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Greece Unscathed by Jihadism

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines why Greece has, at least so far, remained unscathed by the threat of Jihadist terrorism. It attempts to explore why the level of Jihadist threat in Greece remains low in comparison to that in other European countries such as the UK, by looking to foreign policy, counter-terrorism policy and wider political, social and geographical characteristics. In doing so, it first explores the concept of Jihadism, adopting a new framework for the analysis of this phenomenon and, by extension, a new means of evaluating the threat it poses to Greek national security. The UK is used as a comparison largely because of its struggle with Jihadist terrorism, and this comparison is useful in shedding light on the twin issues of home-grown terrorism and radicalisation among sizeable Muslim communities across Europe. These two issues were further used as analytical instruments to examine the level of the Jihadist threat to Greek national security.

Although this work relies on a substantial literature review in setting out the scope and scale of the problem of Jihadist terrorism, it also produces primary data, contributing to existing awareness of the issue in both scholarly literature and in the wider political arena. Elite interviews, carried out with distinguished Greek experts and security officials, as well as leading figures from the Muslim community, were utilised for the purposes of gathering primary data for this investigation. These interviews were conducted across two separate time periods, in order to improve validity and reliability, as well as to provide the researcher with the chance to observe any changes in attitude toward the topic. Content analysis, a useful, tried-and-tested

mode of qualitative data analysis, was then used to interpret this data, revealing that Greece is currently experiencing low levels of threat from Jihadist terrorism. The data collected and analysed here also suggests that this is attributable to Greek's continued attempts to maintain excellent political, economic and cultural relations with the Muslim world; the lack of negative history with the Muslim community that the UK holds due to recent involvement in wars in the Middle East; the successful integration of the Greek Muslim population made up mainly of first-generation immigrants looking to earn a living peacefully; and the usefulness of Greece as a transit country for terrorist organisations. Based on the primary research conducted within this research, as well as the literature consulted in the preparation of the literature review, this thesis suggests that to ensure continued peace, security and positive relations with the Muslim community, it would be beneficial to adopt elements of the UK's policies on counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism.

Declaration – Statement

I hereby declare that my thesis entitled ‘Greece Unscathed by Jihadism’ is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration, except as otherwise stated and specified in the text, and is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or is concurrently submitted, for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Buckingham or any other University or similar institution. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or is concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma, or other qualification at the University of Buckingham or any other University or similar institution.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABTTF	Association of Turks of Western Thrace
AM	Al-Muhajiroun
ANTARSYA	Anti-Capitalist Leftist Cooperation (Greece)
AQAP	Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ASEP	Supreme Council for Selection of Personnel (Greece)
BNP	British National Party
BTP	British Transport Police
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CNI	Center for National Infrastructure
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (UK)
CONTEST	Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UK)
CPNI	Center for the Protection of National Infrastructure (UK)
CR	Counter-Radicalisation
CT	Counter-Terrorism
CTED	Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council
CTSA	Counter-Terrorism Security Advisers (UK)
DfT	Department for Transport (UK)
DI	Defence Intelligence (UK)
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights

EDL	English Defence League
EEA	European Economic Area
EFMW	European Forum of Muslim Women
ELA	Revolutionary Popular Struggle (Greece)
ELIAMEP	Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy
EU	European Union
FIOE	Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (Algeria)
HCG	Hellenic Coast Guard (Greece)
HMG	Her Majesty's Government (UK)
HT	Hizb-ut-Tahrir
HTB	Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Britain
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
ICSR	International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation & Political Violence (UK)
IF	Islamic Foundation (UK)
IFE	Islamic Forum of Europe (UK)
IHH	Humanitarian Relief Organisation (Turkey)
IRO	Islamist Related Offense
ISA	Intelligence Services Act (UK)
ISC	Intelligence and Security Committee (UK)
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham
IT	Information Technology
JI	Jamaat e- Islami
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee (UK)
JTAC	Joint Terrorism Analysis Center (UK)

KEMEA	Center for Security Studies (Greece)
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
MAB	Muslim Association of Britain
MAG	Muslim Association of Greece
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MCP	Ministry of Citizen Protection & Public Order (Greece)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MI5	Security Service (UK)
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service (UK)
MIT	Turkish Intelligence Service
MoD	Ministry of Defence (UK)
MPAC	Muslim Public Affairs Committee (UK)
MPSB	Metropolitan Police Special Branch (UK)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCS	National Crime Squad (UK)
NCIS	National Criminal Intelligence Service (UK)
NCSP	National Cyber Security Program (UK)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIS-EYP	National Intelligence Service (Greece)
ND	Nea Demokratia-Conservative Party (Greece)
NSA	National Security Agency (USA)
NSC	National Security Council
NUS	National Union of Students (UK)
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education (UK)

OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSCIA	Office of Cyber Security and Information Assurance (UK)
OSCT	Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (UK)
PASOK	Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima (Greek Socialist Party)
PEO	Prevent Engagement Officers (UK)
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network (EU)
RICU	Research Information and Communication Unit (UK)
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (UK)
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service or MI6 (UK)
SYRIZA	Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras-Leftist Party (Greece)
UKIM	UK’s Islamic Mission
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (USA)

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Over the past decades and certainly since 9/11, political scientists, historians, security and intelligence professionals have sought to understand and analyse the phenomenon of Jihadism. Jihadism may be very briefly described as a specific strand of Islamist activity and thinking, articulated and acted upon by a number of terrorist groups sharing similar ideologies, which use a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith to justify violence and terrorism as a method of achieving political goals.¹

Although there are various reports regarding the presence of Islamist cells in Greece, not a single Jihadi terrorist attack has occurred in the country to date. This is a peculiar phenomenon taking into account that Greece has a record of being home to left wing extremism and terrorism since the 1970s.² In more recent years, Greece has been used as a transit country by individuals who travel to and from conflict zones in the Middle East, leading some to claim that it has become a through route for terrorists.³ In 2016, for example, 15 suspected Jihadists were arrested travelling through Greece, and this case was included in a recent Europol annual report.⁴ In general, Greece is not only a route for Jihadists trying to reach Iraq and Syria, but also a gateway into Europe for fighters returning home from the Middle East. The attacks of November 13, 2015 in Paris, are a startling example of this reality, as it has been reported that the Belgian national responsible, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, used

¹ John L Esposito, 'Islam and Political Violence' (2015) 6(1) *Religions* 1067

² Will Horner, 'Greece fears revival of far-left violence' (POLITICO EU, 26 June 2017) Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/greece-fears-revival-of-far-left-violence/> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

³ Ioannis Mantzokos, 'The Greek Gateway to Jihad' (2016) 9(6) *CTC SENTINEL* 16

⁴ Dimitris Skleparis, 'Explaining the absence of Islamist Terrorist Attacks and Radicalisation in Greece' (ELIAMEP, 2017) Available at: <https://www.eliamep.gr/en/γιατι-το-ισλαμικο-κρατος-δεν-εχει-πληξ/> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

Greece as a route several times to enter Europe from Syria, on his way to Belgium. Also, at least two of the suicide bombers responsible for the attempted attack on the Stade de France passed through Greece as Syrian refugees.⁵ This strongly indicates that Greece is a vital pass for Jihadists travelling the route between the Middle East and Europe. Exactly what the implications are for this will be explored within the latter chapters of this thesis. As it will also be illustrated in the forthcoming chapters, Greece has significance for a whole host of other reasons relating to terrorism and Jihadism in Europe, as there have been indications that terrorists are setting up logistical, recruitment and financial cells in Greece, in part to facilitate the travel of a growing number of terrorists.⁶

This thesis aims to explain why Greece has thus far remained unscathed by Jihadist terrorism. In doing so, a series of interwoven puzzles about Jihadism in relation to Greece are carefully unravelled. Should threat levels increase in the near future, Greece may have the opportunity to learn from the experience of Western countries like the UK in terms of prevention and response. For the time being, however, Greece's peculiarity in respect to Jihadism puts it in a very different position from the UK, a fellow member of NATO and the EU, whose experience of Jihadism has been very different and whose governments have, over the years, developed a vast panoply of security policy responses to suppress and contain it. Indeed, Greece has been named as one of the weakest links in Europe's fight against terrorism, and some have claimed that this leads the country to be particularly

⁵ The New York Times, 'Unraveling the Connections Among the Paris Attackers' (NY Times, 18 March 2016) Available at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/11/15/world/europe/manhunt-for-paris-attackers.html> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

⁶ Counter Extremism Project, 'Greece: Extremism and Counter-Extremism' (Counter Extremism Project, 2018) Available at:

<https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/greece> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

exposed to future problems of this type.⁷ Should this be the case, the Greek government should be more vigilant and prepared to counter any emerging terrorist threat, and having the measures in place ready to do so will be essential in ensuring any response is effective and timely.

Although it does not have the same history of threat from Jihadism as allies including the UK, Greece could potentially become a target for Jihadists in the near future if the security situation in its geopolitical neighbourhood deteriorates. If the perceived advantage of non-aggression towards Greece fades away, or if terrorist organisations find new means of travelling to Europe, Jihadists may begin to consider it a target, rather than simply a transit country. Equally, if Jihadists are thwarted by EU counter-terrorist policies, they may find Greece a softer target to spread their message throughout the West.⁸ Adopting an approach similar to the UK's, which is considered one of the strongest counter-terrorism frameworks in the world, would help Greece to anticipate imminent threats, continue to protect itself from such threats, and ultimately mend this 'hole' in Europe's defences.⁹ The CTED's recent follow-up visit to Greece to check on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005), and 2178 (2014), also demonstrates the external pressure from the international community to strengthen counter-terrorism approaches in the country.¹⁰

⁷ Georgios Karyotis, 'Securitisation of Greek Terrorism and Arrest of the 'Revolutionary Organisation November 17' (2007) 42(3) *Cooperation and Conflict* 271

⁸ Alexandros Sakellariou, 'Fear of Islam in Greece: migration, terrorism, and "ghosts" from the past' (2017) 45(4) *Nationalities Papers* 511

⁹ Sebastian Rotella, 'How Europe Left Itself Open to Terrorism' (Frontline, 18 October 2018) Available at: <<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/how-europe-left-itself-open-to-terrorism/>> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

¹⁰ UN, 'CTED conducts follow-up visit to Greece' (UN, 1 February 2018) Available at: <<https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/news/2018/02/01/cted-conducts-follow-visit-greece/>> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

Such considerations lead, in turn, to further questions. How can Greece's security policy be strengthened in order to protect both Greece and Europe from potential attacks in the future? Special attention needs to be paid to the so-called counter-radicalisation policies which have been championed so strongly in the UK, which might help to ensure that Muslims living in Greece will remain resilient in the face of Jihadist activity.

The present thesis consists of two parts. The first part examines the phenomenon of Jihadism, the threat of Jihadi terrorism to the UK and the UK counter-terrorism strategy to confront this threat; while the second part presents the findings of the field research, interpreted using a qualitative content analysis of elite interviews. It is argued that because of some very specific conditions that apply to Greece, it has thus far eluded the threat of Jihadist terrorism. The research shows that this is remarkable, not least because Greece is a member of both NATO and the European Union, giving them a close relationship with countries who have previously been targets, including the US and the UK. This thesis argues that a primary reason why Greece has not been targeted by Jihadists is because it has made strenuous efforts to maintain excellent political, economic and cultural relations with the Arab and Muslim world. Furthermore, Greece has no colonial past in the Middle East (or elsewhere) that might generate hostility towards it today, if this can be said to be a factor in developing Jihadist tendencies in other European states.

It is also significant that, in terms of domestic Greek politics, over many years various Greek governments have pursued a raft of specific policies designed to assist the Muslim minority of Western Thrace in integrating into Greek society. As a result, Greek Muslims seem to show little propensity towards radicalisation, appearing, by all accounts, to be more concerned with improving their living standards rather than

espousing extremist creeds.¹¹ Finally, from the point of view of Jihadist groups, Greece serves as a vital and much-used staging post and port of entry into Europe. In this thesis it is suggested that Jihadists have no real interest in targeting Greece for fear of jeopardising this means of carrying out activities in and across Europe. Drawing both on published sources and then on a series of semi-structured elite interviews, the thesis presents a rich picture of the current condition of Greece towards Jihadism.

The author draws extensively on empirical data elicited from elite interviews with representatives of Muslim communities in Greece and representatives and significant figures in the Greek security establishment and political sphere. In order for the main research question to be answered, two broader categories regarding threat and policy response are developed. This work first investigates the core concept of Jihadism and its implications, before moving on to consider the potential for a Jihadist threat to Greece. The secondary research aim explores whether UK counter-terrorism policies should be adopted by Greek policy-makers as an insurance and future-proofing policy. This thesis seeks to identify all factors that contribute to this positive state of affairs for an otherwise much-assailed small country on the south-eastern border of the EU.

Furthermore, a number of key concepts are outlined that enable the theoretical context of the research to be understood and evaluated. In this thesis, the UK is selected as a case study that may serve as a paradigm for the Greek case for several reasons: a) its unique record in developing effective counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism policies, b) as a member of NATO and the EU which shares

¹¹ Anna Triandafyllidou, 'European Muslims: Caught between Local Integration Challenges and Global Terrorism Discourses' (IAI and OSCE, May 2015) Available at <<https://www.osce.org/networks/newmedtrackII/166511?download=true>> [Accessed 10 March 2019]

common values and interests with Greece, and c) the UK has a percentage of Muslim population very similar to Greece.¹²

1.2 Thesis Outline

The present thesis is comprised of nine chapters. In this section, a summary of the content of the following eight chapters will be presented.

In Chapter 2, an overview of the relevant literature is presented, in order to clarify the subject as well as the variables of terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism. Furthermore, in this chapter the theoretical approaches of security studies are presented and analysed, as a result of an identified need to contextualise the discussions presented within this thesis in terms of scholarly relevance. Terrorism and radicalisation have been researched more and more frequently over recent years, and schools of thought such as the Copenhagen School, have become more prominent, since they offer a solution to a real need to account for the emergence of ‘new’ security concepts such as these two examples. This development has been imperative, since Realist and Liberal scholars have found it hard to justify the new importance and pre-eminence of studies of this nature.

In Chapter 3, the methodology and specific approach used for the current research will be described thoroughly. Specifically, the author’s decision to use a qualitative approach in order to investigate the research questions will be justified, and the use of elite interviews as a research tool will similarly be evaluated. As will be demonstrated within this chapter, elite interviews are discussions with people who are chosen because of who they are or what position they occupy in the population being studied.

¹² J. Nielsen (2005) ‘Muslims in Western Europe’ (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) p.p. 89-92.

In Chapter 4, the notion of Jihadism, which uses a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith to justify violence for political aims, will be explored. Accordingly, Islamism, Salafism and Wahhabism will be examined and the connection of Jihadism with extremism and violence will be established; therefore, an analysis of the history of Jihadism and the terrorist record of the most important Jihadist organisations (i.e. Al Qaeda and ISIS) will be undertaken. In summary, this chapter demonstrates that Islam as a religion is not what constitutes a threat to the West; rather, the Jihadist threat originates solely from a small minority of extremists who adhere to this most distorted version of Islam.

In Chapter 5, the security environment in the UK in regard to the Jihadist threat will be presented. More specifically, the purpose of this chapter is on the one hand to map the most important Islamist organisations in the UK and their connections to international Islamist organisations like the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb-ut- Tahrir and Jamaat e-Islami; and on the other hand to present the threat posed by Jihadist terrorism. Moreover, the author also examines the problem of radicalisation among British Muslims and the factors that have led to an increased level of threat in the UK.

In Chapter 6, the thesis presents an analysis of the British Counter-Terrorism Strategy, better known as CONTEST, with particular focus on the 'Prevent' pillar of this strategy and the evolution of anti-terror legislation since the Terrorism Act of 2000. The rationale of this analysis is that CONTEST might prove to be a valuable paradigm for strengthening the counter-terrorism framework in Greece.

In Chapter 7, the interview findings of the field research will be presented. The interview findings are produced from the field research conducted across two time periods. The first period is from September 2010-February 2011 and the second

period is from October 2014-February 2015 and the author will explain why he has selected these particular periods for his primary research. This Chapter sets the scene, therefore, for an analysis of findings carried out in Chapter 8.

In Chapter 8, data collected through the elite interviews is analysed thoroughly. Thereafter, the conclusions about the level of the Jihadist threat to Greek national security and the real reasons behind this state of affairs are drawn. In summary, the analysis of the data demonstrates that Greece faces a very low level of threat emanating from Jihadi terrorism. Furthermore, in this chapter, a comparative study between Greek and UK case studies takes place. Finally, the factors that may lead to an increased threat level in Greece are discussed, as well the lessons that Greece might learn from the UK experience.

Finally, in Chapter 9, the conclusions of the thesis are presented, recommendations for further research are offered, and the ultimate answers to the research aims and objectives are provided.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on terrorism. The purpose of this literature review is to understand how the academic literature frames the concept of terrorism, aiming to clarify the subject and to further illuminate – and distinguish between – the concepts of terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism. In the first part of this chapter, the various definitions of terrorism are discussed, as well as the debate these definitions continue to generate within the academic community.

Radicalisation usually refers to the manifestation of political opinion, which may amount to (endemic) extremist practices. In this chapter, the concept of radicalisation is analysed in the context of Islamist extremism. This is not the only form of political extremism visible in Europe at present, but Muslim communities in the UK and elsewhere have come under intense scrutiny in recent years for fear of Islamist extremism, especially after the 2005 London bombings. Many theories have been presented about the drivers or causes of this type of radicalisation, and these will be explored in more depth in the later sections of this literature review.

This chapter further proceeds to analyse the subject of violent extremism, which can be defined as “advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives”.¹³ Furthermore, in this chapter the theoretical approaches of security

¹³ USAID ‘The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency: Putting Principles Into Practice’ (USAID, September 2011) Available at: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/VEI_Policy_Final.pdf [Accessed 10 March 2019]

studies are presented and analysed for their insight into the research topic.

2.2 The context of the research

This section aims to provide an insight into the most basic concepts that make up the research question. We must start with an analysis of what can be called ‘Western values’. These are based on Greek-Roman and Enlightenment traditions and ideals such as respect for human diversity, gender equality, liberty, the rule of law, liberal democracy, free markets, and the separation of state and religion. It is also useful to clarify the concept of ‘threat’, so as to avoid misinterpretations. ‘Threat’ is a term used in security policy and security studies both as a political term and as a scientific concept. It has been argued that its definition is formulated mainly in relation to the era, the conditions and the locus of study. The use of the term comes from what Knorr defined as a matter which “causes a lot of conceptual uneasiness”.¹⁴ This implies the existence of various *types* of threats, which leads to the need for in turn defining these.

The notion of security threat is defined by Ullman as “an action or sequence of events that: 1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state; or 2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private non-governmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state”.¹⁵ Within the framework of national security, Buzan has pointed to a dual threat to state institutions posed by force (capabilities) and ideas (ideology). The state’s territory ‘can be threatened by seizure or damage, and the threats can come from within and

¹⁴ Klaus Knorr, 'Economic Interdependence and National Security', in Klaus Knorr and Frank Trager (eds.) *Economic Issues and National Security*, (Lawrence, KS, 1977) 18.

¹⁵ Richard Ullman, 'Redefining Security', (1983) 8(1) *International Security* 133

outside the state'.¹⁶ For Buzan, different components of the state are vulnerable to different types of threat. Consequently, different states are vulnerable to different threats, as strong states are primarily threatened by outside forces, while weak ones may be challenged both from within and from outside. Security challenge is a term which has not been defined and has often been used as a synonym for the term 'threat'. It is often used in the context of security issues, referring both to military and to intentional threats, as well as less urgent and probably non-violent security problems, such as migration, pollution of natural resources and social security. Particularly in Europe, it is argued that after the Cold War, a new set of security challenges occurred, mainly due to the integration of the countries into one union, which appeared to be an optimal security organisation for the smallest countries.

While the aforementioned concepts may be used synonymously in relation to both hard and soft security risks, the concept of vulnerability has been developed in both scientific and policy fields, with different meanings. It has been argued that there is a continuum of 'vulnerability', implying that problems are considered to be vulnerabilities where they have the potential to "have political outcomes that affect the survivability of states".¹⁷ Apart from security vulnerabilities, security risk is also a relative concept, which can mean the possibility of loss, injury, disadvantage, or destruction or something which represents potential danger, hazard or other adverse outcome.

Another term which must be clarified is 'national security', which remains ill-defined in both policy and academic literature. Wolfers defines national security as 'in an objective sense... the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense,

¹⁶ Barry Buzan (1983) 'People, State and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations' (Brighton: Wheatsheaf) p.123.

¹⁷ Mohammed Ayoob (1995) 'The Third World Security Predicament, State Making, Regional Conflict and the International System,' (London: Boulder Lynne Rienner Publisher) p.110.

the absence of fear that such values will be attacked'.¹⁸ Professor Charles Maier of Harvard University defines the term as 'a capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and well-being'.¹⁹ This thesis uses Wolfers' conceptualisation of national security as the absence of objective dangers, namely security threats, security challenges and vulnerabilities, and the absence of subjective fears that a community's acquired values will be attacked.²⁰

Before defining the term 'Jihadism', it is necessary to explore the terms 'Jihad' and 'Islamism'. Professor Ahmad Moussali argued that Jihad should be seen as consisting of two levels, the greater Jihad or the inner struggle to purify the soul; and the lesser Jihad, or the external defence or fighting – that is not only directed towards external enemies, but towards anyone who is unjust towards Muslims, even if he is a Muslim himself.²¹ The concept of Jihad can be further divided into offensive and defensive. Offensive Jihad is identical to the war against unbelievers, in an effort to expand the territory of a Muslim state, in order to bring as many people as possible under its rule. Participating in offensive Jihad is considered a voluntary collective duty.²² Defensive Jihad takes place when a Muslim territory is attacked by the enemy; participating in this Jihad becomes a compulsory individual duty for all Muslims capable of fighting. It is equally important to stress the point that the Islamic concept of Jihad is distorted and misinterpreted by violent extremists, as the author will show

¹⁸ Arnold Wolfers, 'National Security' as an Ambiguous Signal' (1952) 67(4) *Political Science Quarterly* 485

¹⁹ Charles Maier, *Peace and Security for the 1990s*. (Unpublished paper for the MacArthur Fellowship Programme, Social Science Research Council, June 12, 1990)

²⁰ Wolfers, p.485

²¹ Moussali, *Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism*

²² David Bukay, 'Defensive or Offensive Jihad: History, Exegesis vs. Contemporary Propagation' (The Jerusalem Post, 13 February 2014) Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Defensive-or-Offensive-Jihad-History-Exegesis-vs-Contemporary-Propagation-341308>>[Accessed 5 March 2019]

in chapter 4.²³

Generated from a distorted interpretation of the Islamic religion, Islamism is regarded to be a complex and multidimensional phenomenon with various characteristics. Islamism is simultaneously a political ideology and a movement which advocates the establishment of an Islamic state ruled by the Sharia (Islamic Law). Islamism can therefore be identified as an ideology that connects *din* (religion) with *dawla* (the state) in a Sharia-based political order.²⁴ In addition, it is not local, restricted to Islamic countries, but also global, as Islamists propose a remaking of the world at large.

Finally, Jihadism or militant Islamism needs to be briefly explained. The concept of struggle (Jihad) is central to the militant ideology, according to which, the use of violence against society is a legitimate mode of action. The purpose of Jihadism is to establish the Islamic state. It represents a tiny fraction of the larger mainstream Islamist movement. It justifies the use of violence in order to promote the Islamist agenda, by using a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith. The overarching goal of Jihadism is to establish *hakimiyyat Allah*, God's rule, as a political order, first in the world of Islam and then in the world at large. This new order would replace the Western secular Westphalian system with an Islamic one. This political goal is common to both Jihadism and institutional Islamism.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Niels Spierings, 'The Multidimensional Impact of Islamic Religiosity on Ethno-religious Social Tolerance in the Middle East and North Africa' (2018) 1(1) *Social Forces* 92

2.3 Terrorism

Defining terrorism has been a topic of heated debate. In this chapter, we will showcase how the conflicting views about how to define terrorism in fact reveal deeper issues concerning the concept. A good place to start is the definition of terrorism included in the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989: “...the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear”.²⁵

The roots of terrorism can be found in the late 18th century, when the term 'terror' was originally used during the period of the French Revolution to denote the violent activities of the Jacobin revolutionary government.²⁶ Yet terrorism in fact extends back even farther than this, at least as far back as the Zealots and Assassins in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁷ During the French Revolution, the term 'terrorism' originally carried positive rather than negative connotations: it was considered a useful instrument of statehood.²⁸ More recently, however, the concept of terrorism has been understood in a resolutely negative sense to refer to 'clandestine attacks on governmental targets by domestic opponents'.²⁹ As Moeckli notes, terrorism now has a 'distinctly negative connotation, conveying a sense of illegitimacy and automatically discrediting those to which it is affixed'.³⁰ Terrorism is commonly described as a 'weapon of the weak' used against the powerful.³¹

²⁵ Jamie Bartlett and Jonathan Birdwell, ‘Cumulative Radicalisation Between the Far-Right and Islamist Groups in the UK: A Review of Evidence’, (London: Demos, 2013) p. 32.

²⁶ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, (Columbia University Press 2006) p.p 2-3.

²⁷ B. Lutz and J. Lutz, 'Terrorism'. In: A. Collins (ed.) ‘Contemporary Security Studies’ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 4th ed., 2015) p. 312.

²⁸ Bartlett and Birdwell

²⁹ Charles Tilly, 'Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists' (2004), 22(1) *Sociological Theory* 9.

³⁰ Daniel Moeckli, ‘Human Rights and non-Discrimination in the 'War on Terror' (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) p. 24.

³¹ Lutz and Lutz, 'Terrorism', 313; Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p.174.

Yet although the concept of terrorism has a long history, scholarship on terrorism has been 'notoriously underdeveloped'.³² Indeed, Tilly observes that the term is 'politically powerful but analytically elusive'.³³ This elusiveness is partly a function of the contested nature of terrorism.³⁴ The aphorism that 'one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter' reflects the difficulty of determining who is, and is not, a terrorist.³⁵ Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, there is no consensus about how to define terrorism. The United Nations General Assembly notoriously failed to reach a definition of the term, and domestically a multitude of various definitions are employed by various institutions.³⁶ As noted, Schmid identified 109 different (and frequently contradictory) definitions of terrorism.³⁷

The problem of defining terrorism derives in part from the fact that terrorism manifests itself as a phenomenon in a variety of ways. This diversity, along with the diverse motivations behind terrorism, make it difficult to formulate a definition that is sufficiently exact but not overly so. It is important neither to be too specific nor too general.³⁸ Some scholars even regard the pursuit of a definition as pointless - Laqueur, for instance, takes the view that the term 'terrorism' is employed in so many contradictory ways that the term has essentially become meaningless.³⁹

This begs the question of whether terrorism can be distinguished from ordinary violent crime. In the view of Moeckli, the key distinction emerges in the

³² Jeff Goodwin, 'What Must We Explain to Explain Terrorism?' (2004), 3(1) 'Social Movement Studies' p. 259.

³³ Tilly, p. 5.

³⁴ Menon, p. 3.

³⁵ Hoffman, p. 936.

³⁶ Menon, p. 5.

³⁷ Alex Schmid, 'Political Terrorism': *A Research Guide to Concepts, Theories, Data Bases and Literature* (Transaction Publishing, 1984) 111

³⁸ Alex Schmid, 'Terrorism – the Definitional Problem' (2004) 36(1) *Case Journal of International Law* p.p. 375, 402.

³⁹ Walter Laqueur, 'The Age of Terrorism', (New York: Little Brown, 1987) p. 11.

motivation driving the act: terrorism is generally motivated by political ideology, whereas generic violent crime is not. This political element explains why states opt to categorise acts of this nature as terroristic.⁴⁰ Hoffman concurs with this view, and concludes that terrorism ought to be defined as 'violence – or, equally important, the threat of violence – used and directed in pursuit of, or in service of, a political aim'.⁴¹ In the UK, the Terrorism Act of 2000, for example, states that terrorism is violence intended to sway a government or intimidate the populace with the purpose of 'advancing a political, religious, racial, or ideological cause'.⁴² This strategic aspect is critical: indeed, terrorism is 'a strategy, not a creed'. In other words, violence is used for instrumental purposes, not as an end in itself.⁴³

Among the various definitions of terrorism used by academics, politicians, security experts and journalists, some definitions focus on the mode of operation employed by terrorist organisations, while others emphasise the motivations and characteristics of terrorism and the modus operandi of individual terrorists. In their book *Political Terrorism*, Schmid and Jongman surveyed academics in the field, and found 109 alternative definitions of terrorism.⁴⁴ Of these potential definitions, the following statistically significant concepts were found: violence and force (83.5%); political (65%); fear, emphasis on terror (51%); threats (47%); psychological effects and anticipated reactions (41.5%); discrepancy between the targets and the victims (37.5%); intentional, planned, systematic, organised action (32%); and methods of combat, strategy, tactics (30.5%).⁴⁵ Respondents were also asked what elements of terrorism they felt needed to be better defined, and their answers suggested that there

⁴⁰ Moeckli, p 46.

⁴¹ Hoffman, p.p 2-3.

⁴² Terrorism Act 2000 (UK), s1.

⁴³ Tilly (n11) p. 11.

⁴⁴ Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman (1988) 'Political terrorism': *A new guide to actors, authors, concepts, data bases, theories and literature* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.) p.98.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

should be closer attention paid to the relationship between terrorism and other kinds of political violence, and also that the potential for legitimacy in terrorism should be considered.

Given the uncertainties in defining terrorism, this research will focus on the definition provided within the Terrorism Act of 2000, which is the accepted definition used by the UK's main national security agency, MI5. This definition is as follows:

The use or threat of action designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public, or a section of the public; made for the purposes of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause; and it involves or causes:

- *serious violence against a person;*
- *serious damage to a property;*
- *a threat to a person's life;*
- *a serious risk to the health and safety of the public; or*
- *serious interference with or disruption to an electronic system.*⁴⁶

The UK government's definition of terrorism, which is quoted here as the UK paradigm, is discussed in this thesis. It is generally agreed that terrorism involves the use of violence, or threat of violence, against targets including civilian populations, to achieve political objectives.⁴⁷ Simply carrying out non-violent activities in a group with political aims is not, alone, enough to be considered 'terrorist', at least in the

⁴⁶ Lord Carlile of Berriew, 'Report on the Operation in 2007 of the Terrorism Act 2000' (London: Home Office, 2008), paragraph 42; [Ibid.], 'Report on the Operation in 2008 of the Terrorism Act 2000' London: Home Office, 2009) paragraphs 53, 55; David Anderson, 'Report on the operation in 2010 of the Terrorism Act 2000' (London: Home Office, 2011) paragraph 4.6.

⁴⁷ Boaz Ganor, 'Defining Terrorism: Is one man's terrorist another man's freedom fighter?' (2002) 3(4) *Police Practice and Research* 287

UK. For example, carrying out a peaceful protest is permitted within UK law in line with the Human Rights Act of 1998.⁴⁸ The importance of the political motive should not be underestimated, however, since without this motivation, acts carried out against civilians would be considered under other tenets of the law. The benefit of agreement regarding the need for political motivations to be present, is that political objectives can be a ‘catch all’ for ideological or religious motives, which have also been associated with terrorism.⁴⁹ In line with this notion, it has been argued that motives are generally not of great importance in considering cases of terrorism, and that spending time analysing potential motivations of political terrorism can actually confuse, rather than inform, investigations.⁵⁰

One of the most important elements of terrorism has continued to be the targeting of civilian populations as a means of garnering support for aforementioned objectives. This feature has tended to help to distinguish terrorism from other forms of politically-motivated violence, which could include anything from civil insurgency to guerrilla warfare.⁵¹ Importantly, this feature has also been one of the things which has helped to bring terrorism, and terrorist attacks, onto the public’s radar, with attacks targeting civilian populations tending to provoke immense feelings of fear, along with a strong reaction from all forms of media.⁵² The problem arising in particular from this kind of relationship between attacks and fear, has been that terrorist organisations recognise the benefits which may arise from the media fueling

⁴⁸ Equality and Human Rights Commission, ‘Article 11: Freedom of Assembly and Association’ (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018) Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights-act/article-11-freedom-assembly-and-association> [Accessed 4 March 2019]

⁴⁹ Lorne L. Dawson and Amarnath Amarasingam, ‘Talking to Foreign Fighters: Insights into the Motivations for Hijrah to Syria and Iraq’ (2017) 40(3) *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 191

⁵⁰ Michael Stohl, ‘The Politics of Terrorism’, (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1988), p. 239.

⁵¹ John Alan Cohan, ‘Necessity, Political Violence and Terrorism’ (2006) 35(1) *Stetson Law Review* 903

⁵² Arthur H. Garrison, ‘Defining terrorism: philosophy of the bomb, propaganda by deed and change through fear and violence’ (2004) 17(3) *Criminal Justice Studies* 259

this kind of fear, and may be attracted to the kind of attention they receive through carrying out attacks on civilians. The effectiveness in terms of bringing attention to political objectives cannot be denied, and in the past, terrorist attacks carried out by lone attackers have had a huge impact on public fear and been reported widely in the media, including the 2017 attack carried out at Manchester Arena in the UK.⁵³

There is the potential for confusion about how these characteristics touch upon related concepts. For example, more than 15 percent of the definitions reviewed by Schmid and Jongman incorporate the innocence of casualties as a critical component of terrorism.⁵⁴ This feature would likely exclude any assault on the military as a terrorist demonstration, for example the bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 or the 2000 assault on the USS Cole.⁵⁵ While recognising the necessity of specifying the meaning of terrorism to avoid components that muddle the connection between terrorism and other concepts (such as democracy, economic development, and so on), a minimalist definition is also problematic. A minimalist definition will have more exact referents, however it can also neglect to tell apart quite different events, such as terrorism and insurgency or terrorism and genocide. By introducing a factor that requires the objective of the target to be unique in relation to its target group, terrorist events can be isolated from genocides and rebellions.⁵⁶ This is imperative given the likelihood that these types of conflict have different mechanisms.

⁵³ Bart Schuurman and others, 'Lone Actor Terrorist Attack Planning and Preparation: A Data- Driven Analysis' (2017) 63(4) *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 1191

⁵⁴ Lord Carlile of Berriew, 'The Definition of Terrorism' (London: Crown Copyright, 2007)

⁵⁵ European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation '*Radicalisation Processes leading to acts of Terrorism*' (European Commission, 15 May 2008) Available at: <https://rikcoolsaet.be/files/2008/12/expert-group-report-violent-radicalisation-final.pdf> [Accessed 11 March 2019]

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Recently, Silke has proposed the use of different definitions of terrorism to explore how sensitive practical interpretations are to definitional specifications.⁵⁷ Up to this point, investigations that use different definitional segments of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) find that the impacts of key indicators on terrorism are related to its distinctive operational definitions.⁵⁸ The GTD incorporates occurrences that meet all of the following three conditions:

1. *The incident must be intentional;*
2. *The incident must entail some level of violence or threat of violence;*
3. *The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors.*

In addition, the incidents must fit at least two of the following three criteria:

A: The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal. As far as financial objectives are concerned, the restrictive quest for benefit does not fulfill this measure. It must include the quest for more significant, systemic economic change.

B: There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims. It is the act taken as a totality that is considered, regardless of whether each individual involved in doing the act knew about this aim. For whatever length of time that any of the organisers or leaders behind the assault planned to pressure, scare or intimidate, the purposefulness basis is met.

C: The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. That is, the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law (particularly the prohibition against deliberately targeting civilians

⁵⁷ Andrew Silke, 'The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism' (2001) 13(4) *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

or non-combatants).

By using explicit criteria, researchers employing the GTD can filter incidents by including or subtracting these criteria.

A terrorist organisation is then viewed as a group that uses terrorism as described above.⁵⁹ While this statement can be considered as legitimate, it prompts some troublesome questions. For instance, can all organisations that employ fear be considered as terrorist groups? In the event that a group just uses one demonstration of terror and uses peaceful means in 99% of its other interactions, would it still qualify as a terrorist group? Since we are attempting to recognise why terrorist groups (and demonstrations of terror) endure or dissipate, we have to mark any group who uses such actions as a terrorist group.⁶⁰ When they refrain from utilising such a strategy, at that point they are never again coded as a terrorist group.

By using terrorist assaults as an approach to determine which groups are terrorist groups, we maintain a strategic distance from subjectively marking groups as terrorist and concentrate rather on their activities. Groups that use fear in this way are considered terrorist associations. For whatever length of time that they use this strategy, the group maintains this identity.⁶¹ At the point when the group halts, it no longer fits the criteria. This is congruent with how academic researchers consider the issue of terrorism. It is likewise consistent with the worries of most governments that deal with terror campaigns: they need to comprehend what brings terrorism to an end. In entirety, terrorist group survival is conceptualised as the time between a group's initial attack and its last assault.⁶²

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ J. Wright 'The Importance of Europe in the Global Campaign Against Terror' (2006) 18(2) *Terrorism and Political Violence* 281.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² B. Hoffman 'Radicalisation and Subversion: Al Qaeda and the 7 July 2005 Bombings and the 2006 Airline Bombing Plot' (2009) 32(1) *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 1100.

2.4 Radicalisation and the “New” Terrorism

The visible part of radicalisation concerns the manifestation of activist political activity, which may amount to recourse to (endemic) extremist practices.⁶³ The preceding analysis of lexical definition of the term ‘radical’, clarifies that the term is closely associated with the idea of extremism. It should be noted that radicalisation does not necessarily lead into violent extremism or terrorism and that radical behaviors are not necessarily problematic. It is important to identify individuals and groups that are vulnerable to radicalisation in order for appropriate measures to be implemented in a timely and effective manner. Existing scholarly work offers that radicalisation, an intense social and psychological process of increased commitment to political or religious extremist ideologies,⁶⁴ is about gradually adopting extreme religious and political beliefs with the aim of overthrowing conventional ideologies on the ground, "injustice" and alienation from society and the state. It is a personal and ideological transformation from one situation to another, which – when it starts to be associated with violent extremism – can lead to political violence.

There is a prominent debate in the literature as to the newness of the so-called 'new' terrorism. In the immediate post-9/11 period, it was frequently pointed out that a 'new age of terror' had emerged, with new 'super-terrorists' posing a greater threat than ever seen in the past.⁶⁵ Analysts spoke of a 'war to the death' between Western states and a new generation of religiously inspired terrorists whose apocalyptic

⁶³ R. Cachalia, U. Salifu and I. Nolung'u, 'The Dynamics of Youth Radicalisation in Africa' (Institute for Security Studies, 2016) Available at: <https://www.africaportal.org/publications/the-dynamics-of-youth-radicalisation-in-africa-reviewing-the-current-evidence/> [Accessed 11 March 2019]

⁶⁴ R. Coolsaet, 'Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism' (GSDRC, 2008) Available at: <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/radicalisation-processes-leading-to-acts-of-terrorism/> [Accessed 11 March 2019]

⁶⁵ R. Jackson (2005) 'Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism', (Manchester: Manchester University Press,) p.103.

millenarian goals brooked no possible compromise.⁶⁶ Naturally, much of this line of argument focuses on the events of 9/11. Menon, for instance, suggests that 'a line was crossed in the history of terrorism and political violence' on that day.⁶⁷ In this view, 9/11 illustrates how the 'new' terrorism is more dangerous than everything that went before.⁶⁸

Nonetheless, it remains in doubt what, specifically, is 'new' about the new terrorism. Tucker suggests three elements: structure, personnel, and attitudes to violence. To take structure first, it is evident that terror organisation increasingly employ a loose network structure to operate. Whereas in the past organisations such as the PLO worked closely with state sponsors of terrorism, nowadays it is argued that inchoate alliances of individuals and small groups enable terrorist groups to operate beneath the radar.⁶⁹ This development has been encouraged by modern communications, which enable terror organisations to operate effectively with a flatter, more horizontal structure.⁷⁰ This is significant, because 'a network, unlike a hierarchy, cannot be destroyed by decapitation'.⁷¹

Second, and as a consequence of this trend towards network terrorism, there has been a significant growth in the number of 'amateur' terrorists. It is now possible for individuals to radicalise themselves within a matter of days or weeks by accessing material on the Internet. Further, these individuals can also use the Internet to learn methods by which to cause mass casualties. Networks of largely autonomous individuals are also more difficult to control, which potentially increases the

⁶⁶ J. Mueller 'Simplicity and Spook: Terrorism and the Dynamics of Threat Exaggeration' (2005) 6(1) *International Studies Perspectives* 225.

⁶⁷ S. Menon, 'International Terrorism and Human Rights', (2014) 4(1) *Asian Journal of International Law* 1.

⁶⁸ D. Tucker (2001) 'What is New About the New Terrorism and How Dangerous Is It?' (2001) 13(3) *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1.

⁶⁹ Lutz and Lutz, 'Terrorism', p.312

⁷⁰ Tucker, 'What is new', 1.

⁷¹ Tucker, 'What is new', 2.

likelihood of rogue actions by particularly amoral individuals. The lack of a proper structure means that small groups, or individuals, can appear from the ether and cause chaos.⁷² The absence of ties to a formal structure also makes it much harder for the intelligence services to identify such individuals.

Third, scholars posit that the 'new' terrorism is also defined by a greater willingness to cause mass death – possibly even through the use of weapons of mass destruction.⁷³ The more autonomous, individual nature of modern terrorism makes the political and moral constraints of yesteryear less significant. A lone wolf terrorist does not need to worry about alienating his state sponsor or his constituency of support. Further, it is suggested that the millenarian and apocalyptic nature of Salafist terrorists makes them particularly predisposed towards mass violence. According to Thornton, for instance, Islamist terrorists carry 'a religious fervour that defies moral boundaries'.⁷⁴

Yet this sharp distinction between 'new' and 'old' terrorism is problematic. Indeed, all of the supposedly new elements identified above are in fact much more longstanding than proponents of the 'new' terrorism thesis admit. Horizontal network structures, for instance, are far from new: the PLO operated such a structure, and Leftist groups in the 1970s also used cell groups.⁷⁵ It is also questionable whether network structures are harder for intelligence agencies to crack. In fact, terrorist leaders in such structures tend to have lower control over when and how communications between members take place, and this creates scope for

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Tucker, 'What is new', 1.

⁷⁴ R. Thornton, (2007) 'Asymmetric Warfare': *Threat and Response in the 21st century*, (Cambridge: Polity Press,) p.26.

⁷⁵ Tucker, 'What is new', 3-4.

identification and penetration.⁷⁶ Indeed, Tucker argues that a network structure is in fact 'very risky for terrorists'.⁷⁷ Equally, the more amateur nature of modern-day terrorist individuals renders them less effective in terms of inflicting mass casualties. Such individuals are generally unable to access the type of bombs or even guns used by groups in the past, forcing them instead to fall back on low-tech methods such as vehicle assaults or knife attacks. These types of assault can be dangerous, but they are much less likely to cause mass casualties.

Finally, it is also questionable whether Islamist terrorists are as free of political and social constraints as some analysts suppose. It has been observed, for instance, that al-Qaeda's political objectives – as espoused by Osama bin Laden at least – were in fact quite openly laid out. These objectives included a wholesale American withdrawal from the Arabian lands. Similarly, it has been noted that even ISIS was forced to observe the preferences of the local populace in Iraq and Syria.⁷⁸ Critically, not only is the 'new' terrorism a flawed concept, it is potentially also a dangerous one when used to buttress excessive counter-terrorism policies. Waldron observes that intelligence sourced from within Muslim communities is critical to defeating the Islamist threat.⁷⁹ Yet overly stringent counter-terrorism measures can have the contradictory effect of increasing the 'reservoir of discontent' inside Muslim communities. This occurs when law abiding Muslims are lumped together – or are perceived to be lumped together – with terrorists and terrorist sympathisers.⁸⁰ Such policies disincentivise 'ordinary' Muslims to cooperate with the authorities, and

⁷⁶ Tucker, 'What is new', 10-11

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ B. Mendelsohn, (2016) 'The Al Qaeda Franchise: The Expansion of Al Qaeda and Its Consequences'. (Oxford: Oxford University Press,) p. 184.

⁷⁹ J. Waldron, 'Security and liberty: the image of balance' (2003) 11(2) *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 206.

⁸⁰ M. Freeman, (2005) 'Order, Rights and Threats: Terrorism and Global Justice'. In: R. Wilson (ed.) *Human Rights in the 'War on Terror'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p. 48.

indeed potentially increase the level of sympathy for terrorist groups. As such, overly punitive counter-terror policies can have the paradoxical effect of undermining, rather than enhancing, security.⁸¹

In addition, critical scholars make the point that terrorism is neither the only threat to individual security, nor even the most significant one. Over the course of history, the greatest threat to individual security has, in fact, been the state itself. The great danger of counter-terrorism policy, therefore, is that it helps to increase state power to the point where the state itself potentially endorses terrorism or terrorists.⁸² This is not mere rhetoric or hyperbole: the term 'terrorism' originated, after all, as a description of the behaviour of the French Jacobin government in the late eighteenth century.⁸³ Since then, many other states – the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, Mao's China – have also represented grievous threats to the individual security of their own citizens. The problem with counter-terrorism policy, then, is that it increases the power of the state vis-à-vis its citizens. This is exemplified by the growth in executive measures during the so-called 'war on terror'.⁸⁴ This growth in state and executive powers might seem like a price worth paying in the short-term, but in the long run it increases the risk of the state itself turning on those same citizens. These fears are accentuated by the manner in which modern states use security as a tool of governance. As Jackson notes, 'the construction of fear is a frequently employed strategy of social control for most states'.⁸⁵ The Putin regime in Russia clearly stokes insecurity to generate popular support, for example, and the same point has been

⁸¹ Hoffman. p. 935.

⁸² G. Agamben, 'Security and Terror' (2005) (4) *Theory and Event*; G. Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: Chicago University Press) p.p. 34-35.

⁸³ W. Eubank and L. Weinberg (2006) 'What is Terrorism?' (New York: Infobase) p.27.

⁸⁴ Moeckli. p.213

⁸⁵ Jackson. p.114.

made in relation to George Bush's 'war on terror'.⁸⁶ The risk is that at some point we enter a Schmittian style 'permanent state of exception' whereby the state's power becomes untrammelled and citizens are reduced to 'bare life'.⁸⁷ For some critical scholars, this process has already taken place.⁸⁸ In the case of drone strikes, for instance, one observes the executive branch of government unilaterally assassinating foreign citizens with no recourse to the rule of law.⁸⁹ Such abuses may not have happened – yet – on home soil, but in the view of critical theorists the historical evidence suggests that such an outcome is possible, maybe even probable, if state power is allowed to grow unchecked. It certainly becomes more likely if citizens allow the need for security to become the overriding principle governing their lives.⁹⁰

Radicalisation can be found in many different social groups, making it extremely difficult to outline a specific person's profile to being vulnerable to recruitment by extremist organisations. In most cases, it is a gradual passage from different stages, which is not easy, simple, or quick, though certain events can act as "catalysts" that speed up the process. Under no circumstances, of course, should it be assumed that a radicalised person will definitely commit violent and / or terrorist acts.

Radicalisation is a phenomenon as old as social protest itself.⁹¹ The conflict of ideas within any social, economic or political system, over time, is inherent in the very creation and operation of societies. So why has it become such a major problem in modern society? Modern or online radicalisation is connected with extremism, and

⁸⁶ Mueller. p.34

⁸⁷ C. Boukalas, (2014) 'No exceptions: authoritarian statism. Agamben, Poulantzas and homeland security' 7 (2) *Critical Studies on Terrorism* p.112.

⁸⁸ M. Hardt and A. Negri (2004) 'Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire' (New York: Penguin) p.7.

⁸⁹ D. Greene, 'Drone Vision' (2015) 13(2) *Surveillance and Society* 233

⁹⁰ Z. Bauman and others (2014) 'After Snowden: Rethinking the Impact of Surveillance' 8(2) *International Political Sociology* p.121

⁹¹ Manni Crone (2016) 'Radicalisation revisited: violence, politics and the skills of the body' 92(3) *International Affairs* p.587

sometimes with terrorism. It may have purely political motives or be religiously motivated. It has also started to become apparent through technology such as the internet. Radicalisation is characterised by adopting extreme ideologies about the "ideal society", but also borne of faith that the imposition of these aims can be achieved mainly, if not exclusively, by violent means. Exactly this trend in the violent adaptation of reality to the ideal, the lack of respect for human life and the view that it is a collateral, minor, loss, classifies these ideologies in the category of extremism. The interest – and concern – about the phenomenon of radicalisation has increased especially since the events of 11 September 2001, with the emergence of the so-called "new terrorism" and its direct relationship with religious extremism. However, it is clear that radicalisation equally concerns the extremes of the political spectrum.

The modern version of radicalisation, namely online radicalisation, refers to a situation in which a person, in the first stage, is beginning to possess extremist ideas. That person can express public extremist views but not take action.⁹² Activism, on the other hand, is a very widespread range of actions by many groups of citizens and movements and has been developing mainly since the 1990s and is linked, in particular, with the Civil Society. Even if activism can take violent forms, it should not be directly associated with violent extremism. It is also essential to emphasise the difference in healthy engagement with the public and social claims expressed in a society – where disagreements naturally arise – from violent forms that are aimed at conflict.

All approaches to the phenomenon of radicalisation aim to understand how an individual – whether for psychological, personal, social and economic reasons – can

⁹² European Parliament, 'Radicalisation and violent extremism – focus on women: How women become radicalised and how to empower them to prevent radicalisation' (European Parliament, December 2017) Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596838/IPOL_STU\(2017\)596838_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596838/IPOL_STU(2017)596838_EN.pdf) [Accessed 11 March 2019].

experience a process of isolation from society. Access to a radical group may, initially, look important and a person can experience it as a sense of "belonging", a sense of purpose and meaning and force.⁹³ Then, of course, the isolation of the individual becomes much deeper, as the radicalised person "socialises" strongly within the group, adopts an absolute way of thinking that separates the world into "us and them", and begins to see the "other" as an enemy. The "socialisation" within the group leads to a life of secrecy and limitations, which separates the individual even more from the wider community.

Hoffman moreover suggests that 'we are witnessing a new phenomenon of diaspora communities turning against their adopted homelands, targeting the government and its people'.⁹⁴ This reality is important because of globalisation: the volume of traffic and open borders makes the problem more acute. Six critical issues are particularly worrisome. First, the demonstrated fear that communities will indeed attack adopted homelands. Second, the lack of integration that has created recruits, affecting both the assimilated and the alienated. Some are attracted through recruitment and auto-radicalisation—they are independent actors with no prior ties to terror groups, but become inspired and motivated to carry out acts done in support of or in sympathy with movements. Third, financial lifelines, notably the flow of contributions from abroad. Fourth, diasporas also potentially facilitate the procurement of weapons. Fifth, diasporas are useful propaganda platforms—new countries allow outlets that are proscribed in native countries. Finally, diaspora

⁹³ Terrellyn Fearn, 'A Sense of Belonging: Supporting Healthy Child Development in Aboriginal Families' (Best Start, 2006) Available at: https://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/aboriginal_manual.pdf [Accessed 11 March 2019].

⁹⁴ J. Smith and others, *Exploring the Impacts of Conflicts Abroad on Diaspora Communities in Canada*, (Security Governance Group (SGG) for Public Safety Canada, 2017) Available at: <https://secgovgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Working-Paper-1-Exploring-the-Impacts-of-Conflicts-Abroad-on-Diaspora-Communities-in-Canada.pdf> [Accessed 11 March 2019].

communities can become enlisted and mobilised to lobby and influence adopted governments to bring pressure against governments in their countries of origin.⁹⁵

Radicalisation is sometimes an individual process, but scientists emphasise the importance of networks and social contacts in facilitating the process.⁹⁶ A number of causes of radicalisation have been proposed. These include social causes, such as poverty, relative deprivation, social, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination, absence of social inclusion, absence of social mobility, "ghettoisation", and identity issues. All of these factors are considered to be particularly important in stoking an environment conducive to radicalisation. Even among terrorism scholars and counter-terrorism practitioners in the West there is a wide range of viewpoints that would seem to confuse efforts to agree on which groups or individuals are radicalised and how different types of people become radicalised for different reasons. Although this is not absolute, it is important to stress that no single cause can explain the phenomenon or the act of a person as a whole.⁹⁷

At the same time, there are multi-level socio-psychological processes that, apart from behavioral changes, involve the transformation of identifying processes and the change of cognitive and emotional experiences and expressions. The process of radicalisation occurs within a context of polarisation and internal and social conflict, in which a part of the social subject –both individually and collectively – is self-sacrificing, sometimes isolated and eventually marginalised. Recourse to terrorist acts is a prototypical model of radicalisation in the sense that changes in ideological beliefs, political tactics, and the declared strategic goals of one or more components

⁹⁵ B. Hoffman 'Radicalisation and Subversion: Al Qaeda and the 7 July 2005 Bombings and the 2006 Airline Bombing Plot' (2009) 32(1) *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*

⁹⁶ European Commission, 'Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism' (European Commission, 2008) Available at: http://www.rikcoolsaet.be/files/art_ip_wz/Expert%20Group%20Report%20Violent%20Radicalisation%20FINAL.pdf [Accessed 11 March 2019]

⁹⁷ Ibid.

of a demanding movement are so intense that they cause an increasing incompatibility of values and practices.

McCauley and Moskalenko,⁹⁸ in demonstrating that the socio-psychological study of terrorism is a much more serious case than the scientifically clear "profiling" of the terrorist personality, the self-evident moral proclamations, and the general sociological justifications, enumerated a dozen such mechanisms. The following twelve mechanisms have been adapted from this work:

1. Personal "victimisation": linked to traumatic experiences in the life story of the person who has been subjected to extreme power violence.

2. Individual reaction to a particular political climate or events: the sense of belonging to a besieged group, combined with the experience of acts of extreme violence against either the same or important others, which gives one the necessary impetus to engage in extremism.

3. Individual radicalisation when joining an extremist group: the "slippery path" of gradual "strict initiation" and "freely accepted submission".

4. "Interpersonal Confidence Networks": refers to the recruitment of members from a close social network of people. Fleet loyalty and shared experience of challenges and risks increase the group's consistency.

5. Collective polarisation: the tendency for members of the group to adopt more extreme attitudes, adapting them to the attitudes of the most extremist members of a group that accepts and legitimises violence.

6. Torque of the group in extremism under conditions of isolation of the group and sense of "common fate" and common risk: it concerns the value of the common reality that the team constructs in conditions of absolute coherence and strong

⁹⁸ Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko (2008) 'Mechanisms of Political Radicalisation: Pathways Toward Terrorism' 20(3) *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence*.

interdependence among the members. Team life becomes a source of absolute understanding and rewards for the member.

7. Torque of the group in extremism due to competition with other groups in order to "claim" the same base of sympathisers: the possibility of gang violence within the wider movement of common claims.

8. The group's torque in extremism as a form of competition with state power or the "thickening of a small critical mass": the violence against a wider movement leads to the detachment and formation of a small group with violent retaliatory action.

9. Torque of the group in extremism as a result of inter-group conflict: possible role of intra-group pressure for compliance, dynamics of disintegration, "civil" violent competition.

10. Increasing momentum in extremism due to competition with an extra group: external attack as a factor in increasing intragroup cohesion, idealising the leader and idealising the values of the group and thus using violence to support them.

11. Increasing momentum of extremism due to competition with an extra group - the role of hatred: a two-team conflict at the symbolic level, the reinforcement of prejudice and stereotypes, the emergence of assertive beliefs - the "humanisation" of the enemy and the activation against the intense negative emotions of anger and contempt as an "ethical release" for extreme violence.

12. Increasing momentum in extremism due to competition with an extra group - The catalytic image of the "witness": social construction and the idealisation of the "dead hero" as a model of the credible servant of the highest values.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Ibid.

2.4.1 Radicalisation of Muslims

Marc Sageman, a forensic psychiatrist, sociologist and former CIA case officer, has stated: ‘Understanding the process of radicalisation is critical to assessing the threat facing the West and should be the basis guiding our interventions to counter it’.¹⁰⁰ According to the Intelligence and Security Committee Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on July 7, 2005, the Security Service (MI5):

*... identified that there is no simple Islamist extremist profile in the UK and that the threat is as likely to come from those who appear well-assimilated into the mainstream UK society, with jobs and young families, as from those within socially or economically deprived sections of the community.*¹⁰¹

Radicalisation is a process that can lead to violent and/or non-violent extremism. Radicalisation is not a sufficient cause of terrorism, simply because not all radicals are terrorists. That is why when we discuss terrorism, we come to use the term violent radicalisation. According to the definition provided by the European Commission in 2005: ‘violent radicalisation involves embracing opinions, views and ideas which can lead to acts of terrorism’.¹⁰² The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) describe radicalisation as ‘a process by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an

¹⁰⁰ Marc Sageman, ‘Radicalisation of Global Islamist Terrorists’ (US Senate, 27 June 2007) Available at: <<http://www.globalfuturesforum.org/ReadingDetail.php?rid=520>> [Accessed 11 March 2019]

¹⁰¹ UK Parliament, ‘Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005’ (Crown Copyright, 2006) Available at: <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm67/6785/6785.pdf>> [Accessed 11 March 2019]

¹⁰² EC Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation, ‘Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism’ (European Commission, 15 May 2008) Available at: http://www.rikcoolsaet.be/files/art_ip_wz/Expert%20Group%20Report%20Violent%20Radicalisation%20FINAL.pdf [Accessed 11 February 2019].

attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective'.¹⁰³ Moreover, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs describes radicalisation as 'the phenomenon of people embracing opinions and ideas that could lead to acts of terrorism'.¹⁰⁴ According to a definition given by Dr. David R.Mandel, a senior Defence scientist at the Canadian Department of National Defense, radicalisation refers to 'an increase in and/or reinforcing of extremism in the thinking, sentiments and/or behavior of individuals and/or groups of individuals'.¹⁰⁵

Many theories have been presented about the drivers or causes of radicalisation. However, it is very difficult if not impossible to accurately determine the causes, and define which factors are instrumental or merely coincidental. There are a number of factors, such as key places, charismatic leaders, relationship links, experiences and stated and/or assumed grievances.¹⁰⁶ Another factor is the existence of certain organisations, networks and movements which play a central role in the process of radicalisation of individuals. According to MI5

*... there are a range of potential factors in radicalisation and no single factor predominates. It is likely the catalyst for any given individual becoming a terrorist will be a combination of different factors particular to that person. Potentially radicalising factors include the development of a sense of grievance and injustice.*¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Karin Von Hippel (2006) 'Countering radicalisation through development assistance-A country assessment tool' (Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark).

¹⁰⁵ Mark Sedgwick (2010) 'The Concept of Radicalisation as a Source of Confusion' 22(4) *Terrorism and Political Violence* 479

¹⁰⁶ Keiran Hardy (2018) 'Comparing Theories of Radicalisation with Countering Violent Extremism Policy' 15(1) *Journal for Deradicalisation* p.76.

¹⁰⁷ MI5 (2009) 'Tackling Radicalisation' Available at:

<<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/tackling-radicalisation.html>> [Accessed 10 December 2018]

Veldhuis, of the Department of Sociology at the University of Groningen, and Staun, a researcher on terrorism and radicalisation at the Danish Institute for International Studies, conducted an interesting survey on the root causes of radicalisation.¹⁰⁸ They formulated a root cause model of radicalisation, which distinguishes causal factors at the macro- and micro-level, and argues that macro-level factors are preconditions for radicalisation. However, in order to explain why some people radicalise while others do not, an in-depth analysis of the micro-level variables is also essential.¹⁰⁹ They also categorise between causes, which set the foundation for radicalisation, and catalysts, which accelerate the radicalisation process.¹¹⁰ Poor integration, international relations, poverty, globalisation and modernisation constitute the casual factors at the macro-level. Self-categorisation and social identity, social interactions and group processes, as well as personality characteristics and personal experiences, constitute the casual factors at the micro-level.¹¹¹ Key locations where radicalisation among Muslims may occur include mosques, universities, libraries, the internet and prisons. According to a detailed report published in 2010 by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), prisons have become breeding grounds for radicalisation. This should come as no surprise. Prisons are ‘places of vulnerability’, which produce ‘identity seekers’, ‘protection seekers’ and ‘rebels’ in greater numbers than other environments. They provide near-perfect conditions in which radical, religiously framed ideologies can flourish.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Tinka Veldhuis and Jorgen Staun, ‘Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model’ (Netherlands Institute of International Relations, October 2009) Available at: [http://www.diis.dk/graphics/ IO_indsatsomraader/Religion_og_social_konflikt_og_Mellemosten/Islamist%20Radicalisation.Veldhuis%20and%20Staun.pdf](http://www.diis.dk/graphics/IO_indsatsomraader/Religion_og_social_konflikt_og_Mellemosten/Islamist%20Radicalisation.Veldhuis%20and%20Staun.pdf) [Accessed 7 February 2019].

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² ICSR (2010) ‘Prisons and Terrorism: *Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 countries* Available at <https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Prisons-and-terrorism-15->

Islamist movements, radical preachers and indoctrinators whose activities were banned in Arab countries have been the main agents of the radicalisation process in Europe.¹¹³ However, we ought not to underestimate that the identity crisis of second and third generation young Muslims, the indifference and sometimes hostility of majority communities, a sluggish process of integration of Muslim immigrants into the mainstream, and stereotypical images of a medieval Islam in the European media, are also important contributing factors.¹¹⁴ As shown in chapters 5 and 7, the issue of radicalisation possesses an undisputable significance with regards to the threat of jihadist violence. The author allocated special emphasis to the analysis of this phenomenon during and after the interviews.

2.5 Violent Extremism

Violent extremism is rarely defined: neither the United Nations nor the European Union has an official definition. USAID¹¹⁵ defines it as 'advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives'. However, this apparently simple and obvious statement conceals a great deal of controversy and uncertainty. Is violent extremism something carried out by non-state actors? In conflict situations, how can we differentiate violent extremists from other, more legitimate conflict actors? Does violent extremism always have to be ideological – or can it also, for

[countries.pdf](#) [Accessed 12 September 2018]

¹¹³ Alok R. Mukhopadhyay, (2007) 'Radical Islamic Organisations in Europe: South Asia in Their Discourse', 31(2) *Strategic Analysis* p.267

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ R ALONSO, T BJORGO, D DELLA PORTA, Rik Coolsaet, F KHOSROKHAVAR (2008) *Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism. A concise Report prepared by the European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation*, p. 89. "USAID is the world's premier international development agency and a catalytic actor driving development results"

example, be criminal, or even purposeless?¹¹⁶ Is ‘violent extremism’ merely a synonym for ‘terrorism’? More fundamentally, are terms like ‘extremism’ relative – in which case does ‘violent extremism’ mean different things to different people? These are not merely academic questions: what we call a phenomenon helps determine how we see it and what we do in response to it.¹¹⁷

Although USAID’s definition is wide, ‘violent extremism’ is often applied much more narrowly – i.e. to Islamist violence alone, ignoring the many other forms of ideologically motivated violence that affect countries.¹¹⁸ There is a substantial amount of literature on terrorism, but even some of the most prolific authorities on the topic bemoan the generally poor state of data and methodology in the field. Much remains speculative, unknown or uncertain. Disparate phenomena tend to be aggregated; key terms are poorly defined. Most work in the field has focused on why and how people become drawn into terrorism – the problem now usually referred to as ‘radicalisation’ – and how violent extremist groups and networks are organised. Most of this work is on terrorism that threatens the West. Less work has been done on violent extremists in the countries where they do most damage – most violent extremism affects countries in Asia and Africa.¹¹⁹ Researchers are only now beginning to examine the various responses to violent extremism, which can be classified under three headings: counter-terrorism (CT, for example using military or policing resources to deter or disrupt terrorists), countering violent extremism (CVE – preventative approaches using mostly non-coercive means), and risk reduction (seeking to ensure that violent extremists do not cause harm, for example through

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ P. Nesser (2006) ‘How does radicalisation occur in Europe?’ (Norwegian Research Establishment)

¹¹⁸ B. Hoffman (2006) ‘Radicalisation and Subversion: Al Qaeda and the 7 July 2005 Bombings and the Airline Bombing Plot’ (2009) 32(1) *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*

¹¹⁹ P. Cornish (2008) ‘Terrorism, radicalisation and the Internet’ (London: Chatham House) p. 89.

efforts to change behaviour).¹²⁰

Over recent years and with the increasing amount of research on the topics of terrorism, extremism and radicalisation, there have been a number of emerging recommendations for addressing violent extremism. Of these, some have been actively and readily put into practice, such as adopting a more globalised and international response to terrorism. There have also been measures put into place in recognition of the need for a collaborative private and public sector response to threats of violent extremism, such as the shutting down of sources of financial and other types of support which might be directed toward extremist organisations.¹²¹ There are already positive examples of the private sector shutting down sources of financial and material support for violent extremist activities, as well as supporting community structures that help to prevent the proliferation of extremist world views.¹²² But the most important role of the private sector is to invest in infrastructure and provide jobs. Similarly, civil society must play a critical role in changing discourse among communities where extremism germinates, by engaging and educating the public, especially young people. It is also up to civil leaders to develop legitimate governance structures and institutions to oversee public-sector counterparts.¹²³

There is evidence that addressing the root causes of extremism holistically by understanding and adapting to differing contexts, would be a positive approach for policy-makers. It is now recognised that there is no single path to radicalisation, which means that violent extremism must be approached by making a concerted

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Oldrich Bures, (2013) 'Public-private partnerships in the fight against terrorism?' 60(4) *Crime, Law and Social Change* 429.

¹²² P. Cornish (2008).

¹²³ J. Horgan (2008) 'From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalisation into Terrorism' 618(1) *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 80

effort to understand the root causes of extremism and the relative weight of different cultural, social, economic, psychological and political indicators on a town-to-town, region-to-region and state-to-state basis.¹²⁴ Yet, on the other hand, while the motives for violent extremism vary among communities and their individuals, it is clear that greater emphasis should be placed on bolstering education, increasing employment opportunities, promoting positive role models through the media, and building more effective avenues for civic participation among youth.¹²⁵

From a military and strategy standpoint, though military and intelligence services offer critical tools to contain violence in general, these tools can, ironically, be counterproductive. The core problem is that militaries and intelligence services are geared to react to insurgencies, and to do so with broad campaigns, rather than conduct deep analysis of the root causes particular to an environment and devise rigorous, nuanced campaigns that fit each particular circumstance.¹²⁶ Without careful follow-up and thorough analysis, the strategies that militaries and intelligence services put in place often come in the form of one-size-fits-all campaigns that only perpetuate the cultural disconnects that fuel extremism. There is a strong need for a truly interdisciplinary approach and strategic follow-up, combining “soft” and “hard” measures, which in and of themselves suggest a re-thinking of modern military concepts, especially around counterterrorism or counter-insurgency strategie

¹²⁴ David R. Mandel ‘Radicalisation (2009) What does it mean?’ in Thomas M. Pick, Anne Speckhard and Beatrice Jacuch (eds.) *Home-Grown Terrorism* (Amsterdam: IOS Press) p. 101.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Barry Buzan (1983) ‘People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations’ (Brighton: Wheatsheaf) p. 57.

2.6 Theoretical Approaches in Security Studies

In this section, the most important theoretical approaches and schools of thought in the field of security studies are explored for their value in contributing to the research topic. Assessing the development of the security studies field, there is little doubt that the realist tradition has exerted an enormous influence. There are several different realist approaches to security studies, and although there are significant differences among variants, they largely share the view that state behaviour is driven by leaders' flawed human nature, selfish human appetites for power, or the need to accumulate wealth to be secure in a self-help world.¹²⁷ According to classical realism, as a result of the flawed nature of humanity that leads to the desire for more power, states are continuously engaged in a struggle to increase their capabilities. The classic work of Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, became the undisputed standard-bearer for this school of political realism. State strategies are understood as having been decided rationally, after taking costs and benefits of different courses of action into account.

Neorealism emerged as a variant of realism in the late 1970s. Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* replaced Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* as the standard-bearer for realists.¹²⁸ Waltz argues that systems are composed of a structure and their interacting units, and the author focuses on explaining why similarly structured international systems seem to be characterised by similar outcomes, even though their units (nation states) have different domestic political arrangements and

¹²⁷ Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams, (2014) 'Critical Security Studies: An Introduction' (London: Routledge). p.100.

¹²⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz (1979) 'Theory of International Politics' (Long Grove, IL.: Waveland Press)

particular histories.¹²⁹ Finally, in addition to neorealism, there are at least four contemporary strands of political realism: rise and fall realism, neoclassical realism, defensive structural realism and offensive structural realism. All four take the view that international relations are characterised by an endless succession of wars and conflict.

In liberal IR theory, the state is not an actor but an institution. This theory has distinct variants which supply different motivations for action, and which have different implications for security theory. We can distinguish four main strands of liberalism: traditional or Kantian liberalism, commercial liberalism, the democratic peace theory of liberalism, and neoliberal institutionalism. In traditional or Kantian liberalism, republican governments (a condition of constitutional rule where even the monarchs ruled according to the law) were ‘peace producers’; in other words, they were more inclined to peaceful behaviour than other sorts of states.¹³⁰ The Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) wrote in his work *Perpetual Peace* that a state built on law was less likely to endorse lawless behaviour in international relations. A critical part of Kant’s argument was his critique of the concept of the ‘balance of power’. He argued that the duty of the republican state is to strive towards law-regulated international relations.¹³¹ The origins of commercial liberalism lay in the developing liberal critique of mercantilism. The economic ‘philosophes’ (called physiocrats) such as Francois Quesnay and Victor de Mirabeau identified a structural proclivity in mercantilism towards trade wars and territorial conquests. However, the explicit association between non-mercantilism, free trade and peace first appeared in Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, where he argued

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Oliver P. Richmond (2006), ‘The problem of peace: understanding the ‘liberal peace’’ 6(3) *Conflict, Security and Development* 291

¹³¹ Immanuel Kant (1795), ‘Perpetual Peace’; *a philosophical essay*, (London: S. Sonnenschein, 1903)

that ‘the hidden hand’, besides increasing wealth, also promoted a lessening of economic hostilities.¹³²

The ‘democratic peace’ thesis builds on Kant's insights to argue that liberal states do not fight wars amongst themselves. This theory was first described in a keynote article by Michael Doyle in the journal *Philosophy and Public Affairs*. The theory that liberal democracies do not fight wars against other liberal democracies has been hugely influential in public policy. On the other hand, neoliberal institutionalism concentrates on the role of international institutions in mitigating conflict. Robert Keohane and Robert Axelrod, who had a central role in defining this theory, pointed to the ability of institutions such as the UN to redefine state roles and act as arbitrators in state disputes. In this approach, unlike other liberal approaches, states are central. Interests are first defined outside the institutional context, and institutions are designed by state actors to facilitate the achievement of their joint interests.¹³³ Basic to the approach of the neoliberal institutionalists is the idea of common interests that states can achieve together. The notion that security might lie outside the scope of neoliberal cooperation has led neoliberal institutionalists to focus on cooperation in low politics, such as the economy, society and environment, and to pay much less attention to military security cooperation.

Constructivism emerged as an IR theory in the 1980s. The term was first mentioned by Nicholas Onuf, whose work was critical for IR theory.¹³⁴ According to Matt McDonald, constructivism interprets international relations as a result of social

¹³² A. Smith and E. Cannan (2003), ‘The Wealth of Nations’ (New York, NY.: Bantam Classic) p. 234

¹³³ Robert Axelrod and Robert O. Keohane (1986), ‘Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions’ in Kenneth A. Oye’ (ed.) *Cooperation Under Anarchy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,) p. 227.

¹³⁴ Nicholas G. Onuf, ‘World of Our Making’ (1989) (Columbia: University of South California Press) p.321.

inter-subjective interaction.¹³⁵ Constructivists aim to identify the norms that govern the world, and through it to understand and explain international relations. The central shared assumption of constructivists is that security is a social construction. Although all constructivists share a belief in the centrality of identity to the construction of security, different strands of constructivism see the relationship between identity and security quite differently. Constructivists share the approach that non-material or ideational factors are central to security practices and dynamics in world politics.

The Copenhagen School is an exception within the broader constructivist tradition. Its conceptual framework of securitisation suggests that security issues are constructed through ‘speech acts’ that designate particular issues or actors as existential threats.¹³⁶ The Copenhagen School was a label given to the collective research agenda of various academics at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, centred on the work of Barry Buzan and Ole Waever. It developed within the context of post-Cold War concerns, to broaden the frame of security in order to incorporate a range of relatively new issues, such as environmental change, poverty and human rights, onto state security agendas.

To expand further on securitisation theory, Waever has suggested that the central concepts of the Copenhagen School are ‘sectors’, ‘regional security complexes’ and ‘securitisation’.¹³⁷ Sectors are defined as arenas entailing particular types of security interaction, including military, political, economic, societal and environmental fields. For the Copenhagen School these sectors encourage different forms of relationships between relevant actors to develop and generally encourage

¹³⁵ Matt McDonald (2008) ‘Constructivism’ in Paul D. Williams (ed.) *Security Studies: An Introduction* (Oxon: Routledge) p.59.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ole Waever (1999) ‘Securitizing Sectors? Reply to Eriksson’ 34 (3) *Cooperation and Conflict* p.334

different definitions of the referent object (who or what is to be secured). The central contribution of the Copenhagen School, however, is the concept of ‘securitisation’, which it defines as a process in which an actor declares a particular issue, dynamic or actor to be an ‘existential threat’ to a particular referent object.¹³⁸ If accepted as such by a relevant audience, this leads to the suspension of normal politics and the use of emergency measures as a response to the perceived critical situation. Although defining the concept of ‘securitisation’, the Copenhagen School expressed preference for the concept of ‘desecuritisation’, meaning the removal of issues from the security agenda, because according to this ‘school of thought once an issue is ‘securitised’, the dynamics of ‘normal politics are suspended, with few actors able to contribute to political debate about how that issue should be addressed.

The origins of critical security studies as a distinct school of thought go back to the early 1990s. This theoretical approach is also known as the ‘Aberystwyth School’. It was Robert W. Cox who familiarised students of IR with the ideas of the Italian political theorist and activist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), through his distinction between ‘critical theory’ and ‘problem-solving theory’. Whereas critical theory ‘stands apart from the prevailing order and asks how that order came about’, problem-solving theory is content with fixing malfunctions in the dominating system so as to make ‘existing relationships and institutions work smoothly’.¹³⁹

Another source of inspiration for critical scholars is the Frankfurt School Theorist Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), who drew an important distinction between ‘critical theory’ and ‘traditional theory’. According to Horkheimer, traditional theory is defined by its reification of ideas into institutions, which are then represented as

¹³⁸ Clara Eroukhmanoff, ‘Securitisation Theory: An Introduction’ (E-IR, 14 January 2018) Available at: <<https://www.e-ir.info/2018/01/14/securitisation-theory-an-introduction/>> [Accessed 6 March 2019]

¹³⁹ John S. Moolakkattu (2009) ‘Robert W. Cox and Critical Theory of International Relations’ 46(4) *International Studies* p.439

fixed ‘facts of life’ (all this while denying the role played by theory and the theorist).¹⁴⁰ In contrast, critical theory rejects such inflexible distinctions between subject and object, observer and observed, and determines the role played by theories and theorists throughout the process of reification. In security studies, ‘traditional’ and ‘critical’ approaches differ in their analysis of the state. Traditional security studies view the world from a state-centric perspective. In contrast, critical security scholars have argued that states are a means and not the ends of security policy.

The first analytical move made by the Aberystwyth School is to enhance our understanding of security by revealing the politics behind scholarly concepts and policy agendas. The second move is to broaden our understanding of security in order ‘to consider a range of insecurities faced by an array of referent objects’. In this sense critical security studies do not ‘securitise’ issues but ‘politicise security’. Whereas the Copenhagen School makes a case for ‘desecuritisation’, the Aberystwyth School re-theorises security as a ‘derivative’ concept and calls for ‘politicising security’.

The Aberystwyth School prefers ‘politicising security’ as opposed to ‘desecuritisation’ for three main reasons. The first reason is strategic. Desecuritisation would amount to leaving security as a tool in the hands of state elites who have not been sensitive towards the security concerns of referents other than the state and/or the regime. The second argument is ethical-political. When defined by state elites, ‘security’ could include everything depending on their policy agenda. Finally, the third argument is analytical. The question of whether it is ‘desecuritisation’ or ‘politicising security’ that should address security concerns is one that ‘must be answered empirically, historically, and discursively’.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Max Horkheimer (1937) ‘Traditional and Critical Theory’ in M. Horkheimer (ed.) *Critical Theory: Selected Essays* (New York: Continuum, 1937) p.188

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

2.7 Security Studies and Security Theory within the context of the present thesis

If we think about security studies as a field of inquiry, then nine fundamental questions arise: i) What is security?; ii) Whose security are we talking about?; iii) What is a security issue?; iv) Security for which values?; v) How much security?; vi) From what threats?; vii) By what means?; viii) At what cost?; and ix) In what time period? When in this thesis reference is made to security studies and security theory in general and in respect of the Greek state, answers to these nine questions need to be offered. This section attempts to do precisely this. In this thesis, in Chapter 4, we will explore why Jihadism is a threat to Western values, whilst in Chapter 8 we will analyse the reasons why Greece has remained unscathed by this kind of threat.

This thesis is concerned with the security of the Greek state and society, which are the referent objects. The UK's state and society are also referent objects (Chapters 5 and 6), and they are used, as well as the UK policy responses to the threat, as a paradigm for the case of Greece. The security issue in the case of Greece within the context of this thesis, is the potential security risk derived from Jihadism.

Security for which values? The values in Greece that are under threat from Jihadism are the core Western values (respect for life and property, respect for basic human rights and freedoms etc). How much security is needed, at what cost and in what time period, are questions that will be approached, examined and answered in detail in Chapter 8. Protection from what threat? The potential threat assessed is that to Greece's national security, emanating from Jihadism.

The theoretical approach of this thesis adopts a variant of Buzan's theory, since it will focus on the potential Jihadist threat posed to Greece's national, political and societal security. Buzan's approach, as the co-founder of the Copenhagen School,

was developed in the post-Cold War context, and included military, political, economic, societal and environmental considerations. These sectors encourage different forms of relationships between relevant actors to develop, and generally encourage different definitions of referent objects (who or what is to be secured).¹⁴² Moreover, the theoretical approach in this thesis also shares some elements from the school of political realism as defined in the previous section, since it explores the Jihadist threat in terms of state security.

2.8 Conclusions

It is apparent that radicalisation, terrorism and violent extremism have become an increasingly important national security issue in recent years. As a result, much research has taken place and many books have been written on the topic in order to help people gain a better understanding of these phenomena. Regarding terrorism, numerous different definitions have been attempted, each one focused on a different side of the spectrum of this complex national security threat. Specifically, the UK government suggests that terrorism is the threat or actual use of violence against civilians or civilian targets, in order to attain political aims. Additionally, the current version of radicalisation refers to a situation in which a person starts to develop extremist ideas that may lead to acts of terrorism and this is an individual process. Even though we have yet to discover the exact reasons why radicalisation occurs, it has been proven that key places, charismatic leaders, experiences, grievances and radical organisations can be key factors.

¹⁴² Matt McDonald (2008) 'Constructivisms' in Paul D. Williams (ed.), *Security Studies: An Introduction*, (Abingdon: Routledge) p. 72.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology & Design

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Debate: Qualitative vs Quantitative Research Methodology

The two most important stages of a research project are the formulation of the research questions and the selection of the research methodology. Research Questions set the scope and goals of the study, while research methodology provides a scientifically based way of pursuing and achieving these goals.¹⁴³

In this study, the chosen scientific method is qualitative research. The aim of qualitative research may vary with the disciplinary background, such as a psychologist seeking to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. Qualitative methods examine the why and how of decision making, not just the what, where, when, or who; and have a strong basis in the field of sociology, especially in relation to furthering understanding of government and social programs.¹⁴⁴ This is due to their capability to reveal the specific issues and concerns of population groups, which is a limitation of quantitative methods which would tend to measure a phenomenon rather than explain it.

Research done in a scientific way can be placed in two categories: positivistic and naturalistic.¹⁴⁵ Choosing one of these two approaches is integral for any research study, as this helps to ground the study in the element of reality on which it is

¹⁴³ M. Crotty (1998) 'The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process' (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage) p.p. 87-88.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p.p.94-96

¹⁴⁵ Y. S. Lincoln and E. G. Guba (1985) 'Naturalistic Inquiry', (Newbury Park, CA: Sage) p.p. 65-67.

based.¹⁴⁶ The two competing viewpoints offer very different viewpoints into the way that the world is perceived, and construct reality in different ways. A positivist stance assumes that there is a single reality, and that this can be accurately measured and explained in a scientific manner.¹⁴⁷ The naturalistic viewpoint, however, is quite the opposite, and relies on the belief that reality is not fixed, but instead is continuously evolving, making it almost impossible to measure using scientific, or other, means.¹⁴⁸

The choice of the Positivist or Naturalistic approach has long been associated with the choice of Quantitative or Qualitative methodology. Traditionally, research used only one of these research designs, using either quantitative or qualitative research design, and considering these almost entirely separate from one another. It has only been in recent years, as a result of experimentations with research design and an increase in scholarship in this area, that there has been a realisation that the two could actually work to complement one another. The quantitative approach came first, and remained the only research paradigm in use throughout the 19th century, until those who refuted this paradigm's assumptions went on to develop the qualitative paradigm. The qualitative paradigm then helped researchers to explore problems from a different perspective, and draws upon evidence and analysis in a different way.¹⁴⁹

Qualitative data tends to be collected in the form of transcriptions of spoken or written language, with potential sources of this data being interviews with research participants, observations of a research subject, or existing documents and/or

¹⁴⁶ A. Bryman and E. Bell (2007) 'Business Research Methods', (New York: Oxford University Press,) p.p.120-121.

¹⁴⁷ M. Balnaves and P. Caputi (2001) 'Introduction to quantitative research methods: An investigative approach'. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage) p.p. 98-102.

¹⁴⁸ M. Freeman and others (2007) 'Standards of evidence in qualitative research: An incitement to discourse' 36 (1) *Educational Researcher* 25

¹⁴⁹ EUMC 'Muslims in the European Union Discrimination and Islamophobia', (EUMC, December 2006) Available at: < <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/muslims-european-union-discrimination-and-islamophobia> > [Accessed 15 March 2019]

artefacts.¹⁵⁰ This data can then be analysed in a number of ways, allowing the researcher to draw meaning from the text in front of them, often relying on interpretative methods to infer meaning. This relies on the abilities of the researcher, also, to construct an interview which allows for the portrayal of the issue at hand, and can often rely on self-reporting mechanisms.¹⁵¹

For the present research, Qualitative methodology was selected as an approach. In retrieving qualitative data, elite interviews were constructed, which can play multiple roles for research that traces the development of the phenomenon of terrorism or immigration policy. Elite interviews are discussions with people who are chosen because of whom they are or the position they occupy. In this way, ‘elite’ does not, in the typical sense of the word, convey the meaning that a person is of an elevated social or political standing; it instead infers that the choice of participants is based on their unique and expert ability to testify on the subject in question. In this instance, participants are deemed ‘elite’ as a result of their closeness to the topic at hand, their position in society which gives them insight, and/or their experience of the problem the research seeks to explore.¹⁵²

Elite interviews were chosen, therefore, because terrorism is such a sensitive subject that it was considered of very high importance for the people involved in the research. Although in existing research, the role of prejudice or bias is well-established in relation to the Muslim community, this research argues that this recognition has been absent in prior work on this topic, and that its inclusion is vital in order to understand the social context in which extremism or radicalisation can flourish. In contemporary Western societies, for example, most citizens receive strong

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.p.52-54

¹⁵¹ Ibid,p.p.56-58

¹⁵² J. L. Hochschild, (2009)‘Conducting Intensive Interviews and Elite Interviews’ (Harvard Education,) Available at: <<https://scholar.harvard.edu/jlhochschild/publications/conducting-intensive-interviews-and-elite-interviews>> [Accessed 15 March 2019]

signals that prejudice is not normatively acceptable. We demonstrate that many majority-group individuals have internalised a motivation to control prejudiced thoughts and actions, and that this motivation influences their political behavior in predictable ways.

Quantitative research methodology is aligned with the positivist paradigm, while qualitative research is largely in line with the naturalistic approach.¹⁵³ Quantitative analysis involves using scientific or mathematical data to understand a problem. This contrasts with a qualitative approach, which uses a social methodology, such as interviewing people. The quantitative approach focuses on the results from a large number of people, instead of focusing on individuals.¹⁵⁴

Quantitative research is also often described with the term ‘empiricism’; and, following the positivist perspective, is associated with the scientific method used in the natural sciences.¹⁵⁵ It is essentially an objective, formal and systematic process in which numerical data are used to quantify and measure phenomena and produce results.¹⁵⁶ The quantitative research methodology is used to describe, examine and test the relationship between cause and effect,¹⁵⁷ using a production process of achieving knowledge.¹⁵⁸

The quantitative research approach is often used as a result of its aims to confirm or test existing theory, with the deductive method coming into play often to maintain a distance from the research problem.¹⁵⁹ This is important in order to ensure

¹⁵³ Lincoln and Guba, ‘Naturalistic Inquiry’ p.p.68-75.

¹⁵⁴ J. L. Hochschild. p.p. 56-57

¹⁵⁵ E. J. Pedhazur and L. P. Schmelkin, (1991) ‘Measurement, design, and analysis: An integrated approach’, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum) p.p. 87- 89.

¹⁵⁶ A. Bryman and E. Bell p.p. 45-57.

¹⁵⁷ J. W. Creswell (1994) ‘Research design: qualitative and quantitative approaches’ (Thousand Oaks: Sage) p.p. 110-115.

¹⁵⁸ M. E. Duffy (1997) ‘Methodological triangulation: A vehicle for merging quantitative and qualitative methods’ 19 (3) *Image* 130

¹⁵⁹ B. Diccico-Bloom and B. F. Crabtree, ‘The qualitative research interview’ (2006) 40(4) *Medical Education* 314

that researcher bias is kept to a minimum, as existing research has demonstrated that this can have an influence on shaping outcomes where a researcher's own perceptions and beliefs are allowed to interfere.¹⁶⁰ In this way, it is hoped that the use of quantitative methods will help to prevent any of these subjective thoughts or feelings from being reflected in the outcomes of the research.¹⁶¹

There are many ways in which the qualitative and quantitative paradigms differ from one another. The qualitative approach is mainly used to explore elements present in the empirical world, usually from the perspective of the subject, rather than the researcher.¹⁶² Benohel argues that the systematic nature of many qualitative studies allows them to convey a better understanding of things relating to human nature and the social environment.¹⁶³ The goal of qualitative research is to describe some aspects of a phenomenon, in order to explain the issue under study.¹⁶⁴ This is the reason that the qualitative methodology is often described as phenomenology,¹⁶⁵ or as the humanistic and idealistic approach, with its roots lying in the disciplines of history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology and psychology.¹⁶⁶

The qualitative approach, then, can be termed a 'humanistic' approach, which fills in the gaps present in the study of natural sciences, and begins to build upon what is known about the natural world and human phenomena.¹⁶⁷ Although differing from the outset, one of the main ways in which quantitative and qualitative studies can be differentiated lies within their choice of data analysis and data collection methodologies. In the past, this difference has been described as follows: 'the

¹⁶⁰ J. W. Creswell (1994) 'Research design' p.p.115-117.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Duffy, 'Methodological Triangulation' p.p. 130-133.

¹⁶³ J. Q. Benohel (1985) 'Advancing nursing science qualitative approaches' (3) *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 1

¹⁶⁴ J. W. Creswell, 'Qualitative Inquiry' p.p.122-125.

¹⁶⁵ Duffy, 'Methodological Triangulation' p.p. 130-133.

¹⁶⁶ R. S. Hathaway (1995) 'Assumptions underlying quantitative and qualitative research: implications for institutional research' 36(5) *Research in Higher Education* 535

¹⁶⁷ Duffy, 'Methodological Triangulation' p.p.130-133.

qualitative approach is based on qualitative data, analysed by conceptual criteria, while the quantitative approach is based on arithmetical data which measure the amount and frequency of a phenomenon'.¹⁶⁸ Differences also extend to the ways that data is collected in the first instance, with qualitative studies tending to focus on gaining data from individuals through the use of interviews or observations (or a combination of these). On the other hand, quantitative research largely relies upon experiments or databases, which present fixed values and assigned categories, rendering results much more accurate from a scientific point of view.¹⁶⁹

From the above, one can conclude that the qualitative approach is best used for studies seeking in-depth examination of a phenomenon, discovering new variables and exploring the relationships between them,¹⁷⁰ while the quantitative approach is more suitable for studies seeking to empirically verify specific relations between variables.¹⁷¹ Qualitative studies focus on answering research questions, while quantitative ones aim at the validation of specific research hypotheses.¹⁷² It is important to note that it is perfectly viable to combine the two approaches in what is known as a mixed method research design, but to do so the subject of the study must demand it.

¹⁶⁸ J. Mouton and H. C. Marais, (1990) 'Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences', (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council).

¹⁶⁹ W. M. K. Trochim, (2006) 'Research methods knowledge base' (Mason, Ohio: Atomic Dog, 2nd ed.)

¹⁷⁰ M. Q. Patton, 'Qualitative research and evaluation methods' (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002, 3rd ed.) p.47

¹⁷¹ C. Robson (2002) 'Real World Research': *a resource for users of social methods in applied settings* (Chichester: Wiley, 2nd ed.) p.p. 87-92.

¹⁷² Ibid.

3.1.2 Qualitative Methodology

The present study concerns a very wide and strictly human-related phenomenon, with the goal of exploring and discovering the answers in a broad set of research questions in order to inductively develop and propose a new theory. It is therefore by definition a purely naturalistic¹⁷³ study for which the qualitative research approach is most appropriate. Following the choice of the naturalistic qualitative research approach, the researcher proceeded to decide on the secondary methodological characteristics of the study, namely: data collection, sample selection and data analysis, described in the next section.

In this particular study, we examine thoroughly the ongoing rise in Islamophobia and concern over processes of alienation and radicalisation that have triggered an intense debate in the European Union regarding the need for a re-examination of community cohesion and integration policies. European Muslims are a highly diverse mix of ethnicities, religious affiliations, philosophical beliefs, political persuasions, secular tendencies, languages and cultural traditions, constituting the second largest religious group of Europe's multi-faith society.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, Muslim communities are no different from other communities in their complexity. Discrimination against Muslims can be attributed to Islamophobic attitudes, as much as to racist and xenophobic resentments, as these elements are in many cases inextricably intertwined.¹⁷⁵ Choosing qualitative methodology, we look into the "*Perceptions of discrimination and Islamophobia*", based on in-depth elite interviews with members of Muslim communities.

¹⁷³ B Devi Prasad, (2008) 'Content Analysis: 'A method in social science research' in D. K Las Das and V. Bhaskaran (eds.) *Research Methods for Social Work* (Delhi: Rawat,) p.173

¹⁷⁴ EUMC 'Muslims in the European Union Discrimination and Islamophobia' p.p. 56-61, (EUMC, December 2006) Available at:< <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/muslims-european-union-discrimination-and-islamophobia>> [Accessed 15 March 2019]

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

In the United Kingdom, according to the Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) 'Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2003-2004', in 22 of 44 incidents reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim. This demonstrates the prevalence of anti-Muslim discrimination in the UK. The CPS's result the following year also found that in 23 of 34 cases reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim. Importantly, scholars have successfully demonstrated that the events of the London bombings in July of 2005 caused a 'spike' in so-called religious hate crimes in the immediate aftermath.¹⁷⁶ Although this spike occurred immediately following the incident, the number of reports of this type of hate crime incident returned to the normal rate in the weeks following the bombings. The Home Office British Crime Survey found Pakistanis and Bangladeshis consistently to be more at risk of being a victim of racially motivated crime than the other ethnic groups surveyed. FAIR, the UK's leading NGO on Islamophobia, recorded in the period 2004-2005 over 50 cases of violence against Muslim property in the European Union, discrimination and Islamophobia in 18 places of worship, and over 100 cases of verbal threats and abusive behaviour aimed at members of the Muslim community.

The lack of accurate information or reliable data as to the extent of hate crime suffered by the Muslim community, does not help ongoing campaigns to prevent it. The UK police force and associated investigative agencies are, in effect, working blind when attempting to tackle hate crime of this type. Policies aiming to better integrate Muslim communities into wider UK society are also based on potentially incorrect information, and as a result, it is likely that the Muslim population of the UK feel largely ignored, left out of discussions on their own safety, wellbeing and

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p.p. 63-66

future.¹⁷⁷ In light of research findings which have suggested that many Muslim communities are in deprived urban areas, there should be a better attempt to collect data on so-called ‘Islamophobic’ attacks in these areas, so as to find out exactly how these communities suffer collectively from such crime. Developing new policies with the cooperation of Muslim communities would be beneficial for a number of reasons, helping to better target specific problem areas and take steps to protect vulnerable sections of the community.¹⁷⁸

3.2 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability, which are rooted in the positivist perspective, have a different meaning in the naturalistic approach. Reliability and validity in quantitative research tend to be associated with the fact that results can be effectively tested, or research can be replicated in order to achieve these same results in the future. Validity is closely connected to positivism and requires that the selected research instruments measure the research object accurately and the results are reliable. In quantitative research these two concepts are usually tested for separately, unlike in qualitative research, where validity and reliability tend to take on a new meaning relating to the elimination of bias and the accurate interpretation of data.¹⁷⁹ However, in qualitative research these terms are replaced by credibility and transferability and trustworthiness. Credibility also has different nuances in quantitative and qualitative studies, since in the former it is instrument-dependent, while in the latter it depends on the researcher’s ability.¹⁸⁰

Triangulation is a method which is often used to test for reliability and

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p.p.75-79

¹⁷⁹ N. Golafshani (2003) ‘Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research’ (4) *Test* 597

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

validity in a range of different research methods. Using different sources, a researcher can collect diverse data, which result in exceptions and deviations in quantitative research, leading to a problematic hypothesis. However, in qualitative research these exceptions are useful for modifying and enriching theories to document qualitative research of high quality.¹⁸¹ In terms of triangulation, the researcher selected the theoretical and empirical investigation for the present research. Eliciting subjective perceptions is questionable in terms of validity.¹⁸²

According to grounded theory, similarities and differences between incidents prevent the influence of the researchers' biases and contribute to greater precision and consistency.¹⁸³ The way that people are represented in the research is thus not as important as the way that different concepts are represented, and consistency can be gauged in such a way in interviews, where the consistent repetition of a concept can be key to defining it as a category and resultantly pointing to its importance in relation to the phenomenon being studied.¹⁸⁴ T. Long and M. Johnson suggest three types of testing reliability in qualitative studies. Stability is ensured when the respondent's answers are consistent after being asked identical questions at different times. Consistency is tested when the respondents' answers regarding an issue remain congruous. Equivalence is established when a question is formulated differently in one interview.¹⁸⁵

Validity is defined by T.Long & M.Johnson¹⁸⁶ as 'the accurate representation of the phenomenon under study'. A study is therefore valid in accordance with this

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² A. Bozóki, 'Elite Interviews', (2010) 1 (1) p. 122

¹⁸³ J. M. Corbin and A. Strauss (1990) 'Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria' 13(1) *Qualitative Sociology* 3

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p.p. 3-21

¹⁸⁵ T. Long and M. Johnson, (2000) 'Rigour, reliability and validity in qualitative research' 4(1) *Clinical Effectiveness in Nursing* 30

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

hypothesis when its claims can be demonstrated by evidence which is collected for the purposes of analysis. Moreover, the more significant a statement is, the stronger evidence it requires. The degree of centrality and the nature of the claim determine the evidence which should be brought. Three aspects of validity have been considered by the researcher. Content validity depends on the sampling and the instrument, and it reflects the degree of addressing the phenomenon under study. Criterion-related validity is established after the instrument and the findings are compared with a specific standard, in order to define how the measured performance and the actual performance are correlated. Construct validity refers to the degree of the instrument proximity to the construct.¹⁸⁷

In general, the criteria used for the evaluation of the outcome of qualitative research should be in direct relation to the procedures of the selected method. In agreement with other researchers, grounded theorists believe that evaluative standards should be revisited.¹⁸⁸ The two principles of grounded theory refer to the change of phenomena due to their dynamic nature and, therefore, integrating change in the method, and the individual's potential to make choices in respect of the conditions and the options. Not only is the researcher required to investigate the conditions, but the individuals' responses to them and their consequences also call for exploration.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ J. M. Corbin and A. Strauss (1990) 'Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria' 13(1) *Qualitative sociology* 3

3.3 Case Study Methodology

Case study analysis has developed as a compelling approach to explore and comprehend complex issues in certifiable settings.¹⁹⁰ Case study analysis designs have been utilised over various sectors, especially the social sciences, education, business, law, and health, to address an extensive variety of research questions. Subsequently, over the most recent years, through the use of an assortment of methodological approaches, case studies have experienced major advancement. Change and development have originated from parallel impacts employing verifiable ways to deal with research and individual specialists' inclinations and perspectives.

Vital to these varieties are the supporting scientific orientations of those engaged with the development of case studies.¹⁹¹ Analysts, who have added to the improvement of case study research, originate from assorted disciplines and their philosophical underpinnings have helped to expand the variety of approaches used. Thus, different outlines have been proposed for preparing, arranging, and conducting case studies, with guidance on key contemplation for making progress. Accordingly, while case study analysis has developed to be an adaptable research approach, the variety in definition, application, legitimacy, and intentionality create a confusing platform for its use.

Case studies can amalgamate many different aspects of other research methods, giving them the status of a 'meta-technique'.¹⁹² They also help to reveal information which can offer great support for a given hypotheses. Research

¹⁹⁰ David R. Thomas, (2006) 'A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis' 27(2) *American Journal of Evaluation* 237

¹⁹¹ John Gerring, (2007) 'Case Study Research: Principles and Practices' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p.76

¹⁹² Donald A. Schön (1983) 'The Reflective Practitioner: How professionals think in action'. (New York: Basic Books) p.67.

configuration should counterbalance the inborn limits of case studies and react to the necessities of utilising them to educate extrapolations. Strong evidence retrieved in this way can be the basis for placing findings within experimental realities. This means that a carefully laid-out research plan is critical in ensuring that any loose ends can be tied up in preparedness for arguing the proof of any given hypothesis. According to Yin,¹⁹³ case studies can be used to clarify, depict or investigate phenomena in the regular settings in which they happen. These can, for example, be used to demonstrate connections or implications of a particular phenomenon, or to test the application of a known theory to a particular phenomenon, either proving or disproving it as relevant to the research topic.¹⁹⁴ As opposed to test plans, which try to test a particular theory through intentionally controlling the environment, the case study approach is dedicated to gathering data on 'how', 'what' and 'why' questions. The case study approach can offer more insight into what holes exist in its conveyance or why one implementation method may be picked over another. This can help to create or refine hypothesis.¹⁹⁵ Key inquiries to consider while choosing the most proper examination configuration are whether it is conceivable to attempt a formal test examination in which people and associations are allocated to an intervention or control arm, or, alternatively, whether the desire is to attain a more naturalistic comprehension of an issue.

Case studies might be interpreted in different ways depending upon the epistemological angle of the analyst, that is, regardless of whether they take a critical (scrutinising one's own and others' suppositions), interpretive (attempting to comprehend individual and shared social implications) or positivist (orientating

¹⁹³ R. K. Yin (2009) 'Case study research: Design and methods' (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 4th ed.) p.120

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

towards the criteria of normal sciences, for example, concentrating on generalisability contemplations) approach. Doolin¹⁹⁶, noted that in interpretative case studies, it was possible for researchers to critically explore the implications of the subject being studied for social and political conditions, or for the impact of social and political condition on the phenomenon it portrayed.¹⁹⁷

The choice on the most proficient method by which to select a case for study is an essential one that merits some reflection. In an intrinsic case study, the case is chosen on its own merits.¹⁹⁸ The case is chosen not on the grounds that it is illustrative of different cases, but rather in light of its uniqueness. For a conductive case study, the best way of carrying it out relies on using a case which is commonplace.¹⁹⁹ As opposed to the intrinsic case study, choice of case is less important than finding one which can accurately portray the phenomenon the researcher is attempting to demonstrate. Inspecting an "atypical" case may, however, be considerably more useful, possibly empowering the specialist to recognise causal procedures, create speculations and develop hypotheses.

In collective or multiple case studies, various cases are meticulously chosen. This offers the advantage of enabling correlations, or potentially replications, to be made over a few cases. Picking an "average" case may allow the discoveries to be summed up in a hypothesis (i.e. explanatory speculation) or to test a hypothesis by duplicating the discoveries in a second or even a third case (i.e. replication rationale).²⁰⁰ Yin recommends two or three strict replications (i.e. anticipating

¹⁹⁶ Bill Doolin(1998), 'Information technology as disciplinary technology: being critical in interpretative research on information systems'. *Journal of Information Technology*. p.p. 140-152.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ R. K. Yin (2009) 'Case study research: Design and methods' (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 4th ed.) p.p. 122- 128.

comparative outcomes) if the hypothesis is direct and at least five if the hypothesis is plainer. Scholars have suggested that chosen case studies ought to give the research team access to the relevant group of people, the association, the procedures or whatever else constitutes the picked unit of examination for the investigation.²⁰¹ Access is therefore a focal consideration; the researcher needs to come to know the case study sites well and to work helpfully with them. Chosen cases should be intriguing as well as hospitable to the request²⁰² in the event that they are to be instructive and answer the exploration question(s). Case study sites may likewise be pre-chosen for the specialist, with choices being impacted by key partners.²⁰³

It is likewise vital to consider ahead of time the conceivable dangers for the individuals who (or the site(s) which) comprise the case study.²⁰⁴ Of specific significance is the commitment for the researcher to thoroughly consider the moral ramifications of the investigation (e.g. the danger of coincidentally rupturing secrecy or privacy) and to guarantee that potential members are given adequate data to settle on an educated decision about joining the study. According to Mason, the result of giving this data may be that the emotive burden related with cooperation, or the hierarchical interruption related with supporting the fieldwork, is considered so high that the people or locals rule against participation.²⁰⁵

To build up a thorough understanding of the case, the case study approach, more often than not, includes the accumulation of numerous sources of evidence, using a range of quantitative (e.g. polls and reviews) and other, more subjective procedures (e.g. interviews, center gatherings and perceptions). The use of different

²⁰¹ Robert Stake (1995), 'The Art of Case Study Research' (Sage Publications) p.p 30-38.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ B.Doolin,. p.p 140-152.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Mason J. p.p. 78-82.

sources of data has been supported as a method for expanding the legitimacy of an examination.²⁰⁶ A fundamental presumption is that information gathered in various ways should prompt comparative conclusions, and moving toward a similar issue from various edges can help build up a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon in question.²⁰⁷

In collective or multiple case studies, information gathering should be sufficiently adaptable to permit a point by point portrayal of every individual case to be created, before considering the rising similarities and contrasts in cross-case correlations (e.g. to investigate why one program is more successful than another). It is critical that information sources from various cases are, where possible, broadly comparable for this reason despite the fact that they may differ in nature and profundity. Yin states that ‘a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’.²⁰⁸ It is therefore useful as a means of observing a given phenomenon in the context in which it occurs, ensuring as much validity and reliability as possible in observing as ‘naturally’ as possible. This is one benefit of the choice of this empirical inquiry over quantitative methods, which arguably are best used to look at outcomes, rather than processes. When studying the subject of terrorism, this is essential because terrorism is a real life threat, as far from the realm of theory as possible. Content analysis, lastly, was chosen because of its non-invasive nature that can provide valuable cultural insights over time through analysis of texts, as well as an insight into

²⁰⁶ Ibid

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ R. K. Yin (2009) ‘Case study research: Design and methods’ (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 4th ed.) p.p.120-122.

complex models of human thought and language use.²⁰⁹

3.4 Case Study selection

The present study can be broken down into two main parts: the first part is concerned with a look at existing literature on the topic and setting the scene, while the second is dedicated to the empirical investigation of the subject. The theoretical part of this study focuses on studying the UK's experience in relation to the Jihadist threat. Actually, there are a number of reasons for selecting the UK as a useful paradigm instead of another European country. Both the UK and Greece are committed members of Euro-Atlantic institutions. In addition, both countries have approximately the same proportion of Muslims within the population. The UK has 6.3% and Greece has 5.7%.²¹⁰ Moreover, the UK's Counterterrorism strategy (known as CONTEST) and especially its 'Prevent' pillar, might serve as a useful example for Greece in order to better confront the potential radicalisation of Muslim immigrants in the future.

The first goal is to identify critical indicators which can verify the presence of a Jihadist threat in the UK as well as to highlight the policies adopted by the UK in order to counter such a threat, and the second objective is to explore the reasons why Greece, in contrast to the UK, has remained unscathed by the Jihadist threat. The roots of the current wave of Islamic militancy lie in the religious revival that swept the Muslim world in the 60s and 70s. However, most religious violence then was local. The most significant development in terms of the wider world was the development of a vision of a global jihad in the 1990s. This meant violence directed

²⁰⁹ Eben. A. p.p. 804-806.

²¹⁰ PEW Research Center, 'Europe's Growing Muslim Population' (PEW Center, 29 November 2017) Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/> [Accessed 11 July 2018]

against the “far enemy” – the west – rather than the “near enemy” – regimes in the Middle East. Many factors played into this change, including the end of the Cold War, the failure of local Islamic militant movements, and the advent of satellite television. Entirely unsurprisingly, a globalised world produced globalised terrorism.²¹¹

The goals of the theoretical investigation are achieved through the study of literature, scientific journals, government documents and other reliable sources.²¹² More specifically, once the problem was formulated, the researcher undertook extensive literature surveys connected to the problem. For this purpose, the abstracting and indexing of journals and published bibliographies were the first place to start. Academic journals, conference proceedings, government reports and books were tapped. In this process, the author used the most cited sources as they appeared in the relevant bibliography. Other relevant studies were also scrutinised.²¹³

The second part of the study is empirical. The empirical goal²¹⁴ is to collect data that will allow the researcher to explore the reasons why Greece is unscathed by Jihadism. The choice of research methodology for an empirical study can often be a difficult decision, since the success or failure of the entire investigation depends on the choices made during this stage. In the following lines the study’s methodological choices will be explained.

Kenneth D. Bailey states that making sense of and offering a coherent interpretation of the typically disparate sources of data (whether qualitative alone or

²¹¹ Jason Burke, ‘From 7/7 to Isis: how the terrorist threat to the UK has evolved’ (The Guardian, 6 July 2015), Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jul/06/7-7-bombings-isis-terrorist-threat-uk-evolved> [Accessed 12 April 2019]

²¹² R. K. Yin, ‘Case study research: Design and methods’ p.p.120-122.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ CAQDAS Networking Project Cristina Silver, August 2012. ‘Closeness to data and interactivity in Dedoose. p.p. 3-4.

together with quantitative) is a long way from direct.²¹⁵ Bailey further asserts that repeated assessment and arranging of the voluminous and detail-rich information are indispensable to the procedure of examination.²¹⁶ In collective case studies, it is useful to investigate information identifying with the individual part cases to start with, before making comparisons across cases. Miles *et al* state that inside each case there is a connection between various causes, effects and results.²¹⁷ Information should be categorised and coded to permit the key issues to be effectively recovered at a later stage. An underlying coding frame can help capture these issues and can be connected deliberately to the entire dataset with the guide of a qualitative data analysis software package.²¹⁸

The Framework approach is a reasonable approach to overseeing and breaking down large datasets, especially if time is restricted. The approach contains five phases: familiarisation; identifying a thematic framework; indexing; charting; mapping and interpretation. Theoretical frameworks may likewise assume a critical role in incorporating distinctive sources of information and inspecting developing subjects.

In security studies, “traditional” and “critical” approaches display differences in their treatment of the state.²¹⁹ Whereas traditional security studies views the world from a state-centric perspective, critical security studies theorists hold that states are a means and not the ends of security policy, and therefore they should be de-centred in scholarly studies as well as policy practice.²²⁰

²¹⁵ Kenneth D. Bailey (1994), ‘Methods of Social Research’, (The Free Press, New York) p.p. 107-120.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.p. 110-118

²¹⁷ Miles, Matthew B. & Huberman, A. Michael. ‘Qualitative Data Analysis’. Thousand Oaks: Sage. p.p. 22- 35.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*.

²¹⁹ Kenneth D. Bailey. p. 120.

²²⁰ *Ibid*.

George and Bennett²²¹ state that *Case study* discoveries can have suggestions for both hypothesis advancement and hypothesis testing. They may build up, fortify or debilitate historical explanations of a case and, in specific conditions, permit theoretical (rather than statistical) speculation past the specific cases considered.²²² In addition, Mason states that these hypothetical focal points should not, however, constitute a straitjacket and the cases should not be "compelled to fit" the specific theoretical framework that is being used.²²³

When presenting results, it is imperative to provide the reader with enough logical data to comprehend the procedures that were taken and how the conclusions were arrived at.²²⁴ In a collective case study, researchers may show the discoveries from individual cases separately before amalgamating across cases. Care must be taken to guarantee the anonymity of both case sites and individual members (if agreed ahead of time) by designating fitting codes or withholding descriptors.

In this present thesis the question that arises is why some countries were hit much more severely than others by jihadist violence. We prefer to analyse the case of the UK because the UK offers the biggest possible contrast to the Greek case.²²⁵ Whilst the UK has suffered issues with jihadist attacks, Greece has not; and whilst the UK is considered a world leader in its counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation policies, Greece has been considered to be underperforming.

However, there are also less well-documented factors that can potentially shed light on the absence of Islamist terrorist attacks and radicalisation in Greece. Despite the persistent lack of comprehensive state integration policies with clear-cut long-

²²¹ George, AL. and Bennett. 'Case studies and theory development in the social sciences', Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. p.p. 22- 30

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Mason J. p.p. 78-82.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Blomberg, S. Brock; Gregory D. Hess & Akila Weerapana (2004). 'Economic Conditions and Terrorism', *European Journal of Political Economy* 20 (2): p.p.463-478.

term objectives, migrants and refugees have achieved a high degree of integration into Greek society, mainly thanks to their own initiative, but also thanks to particular social dynamics at play. More specifically, Athens, in contrast to many other EU capitals, does not have migrant ghettos. In other words, there are no neighbourhoods in Athens where exclusively migrant communities reside segregated from the native population. Social stratification in Athens is both vertical and horizontal: in poor neighbourhoods, where ghettos can potentially grow, there are apartment buildings where both natives and migrants coexist on different floors. Simply put, class distinction also exists within apartment buildings, not only across neighbourhoods in Athens.

Once a general understanding of terrorist planning procedures is attained, the important role of the case study is to take this subject out of the theoretical realm and show how the planning process is actually, physically, conducted in real life.²²⁶ The classic type of terrorist case study seminar or article has, for obvious reasons, become quite popular, as the case studies in and of themselves are fascinating stories.²²⁷ But if at the end of an article or seminar on case studies, all you are left with is a general understanding that attacks should be prevented, then you have been short changed. Case studies that do not reveal specific information about hostile planning, and that subsequently have nothing to teach you about how to potentially prevent hostile planning in the future, are nothing more than interesting stories.

3.5 Elite interviews

Data were collected through interviewing. More specifically, elite

²²⁶ Johansson, R. (2003) 'Methodologies in Housing Research, Royal Institute of Technology in cooperation with the International Association of People–Environment Studies, Stockholm. p.p. 13-20
²²⁷ Ibid.

interviewing was selected, in order to explore information provided by those actors who are or were engaged in policy-making. Therefore, the sample consists of elite members who could give first-hand accounts of events and whose words and interpretations are worthy of serious consideration. They are elite members as they have a particular position and reflect the status quo or because they participate or participated in specific significant situations. They meet Bozoki's criteria of belonging to the elite. According to these criteria, elite members are people close to power who make decisions or influence policy-making processes; the positional and reputational elites; people from the establishment; people who participated in or are participating in specific significant situations; people who are more self-conscious than others.²²⁸

More precisely, the members of the elite who participated in the first phase of the research were representatives of the Muslim community in Greece, security experts, security officials, journalists, academics, politicians, and government officials. During the second phase of the research, leading journalists, academics, representatives of the immigrant Muslim community, security experts, and government officials were interviewed.

In terms of available research methods, elite interviews were considered the most suitable method for the study as they provided rich, detailed answers to the research questions while allowing the subjects flexibility in terms of challenging the assumptions of the researcher. Silke has argued that there are a number of advantages of using interviews for gathering data.²²⁹ In particular, they are a flexible method,

²²⁸ Monika Mokre, Hakan G. Sicakkan and Veit Bader, 'Eurosphere Elite Interview Questions', *Eurosphere, Diversity and the European Public Sphere. Towards a Citizens' Europe*. Available at: http://eurospheres.org/files/2011/04/10_Bozoki_Elite-interviews.pdf [Accessed 12 September 2018]

²²⁹ Andrew Silke, (2001) 'The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 13, no. 4: p.p. 1-14.

especially in the semi-structured form that dominates terrorism interviews. By following this approach, researchers can probe for additional information when the conversation leads down an unexpected path not originally predicted at the start. Silke states that interviews have a good response rate and can produce a great deal of extra information – indeed, 'supplementary information gathered in interviews can be of great value in establishing the wider context'.²³⁰

Denscome suggests there is a broad consensus across a number of social science disciplines that in order to gain insight into what motivates a person, qualitative interviews are the most appropriate research method. The conversations analysed here include interviews between terrorist suspects and the police, cross-examinations at trial between defendants and barristers, and covert audio probes used in court evidence. When we say audio probes, we are referring to the listening devices secretly placed in the homes of terror suspects by police and the security services.²³¹

Elite interviews conducted with government ministers, anti-terrorism police, counter-radicalisation workers and journalists suggest this contemporary threat to national security is a logical, inescapable consequence of an environment socially constructed by the organisation and mobilisation of fundamentalist Muslims that began in London circa 1995. The European Commission's expert group on violent radicalisation agree on the importance of an environment made of up like-minded individuals as an enabler for terrorism. Reporting in 2008, the group stated clearly: All diverse political radicalisation waves that resulted in terrorism have thrived in an enabling environment characterised by a widely shared sense of injustice among concerned segments of the population. Sentiments of injustice, exclusion and

²³⁰ J. Berry (2002) 'Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, vol. 35, no. 4, p.p. 679-682

²³¹ *Ibid.*

humiliation have always been powerful forces in politics and prime movers for change.²³²

Semi-structured interviews have been conducted with elite individuals known to have first-hand experience of investigating, researching and responding to acts of terrorism carried out in the UK. Supplementing this rich source of information, an archive of literature published by fundamentalist groups before the turn of the century has also been examined. Written before the introduction of terrorism laws preventing the dissemination of extremist literature, this archive provides a unique insight into the politics of those British Muslims who would later support and carry out acts of terrorism.²³³

The interviews were semi-structured and contained open-ended questions which were formulated by the author. The primary data were collected in two periods, from September 2010 to February 2011 and from October 2014 to February 2015.

The author conducted the interviews over two separate time periods, in order to explore whether there were any changes in the reasons why Greece had remained unscathed by Jihadism. Whilst the first time period simply fitted with the author's beginning of the research in September 2010, the second period was selected deliberately because of the deterioration of the security environment in the Middle East, or more specifically, the ISIS offensive in Iraq in June 2014, the capture of Mosul and the declaration of a Caliphate by its leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi.

During the first period, 23 people were interviewed. They were representatives of the Muslim community in Greece, members of the Greek security and intelligence community, security experts and government officials. After the onslaught of the so-called Islamic state, also known as ISIS or Daesh in northern Iraq

²³² Ibid.

²³³ A. Bryman (2008), 'Social Research Methods', Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.p. 621- 625.

and Syria in June 2014, the author undertook some additional interviews. During this second period of field work, there were 12 interviewees, four of whom had been interviewed in the previous period.

Content analysis of the interviews was used to answer the research question properly, while factual information contained in the interviews was also collaborated by accessing external sources and archives. The wealth of the respondents' answers outbalanced the difficulties in coding. Moreover, using qualitative data analysis software, Dedoose, the author was able to code data into content categories and analyse them. It was the analysis of the content of the interviews, along with the previous literature review and research, which enabled the author to draw the final conclusions.

3.6 Data Collection

Among the ways of collecting the appropriate primary data, which differ considerably regarding financial cost, time and other resources, the author selected interviewing. Having excluded the other main methods of qualitative data collection, namely experiment and observation, the researcher found interviews more appropriate for the specific research questions to be investigated and answered.

The interview can be used to control the vast majority of social research issues. It helps the researcher to receive direct feedback from the respondents; it gives him/her flexibility, since interviews can be conducted in a variety of locations and times; it gives him/her the opportunity to probe, to yield rich data, details and new insights, and the opportunity to explain or clarify questions. These advantages render interviews the most reliable method of primary data collection.²³⁴ Interviewing must

²³⁴ Steinar, Kvale (1996), 'InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing', Sage

be tailored to the purpose of the research.²³⁵ However, a limitation which must be considered is that data collected from elite interviewing can by no means be generalised.²³⁶

Elite interviewing provides the researcher with insight into the individuals and the phenomenon under study, first-hand accounts of events, and wealth and depth of information. The author can use the respondents' memories, interpretations and beliefs about an event or a situation.²³⁷ Moreover, elite interviewing may provide the researcher with the opportunity to discover unanticipated findings, which would not have been revealed with the use of other methods or through interviewing other people.

Since it was decided that interviews were the most fitting data collection method for the thesis, the primary data were collected through personal interviews conducted by the researcher himself. Data from elite interviews are considered to be as important as empirical and archival data, because they are part of a full account. That said, the data are nonetheless supported by published secondary data.²³⁸

The author kept in mind that he might encounter difficulties in preparing the questions for the elite interviews,²³⁹ Therefore, the selection of the appropriate language and style was critical in the procedure of question formulation. The questions for the interviews were prepared in an open-ended manner, because elites prefer open-ended questions to closed questions.²⁴⁰ Semi-structured interviews were therefore selected. The author was particularly careful in formulating the questions,

Publications p.p. 67-69.

²³⁵ Joel D. Aberbach and Bert A. Rockman (2002) 'Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews', *Political Science and Politics*, 35/4 p.p. 673–676.

²³⁶ Andras Bozóki (2010) 'Elite Interviews', (Prague: Central European University) Available at: http://eurospheres.org/files/2011/04/10_Bozoki_Elite-interviews.pdf. [Accessed 12 October 2018]

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

the answers to which would meet the objectives of the research, because there would be only one occasion for each interview due to the demanding schedule of the respondents.

Before embarking on an empirical investigation, it was, of course, necessary that the first part of the study be completed (in order to ensure that the critical issues were addressed in the interviews). Prior research enabled the author to formulate clear and pertinent questions.²⁴¹ The primary data for the research was collected from the periods September 2010 to February 2011 and October 2014 to February 2015. The researcher followed a pre-planned procedure and sought answers to a set of pre-conceived open-ended questions through personal interviews. Open-ended questions provide the researcher with flexibility and the respondents with latitude to complete their answers.²⁴² Most of the interviews were conducted in Greek, with some exceptions of representatives of Muslim communities who found it easier to speak with the author in English. Having said that, the vast majority of the interviews in the transcript presented in the Appendices are translated from Greek into English for the needs of the present thesis. Recording was vital in the procedure, to ensure that the researcher would avoid any loss of information. Most interviews were conducted in person, and respondents were asked whether they consented to the use of a digital recording device prior to the start of the interview session. All accepted and provided their consent for this recording to take place. A small number of interviewees could not be interviewed in person as a result of their personal circumstances (distance, time constraints, etc.). In order to overcome this problem, these respondents were asked for their consent to be sent the interview questions via email, and to respond to

²⁴¹ Joel D. Aberbach and Bert A. Rockman (2002) 'Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews', *Political Science and Politics*, 35/4 p.p. 673–676.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

these questions through the same medium. All respondents asked for their consent to the use of email obliged.

This method of collecting data was carried out in a semi-structured and largely open way, as the researcher provided the general subject to the interviewee and recorded his/her opinion. The output therefore depended upon both the ability of the interviewer and the ability and willingness of the interviewee to get to the core of the subject. Bearing in mind that the research is concerned with a contemporary phenomenon, the 'stories' the interviewees were telling were relatively fresh.

As explained above, it was essential that the data the researcher collected from interviews were supported by data obtained from diverse sources, such as documents, archives, audiovisual material and anything which the researcher judged to be informative. Elite people's answers contained some factual information, which the researcher corroborated when access to external sources and archives was possible.

As described above almost all the respondents agreed to be recorded, thanks to the trust established and the researcher's credentials. However, the researcher thought it would also be useful to take notes, in order to record the paralinguistic features of the interviews, which reflect the interviewees' emotional states or attitudes, so that they could be coded, if the researcher thought they would contribute to the study. Although they did not add to the actual statements, as the respondents were clear and their answers could be interpreted without the need to add more information, they contributed to the formation of the researcher's impression at the initial stage.

During the interviews, rephrasing was unavoidable, and the questions were

not necessarily asked in the same order as in some of the other interviews. This was in order to facilitate the natural flow of the interview, which took the form of a conversation. The researcher did not believe that it would affect the outcomes of the interviews or their validity. The depth of the responses outbalanced the difficulties in coding which would emerge from the inconsistent order of questions.²⁴³

Open-ended questions in interviewing have limitations. The time invested in the interviews, and their coding and analysis, take up more than the time which would have been required for coding and analysing interviews based on close-ended questions.²⁴⁴ However, the nature of the research question did not allow the researcher to conduct highly structured interviews, although they are coded and analysed more easily.

3.7 Sampling

Because sampling involves approaching a community, organisation or group of people representative of the object of the study, the criteria which were considered in the process of selecting the participants were limited to origin and position. Therefore, interviewees were asked to participate in the research with respect to the knowledge they had gained through their presence and position in the specific contexts. Sampling these people met the researcher's objectives, which required the collection of events, incidents, conditions and their consequences, so that their specification could lead to clear conclusions.²⁴⁵

Some of the respondents were identified after thorough research on the Internet, some were acquaintances of the researcher, and others were interviewed

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

after being recommended. Therefore, in the first round of interviewing, the snowball technique was used. This involves people suggesting other people who are able and willing to contribute to the research. The researcher approached the respondents via electronic mail or telephone, and the appointments were arranged at the respondents' convenience. Their initial oral consent was validated in written form, when they confirmed the transcriptions through an electronic message.

More specifically, at the start of the survey, the author aimed to investigate whether Greece faced a Jihadist threat like most states in the West did. For this reason, during the period September 2010-February 2011, he interviewed 23 persons, comprising important representatives of the Muslim community in Greece, as well as members of the security and intelligence community, security experts and government officials, in order to determine whether Greece was facing a problem of radicalisation among Muslims, whether the construction of the official mosque in Athens would help to prevent potential radicalisation, and generally to investigate the level of the Jihadist threat in Greece. From the first research findings the author found that Greece faces no problem of radicalisation among Muslims (indigenous and immigrants), and that the level of Jihadist threat is low in contrast to the high level of threat faced in the UK.

However, during the course of this research, the fact that research is dynamic and not static was proved by the spectacular rise of ISIS in northern Iraq and Syria in June 2014 and the establishment of the self-proclaimed 'Islamic Caliphate', which changed the global and regional security environment considerably. The author decided that it was necessary to proceed with additional primary research in order to determine whether the rise of ISIS and the so-called returning foreign fighters had had any negative effect on the security situation in Greece. Additionally, the author

considered it useful and crucial for his research to explore the reasons why Greece has been unscathed by Jihadism. So, during the period October 2014-February 2015, he conducted additional interviews with 12 persons, of whom four had also been interviewed during the period September 2010-February 2011. Due to the gap of four years, and despite the efforts of the researcher to contact all of the respondents interviewed during the first period of the research, many of those initially interviewed could not be reached. Moreover, some of the initial interviewees did not wish to give a new interview, and did not provide any particular reason to the author for this decision. Due to the qualitative nature of the research, the fact that the sample in the first period was not the same as that in the second period, should not affect the validity of the results.

The researcher therefore decided to supplement the list of interviewees with eight additional individuals well-acquainted with the research subject (journalists, academics, government officials). The fact that the second sample of interviewees is smaller than the first was not a serious problem in terms of research methodology, since the second sample is complementary to the first, and since the present study is qualitative and not quantitative. Thus the smaller second sample does not distort the research findings. It is also worth mentioning that the research findings and the second set of interviews confirmed the findings of the first set of interviews and additionally helped the researcher to understand the reasons why Greece has not been targeted by Jihadists.

Regardless of these drawbacks, it was considered of great value to conduct additional research, as it helped to bolster the reliability of findings presented in this work. Moreover, with the increasing threat of radicalisation in the UK and the simultaneous absence of this same threat in Greece, the value of the research

questions posed here has been confirmed, whilst the appropriateness of the research design in highlighting extreme cases has also been strongly proven. By continuing to pursue the assumptions made in 2014-2015 four years later, the present framework has maximised inferential leverage and presented new opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the UK model in line with the first research goal. In line with the second research goal, this additional time has also facilitated a better understanding of the reasons behind Greece's apparent immunity and to track perceptual adjustments which could indicate a rise in perceived threat levels in the country.

3.8 Data Analysis

The processes of data collection and data analysis are interrelated, in that every concept is evaluated as significant with respect to the frequency of occurrence in the interviews.²⁴⁶ To describe and clarify them, the researcher used categories, the interrelation of which leads to clear answers to the research question. This implies content analysis, which is frequently used when analysing elite interviews.²⁴⁷ According to Stemler, content analysis is a 'powerful data reduction technique'. It enables the researcher to make inferences from specific characteristics of messages which are identified through a systematic and replicable process. It allows large volumes of data to be interpreted after being coded into content categories, which contain a reduced version of texts.²⁴⁸

The simplest method used to define categories and put data into them is to count word frequency. However, the researcher should be cautious of problematic issues which might emerge, because synonyms may be used or because certain words

²⁴⁶ A.Bozóki (2010) p.p. 122-124.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Steve Stemler, (2001) 'An overview of content analysis', *Practical assessment, research & evaluation*, 7(17) p.p. 137-146.

have different meanings. This might affect the reliability of the study, especially when ambiguity, diverse definitions or coding rules occur.²⁴⁹ Data coding and categorising brings a meaningful quality to this technique. A category consists of words which have similar meanings or connotations. Although categories are defined by the researcher before data analysis, new categories may emerge while coding data. It is noteworthy that open-ended interviews are difficult to analyse. More specifically, in elite interviewing the quality of the individual's responses, which are generally well-articulated and coherent, needs to be maintained in the coding system.²⁵⁰

This process of content analysis was performed twice, once for the first group of interviewees (September 2010-February 2011), and once for the second group (October 2014- February 2015). Moreover, the researcher combined the primary data collected from the interviewees with secondary data available from previous research and studies, in a dialectic analysis drawing upon both sources. For the collection of these secondary data the researcher used the Internet, articles, academic journals, books, previous research and official websites of state organisations, such as MI5, NIS-EYP, the Home Office, the Ministry of Citizen Protection and Public Order etc. Reviews are usually written by experts in the field. Review articles discuss and list all the relevant publications from which the information is derived. Journals contain articles that discuss practical information concerning various fields of the topic examined. Reference books provide secondary source material. In order to successfully manage the 'information overload' regarding the relevant literature, the author has categorised the available material based on the research questions, and focused on the most representative works.

Moreover, the author decided to split the first group of individuals into two

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Joel D. Aberbach and Bert A. Rockman (2002) 'Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews', *Political Science and Politics*, 35/4 p.p. 673–676.

sub-groups: a) a sub-group of 16 representatives of the Muslim community in Greece; and b) one of seven representatives of the Greek intelligence and security community, security experts and politicians. All the people interviewed were leading figures in their respective fields.

More specifically, the author was privileged to interview the following leading individuals of the Muslim community in Greece (1st sub-group of Group A): i) Naim El-Ghandour, President of the Muslim Association of Greece (MAG), ii) Anna Stamou, a Greek convert to Islam and PR Director of the MAG, iii) Syed Mohammad Jamil, President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society, iv) Munir Sindho Badar, President of the Hellenic-Pakistan Friendship Association, v) Mathee Ullah, President of the Pakistani Islamic Forum in Greece vi) Zaki Sidi Mohammed, President of the Moroccan community in Greece, vii) Muhammadi Yonous, President of the Afghan community in Greece, viii) Nader Halbouni, President of the Syrian community in Greece, ix) Mehmet Imam, President of the Pan-Hellenic Federation in Support of Muslims in Greece (“Filotita”), x) Zainul Abedin, President of the Bangladeshi community in Greece, xi) Abul Bashar, President of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece, xii) Halit Habipoglu, President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe, xiii) Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf, Secretary General of the Association of the Egyptian community in Greece, xiv) Hala Akari, Member of the Board of Directors of the European Forum of Muslim Women and Head of the Women Sector of the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Centre in Athens, xv) Shadi Ayubi, journalist and administrator of the website islam.gr and correspondent of the Al Jazeera website in Greece, and xvi) Daadir Daysane, spokesman of the Somali community in Greece.

Furthermore, the author was fortunate to be able to interview leading officials

and experts of the Greek intelligence and security community, as well as a leading Greek politician (second sub-group of Group A): i) Ioannis Corantis, former Director General of the NIS-EYP, ii) Dimitrios Chorianopoulos, former Commandant of the Greek Counterterrorism Unit, iii) Savvas Kalenteridis, former intelligence officer of NIS-EYP, iv) Ioannis Michaletos, security analyst and Head of the Southeast European Office of the World Security Network, v) Marinos Stagakis, Director of the Criminal Intelligence Analysis Unit in the Hellenic Police, vi) a senior intelligence officer of the NIS-EYP, who spoke to the author on condition of anonymity, and vii) Evripidis Stylianidis, a former Minister of Education and Religious Affairs and MP of the Rodopi District in Western Thrace for the Greek conservative party (ND-New Democracy).

In addition to the first group of interviewees, the researcher conducted a set of new interviews in order to investigate the potential impact of the rise of ISIS on the security situation in Greece, as well as to explore the reasons why Greece remains unscathed by Jihadism. More specifically, the author interviewed the following leading journalists, academics, representatives of the Muslim community of immigrants, security experts and government officials: i) Vasilis Lambropoulos, journalist at *To Vima*, specialist in security issues, ii) Georgios Dionysopoulos, journalist at *Proto Thema*, specialist in security issues, iii) Ioannis Michaletos, security expert, iv) Ioannis Souliotis, journalist at *Kathimerini* specialist in security issues, v) Andreas Andrianopoulos, Director of the Athens-based Think Tank ‘Institute of Diplomacy and Global Affairs-American College of Greece’ and former Greek Government Minister, vi) Nader Halbuni, President of the Syrian community in Greece, vii) an intelligence analyst of NIS-EYP, who spoke to the author on condition of anonymity, viii) Savvas Kalenteridis, former intelligence officer of the

NIS-EYP, ix) Syed Mohammad Jamil, President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society, x) Dr Georgios Kalantzis, Secretary General for Religious Affairs at the Ministry of Education, xi) Dr Thanos Dokos, Director General of the Athens-based Think Tank ELIAMEP, and xii) Dr Angelos Syrigos, former Secretary General for Immigration and Social Cohesion at the Ministry of the Interior and Assistant Professor of International Relations at Panteion University.

As the researcher's main concern was to answer the research question, his first step was to organise the data in such a way as to scrutinise all respondents and their answers and find consistencies and differences. The next step was to identify themes or patterns (ideas, concepts, behaviours, interactions, incidents, terminology or phrases used) and then to organise them into the relevant categories.

Using qualitative data analysis software provides the researcher with tools which allow him to overcome these limitations and analyse any nuance in the message.²⁵¹ Computer software is used to facilitate the process of coding and analysing data. According to Gibbs,²⁵² such technological tools have become necessary for researchers in the last twenty years. Indeed, the nature of the research lends itself to the use of technology, the latter proving very helpful. The assistive quality of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) software,²⁵³ rather than its perceived dimension as a method of data analysis, is discussed in literature, as it helps researchers organise their thoughts and data, as opposed to making the analysis. The main functions of CAQDAS aim at categorising, coding and comparing.

Selecting the appropriate software was the outcome of the author's searching

²⁵¹ Steve Stemler (2001) p.141

²⁵² Graham R. Gibbs, (2013) 'Using software in qualitative analysis' in Uwe Flick (ed.): *The Sage handbook of qualitative data analysis* (Free University of Berlin: Sage). p.p. 277-295.

²⁵³ The term was introduced by Fielding and Lee in 1991. Gibbs, 'Using software', p.p. 277-295'.

and downloading trial versions of different companies. After having worked on them and studied the required technical skills, the author decided to use Dedoose.²⁵⁴

Dedoose provides the researcher with a new facilitating quality. It works through the web browser, so that both data and features are stored in the cloud, rather than a specific computer, which means that the researcher can access the material with the use of any electronic device. The material is secured because the researcher is asked to use a password, while for more protection, after long periods of inactivity the system automatically logs the user out, requiring him to log in again. It is also possible to export the data in an MS XLS format, so that they can be saved in a particular computer.

After having imported the interviews, which were in MS Word format, the researcher created categories and subcategories. More specifically, as illustrated below, eighteen codes were eventually created after he had read all the interviews. There was the option of renaming, deleting or adding, and dividing or uniting codes, according to the emerging need.

²⁵⁴ For more information, see: CAQDAS Networking Project Cristina Silver, August 2012. 'Closeness to data and interactivity in Dedoose. p.p. 3-4.

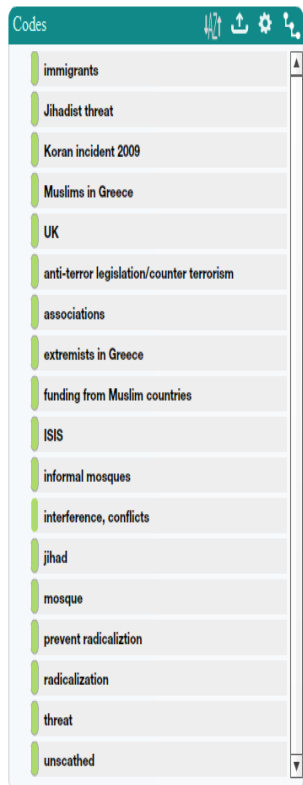


Figure 1: The Codes Panel in Dedoose

After initiating the codes, the researcher read the interviews once more, so that he could find content relevant to the codes. Particular parts of the texts were selected with the mouse cursor and highlighted in different colours. Then, a code or more were assigned to each excerpt by double-clicking on the code. The researcher was also able to attach descriptions, definitions or memos, utilising multiple tools, such as diagrams and statistics.

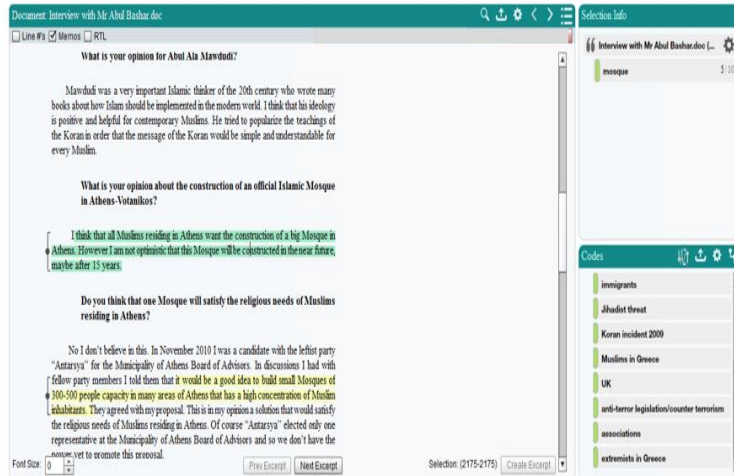


Figure 2: Producing excerpts and assigning codes in Dedoose

In 289 excerpts the codes were applied 325 times. By selecting a code, the researcher could check the frequency of its occurrence within the interviews, so that he could modify the list of codes or the excerpts. Double clicking on a code shows the excerpts which are relevant and provides the researcher with the ability to assess the coding process. Similarities and differences can be pinpointed through searching for a term, a word or phrase, which helps the researcher be in a process of constant comparison and inductive coding.

Selected	Type	Title	Excerpts	Length	Code #: mosque
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Dimitrios Chronopoulos.doc	9	9463	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Zainul Abedin.doc	7	9630	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Daadir Daysane.doc	4	6012	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Nader Halbouni President of the Syrian ...	6	8472	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Munir Sindho Badar.doc	5	10325	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Muhammadi Yonous President of the Afg...	7	9902	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Mohamed Rashad El Zatzaf.doc	6	9444	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Ioannis Corantis ex Director General NIS...	16	25966	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Shadi F.Ayoubi Administrator of islam gr...	6	15552	2
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Zaki Sidi Mohammed President of the Mo...	5	7918	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mathee Ullah.doc	6	5800	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Halit Habipoglu.doc	6	14850	2
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mehmet Imam.doc	10	16918	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Syed Mohammad Jamil President of the ...	6	12685	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Naim El Ghandour and Mrs Anna Stamo...	10	30680	2
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Savvas Kalenteridis ex intelligence office...	14	20333	0
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Marinos Stagakis.doc	5	5738	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashar.doc	7	11282	2
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview-Mr Ioannis Michaleos Security analyst.doc	9	16651	3
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Senior Intelligence Officer of the NIS.doc	14	12935	2
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mrs Hala Akari.doc	5	14839	1
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Andreas Andrianopoulos.doc	10	8690	1

Page: 1 of 2. Items: 1-22 of 34

1 | 2 | Next > | Last >>

Delete Selected | Select All | Select None | Export Selected | Add Media

Columns & Filters

Columns

- Type
- Title
- User
- Date/Time
- Excerpts
- Length
- Descriptors
- Memos
- Codes

Uncheck All | Check All

Filters

- Selected
- Excerpts
- Length

Clear Filters

Selected	Type	Title	Excerpts	Length
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Dimitrios Chorianopoulos.doc	9	9463
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr Zainul Abedin.doc	7	9630
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Daadir Daysane.doc	4	6012
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Nader Halbouni President of the Syrian Comm...	6	8472
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Munir Sindho Badar.doc	5	10325
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Muhammadi Yonous President of the Afghan C...	7	9902
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Mohamed Rashad El Zatzaf.doc	6	9444
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Ioannis Corantis ex Director General NIS.doc	16	25966
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Shadi F.Ayoubi Administrator of islam gr.doc	6	15552
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Zaki Sidi Mohammed President of the Morocco...	5	7918
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mathee Ullah.doc	6	5800
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Halit Habipoglu.doc	6	14850
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mehmet Imam.doc	10	16918
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Syed Mohammad Jamil President of the Pak H...	6	12685
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Naim El Ghandour and Mrs Anna Stamou.doc	10	30680
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Savvas Kalenteridis ex intelligence officer of th...	14	20333
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Marinos Stagakis.doc	5	5738
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashar.doc	7	11282
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview-Mr Ioannis Michaleos Security analyst.doc	9	16651
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Senior Intelligence Officer of the NIS.doc	14	12935
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mrs Hala Akari.doc	5	14839
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Andreas Andrianopoulos.doc	10	8690

Page: 1 of 2. Items: 1-22 of 34

1 | 2 | Next > | Last >>

Delete Selected | Select All | Select None | Export Selected | Add Media

<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashar.doc	92	1	funding from Muslim countries: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashar.doc	313	1	jihad: 5

Page: 1 of 13. Items: 1-23 of 279

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Next > | Last >>

Delete Selected | Select All | Select None

87

Selected	Type	Title	Excerpts	Length
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Dimitrios Chorianopoulos.doc	9	9463
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Zainul Abedin.doc	7	9630
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Daadir Daysane.doc	4	6012
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Nader Halbouni President of the Syrian Comm...	6	8472
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Munir Sindho Badar.doc	5	10325
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Muhammad Yonous President of the Afghan C...	7	9902
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Mohamed Rashad El Zatzaf.doc	6	9444
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Ioannis Corantis ex Director General NIS.doc	16	25966
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Shadi F.Ayoubi Administrator of Islam.gr.doc	6	15552
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Zaki Sidi Mohammed President of the Morocco...	5	7918
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mathee Ullah.doc	6	5800
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Halit Habipoglu.doc	6	14850
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Mehmet Imam.doc	10	16918
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Syed Mohammad Jamil President of the Pak H...	6	12885
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Naim El Ghandour and Mrs Anna Stamou.doc	10	30680
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Savas Kalenteridis ex intelligence officer of th...	14	20333
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Marinos Stagakis.doc	5	5738
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	7	11282
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview-Mr Ioannis Michaletos Security analyst.doc	9	16651
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Senior Intelligence Officer of the NIS.doc	14	12935
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mrs Hala Akari.doc	5	14839
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr. Andreas Andrianopoulos.doc	10	8690

Figure 3: Manipulating data in Dedoose

A variety of tools, such as diagrams, charts and visual representations, which combine data in different ways, reveals patterns in the coded data, for example how the Koran incident is connected to the threat of radicalisation.

Selected	Type	Media	Length	Codes Count	Codes Short
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview-Mr Ioannis Michaletos Security analyst.doc	1287	2	anti-terror legislation/counter terrorism : 5, threat: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	118	1	prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	200	1	prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	2826-3026	1	prevent radicalization
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	1	1	Muslims in Greece: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	1	1	interference, conflicts
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	1	1	interference, conflicts
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	1	1	associations: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	253	1	associations: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	253	1	associations: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	317	1	Muslims in Greece: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	368	1	interference, conflicts
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	385	1	Koran incident 2009: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	345	1	funding from Muslim countries: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	345	1	prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	289	1	prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	756	2	mosque: 5, prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	805	1	anti-terror legislation/counter terrorism : 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis.doc	1301	1	prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	95	2	Muslims in Greece: 5, prevent radicalization: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	198	1	mosque: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	151	1	mosque: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	77	1	associations: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	92	1	funding from Muslim countries: 5
<input type="checkbox"/>		Interview with Mr Abul Bashhar.doc	313	1	jihad: 5

3.9 Research Ethics

The researcher took all necessary actions to ensure the ethicality of the present thesis. As regards the theoretical investigation, all sources were properly and analytically referenced and the researcher was committed to avoiding plagiarism in any form. As regards the empirical investigation, the researcher took all the necessary actions, as defined by Bailey,²⁵⁵ to ensure that the members of the sample provided their informed consent before proceeding with their interviews.

The first step was to provide the interviewees with an analytical report comprising a presentation of the researcher's credentials; a presentation of the thesis' subject, goals and methods; a description of the thesis' potential benefits; a description of the purpose and content of their interview; a reference to the fact that the views and opinions they expressed during their interviews would be subjected to qualitative analysis; a reference to the fact that the views and opinions they expressed during their interviews would be referred to eponymously in the thesis; a reassurance that they could stop the interview process at any time; a reassurance that if the study's subject or goals changed then the researcher would seek to renew their approval in order to use the data provided by their interviews; and finally an offer to provide any additional information concerning the interview and the study as a whole, before or during the interview process.

The researcher undertook to provide any additional information the interviewee may require as well as what had been agreed on before beginning the interview process. It is important to report that all interviewees agreed to the study's terms. During the interview process the researcher did not try to influence the interviewees, nor to provoke specific responses, nor in any way try to distort their

²⁵⁵ Kenneth D. Bailey, "Methods of Social Research" p.454.

expressed views. The same is true for the data analysis phase, which was performed with the goal of retaining objectivity and minimising or eliminating the emergence of researcher bias.

3.10 Limitations of the research

Although the research achieved its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. Analysing a complex issue such as Jihadism was not an easy task, and certain limitations on the research inevitably appeared. Furthermore, the reasoning for selecting the UK as a paradigm for the case of Greece was that the UK was one of the countries that suffered most from the Jihadist threat and was cited frequently in the relevant literature. The outcome is that the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIS, has dramatically changed the balance of counter-terrorism work. The phenomenon is now expressing itself in lots of different ways. There is now a new layer of people latching on to this extremism phenomenon and deciding to act. When the State is “under pressure” it reacts by the means and the “Tools” (security and intelligence services) it has and attempts to bring a halt to the armed action of the terrorists.

Another limitation had to do with the nature of the research. The author had no access to certain classified data. This limitation was partly overcome by the extensive number of interviews. The author estimates that, despite the above limitations, he was able to gather the information needed and construct a coherent research framework in order to successfully tackle the research question. Another limitation was that, since the subject under investigation was a very delicate one, respondents would probably feel uncomfortable in expressing their true opinions and views without restraint. This is especially true in light of the fact that the vast majority of the interviewees, with the exception of two intelligence officers, agreed

that their responses could be used eponymously in the thesis. Unfortunately, this limitation cannot be easily overcome in such delicate subjects; continuous and repeated studies, by a multitude of researchers utilising various research methodologies, are therefore required in order to eventually check the credibility of the phenomenon as far as possible. The final limitation was the fact the Jihadist threat is an evolving and constantly changing phenomenon. The results of this study must therefore be checked periodically in order to detect possible changes.

CHAPTER 4: Jihadism and the Jihadist threat

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, Islamism, Salafism, Wahhabism and Jihadism will be examined, and the connection of Jihadism with extremism and violence will be established; therefore, an analysis of the history of Jihadism and the terrorist record of the most important Jihadist organisations (i.e. Al Qaeda and ISIS) will be undertaken.

In summary, this chapter demonstrates that Islam as a religion does not itself constitute a threat to the West; rather, the Jihadist threat originates solely from a small minority of extremists who adhere to the most distorted version of Islam, namely Jihadism.

4.2 A Brief Account of Islamism, Salafism-Wahhabism and Jihadism

4.2.1 Islamism

In this sub-chapter, the author considers that it is useful to analyse the term 'Islamism' which is, as it will be demonstrated here, more distinct and broader than the term 'Jihadism'. Islamism is a complex phenomenon with multiple dimensions and various ramifications. It has its roots in a distorted interpretation of Sunni Islam, but also has a Shi'a variation (the Iranian regime and the Lebanese terrorist organisation Hezbollah). However, in this thesis we will examine Islamism as a political ideology derived from a false interpretation of Sunni Islam. It is important to mention at this point that the terms 'Islamism' and 'Islamist', according to the vast

majority of Muslim theologians and thinkers, is an artificial term used by Westerners. The Qur'an uses the term *Muslimun* (Muslims), never *Islamiyyun* (Islamists). Great theologians, jurists and thinkers (Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, Bukhari, Farabi, Mas'udi, Mawardi, Avicena, Ghazali, Averroes, Ibn Haldun, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Muhammad Abduh, Sayyid Jamal al-Afghani and Rashid Rida) from the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali*) respect the Qur'anic terminology and use the term *Muslimun* rather than *Islamiyyun*.²⁵⁶ However, a number of Muslim authors have in fact used the term 'Islamism'. The Sudanese Hasan al-Turabi is one of them.²⁵⁷ Western scholars such as Professor James Piscatori argue that 'Islamism' is best understood as a self-awareness that something has gone wrong with contemporary Muslim societies and that the solution must lie in a range of political action. Often used interchangeably with 'fundamentalism', Islamism is better equated with 'political Islam'.²⁵⁸ Peter Mandaville uses the term Islamism to refer to

...forms of political theory and practice that aim to the establishment of an Islamic political order in the sense of a state whose governmental principles, institutions and legal system derive directly from the Shariah. In the eyes of those who advocate Islamist solutions, religion is generally viewed as a holistic, totalising system whose prescriptions permeate every aspect of daily life. Islamists, as we will see, differ in their methods and priorities. Some advocate gradualist

²⁵⁶ Mehdi Mozaffari, (2007) 'What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 8 (1). p.p. 17-33.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ James Piscatori, 'Iraq and the Future of Political Islam' (Lowy Institute, 30 May 2007) Available at: http://www.lowyinstitute.org/files/pubfiles/Piscatori_Iraq_and_the_Future.pdf [Accessed on 24 September 2018]

*approaches while others are more revolutionary.*²⁵⁹

Khairi Abaza, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, and Soner Cagaptay, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, argue that many analysts and pundits confuse Islam with Islamism. This confusion helps organisations like Al-Qaeda, as it prevents proper recognition of the fact that Islam is a religion and Islamism an ideology, thus reducing the effectiveness of measures taken to combat either concept. Substituting the term Islamic for Islamist incorrectly brands all Muslims as Islamists, which can be harmful not only to the Muslim community, but also to policy making.²⁶⁰ This distinction was used as a compass during the interviews and the content analysis, helping to avoid any analytical errors.

The elements, according to Tariq Ramadan, that were to shape contemporary political Islam or Islamism appeared in the late 19th century.²⁶¹ Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), two reformist thinkers operating respectively in Turkey and Egypt from the 1870s onward, aimed to create alternative outlets from the decadence of the Ottoman Empire and the subjugation under European (primarily British) colonialism.²⁶² Bringing the central focus back to Islam allowed for them to overcome the influence from overseas, whilst a return to the teachings of Islam from the Qu'ran would help overcome the challenges to the religion and culture posed by colonialism.²⁶³ The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in accordance with these principles, by Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), who promoted

²⁵⁹ Peter Mandaville, (2007) 'Global Political Islam' (New York: Routledge) p.57.

²⁶⁰ Mark Dubowitz and Benjamin Weinthal, 'Europe's delusions on Hezbollah' (FDD, 11 March 2009) Available at:

http://www.defenddemocracy.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11787348&Itemid=345 [Accessed 15 November 2018].

²⁶¹ Tariq Ramadan (2012) 'Islam and the Arab Awakening' (New York: Oxford University Press) p.45.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

political Islam and gave it a meaning which would define its future and ideology.²⁶⁴ John Esposito argues that ‘most scholars agree that Hassan al Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, established in 1928, is the father of modern day Islamic ‘revivalism’, of which militant Islam is one strain.’²⁶⁵ Tariq Ramadan argues that ‘from its inception, the philosophy of the Muslim Brotherhood was non-violent and legalist.’²⁶⁶ However, Bassam Tibi, Professor Emeritus at the University of Göttingen, states that the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna, set out all Jihadism’s essential features.²⁶⁷ The Muslim Brotherhood claimed that creating an Islamic state would be the first step in implementing *Shariah*. Hassan al Banna saw that splitting into differing political factions could lead to the kind of divisions which imperialists were hoping for, and thus concluded that all elements within the *ummah* should be transformed into one powerfully united block.²⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood’s hostile relations with government in Egypt, led to the development of a separate faction, which was led by Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), the ‘Trotsky of Islamism’.²⁶⁹ Qutb advocated for the creation of an Islamic state which would reject any interference or influence of any form from the West. This is made clear by Qutb’s political manifesto, called *Ma‘alim fi’il-tariq* (Signposts on the Road), where the need to accept the all-powerful nature of God and to therefore reject any kind of man-made rule of law, is established.²⁷⁰

Qutb’s work does not lay great emphasis on the need for a caliphate. His concern lies primarily with achieving an Islamic order. As a result, in his view any

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ John Esposito, (1992) ‘Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?’ (New York: Oxford University Press)

²⁶⁶ Ramadan, *Islam*. p.p.65-66

²⁶⁷ Bassam Tibi, (2012) ‘Islamism and Islam’, (London: Yale University Press).

²⁶⁸ James Piscatori, (2000) ‘Islam, Islamists, And The Electoral Principle in The Middle East’ (The Netherlands: Leiden Isim. p. 25

²⁶⁹ Walid Phares, (2005) ‘Future Jihad. Terrorist Strategies against the West’ (New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p.140

²⁷⁰ Sayyid Qutb, (1988) ‘Maalim fi’il-tariq’ (Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq). p.124.

political system or form of government that conforms to the Shariah would be acceptable.²⁷¹ The establishment of an Islamic order represents the submission of Muslim populations to God, as well as to *Shariah*, and would enable followers to completely dedicate themselves to God. In doing so, it would be possible for such followers to avoid entering into a state of paganism or *jahiliyya*, which is said to represent illegitimate constitutions.²⁷² For Qutb *jahiliyya* was not just a moral category. In his later work it became an integral component of his theory of the necessity of Jihad to overthrow the state of *jahiliyya* and establish an Islamic order.²⁷³ The concept of Jihad is present and quite central to his later writing. However, commentators differ in their analysis of how important violent Jihad was to Qutb's thinking.²⁷⁴ Some, such as Sayyid's brother Muhammad Qutb, have argued that invocations of the term Jihad should be understood to be referring primarily to the overall struggle to achieve the Islamic order in the literal sense of Jihad as 'struggle'.²⁷⁵ On the other extreme, there are those who understand Qutb's concept of Jihad as an advocacy for an armed struggle.²⁷⁶

Islamism is based on a series of fundamentalist goals, which are pursued through political means. The prevailing view seems, however, to suggest that existing definitions and conceptualisations of this distinction are flawed. For example, the term 'Islamic fundamentalism' should not be mistaken for 'Islamism', since the latter term is preferred in order to demonstrate the political and resurgent nature of Islam.²⁷⁷ Disagreements similarly arise when taking into account the varying degrees of

²⁷¹ Peter Mandaville, (2007) 'Global Political Islam' (New York: Routledge) p.p.56.

²⁷² Moussali. p.67.

²⁷³ Mandaville. p.65

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Peter Bergen, (2006) 'The Osama bin Laden I Know': *An Oral History of Al Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Simon and Schuster). p.32.

²⁷⁷ J..Esposito, (2003) 'The Oxford Dictionary of Islam' (Oxford University Press: Oxford.) p.12.

moderate and violent Islamism, which is especially important when considering that both often seek to achieve the same objectives but with differing means. In both strands, it is possible to locate the desire to share Islamist ideology and to advance this ideology in the creation of as many ‘Islamic states’ as possible.²⁷⁸ Whilst some factions of Islamist thought believe that this can be achieved in a peaceful way, and argue that only peaceful means should be used in furthering this goal, others consider that moving toward the Caliphate should legitimise all possible forms of action, including extreme violence.²⁷⁹ However, the distinction is not always easy to make. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is both ‘lawful’ and violent, as is also the case with Hamas in Palestine (which is the local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood). On the other hand, Muslim Brotherhood organisations in the West seek to achieve their Islamist agenda mainly by lawful means and avoid the use of violence. This is just one point which can be used to highlight the potential differences in understandings of and actions attributed to, Islamism.

Apart from the Muslim Brotherhood, another important Islamist organisation with a global reach is Hizb-ut-Tahrir al-Islami (HT, the Islamic Liberation Party), founded in 1953 by Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, a prestigious Islamic scholar and Appeals Court judge. The organisation’s members are largely Palestinian, but come from all across the Middle East, from as far afield as Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. It was reported that ‘HT operates through a network of underground cells resembling those that the Bolshevik revolutionaries employed as the groundwork for the seizure of power in Russia in October 1917.’²⁸⁰ The organisation has a bold political doctrine

²⁷⁸ Ayaan Hirsi Ali, ‘Islam is a Religion of Violence’ (Foreign Policy, 2015) Available at: <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/09/islam-is-a-religion-of-violence-ayaan-hirsi-ali-debate-islamic-state/>> [Accessed 6 April 2019]

²⁷⁹ Ekaterina Stepanova, (2008) ‘Terrorism in Asymmetrical Conflict’. *Ideological and structural aspects*. (New York: Oxford University Press.) p.32

²⁸⁰ Emmanuel Karagiannis and Chris Mc Cauley, (2006) ‘Hizb ut- Tahrir al-Islami: Evaluating the

which enshrines both the push for recognition of Islamic law, and the move toward creating an Islamic state. HT has gone about recruiting members in the same way as many other similar organisations, by looking for those who share a desire to build an Islamic state, and for those who share the beliefs that the organisation is founded on. Ensuring the dedication and commitment of members toward shared goals is essential to continue the growth of the organisation, and in ultimately attempting to create an Islamic state with ‘citizens’ capable of spreading the message of Islam throughout the globe.²⁸¹

As with many other similar organisations before it, HT has been known to use extremist language to attract followers and to make clear its ultimate aims. This being said, HT has distanced itself from the use of violence, and has made known its position as opposed to the use of violence in advancing its political objectives,²⁸² HT refuses to participate actively in the militant Jihad before the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. Despite the mass migration of Muslims in Greece during the last fifteen years, HT does not retain a significant presence in Greece – a fact that partly explains the low level of radicalisation among the Muslim community.

Yet another important Islamist organisation founded by a non-Arab, is the Pakistani Jamaat e-Islami (JI). JI, which means ‘Islamic Party’, was founded by Syed Abul Ala Maududi, an Islamist theologian and journalist in the city of Lahore, on 26th August 1941 in then British India.²⁸³ ‘The JI ranks among the leading and most

Threat Posed by a Radical Islamic Group that Remains Nonviolent’ 18(2) *Terrorism and Political Violence* p.315

²⁸¹ Hizb-ut-Tahrir, (1999) ‘The Methodology of Hizb-ut-Tahrir for Change’, (London: Al-Khilafah Publications) p.34.

²⁸² Emmanuel Karagiannis and Chris Mc Cauley, (2006) ‘Hizb ut- Tahrir al-Islami: Evaluating the Threat Posed by a Radical Islamic Group that Remains Nonviolent’ 18(2) *Terrorism and Political Violence* p.315

²⁸³ International Crisis Group, ‘Islamic Parties in Pakistan’ (International Crisis Group, 12 December 2011) Available at:

https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1218371/2016_1323945156_216-islamic-parties-in-pakistan.pdf
[Accessed 11 March 2019]

influential Islamic revivalist movements. Maududi in his major book 'Jihad in Islam' described Islam as 'a revolutionary ideology which seeks to alter the social order of the entire world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals.'²⁸⁴

4.2.2 Salafism-Wahhabism

In this section, the author investigates Salafism and Wahhabism in order to alter the misconception that these strands of Islam are associated with Jihadism. Salafism, according to Professor Ahmad Moussali of the American University of Beirut, is 'a very diversified and complicated ideologically and religiously motivated trend and is thus not constructed by one unified discourse or group or authority. As a rule, all Wahhabis are Salafists, but not all Salafists are Wahhabis.'²⁸⁵

Having started as a movement grounded in the aim of achieving theological reform, Wahhabism pursues an objective of *dawah* to reach the proper definition of *tawhid* (Oneness of God or Monotheism) and to disregard 'traditional' disciplines and practises that had evolved in Islamic history, such as theology and jurisprudence. Saleh informs us that 'such disciplines and practices are classified as *shirk* (polytheism), *kufr* (unbelief in God), *ridda* (apostasy), and *bida* (innovations). Its founder, Muhammad Bin Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792), forced people to adhere to a very strict and literal interpretation of 'Monotheism' and to fight *shirk*'.²⁸⁶ Al-Wahhab claims that the mere recognition of one God is not enough, but instead it must be combined with what becomes recognised as 'pure' Islamic behaviour.²⁸⁷ All types of

²⁸⁴ Sayyid Abul 'A'la Maududi, *Jihad fi Sabilillah* (Birmingham: U.K.I.M Dawah Centre, 2010).

²⁸⁵ Moussali. p.215.

²⁸⁶ Ibrahim Saleh (2012) 'Islamic Televangelism: The Salafi Window to Their Paradise' in P. Thomas and P. Lee (eds.) *Global and Local Televangelism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan) p.66.

²⁸⁷ Zeynep Ece Unsal, (2018) 'Terrorism, Radicalism and IS in the Case of Muslim Population in SEEC' in Z. Minchev and M. Bogdanoski (eds.) *Countering Terrorist Activities in Cyberspace* (Amsterdam: IOS Press) p. 63.

Salafism concentrate on the prospect of bringing followers or individuals back to the basics taught within the Quran, and ‘Salafists or Salafis believe that the trajectory of the Islamic communities after the pious *salaf* moved into diverse forms of polytheism (*shirk*), reprehensible innovation (*bida*) and superstition (*khurafa*)’.²⁸⁸

The Salafist doctrine of *tawhid* means the acceptance and belief in the Oneness of God-Allah and His absolute authority. The most important aspect is that while the Salafists emphasise the centrality of *tawhid* in Islam, they aim to distance it far from political meaning, which is unlike most forms of Islamism.²⁸⁹ Salafists also differ from Islamists in a number of other important ways, in that they do not abide by *baya*, which represents an oath of allegiance and loyalty to their leader, and Salafists similarly do not base their ideals or aims on advancing their ideologies in a political sphere. Salafists therefore do not see eye to eye with organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, which takes a much more active role on a political landscape, and consider the actions and objectives of the Brotherhood as distant to pure Islamic *dawah*, and therefore illegitimate.²⁹⁰ Salafists consider that rather than pursue such political means, Muslims should aim to consolidate their religious beliefs to overcome that which threatens pure Islam. Regardless of these important differences, Salafists still advocate for the application of strict *Shariah* law, and see this application as integral to living as a Muslim. Interestingly, Salafists also differ from other organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, because of their rejection of democracy.

²⁸⁸ John Esposito. (1983) ‘Voices of Resurgent Islam’ (New York: Oxford University Press) p. 24.

²⁸⁹ Moussali.p.56

²⁹⁰ The article ‘Dawah’ in the Encyclopedia of Islam.

In his work *Anatomy of the Salafi Movement*,²⁹¹ Quintan Wiktorowicz argues that ‘different contextual readings have produced three major factions in the community: the purists, the politicians and the Jihadis’. According to this thesis, purists are mainly concerned about continuing to follow ‘pure’ Islam as set out in the Quran, the Sunnah and Prophet Muhammad’s teachings. These purists consider it to be their duty to promote their creed and fight against practices which are grounded in human desire or polytheism. One of their overriding duties in this regard is to purify the religion, prevent it from becoming corrupted by those who do not follow strict Islam, and provide education for those who have not yet chosen to pursue this purest form of Islam. As a result of these objectives, purists are often understood to be isolated from much of the rest of the Muslim community, and much of the research supports this, with findings from studies of purist Salafists in Europe suggesting that they live apart from wider society, instead choosing to live in small communities which serve to provide them with the chance to develop their own kinds of ghettos.²⁹²

Purist Salafists become an important consideration for those studying political Islam largely because of their almost complete rejection of the methods most often used by other factions such as the Muslim Brotherhood. In rejecting the use of violence to achieve political means, purists see these methods used by Jihadis as outside of the teachings of Islam, and consider these to be dangerous for the future of Islam.²⁹³ Any kind of endorsement of Western democracy is similarly strongly rejected, as are any ideas of joining in with politics on this basis. To create or join a political party in this sense would be a departure from Islam in placing the interests of this party above those of God and the protection of *tawhid*.

²⁹¹ Quintan Wiktorowicz (2006) ‘Anatomy of the Salafi Movement’, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29 (3), p.p. 207-239.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Marc Lynch, (2010) ‘Veiled Truths: The Rise of Political Islam in the West’ 89 (4) *Foreign Affairs* p.138

From the outset, the Salafi movement was relatively mainstream, and it was only when it began to find differences in opinion with organisations emerging in the 1960's such as the Muslim Brotherhood, that it became somewhat fragmented from the mainstream Muslim community. With the arrival of the Muslim Brotherhood and their organised political agenda, Salafists found themselves being driven to take action to protect what they considered to be the purity of Islam. They saw the emerging politicisation of Islam as a distraction from what should have been the religion and its followers' main goals.²⁹⁴ It was at this point that the Politicos faction of the Salafists began to emerge, brought about by members who felt an extreme responsibility to help to introduce elements of Islam into the wider political community. Whilst maintaining the importance of protecting Islam in its purest form, this branch of purist Salafists aim to bring recognition to this cause in order to protect Islam on a political level.

An important development in the history of the Salafist community is the emergence of a Jihadi faction, which promoted the use of force or violence to create Islamic states. Much of the involvement of Jihadis after this was inspired by the repression which occurred in Saudi Arabia during the 1990's, and the largest concentration of quietist Salafists is still found in the country.²⁹⁵ However, Salafi scholars, in contrast to Wictorowicz and other Western scholars who use the term Salafi-Jihadism, completely reject the idea that Salafism has any connection to Jihadi ideology.²⁹⁶ They argue that Salafism is the Orthodox interpretation of the Islamic

²⁹⁴ Jacob Olidort, 'What Is Salafism? How a Nonpolitical Ideology Became a Political Force' (*Foreign Affairs*, 24 November 2015) Available at: <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2015-11-24/what-salafism>> [Accessed 10 April 2019]

²⁹⁵ Kamran Bokhari and William McCants, 'Experts weigh in (part 9): Is quietist Salafism the antidote to ISIS?' (Brookings, 9 April 2015) Available at: <<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2015/04/09/experts-weigh-in-part-9-is-quietist-salafism-the-antidote-to-isis/>> [Accessed 10 April 2019]

²⁹⁶ A. Belrhiti and B. El-Hmidi, 'ISIS and Kharijite Approaches to Understanding Islam: The Concepts of Khilafah and Jihad' (Morocco World News, 3 December 2014) Available at:

faith, and they condemn the violent actions of Jihadists as un-Islamic. Moreover, as we shall explain in more detail in the next section, they refuse to use the term Jihadism and Jihadists to describe the supposed ‘Islamic terrorism’, instead naming these terrorists ‘dogs of hell’, heretics and Kharijites.²⁹⁷ The author’s view is that whatever we may name these terrorists, the fact is that they use a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith in order to justify violence for political purposes.

4.2.3 Jihadism

Controversies are endemic to scholarly investigation of Jihadism, for it is a minefield beset by definitional quandaries and methodological problems.²⁹⁸ In this section, the author will try to present a definition of the term Jihadism in order for the reader to better understand the threat which derives from this distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith. The term Jihadism is sometimes used interchangeably with the term Islamism. Rather than use the term Jihadism as an ideology which justifies political violence in the name of Islam, some authors use the terms ‘Militant Islamism’, ‘Salafi Jihadism’ and ‘Takfiri Jihadism’. In this thesis, for reasons of intellectual clarity, the author uses the term Jihadism to describe the violent extremism of organisations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS. Islamism, as we have mentioned earlier, has different strands which range from moderate to extremist; its most virulent expression is militant Islamism, better known today as Jihadism.²⁹⁹

<http://www.morocoworldnews.com/2014/12/145920/isis-and-kharijite-approaches-to-understanding-islam-the-concepts-of-khilafah-and-jihad/> [Accessed on 12 March 2019].

²⁹⁷ Shaykh Rami Al Rifai, ‘The Khawarij: The Name of the Most Evil People in Our Time’ (GHAYB, 2015) Available at:

<<https://ghayb.com/2015/09/the-khawarij-the-name-of-the-most-evil-people-in-our-time/>>

[Accessed 1 May 2018]

²⁹⁸ Thomas Hegghammer, ‘Jihadi Salafis or Revolutionaries: On Religion and Politics in the Study of Islamic Militancy’ in R. Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p.p. 244-266.

²⁹⁹ Miryam Lindberg, *Jihadism and Counterterrorism Strategies* (Madrid: Grupo de Estudios

Militant Islamism or Jihadism as defined in this thesis is characterised by (to borrow from Peter Mandaville's book *Global Political Islam*): 'a) a vision of Islamic political order that rejects the legitimacy of the modern sovereign nation-state and seeks to establish a pan-Islamic polity or renewed caliphate; and b) an emphasis on violent struggle (Jihad) as the primary or even the exclusively legitimate method for the pursuit of political change'. Unlike the militants, the Islamists have aimed to establish an Islamic political order through political (electoral, legislative, power-sharing) or social (civil society, informal networking) means.³⁰⁰ Mary Habeck, a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute argues: 'Jihadism is an extreme version of Islamism. Less than one percent of Islamists are Jihadists. The Jihadist ideology holds that they are the only true believers. The rest of world is made up of hostile unbelievers whose sole purpose is the destruction of Islam. These people are thus worthy of attack'.³⁰¹

It is necessary to understand exactly how Jihadists view the tenets of Islam, specifically the concepts of Jihad and *Khilafah* (Caliphate). Jihad focuses on fighting, and draws its legitimacy for this fighting from its beliefs that it is necessary for the protection of the state. In its initial form, Jihad was about spreading the teachings of Islam and its laws across the globe. Since this time, Jihad has evolved to simulate war, and to respond to perceived threats from the West and Western ideology. Thus, the fight is a responsibility of all under Jihad, and all must take part in the response to these threats to protect Islam. Jihadists believe that the only legitimate form of governance is a Caliphate, led by a Caliph. However, in an open letter from Muslim

Estrategicos, 2009) Available at:<http://www.gees.org/files/article/articleAnalysis-07352.pdf> [Accessed 8 December 2018].

³⁰⁰ Peter Mandaville, (2007) 'Global Political Islam' (New York: Routledge) p.46.

³⁰¹ Mary Habeck, (2007) 'Knowing the Enemy': *Jihadist ideology and the War on Terror* (New Haven: Yale University Press.) p.p. 56-57

scholars to the ISIS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, they underline that ‘it is forbidden in Islam to declare a caliphate without consensus from all Muslims’.³⁰²

Beside the misinterpreted doctrine of Jihad and the *Khilafah* stands the doctrine of *Takfir*. This doctrine has been utilised in the past by organisations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS to sanction violence and punish those who they consider do not follow the laws of Islam closely enough. *Takfir* is a pronouncement to declare any (non- practicing Muslim), to be an unbeliever (*Takfir*), apostate, (*Murtad*) hence liable to be killed. Leaders in the Muslim community including Hassan al-Hudaybi and Yousuf al-Qaradawi, argue that *Takfir* is un-Islamic, and promotes the kind of intolerance which has the potential to lead to sectarianism and extremism. Prominent Saudi scholars have also condemned and strongly rejected the ‘*Takfir*’ doctrine.³⁰³ Mansour Salim Alshammari, in his doctoral thesis ‘*Takfir and Terrorism: Historical Roots, Contemporary Challenges and Dynamic Solutions. With special reference to Al-Qaeda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*’, argues that:

the origin of the concept of takfir stemmed from the Kharijites. One of the main reasons that guided the Kharijites to takfir and other related matters was their ignorance of Islamic principles. Hence they have committed several deviations, such as extremism, literally over adherence to the religious provisions. They pronounce as infidels anyone with committing [sic] the slightest fault; following the ambiguous verses of the Quran rather than the clear ones and they honored the corrupted interpretation. The Kharijites issued judgments

³⁰² Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, ‘Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi’ (lettertobaghdadi.com, 2014) Available at: <<http://www.lettertobaghdadi.com/>> [Accessed 12 March 2015]

³⁰³ Islamic Studies Online, ‘Takfir’ (Oxford Islamic Studies, 2018) Available at: <<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2319>> [Accessed 16 February 2019]

*on the basis of personal passions rather than the Islamic texts. They suffer a fundamental misunderstanding of the threats and rewards put forth in Islamic texts. Likewise, major flaws are found in their doctrine of loyalty and disavowal. These are all as a result of their ignorance of the provisions of Islamic faith.*³⁰⁴

In relation to the above quote, it is possible to link modern Jihadi ideology to that of the ancient Kharijite, which have been granted notoriety as posing a danger to Islam and the Muslim community as a whole. Classical Kharijites were a group of Muslim extremists who lived in the 7th Century A.D and set themselves apart from the mainstream Muslim community. Modern Jihadi groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIS are considered to be the modern Kharijites by traditional Muslim scholars because these groups use the same language, concepts, methods and treatment of Islamic religious affairs as the classical Kharijites.³⁰⁵ This danger is evidenced by a statement made by the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Al ash-Sheikh, in August of 2014, who declared that ‘extremist and militant ideas and terrorism which spread decay on Earth, destroying human civilisation are not in any way part of Islam, but are enemy number one of Islam, and Muslims are their first victims’.³⁰⁶ Ahmad Eldin, a Greek Salafi theologian, shares the same view, arguing that ‘it is very important to say that extremists who commit acts of terror in the name of Islam have

³⁰⁴ Mansour Salim H Alshammari, ‘Takfir and Terrorism: Historical Roots, Contemporary Challenges and Dynamic Solutions. With special reference to al-Qacida and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’ (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2013) Available at: <<http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/5340/1/Mansour%20Alshammari%20200158823.pdf>> [Accessed 16 February 2019]

³⁰⁵ Rashid Ali and Hannah Stuart, ‘A Guide to Refuting Jihadism’ (The Henry Jackson Society, 2014) Available at: <<http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Refuting-Jihadism.pdf>> [Accessed 12 March 2019]

³⁰⁶ Reuters, ‘Saudi Arabia’s Grand Mufti denounces Islamic State group as un-Islamic’ (Reuters, 25 August 2014) Available at: <<http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2014/08/25/saudi-arabias-grand-mufti-denounces-islamic-state-group-as-un-islamic/>> [Accessed 12 March 2019]

nothing to do with Islamic Orthodoxy and pious Muslims'.³⁰⁷

In conclusion, Jihadism is an ideology which justifies violence in the name of Islam by using a distorted interpretation of Islamic religious texts. In the next two sections, the author will examine the two most significant modern-day Jihadi organisations posing an immediate threat to international security in general and to Western security in particular. As this thesis shows clearly, Greece has thus far escaped the threat of Jihadist violence due to several reasons outlined in detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

4.3 Al-Qaeda and ISIS

In this section, the author will make a brief presentation of the two most important Jihadi organisations: Al Qaeda and ISIS; which are deemed a major threat to international security as a result of their terrorist agenda and activities. Al Qaeda and a number of other extremist organisations emerged either during or shortly after the Soviet-Afghan war, which lasted from 1979-1989. Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda's leader, found support for his extreme ideas amongst others who shared his commitment to the setting up of an organisation which would promote them.³⁰⁸ In August of 1996, Bin Laden issued a Declaration of War against the USA. In February of 1998, he announced an alliance of terrorist organisations known as the 'International Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders'. According to Bin Laden's 1998 religious decree (*fatwa*), it is the duty of all Muslims around the world to wage 'holy war' - Jihad - against the USA and its allies. Muslims who do not heed this call are declared apostates.

³⁰⁷ Ahmed Eldin, 'Οι Χαρακτήρες' (AhmedEldin.Org, 2015) Available at:

<<https://ahmedeldin.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/xaritzhtes.pdf>> [Accessed 12 March 2019]

³⁰⁸ Institute for Global Change, 'Violent Islamist Extremism: A Global Problem' (Institute for Global Change, 13 September 2018) Available at: <<https://institute.global/insight/co-existence/violent-islamist-extremism-global-problem>> [Accessed 15 March 2019]

Soon after the alliance was announced, in August 1998, Al Qaeda bombed US embassies in Nairobi and Daar es-Salaam. On 11 September 2001, Al Qaeda realised the most spectacular of its terrorist attacks against the USA by organising the hijacking of four passenger jets and intentionally crashing them onto the Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C causing the death of almost 3,000 innocent civilians. Moreover, Al Qaeda was responsible for other two major terrorist attacks on European soil at the time. The first was the Madrid train bombing on 11 March 2004, when Al Qaeda inspired terrorists attacked the commuter train system of Madrid three days before Spain's general elections, killing 192 innocent civilians and injuring 1,800.³⁰⁹ The second major attack was against the London transportation system on 7 July 2005, in which 52 innocent civilians and four Al Qaeda suicide bombers were killed, and 700 people injured.³¹⁰ Of course the above mentioned incidents were only the most notable of a series of attacks that Al Qaeda perpetrated against its enemies.

Over the past decade, Al Qaeda has suffered several setbacks both in Iraq and in Afghanistan, which have led to increased support for Jihadist thinkers, and which have led to the adoption of 'individual' Jihad, carried out by individuals or small-scale operational cells.³¹¹ Osama Bin Laden's death at the hands of the US military in 2011 came as a setback for Al-Qaeda, but it has retained its ominous presence since this time, with experts still claiming that it poses a danger to future stability both in

³⁰⁹ BBC News, 'Al-Qaeda 'claims Madrid bombings'' (BBC, 14 March 2004) Available at: <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3509426.stm>> [Accessed 26 March 2018]

³¹⁰ Paul Carsten, 'Al-Qaeda Attacks in Europe since September 11' (The Telegraph, 21 March 2012) Available at: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/al-qaeda/9157929/Al-Qaeda-attacks-in-Europe-since-September-11.html>> [Accessed 25 March 2018]

³¹¹ Ilan Berman, 'The Once and Future Threat: Al-Qaeda Is Hardly Dead' (World Affairs, June 2014) Available at: <<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/once-and-future-threat-al-qaeda-hardly-dead>> [Accessed 12 March 2018]

the Middle East and to the West, which has been the organisations target for many of its activities.³¹²

Even before Bin Laden's death, Al Qaeda had started to develop from a single hierarchical terrorist organisation into a network of affiliated but largely autonomous groups, operating from North Africa to Southeast Asia.³¹³ The most prominent of these affiliated groups are Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Lashkar e- Taiba (Pakistan and Kashmir), Abu Sayyaf Group (Malaysia, Philippines), Jemaah Islamiya (Indonesia and Southeast Asia), Boko Haram (Nigeria), Jabhat al Nusra (Syria) and Al Shabab Group (Somalia) which merged officially with Al Qaeda in early 2012.³¹⁴ All these groups share al-Qaeda's Jihadist ideology. Currently, the organisational affiliate with the greatest capacity for engaging in concerted terror attacks is AQAP, as the latest deadly attacks against the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris demonstrated.³¹⁵

The Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) also known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and since June 2014 renamed as the 'Islamic State' (IS), stands out as the most notorious contemporary Jihadist organisation in the world – surpassing even Al Qaeda in violence and notoriety. The author, out of respect for the Islamic notion of the Islamic state, will not use the term 'IS', but 'ISIS', in order to

³¹² Declan Walsh, 'Ayman al-Zawahiri to head al-Qaeda following Bin Laden's death' (The Guardian, 16 June 2011) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/16/ayman-al-zawahiri-al-qaida> [Accessed on 15 September 2018]

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ J.M. Berger, 'Al Qaeda's Merger' (Foreign Policy, 15 February 2012) Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/14/al_qaedas_merger [Accessed 15 March 2019].

³¹⁵ Jason Burke and Monica Mark, 'Al-Qaida in Yemen uses video to claim responsibility for Charlie Hebdo attack' (The Guardian, 14 January 2015) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/14/al-qaida-claims-responsibility-charlie-hebdo-attack-paris> [Accessed 12 March 2018]

distinguish between the Islamic state, which is based on mainstream Islamic tradition, and the self-declared ‘Islamic State’, which is an organisation based on Jihadi-Takfiri ideology.

Although mainly based within Syria and Iraq, ISIS’s roots lie in Jordan and Afghanistan and date back to at least 1999.³¹⁶ ISIS’s previous successes across Syria and Iraq have led security analysts to consider the organisation as a credible threat, and it has been treated by international security agencies as more than just a simple terrorist organisation.³¹⁷ ISIS’s objectives lie in the Middle East, mainly in Iraq and Syria, and it continues to encourage attacks on Western shores by its supporters in other countries, arguably making it even more deadly and the threat even harder to diffuse. Although ISIS’s predecessor, Tanzim Qa’idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn, also known as Al Qaeda in Iraq, and its leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden in September 2004,³¹⁸ in February 2014, Al Qaeda’s new leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced: ‘ISIS is not a branch of the Al-Qaeda group, we have no organisational relationship with it, and the group is not responsible for its actions’.³¹⁹ By the end of June 2014, ISIS, after the rapid seizure of the Iraqi city of Mosul on June 10, released an audio recording that announced the formation of the caliphate and its leader as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the Caliph Ibrahim.³²⁰

³¹⁶ Institute for Global Change, ‘Diving Deep into the Origins of ISIS’ (Institute for Global Change, 3 December 2014) Available at <<https://institute.global/insight/co-existence/diving-deep-origins-isis>> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Aaron Zelin, ‘As-Sahab Media presents a new statement from al-Qa’idah on the relationship of Qa’idat al-Jihad and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham’ (Jihadology, 2014) Available at: <http://jihadology.net/2014/02/02/as-sa%E1%B8%A5ab-media-presents-a-new-statement-from-al-qaidah-on-the-relationship-of-qaidat-al-jihad-and-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-sham/> [Accessed 21 February 2019].

³²⁰ Jihadist News, ‘ISIS Spokesman Declares Caliphate, Rebrands Group as Islamic State’ (SITE, 29 June 2014) Available at: <https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/isis-spokesman-declares-caliphate-rebrands-group->

According to Dr. Usama Hasan, an expert from the Quilliam Foundation:

An Islamist caliphate, by definition, covers the entire 'Muslim World'... The hypothetical return of a Caliph in Islamic jurisprudence implies a large degree of Muslim unity, with these united Muslim masses willingly pledging allegiance to him. This is the fundamental mistake of [IS], a fatal flaw for their theological credentials. They may have been entitled to declare an 'Islamic emirate' (as the Taliban did in Afghanistan) or even an 'Islamic state,' just as Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Mauritania are 'Islamic republics.' But to declare a caliphate for all Muslims when they rule over, at best, a few tens of millions Syrians and Iraqis out of a worldwide Muslim population of 1.2-1.5 billion, is to destroy any notion of Muslim representation or unity.³²¹

Despite the damage that ISIS suffered as a result of US air strikes taking place in Syria and Iraq since August 2014, the group still controls large patches of territory in both regions, where the continuing fighting is attracting large numbers of foreign fighters.³²² Some reports have estimated that there are around 15,000 foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria from at least 80 different countries.³²³ The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), estimated that around 20,730 foreign fighters have travelled through Syria and Iraq over the three years

[as-islamic-state.html](#) [Accessed 21 February 2019]

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² James Black and others, 'Troubled waters: a snapshot of security challenges in the Mediterranean region' (RAND, 2012) Available at: https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE221/RAND_PE221.pdf [Accessed 17 March 2019]

³²³ Spencer Ackerman, 'Foreign jihadists flocking to Iraq and Syria on 'unprecedented scale' – UN' (The Guardian, 30 October 2014) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/30/foreign-jihadist-iraq-syria-unprecedented-un-isis> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

preceding its report, further demonstrating the imminent and ongoing nature of the threat posed by ISIS.³²⁴

Although ISIS, has been defeated in Iraq and Syria³²⁵ the foreign returning fighters pose an immediate terrorist threat to the West. The concerns about returning foreign fighters who may commit acts of terrorism, and the particular fear about Syria and Iraq are both justified and exaggerated.³²⁶ In the most comprehensive study of Jihadist foreign fighters conducted so far, Hegghammer finds that only one in nine foreign fighters returning from fighting abroad were determined to commit acts of terrorism at home, which is a low percentage, but still significant.³²⁷ As Hegghammer argues, the Jihadi groups in Syria and Iraq today ‘are not systematically trying to mount operations in the west’.³²⁸ In the remaining chapters of this work, the focus of attention will be on the security risk posed by these foreign fighters, who fought for ISIS or Al Qaeda-affiliated organisations in Iraq and Syria, returning to the UK and Greece.

³²⁴ Peter R. Neumann (2015) ‘Foreign fighter total in Syria/Iraq now exceeds 20,000; surpasses Afghanistan conflict in the 1980s’ (ICSR, 26 January) Available at: <<http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/>> [Accessed 21 February 2019]

³²⁵ Gemma Fox, Isis caliphate defeated: A timeline of the terror group's brutal project (The Independent 27 October 2019) Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-timeline-caliphate-iraq-syria-territory-defeated-a8782351.html> [Accessed 16 November 2019]

³²⁶ Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, ‘Be Afraid. Be A Little Afraid: The Threat of Terrorism from Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq’ (Brookings, November 2014) Available at: <<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2014/11/western-foreign-fighters-in-syria-and-iraq-byman-shapiro/be-afraid--web.pdf>> [Accessed 15 February 2019]

³²⁷ Thomas Hegghammer, ‘Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists’ Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting’ (American Political Science Review, February 2013) Available at: <http://hegghammer.com/files/HegghammerShould_I_stay_or_should_I_go.pdf> [Accessed 12 March 2019]

³²⁸ Ibid.

4.4 Conclusions

The vast majority of Muslims living in the West, as well as in Muslim majority countries, vehemently reject Islamist ideology in general and Jihadism in particular. Though little noticed in media reporting, moderate Muslim leaders and organisations in the West openly condemned al-Qaeda and similar groups in the wake of 9/11 and beyond. Jihadist attacks around the globe have resulted, apart from the deaths of innocent civilians and among them of many ordinary Muslims, in growing criticism of Islam. Mainstream Muslims in the West are also victims of Jihadists in a more subtle though no less tangible way: the actions and rhetoric of Islamists often produce blind, visceral responses from far-right groups, leading to increased racism, religious bigotry and 'Islamophobia'. This chapter has revealed many things about the nature and implications of Jihadism, including that it exists as an extremist ideology based on a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith, which justifies violence for political purposes. Ultimately, however, existing research on the topic would suggest that Jihadism and its various manifestations should be considered as a threat to the West, rather than the wider Islamic religion as a whole.

CHAPTER 5: UK and the Jihadist Threat

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the current security environment in the UK in regard to the Jihadist threat. More specifically, the purpose of this chapter is on the one hand to map the most important Islamist organisations in the UK and their connections to international Islamist organisations like the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb-ut- Tahrir and Jamaat e-Islami; and on the other hand to present the threat posed by Jihadist terrorism. Moreover, the author also examines the problem of radicalisation among British Muslims and the factors that have led to an increased level of threat in the UK.

5.2 Muslims in the UK

There has been a significant Muslim presence in the UK since the beginning of the 19th century when Muslim sailors and traders from the Middle East began settling around the major ports of Britain.³²⁹ The major growth of the Muslim population in the UK started immediately after the Second World War. This growth was the result of a wave of immigration of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians who reached British shores in order to fill specific demands in certain declining industrial cities in the South East, the Midlands and the North.³³⁰ In the 1970s, Arab communities began to settle in London, and since then, a steady flow of Muslim political dissidents as well as economic immigrants have settled in the UK. Since the

³²⁹ T. Abbas (2007) 'Muslim Minorities in Britain: Integration, Multiculturalism and Radicalism in the Post 7/7 Period' 28(3) *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 287

³³⁰ J. Nielsen (2005) *Muslims in Western Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) p.32.

1990s, Muslims from the Balkans (Bosnia and Kosovo), Africa (Nigeria and Somalia) and the Middle East (Iraq and Afghanistan) chose to relocate to the United Kingdom.³³¹ Two out of three Muslims in the UK are of South Asian origin and around half of British Muslims originate from Pakistan. Moreover, half of all Muslims in the UK are British born, a fact that makes them, by definition, British citizens.³³²

Islam is Britain's fastest-growing religion. According to a survey, the Muslim population in Britain has grown from 500,000 to 2.4 million in just four years.³³³ Experts have said that the increase was attributable to immigration, a higher birthrate and conversions to Islam during the period of 2004-2008, when the data was gathered. These same commentators claimed that it also suggested a growing willingness among believers to describe themselves as Muslims because the western reaction to war and terrorism had strengthened their sense of identity.³³⁴ A report published in November 2017, by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, estimated that in 2016, 4,130,000 Muslims were living in the UK, representing 6.3% of the total population.³³⁵

³³¹ T. Abbas (2007) p.78.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Richard Kerbaj, 'Muslim population 'rising 10 times faster than rest of society'' (The Times, 30 January 2009) Available at: <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/muslim-population-rising-10-times-faster-than-rest-of-society-2tr5r8kjzks>> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

³³⁴ PEW Research Forum, 'U.S. Muslims Concerned About Their Place in Society, but Continue to Believe in the American Dream' (Pew Research Center, 26 July 2017) Available at: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/findings-from-pew-research-centers-2017-survey-of-us-muslims/>> [Accessed 26 July 2018]

³³⁵ PEW Research Center, 'Europe's Growing Muslim Population' (PEW Center, 29 November 2017) Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/> [Accessed 11 July 2018]

5.3 Islamists and Jihadists in the UK

5.3.1 An Outlook

The historical roots of contemporary Islamism, as we mentioned in some detail in chapter 4, can be traced to the movement of the Muslim Brotherhood, established in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna.³³⁶ The Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat e-Islami, which was founded by Syed Abul Ala Maududi in Pakistan in 1941,³³⁷ and Hizb-ut-Tahrir, which was founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by Taqiuddin al-Nabhani,³³⁸ represent contemporary Islamism. Al Qaeda and ISIS, on the other hand, as described in the previous chapter, represent the ideology of Jihadism, an extremist strand of Islamism, which uses a distorted interpretation of Islam to justify violence for political purposes. Over the last two decades, London has become home to a variety of Islamist activists. In Britain we have two strands of Islamist extremism. The first comes from the immigration of foreign extremists from North Africa and the Middle East who arrived on British shores during the 1980s and 1990s. The second, along with some converts to Islam, came from the radicalisation of the UK's second-generation Muslims.³³⁹

In the early 1990s, Arab Jihadist exiles from North Africa started immigrating to London in large numbers. Many of them were veterans of the Afghani Jihad. These Afghan Arab warriors were attracted by Britain's 'traditions of democracy and

³³⁶ Richard Mitchell, (1969) 'The Society of the Muslim Brothers' (New York: Oxford University Press.) p.p. 21-24.

³³⁷ Pew Research Center, 'Muslim Brotherhood and Jama'at-I Islami' (Pew Research Center, 15 September 2010) Available at:
<<http://www.pewforum.org/2010/09/15/muslim-networks-and-movements-in-western-europe-muslim-brotherhood-and-jamaat-i-islami/>> [Accessed 15 March 2019]

³³⁸ Counter Extremism Project, 'Hizb ut-Tahrir' (Counter Extremism Project, 2018) Available at:
<<https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/hizb-ut-tahrir>> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

³³⁹ Melanie Phillips (2007) 'Londonistan' (London: Gibson Square).p.p 12-16.

justice.’³⁴⁰ Reda Hussaine, an Algerian journalist and informant to the French and British authorities, states that the Algerian connection was essential, since ‘they came to the UK, the only country that gave asylum and did not ask a lot of questions’. Then they started to organise themselves inside the UK and plan plots against the West. They recruited an extremist preacher from Jordan, Abu Qatada, and ordered him to travel to London to become a preacher in a mosque in Finsbury Park. Abu Qatada was the publisher of a newspaper written on behalf of the Algerian terrorist group GIA, in London in the early 1990s, and was also the ‘spiritual head of the *Mujahideen* in Britain’, according to Spanish prosecutor Baltazar Garzon.³⁴¹

The Finsbury Park mosque has become a central location for Jihad in the UK, and became synonymous with extremism as a result of the infamous Abu Hamza, hate preacher and convicted terrorist. Hamza created a ‘suicide cell’, using Finsbury Park as a cover for his extremist teachings, and emerged as a popular hate figure in London, whose image, with a hook for a hand and a glass eye, became the face of ugly extremism.³⁴² Abu Hamza soon became recognised as one of the most dangerous men in Britain, with his ability to radicalise worshippers at the mosque and particularly young men, encouraging them to adopt extremist ideas and persuading them that they had to play an active role to protect Islam from Western ideology, posing a direct threat to security and stability across the country. The Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica*, reported that Hamza had produced a plot to kill President Bush at a G8 summit in Genoa, using his Finsbury Park mosque as a meeting place

³⁴⁰ Nicolas Pelham, ‘Bin Laden’s strong links to Britain’ (BBC News Online, 26 September 2001) Available at: <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1564626.stm>> [Accessed 3 March 2018]

³⁴¹ Shiraz Maher, ‘The struggle to deal with foreign terror suspects’ (The Spectator, 3 July 2012) Available at: <<http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/2012/07/the-struggle-to-deal-with-foreign-terror-suspects>> [Accessed 10 July 2018]

³⁴² Sean O’Neill and Daniel McGrory, (2010) ‘The Suicide Factory’: *Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque* (New York: Harper Perennial) p.p.56-59.

for his extremist supporters.³⁴³ Although the Board of Trustees for the mosque attempted to oust Hamza, they were unsuccessful, and threats of violence were made against them. This remains proof of how dangerous a single individual with extremist ideas can be for national security in countries like the UK, and of how easy it is for young people to be radicalised in locations which become a hotbed for terrorism, like the Finsbury Park mosque.

Some of the most infamous extremists to come out of the Finsbury Park mosque include Richard Reid the ‘shoe bomber’, Moussaoui, who was known for his involvement in the 9/11 attacks, and Ahmed Ressam, whose plot to bomb a LA airport was luckily foiled when he was intercepted and arrested.³⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the British authorities were unsuccessful in prosecuting Hamza or stopping him from preaching, and he was able to continue his preaching based on the concept of Jihad until 2003, when he was finally thwarted during a raid on the mosque due to reports of his involvement in a terrorist plot involving ricin poisoning. In April of 2003, an attempt was made by the Home Office to remove Hamza’s citizenship, which would lead to his deportation. Even throughout this process, however, Hamza continued to defy the British authorities, moving his preaching to the busy streets surrounding the London mosque, and continuing to preach hate toward the West and the UK population. The only thing to ultimately stop Hamza was his extradition to the US, which at least prevented him from continuing his extremist activities in the UK. How many of his supporters remain in the UK, potentially under the leadership of a new candidate, however, remains unknown. The chaos has continued at Finsbury Park as it has since come to light that one of the new trustees appointed following Hamza’s departure was none other than Mohammed Kassem Sawalha, President of the Muslim

³⁴³ Stephen Ulph, ‘Londonistan’ (2007) 2(4) *Terrorism Monitor* 1

³⁴⁴ Leiken, S. Robert (2012), *Europe’s Angry Muslims: The Revolt of the Second Generation*, New York: Oxford University Press p. 78.

Association of Britain, who according to USA court documents, was involved in Hamas terror operations.³⁴⁵

5.3.2 Islamist Organisations in the UK

The aim of this section is to illustrate the presence and activities of Islamist organisations in the UK which are connected either directly or indirectly to violent extremism and the ideology of Jihadism. Peter R. Neumann, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, has described them as ‘gateway organisations’. These organisations ‘though not directly involved in violence may facilitate individuals in adopting extremist political and religious views that may move them towards violent forms of extremism.’³⁴⁶ Neumann’s view, however, is contested by other experts such as Robert Lambert, who in his book ‘*Countering Al-Qaeda in London: Police and Muslims in Partnership*’ made the case that non-violent Islamist organisations could be more useful in the fight against violent Islamists, and that is why the British government should try to engage with them.³⁴⁷

At this point, it is worth mapping the various Islamist organisations operating in the UK. The most important organisation in the UK with close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood is the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). In 1997, the Egyptian ‘Muslim brother’ Dr. Kamal Helbawy set up the MAB, which was established to ‘promote and propagate the principles of positive Muslim interaction with all elements of society to reflect, project and convey the message of Islam in its pure and unblemished form’.³⁴⁸ There have been claims that the MAB is linked to Hamas, but

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Peter Neumann (2008) ‘Joining Al-Qaeda’ (London: Routledge) p.p. 23-25.

³⁴⁷ Robert Lambert (2013) ‘Countering Al-Qaeda in London’: *Police and Muslims in Partnership* (New York: Columbia University Press). p.135.

³⁴⁸ MAB, ‘About MAB’ (MAB, 2017) Available at: <<https://www.mabonline.net/about/>> [Accessed 6 March 2019]

it has worked alongside the Stop the War Coalition and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Its founder Kemal e-Helbawy was previously a member of the Central Guidance Bureau of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, and according to Bergen and the UK think tank Policy Exchange, the MAB is the closest organisation in Britain to the Muslim Brotherhood.³⁴⁹ Azzam Tamimi is one of the MAB's prominent members, having served as former spokesman.³⁵⁰

In a number of incidents, he made comments to defend those involved in suicide attacks in Palestine, calling them martyrs: 'do not call them suicide bombers, call them martyrs... For us Muslims martyrdom is not the end of things but the beginning of the most wonderful things'.³⁵¹ Another former spokesman for the MAB, Anas Altikriti, now heads the Cordoba Foundation identified by the then leader of the Opposition and former British Prime Minister David Cameron as 'a front for the Muslim Brotherhood'.³⁵² In 2003, Louise Ellman MP told Parliament that the MAB organised a series of meetings with the American imam Anwar Al-Awlaki.³⁵³ Anwar Al-Awlaki, the deceased leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula(AQAP), has been linked to a number of Jihadists, including two of 9/11 hijackers, Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan and Christmas Day bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab.³⁵⁴

One of the world's most important Islamist organisations is Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT) which has its headquarters in the UK. Its ideology is similar to Al-Qaeda's, with

³⁴⁹ Kiran Stacey, 'Government to withhold full UK Muslim Brotherhood report' (Financial Times, 29 December 2014) Available at:

<<https://www.ft.com/content/04f83ed6-8aa0-11e4-be0e-00144feabdc0>> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

³⁵⁰ Azzam Tamimi, 'The right to rule ourselves' (The Guardian, 7 January 2005) Available at:

<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/jan/07/iraq.comment>> [Accessed 15 December 2018]

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, 'The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign 2003-2016' (Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, February 2017) Available at:

<http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2008/03/David_Cameron_Speech_to_the_Community_Security_Trust.aspx> [Accessed 15 December 2018]

³⁵³ Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens and Jacob Amis, 'The Making of the Christmas Day Bomber' (2010) 10(1) *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 116

³⁵⁴ Brian Ross, 'Anwar Al-Awlaki: From American Boy to Face of Terror' (ABC News, 30 September 2011) Available at: <<https://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/anwar-al-awlaki-american-boy-face-terror/story?id=13666145>> [Accessed 17 March 2019]

differences not over aims, but mainly over strategy. For HT the best means of achieving the global Caliphate is not through terrorism, but by infiltrating the political, administrative and military elites in key majority countries, who are expected to overthrow their governments and establish Islamist regimes.³⁵⁵ HT Britain's (HTB) activities demonstrate the party's 'keep your ideology in your heart' strategy. Since the attacks on London now known as the 7/7 bombings, the HTB has taken new steps to hide the intolerance that it preaches. It has done so by disguising extremist ideology within notions of political struggle and the use of euphemistic language, which serve to cover for its support of Jihad and totalitarianism.³⁵⁶

The HTB has adopted front groups to disseminate its ideology. The Brick Lane Islamic Circle is a good example of this, and it provides what are called 'weekly study sessions' from a community center in the Tower Hamlets area of London. The HTB has become infamous for radicalising young Muslims, through encouraging them to work toward the organisations' objectives and by aiming its efforts at recruitment on local universities, youth groups and mosques.³⁵⁷ There have also been claims that the organisation has begun to target school-aged children, with the Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation being central to these claims, as a charity involved with the day-to-day running of two primary schools, including the teaching of religion. Whilst the schools have received praise from Ofsted for their work in developing a positive 'Islamic ethos', and the charity has been in receipt of large grants from the government, there remain concerns about the teachings and the activities of the

³⁵⁵ Jason Burke, 'Rise and fall of Isis: its dream of a caliphate is over, so what now?' (The Guardian, 21 October 2017) Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/21/isis-caliphate-islamic-state-raqqa-iraq-islamist>> [Accessed 18 March 2019]

³⁵⁶ Houriya Ahmed & Hannah Stuart, 'Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy' (Henry Jackson Society, 2009) Available at:

<<http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/HIZB.pdf>> [Accessed 18 March 2019]

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

Foundation and its members elsewhere.³⁵⁸ The party's Chairman, Abdul Wahid, has been outspoken on preventing extremism, and was even involved in the government's own Preventing Violent Extremism programme, and this kind of work has been integral to fending off accusations about the charity's extremist links.

Following the 2005 London bombings the UK government attempted to ban HT, but UK security agencies could find no links between the organisation and any kind of violent extremism.³⁵⁹ Since the introduction of the Terrorism Act in 2006, the organisation has been extra careful not to become embroiled with any activities which might amount to terrorism in the eyes of the British government, and it remains operational in its current capacity.³⁶⁰ There has been some movement, however, to ban HT from universities in the UK, although how successful this has been remains unknown.³⁶¹ It has also attracted attention since this time, largely due to a BBC programme aired in 2007 where claims were made by a former HT member that many of the organisation members were in fact known terrorists³⁶².

An Islamist organisation with terrorist links is the Al-Muhajiroun (AM), which split from HT in 1996 and was led by the radical preacher Omar Bakri Mohammed.³⁶³ Bakri specified the differences between Al-Muhajiroun and HT,

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ BBC News, '7 July London bombings: 15 changes to anti-terror planning' (BBC News, 19 October 2007) Available at: <http://www.microconflict.eu/publications/PWP7_RB_JB.pdf> [Accessed 14 December 2018]

³⁶⁰ UK Parliament, 'Reviewing counter-terrorism legislation: key issues for the 2010 Parliament' (UK Parliament, 2010) Available at: <<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-for-the-new-parliament/security-and-liberty/reviewing-counter-terrorism-legislation/>> [Accessed 18 March 2019]

³⁶¹ Steve Bloomfield, Raymond Whitaker and Sophie Goodchild, 'Islamic group in secret plan to recruit UK students' (The Independent, 4 September 2005) Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/islamic-group-in-secret-plan-to-recruit-uk-students-505497.html> [Accessed 14 December 2018].

³⁶² Paul Williams, (2008), 'Security Studies' 2nd edition, New York, Routledge, p.458.

³⁶³ David Kilcullen, (2007), 'Subversion and Counterversion in the Campaign against Terrorism in

stating: ‘Muhajiroun believes in twinning *dawah* (the call to Islam) and Jihad, whereas HT does not believe that Jihad can be waged by agents not affiliated to the Islamic state.’³⁶⁴ AM’s stated aims include overthrowing the current British government, although the organisation promotes the need to do this without resorting to violence. In doing so, it would aim to bring about an Islamic state, which would operate in the UK under Shariah law.³⁶⁵ According to Anjem Choudary, the leader of AM in Britain, ‘we would continue to conquer other countries, removing the obstacles in the way of establishing the *Shariah* until we have the domination of Islam globally’.³⁶⁶ In other words, the group seeks the establishment of a global Islamic Caliphate, a goal shared with other Islamist organisations.

It has since gone through various mutations, including several name changes, but some of its key personnel have remained unchanged.³⁶⁷ Ideologically the group adopted a more aggressive stance than HT, by sanctioning attacks against Western soldiers in Afghanistan and glorifying the 9/11 attacks against the USA.³⁶⁸ In its public statements the group rejected any active involvement in violence. In reality, however, Bakri and his colleagues helped members to make their way to the forefront of the ‘global Jihad’. Bakri said that he could provide people with references that would enable them to participate in terrorist training camps.³⁶⁹ Critics have suggested that since the acknowledgement of such activities, ‘the question is no longer whether

Europe’, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 30 (8), p.p. 647-666.

³⁶⁴ Anthony Glees and Chris Pope, (2005) ‘When Students Turn to Terror’ (London: The Social Affairs Unit.) p.99.

³⁶⁵ Catherine Zara Raymond, ‘Al Muhajiroun and Islam4UK’ (ICSR, May 2010) Available at: <http://icsr.info/publications/papers/1276697989CatherineZaraRaymondICSRPaper.pdf> [Accessed 14 December 2018].

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Michael Whine, ‘Will the Ban on the Al-Muhajiroun Successor Groups Work?’ paper published by the International Institute for Counterterrorism, (Herzliya-Israel, 2006) Available at: <http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/224/currentpage/10/Default.aspx> [Accessed 4 March 2019].

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

AM should be regarded as a gateway organisation, but rather whether it ought to be considered a terrorist group.³⁷⁰

In October 2004, Bakri chose to disband the group in the ‘interests of Islamic unity’. Shortly after, he requested a coalition with Al Qaeda, with bin Laden as leader. This announcement led some of the members of the group to splinter, and many of them went on to join either *Al Ghurabaa* (The Strangers) and the Saviour Sect. These two groups had already been banned in accordance with the British Terrorism Act of 2006, but they managed to get around this by forming many other smaller organisations which allowed their members to continue their activities uninterrupted.³⁷¹ In August 2005, Omar Bakri left for Lebanon, and his successor, Anjem Choudary, formally introduced a new Islamist group, *Ahl al Sunnah Wal Jamaa’ah* (The Messenger and his Companions), which aimed to unite members of all of the splinter groups.³⁷² Under the Terrorism Act of 2000, a group or organisation can be prohibited if it ‘commits or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for, promotes or encourages terrorism or is otherwise concerned in terrorism’. Groups can also be banned if they ‘unlawfully glorify the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism’.³⁷³ The activities of HT’s leaders in creating splinter groups, however, demonstrate how difficult it can be to track extremist practices, and to prevent such groups from encouraging radicalisation amongst the UK population.

³⁷⁰ Neumann, R. Peter (2008), *Joining Al-Qaeda*, London: Routledge p. 78.

³⁷¹ Ian Cobain and Nick Fielding, ‘Banned Islamists spawn front organisations’ (The Guardian, 22 July 2006) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2006/jul/22/terrorism.world> [Accessed 14 December 2018]

³⁷² Rachel Bryson, ‘How six Islamist ideologues shaped jihadi activity in Britain’ (The National, 3 October 2017) Available at: <https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/how-six-islamist-ideologues-shaped-jihadi-activity-in-britain-1.663714> [Accessed 15 December 2018]

³⁷³ BBC News, ‘Islam4UK Islamist group banned under terror laws’ (BBC News, 12 January 2019) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/8453560.stm [Accessed 12 March 2019].

5.4 Radicalisation

5.4.1 Radicalisation of Muslims in the UK

The UK has had significant experience on the issue of radicalisation affecting British Muslims, and this might be valuable in the case of Greece. The terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004 and in London in 2005 introduced two new concepts: ‘home grown terrorism and radicalisation’.³⁷⁴ As shown in chapters 7 and 8, these two concepts were used by the author in the collection and analysis of the data from the interviews to understand the nature of the phenomenon of Jihadist violence.

Estimates from 2008 placed the number of individuals in the UK involved in Al-Qaeda-inspired activities at around 2,000.³⁷⁵ Muslim communities in Britain have become the target of much speculation over the years since 9/11, but attention in the UK has been particularly intense in the wake of the 7/7 bombings in London. Many ideas have been advanced on the topic of radicalisation, but it has proven difficult to say with any certainty just what factors or motivations come into play in predicting the radicalisation of Muslim people. In the British case, key places where radicalisation occurred were: the Finsbury Park Mosque (21/7), Speakers Corner-Hyde Park (21/7), the Iqra bookstore in Beeston (7/7), local mosques (fertiliser plot), trips to Pakistan (Fertiliser plot, 7/7), Tablighi Jamaat meetings/events (Transatlantic plot, London/Glasgow airport plot), University Islamic student groups (transatlantic plot, Christmas Day bomber plot, 21/7), prisons (Richard Reid the ‘shoe bomber’),

³⁷⁴ Tinka Veldhuis and Jorgen Staun, ‘Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model’ (DIIS, October 2009) Available at: http://www.diis.dk/graphics/IO_indsatsomraader/Religion_og_social_konflikt_og_Mellemosten/Islamist%20Radicalisation.Veldhuis%20and%20Staun.pdf [Accessed 7 February 2019]

³⁷⁵ Lorenzo Vidino (2009) ‘Europe’s New Security Dilemma’, *The Washington Quarterly*, 32 (4) p.p.61-75.

and various Islamist websites (online radicalisation).³⁷⁶ Examples of charismatic leaders are: Abu Hamza, Sheikh el-Feisal, Omar Bakri and Dhiren Barot. Many links can also be made between radical groups, with the following being examples of relationship links established by Briggs and Birdwell:

*Rashid Rauf's (transatlantic plot) wife is reportedly closely related by marriage to Maulana Masood Azhar, the founder of Jaish-e-Mohammed, an armed group that participates in Jihad in Kashmir and was connected to Pakistan's intelligence service (ISI); Waheed Mahmood (fertiliser plot) had a family house in Pakistan where the conspirators met to plan; Salahuddin Amin (fertiliser plot) was born in the UK but raised in Pakistan and was the facilitator between British extremists and Al-Qaeda; and the 7/7 plotters all grew up together in Beeston-Leeds.*³⁷⁷

Clearly, ensuring that known terrorists do not go on to engage in extremist activities elsewhere, is a concerning vocation for the UK's security services, and the emergence of new Islamist organisations on a continuous basis to replace those closed down under the Terrorism Act, makes it difficult to track these activities and assign responsibility for them. The regularity with which known terrorists do emerge again aligned with a different organisation in the UK would, however, suggest that this should be an important focus point for British intelligence.

³⁷⁶ Briggs, Rachel and Birdwell, Jonathan (2009), 'Radicalisation among Muslims in the UK', MICROCON Policy Working Paper 7 p. 45.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

5.4.2 Radicalisation on the Internet

In this section, the author argues that radicalisation on the internet is a factor of particular concern in the UK. Islamist organisations and mosques have been blamed many times for radicalising British Muslims, especially young ones. However, there is also evidence that this kind of activity can also be attributed to political extremists and individuals acting to deliberately radicalise young Muslims for the purposes of recruiting them to extremist organisations or engaging them in extremist activity.³⁷⁸ The internet serves as a valuable resource for those attempting to radicalise or recruit for a number of reasons. Firstly, the ease with which recruiters or those with intentions of radicalising can find new targets, communicate with them and ultimately recruit them, makes the internet a facility which can be used to reach potential targets across the world. The internet has also been postulated to be a low-risk way of new recruits joining organisations, being able to keep communications hidden from the real world. Scholars have considered with great interest the ways in which the internet also provides the possibility to create a new social environment wherein unacceptable views and behaviour are normalised.³⁷⁹ ‘The implications of this phenomenon are enormous. No matter how moderate the local mosque, Muslim youths will still be at risk and targeted for indoctrination through the Internet.’³⁸⁰ According to Gabriel Weimann, a Professor of communication at the University of Haifa, ‘there is a real war going on in cyberspace, but it is invisible to most of us.’³⁸¹

Weimann claims that whilst looking into cyber terrorism is important for security agencies, there also needs to be a consideration of the ways in which the

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Yaakov Lappin Y (2011) ‘Virtual Caliphate: Exposing the Islamist State on the Internet’ (Washington: Potomac Books). p.p.78-79

³⁸¹ Gabriel Weimann (2006) ‘Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, The New Challenges’ (Washington D.C: US Institute of Peace) p.123.

internet is used by extremist groups to share their ideology and organise activities. The difficulties of policing content and activity on the internet have been well-established, with websites being taken down only to emerge a few days later under a different name. In this way, extremist organisations have been able to use the web with relative impunity, using foreign web addresses or service providers to make it even more difficult for intelligence agencies to track them.³⁸² The dangers of the creation of this kind of underground network of similarly-minded individuals all with extremist beliefs is also well-established in the literature, and the chances of encouraging more extreme behaviour is extremely likely.³⁸³ There is also the potential for extremism and radicalisation to be practiced via existing platforms, such as social media or online forums, where the possibility of sharing content helps to attract new recruits or share an extremist message.³⁸⁴ However, the Internet per se does not necessarily lead a young person to join Al Qaeda and/or ISIS. If the internet on its own radicalised young people, then people from every town or village with access to the Internet would have been radicalised. However, the UK experience has shown that the recruitment of Jihadists does not occur uniformly across the country. Therefore, a recruiter is required as well to push a young person (radicalised via the Internet) to the path of Jihadist terrorism.

According to a report, *The Virtual Caliphate*, written by James Brandon - a senior research fellow at the Centre for Social Cohesion, a UK-based think tank in operation between 2007 and 2011:

Islamist extremists have established several websites in order to distribute material justifying terrorism, violence and racial hatred.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Neumann R. Peter (2008), *Joining Al-Qaeda*, London: Routledge p. 123.

³⁸⁴ Brynjar Lia (2006) 'Al-Qaeda Online: Understanding Jihadist Internet Infrastructure', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, January.p.p. 56-57

*These websites contain pro-Jihadist sermons delivered by a variety of radical speakers, including preaching by jailed radicals such as Abu Hamza and Abdullah Faisal. The websites also distribute material produced by Al-Qaeda. Online chat rooms on these websites are used to promote Jihadi ideology and also enable extremists in the UK to organise and publicise their public meetings, distribute pdf leaflets and plan recruitment strategies. Several websites, such as islambase.co.uk and sawtulislam.com, are run by UK-based individuals, and distribute dozens of recorded lectures calling for Jihadist attacks.*³⁸⁵

In many of these inflammatory recordings, speakers tell their fellow Muslims that it is their duty to fight non-Muslims until they submit. Website content has become a major cause for concern in the fight against radicalisation in the UK, with websites such as ‘Islambase’ offering recorded lectures from known extremists, often calling upon Muslims to join together in the fight to establish a Caliphate, and actively encouraging extremist activity. Reportedly, another website entitled ‘sawtulislam’, actually calls upon Muslims to commit mass genocide, identifying this as the only way of fighting back against *shirk* (paganism) which it sees as a threat to Islam.³⁸⁶ Quotes taken out of context from the Quran are also often used, to support the need to obey the actions demanded on this type of website, and providing a legitimising sort of influence for the ideology they preach. Aside from encouraging hatred toward the West and all which represents it, these types of website can be even more dangerous, offering advice to radicals on how to identify the best target for suicide missions, or how to create a bomb.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

Despite most experts' rejection of the idea of Internet-led recruitment, it seems clear that new virtual forms of militant Islamist activism have emerged. Two examples illustrate this point. The first is the case of London-based Younis Tsouli, better known as 'irhabi007' ('terrorist007') who emerged as the undisputed 'superstar' of the online Jihadist scene in early 2004. After almost one year of online activism, Tsouli concluded that he wanted to participate in a suicide attack. The British authorities, who arrested Tsouli in his flat in West London in early 2005, claimed that he had decided to act like a suicide bomber during the Christmas period. The interesting thing here is that Tsouli was radicalised online in the comfort of his own home.³⁸⁷ Another case is that of Irfan Raja, a 19-year old student from Ilford near London, who was indicted for downloading and sharing extremist materials in September 2007. As in Tsouli's case, Raja's radicalisation took place online. He probably spent hundreds of hours downloading videos, posting messages and chatting to others in web forums.³⁸⁸ It seems clear then that the Internet has a significant role in intensifying and accelerating radicalisation. ISIS in particular has used the Internet as a powerful tool to both propagandise its message and recruit more followers among young disaffected Muslims.

³⁸⁷ Neumann R. Peter (2009), *Old & New Terrorism*, Malden, MA: Polity Press p. 132.

³⁸⁸ BBC News, 'Students Who Descended into Extremism', (BBC News, 23 October 2008) Available at: www.bbcnews.com/students-who-descended-extremism/doc/pdf/html/ [Accessed 12 February 2019]

5.4.3 Islamist activities and radicalisation in British Universities

In this section, the author examines Islamist activities and the radicalisation of young Muslim students on British campuses. In their interesting and revealing report *When Students Turn to Terror*, published in 2005 by the Centre for Social Cohesion, Anthony Glees and Chris Pope stated that at least two of those involved in the 7/7 suicide bombings in London had studied at British universities and colleges of higher education. Mohammed Siddique Khan, the ringleader of the 7/7 bombers, had been a student at Dewsbury College and then Leeds Metropolitan University, together with his fellow terrorist Shehzad Tanweer,³⁸⁹ although this does not necessarily mean that they undertook any radicalising activities there.

Al Muhajiroun (AM), one of the organisations to emerge from the splintering of HT, is accused of attempting to use university campuses to radicalise young Muslims.³⁹⁰ A blanket ban has been placed upon AM by the National Union of Students. However, the organisation is said to still be active at universities across the UK, where it continues to preach hatred and intolerance. Commentators have claimed that not only has AM been successful in recruiting many Muslim students, but it has also been responsible for sending hundreds of young Jihadists to fight abroad.³⁹¹ There are several examples of young Muslims who were radicalised in British universities and then turned to terrorism. Amer Mirza, a British born Humberside University accountancy student and alleged AM member, was convicted in 1999 of petrol-bombing a British army base in Southall, London earlier that year to protest against resumed USA bombing of Iraq.³⁹² Other terrorist attacks have also been

³⁸⁹ Anthony Glees and Chris Pope (2005) 'When Students Turn to Terror' (London: The Social Affairs Unit.) p.p 78-83.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

attributed to individuals who were previously students with links to HT, such as that committed by Ahmed Omar Sheikh, a British-born former LSE student. The LSE's Islamic Society came forward to comment on the case, admitting that there was a problem with young people being radicalised in this way and claiming that 'a number of students were brainwashed by outsiders ...they did become very extreme'.³⁹³

The activities of radicalised British Muslims have not only been a problem in the UK, but have also been reported overseas. A suicide bombing in Israel in 2003, in which three were killed and a further sixty-five were injured, turned out to be the work of two British Muslims who had been radicalised in the UK, Asif Mohammed Hanif and Omar Khan Sharif. Sharif was later identified as having been one of Omar Bakri's students, who had attended his lectures prior to travelling overseas to carry out the attack. Although Bakri later strongly denied any connection between the talks his former student had attended and his decision to carry out an attack overseas, many have suggested that Sharif was radicalised during his time as a student at KCL.³⁹⁴ An attack occurring closer to home in Glasgow in 2007, in which a burning vehicle containing flammable material was driven into Glasgow airport, was also attributed to a student of Queens University. However, suggestions were made that Ahmed, who was identified as being responsible for the attack, had been radicalised whilst studying for a PhD at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge.³⁹⁵ Aside from these well-publicised attacks, there have also been many instances in which British Muslims have been convicted of terrorist offences following their time at university, suggesting that this particular age group and environment should be of interest for those looking to prevent radicalisation in the UK.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

Further attacks carried out by young British Muslims overseas have led to close scrutiny on universities and their societies, with scholars claiming that universities should be responsible for doing more in terms of identification and prevention. A former student of Brunel University was involved in the planning of attacks in 2007 which saw five British Muslims intending to carry out attacks across shopping centres and nightclubs in Britain. When confronted with the case, the University declined to comment, and dismissed claims that prayer meetings carried out inside university grounds were used to radicalise students.³⁹⁶ Two other British Muslims convicted of the same offence also reportedly met at an Islamic event held by the University of East London, where it is suggested that they were shown a video showing atrocities being carried out in Kashmir, which ultimately provoked their radicalisation.³⁹⁷ Waseem Mughal, a member of the University of Leicester Islamic society, was charged and convicted in 2007 of the charge of inciting murder, for his role in publishing on extremist websites. In this case, Mughal stood accused of cyber Jihad, or inciting Jihad through the use of the internet.³⁹⁸

Perhaps one of the most worrying cases of extremism in UK universities is the case of Yassin Nassari, who was President of the University of Westminster's Islamic Society, and who was arrested and convicted for the possession of articles useful to terrorists. It later emerged that Nassari had been involved in similar activity before, having been arrested at Luton Airport in possession of bomb-making guides and blueprints for a rocket utilised by Hamas in an attack on the Gaza strip. Computer hard drives found in Nassari's possession also revealed a large quantity of extremist material, including lectures and speeches regarding martyrdom, and some performed

³⁹⁶ The Centre for Social Cohesion, 'Radical Islam on UK Campuses' (Henry Jackson Society, 2010) Available at: <<http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RADICAL-ISLAM-ON-CMAPUS.pdf>> [Accessed 12 April 2019]

³⁹⁷ Ibid

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

or written by known extremists. Upon this realisation, it was particularly concerning that Nassari had been free to organise a number of events targeting Westminster University's student Muslim population, and his position of power at the Islamic Society would have given him yet further access and influence over exactly the age group which has been proven time and again as susceptible to radicalisation.³⁹⁹

Whilst many of the universities charged with ignoring or overlooking extremist activity on their campuses have chosen to claim that they were unaware of such activity, there are many cases which illustrate that just as often, universities or those involved in university activities representing the university, know exactly what is happening yet do not report it to the proper authorities. Bradford University, for example, came under fire in 2007 when four of its students were arrested and found to have articles which could be used for terrorist purposes in their possession. It was heard that these same students were responsible for attempting to gain support from fellow Muslim members of the Islamic Society to commit murder against anyone publishing cartoons depicting Muhammad. The Society kicked out the students shortly afterward, but did not notify the wider university authorities.⁴⁰⁰ In a second similar case at London Metropolitan University, a student was arrested in 2006 for planning a suicide attack on an aeroplane. During the investigation, extremist material was found in the university's Islamic Society office.⁴⁰¹ Whether there should be more control and supervision of university activities to ensure that they do not cross these kinds of boundaries, is something which should be considered and subjected to further research.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

On Christmas Day 2009, a Nigerian student from University College London (UCL), Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, President of UCL's Islamic Society, boarded a Northwest Airlines flight with explosives hidden on his body.⁴⁰² During his tenure as president he organised a conference in January 2007 under the banner 'War on Terror Week', and advertised speakers including former Guantanamo Bay detainees.⁴⁰³ Alan Johnson, the then Home Secretary, stated that during the time he was a university student Abdulmutalab was known to the Security Service (MI5) but not for his role in violent extremism, and that evidence would suggest that spending time in Yemen had led to his radicalisation.⁴⁰⁴ However, Professor Anthony Glees argued that:

*Abdulmutallab's radicalisation from being a devoted Muslim to a suicide bomber took place in the UK and I believe al-Qaeda recruited him in London. Universities and colleges like UCL have got to realise that you don't get suicide bombers unless they have first been radicalised.*⁴⁰⁵

Irresponsibility and a lack of foresight have perhaps contributed to the issues of radicalisation in UK universities. For example, Hamza Andreas Tzortzis, a UK-based Greek convert to Islam, and a popular speaker around universities in the UK, has been outspoken about his desire for the creation of an Islamic state, and has also voiced his hatred of the West. His credentials as a former researcher for the much-criticised Hittin Institute and Chairman of the launch for the Islamic Education and Research Academy, both of which have come under fire for acting as umbrella

⁴⁰² CBS News, 'Court Papers' (CBS News, 23 June 2010) Available at:

http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/Abdulmutallab_Indictment.pdf [Accessed 10 March 2019].

⁴⁰³ Tim Golden, 'The Battle for Guantanamo' (The Times, 17 September 2006) Available at:

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article6971098.ece> [Accessed 17 December 2018].

⁴⁰⁴ Alan Johnson, 'Aviation and Border Security' (House of Commons, 5 January 2010) Available at: <http://services.parliament.uk/hansard/Commons/ByDate/20100105/mainchamberdebates/part004.html> [Accessed 6 February 2019].

⁴⁰⁵ Gordon Rayner, 'Detroit Bomber: British university 'complicit' in radicalisation' (The Telegraph, 30 December 2009) Available at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/6906669/Detroit-bomber-British-university-complicit-in-radicalisation.html> [Accessed 6 February 2019].

organisations for hate preaching, should have alerted university staff to the dangers of inviting him to speak on campus. In one of Tzortzis' speeches, he proclaimed that 'we as Muslims reject the idea of freedom of speech, and even of freedom'.⁴⁰⁶ He has, however, been allowed to continue to have close contact with UK university students and to hold talks, which present him as a legitimate speaker and credible expert, producing the wrong message for those attending. In November 2010, Roshana Choudhry, a student at King's College London, was convicted of attempted murder after stabbing Stephen Timms, a Labour MP, in May 2010 because she wanted to take revenge for the people of Iraq. She was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of fifteen years.⁴⁰⁷ She is believed to have been influenced by extreme Islamist sermons on the Internet, including those of radical imam Anwar al-Awlaki.⁴⁰⁸ A suicide attack in the centre of Stockholm on Saturday, 11 December, 2010, is the latest example of an act of terror carried out by an individual with significant links to the UK and a history of studying at a British university. The Iraqi-born Taimur Abdulwahab Al-Abdaly, who died during the attack, had lived and studied in Luton since 2001.⁴⁰⁹ After moving to Sweden in 1992, where he became an official citizen, he returned to the UK in 2001, where he attended the University of Bedfordshire. In 2007, he took a position as a preacher of sermons at the Luton Islamic Centre, and it is believed that he then started preaching at the University of Bedfordshire's Islamic

⁴⁰⁶ Andrew Gilligan, 'Speaker with extremist links to address Detroit bomber's former student group' (The Telegraph, 18 January 2010) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/7012827/Speaker-with-extremist-links-to-address-Detroit-bombers-former-student-group.html> [Accessed 25 September 2018].

⁴⁰⁷ Channel 4, 'Student jailed for stabbing of MP Stephen Timms' (Channel 4, 3 November 2010) Available at: <http://www.channel4.com/news/student-jailed-for-stabbing-of-mp-stephen-timms> [Accessed 17 December 2018].

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Duncan Gardham, Marcus Oscarsson and Peter Hutchison (2010) 'Sweden suicide bomber: Taimur Abdulwahab al-Abdaly was living in Britain' (The Telegraph, 12 December 2010).

Society.⁴¹⁰ According to the Swedish investigation, Al-Abdaly was also following a number of radical groups on social media platforms.⁴¹¹ In conclusion, we may argue that from the evidence provided above, it is clear that radicalisation and extremism on British campuses is a significant security threat for the country.

5.5 The Threat of Jihadist terrorism to the UK

The international character of the threat posed by Al-Qaeda, the vanguard of international Islamist terrorism, has been illustrated in Chapter 4. The Al-Qaeda threat is ‘the most lethal and destructive non-state terrorist network we have seen in the history of international terrorism’.⁴¹² The UK could not be exempted from the threat posed by Al-Qaeda and its affiliates. As we have seen above, as early as 7 July 2005 Al-Qaeda suicide bombers attacked London, provoking the death of 52 civilians. Numerous other terrorist attempts have followed since then (see Appendix II- Chronology of Jihadism in the UK), without success. The UK’s national security strategy has had to evolve to consider threats from across the world, including in Afghanistan, where Al-Qaeda continues to be a prominent threat.⁴¹³ British Jihadists have been reported to be travelling to Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East to receive training at the hands of terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda,⁴¹⁴ and many of the terrorist attacks on Western shores such as those in the UK and US have been attributed to Al-Qaeda cells in the region.⁴¹⁵ The emergence of splinter cells and

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Paul Wilkinson (2007) ‘International Dimensions of Homeland Security’ in Paul Wilkinson (ed.), *Homeland Security in the UK: Future Preparedness for Terrorist Attack since 9/11* (London: Routledge), p.p. 271-378.

⁴¹³ HM Government, ‘CONTEST (2006)’: Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/170644/28307_Cm_858_3_v0_20.pdf [Accessed 2 June 2018].

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ MI5, ‘The Threats’ (MI5, 2012) Available at:

smaller organisations controlled by Al-Qaeda or following their lead, is a further concern, and has made it more difficult to track the activities of foreign fighters returning to the UK. The uprisings in the Middle East which have become known as the ‘Arab Spring’ have been significant in driving extremism in the region.⁴¹⁶

Currently, the most significant threats to the UK are: a) Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which in Yemen continues to pose a significant threat both to the UK and its interests in the region. The AQAP has also been an active online presence in encouraging extremists in the UK to carry out their own attacks or suicide bombings. Andrew Parker, the Director General of MI5, has warned that Al Qaeda and its affiliates in Pakistan and Yemen present ‘the most direct and immediate threats to the UK’; b) Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), in North and West Africa, has threatened British interests. It has now begun to get involved with Boko Haram, another militant Islamist group, as well as Ansaru, which is a splinter group. Ansaru has been responsible for the kidnapping and killing of many hostages from Western nations, including from the UK and Greece.⁴¹⁷ c) In Somalia, the Jihadist terrorist group Al Shabaab collaborates with other terrorist organisations and aspires to attack targets in the region, including UK interests;⁴¹⁸ d) the Al Nusrah Front and ISIS pose a significant threat to UK interests.

Referring to the current conflict in Syria, the former Director General of MI5 said

<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/home/the-threats/terrorism/international-terrorism.html> [Accessed 4 June 2014]

⁴¹⁶ MI5, ‘The Threats’ (MI5, 2012) Available at: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/home/the-threats/terrorism/international-terrorism.html> [Accessed 4 June 2018]

⁴¹⁷ BBC News, Frank Gardner, ‘MI5 chief Andrew Parker warns of Islamist threat to UK’ (BBC News, 9 October 2013) Available at : www.bbc.com/news/MI5chiefandrewparker/pdf.html [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁴¹⁸ HM Government, ‘CONTEST (2006): Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/170644/28307_Cm_8583_v0_20.pdf [Accessed 2 June 2018].

that:

A growing proportion of MI5's casework concerned individuals from the UK who had travelled to fight there. He said extremist Islamist groups in Syria were aspiring to attack Western countries. This has long been a concern of Western governments - that British-based Jihadists will one day return from the killing fields of Syria and turn their new-found skills on the population back home'.⁴¹⁹ The British Prime Minister himself has stated that the terrorist threat from Syria is more dangerous than threats from Afghanistan or Pakistan, and warned of the risks posed by violent Islamists returning to the UK.⁴²⁰

There is growing recognition for the fact that a large quantity of the terrorist attacks planned or carried out on UK soil are perpetrated by home-grown extremists, and many operations planned in the UK, such as the 2013 EXAMINE operation, have been attributed to terror cells working in the country. Best estimates have placed the total number of individuals either supporting or engaged in violent extremism at several thousand, which is a worrying statistic when considering that many attacks on UK soil have only required one such violent extremist.⁴²¹ There are many ways in which UK-based Jihadists can support extremism, including participating in radicalisation, performing fundraising activities, helping locate false documents for use by extremists travelling to or from the UK, helping out with logistics of terrorist operations, and

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Nicholas Watt (2014) 'David Cameron: Syria terror threat 'more dangerous' than Afghanistan' (The Guardian, 2 June) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jun/02/david-cameron-claims-syrian-terror-threat-worse-than-afghanistan> [Accessed 4 June 2018].

⁴²¹ Ibid.

actually facilitating the movement of known extremists from one location to another.⁴²²

5.6 Factors that have led to an increased threat level in the UK

It is worth mentioning at this point the factors that had led to an increased level of vulnerabilities and risks in the UK. Before examining these factors, we must point out that unlike Greece, as we will see in Chapter 7, the majority of Muslims residing in the UK are second or third generation immigrants who have already attained the status of British citizen. The author of this thesis has identified two main factors that have led, especially after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, to an increased level of risk; a third one which may play a more important role in the future; and a fourth factor linked to the continuing civil war in Syria. The first factor is British foreign policy, in particular the Iraq War (2003) and the subsequent occupation of southern Iraq, and the War in Afghanistan. The 7/7 London bombers, according to the available evidence, did not feel discriminated against, or excluded from British society. According to sources close to them, they led relatively normal lives, and showed little sign of feeling excluded or out of place. Indeed, the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) report on 7/7 noted that ‘the threat is as likely to come from those who appear well assimilated into mainstream UK society, with jobs and young families, as from those within socially or economically deprived sections of the community’.⁴²³

The 7/7 bombers’ ringleader, Mohammed Siddique Khan, suggested that:

(y)our democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world. And your support of

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ ISC, Report into the London terrorist attacks on 7 July 2005, (London: ISC, 2013) Available at : <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm84/8403/8403.pdf> [Accessed 15 July 2014].

*them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters. Until we feel security, you will be our targets...We are at war and I am a soldier.*⁴²⁴

As Anthony Richards, senior lecturer in Terrorism Studies at the University of East London, argues:

*... it is, of course, difficult to assess the degree to which these international 'causes' of Muslim 'suffering' are felt as genuine grievances rather than used as propaganda in a broader ideological struggle. The fundamental point, however, is that issues in the international realm have been exploited in order to perpetrate attacks in the UK.*⁴²⁵

The second factor identified by the author is the exposure of especially young British Muslims to Islamist ideology and propaganda, as well as a significant number of Islamists operating in the UK that might serve as a 'conveyor belt' to violent radicalisation and extremism. The third factor that might play a significant role in the future, leading to a higher level of risk, is the activity of far-right groups like the English Defence League. A pivotal turning point indicating the rise of public fear of extremism was the aftermath of the killing of soldier Lee Rigby in 2013, and this encouraged talk of the potential of violent clashes between the far-right in the UK and extremist groups.⁴²⁶

Professor Roger Eatwell of the University of Bath first coined the term 'cumulative extremism' in a 2006 paper called 'Community Cohesion and Collective

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Anthony Richards (2011) 'The Problem with 'radicalisation': The remit of 'Prevent' and the need to refocus on terrorism in the UK', *International Affairs* 87 (1) p.p. 143-152.

⁴²⁶ Jamie Bartlett and Jonathan Birdwell (2013) 'Cumulative Radicalisation Between the Far-Right and Islamist Groups in the UK': A Review of Evidence (London: Demos). p.p. 121-125.

Extremism in Contemporary Britain'.⁴²⁷ In this paper, Eatwell highlighted the way that race riots in Bradford in 2001 had been inspired by actions taken by the British National Party (BNP) and the National Front (NF).⁴²⁸ In this way, Eatwell points to the ways in which conflicting belief systems can serve to bring about what he refers to as a 'cumulative process', which involves provoking or retaliating from one group to another.⁴²⁹ This could also be the case for Greece, as we will show in the next chapter. Violent activism of the far-right neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn might be a factor for the radicalisation of Muslim immigrants. The fourth factor is the civil war in Syria. As shown in Chapter 7, Greece stands on the opposite side of this trend: though host to hundreds of thousands of Muslim immigrants and a transit country for the Jihadists of ISIS, Greece has been unscathed by Jihadist terror thanks to a number of reasons outlined in Chapters 7 and 8.

5.7 Conclusions

There is a significant Muslim presence in the UK. The major growth of the Muslim population in the UK was the result of a wave of immigration of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians in the first decades after the end of World War II. Islam is Britain's fastest-growing religion. Over the last three decades London has become home to a variety of Islamist organisations. The Jihadist threat is the most lethal and destructive non-state terrorist network we have seen in the history of international terrorism. Jihadists continue to operate against UK interests and still have the capacity to conduct terrorist attacks.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 6: British Counterterrorism Strategy (CONTEST)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines and lays emphasis on the analysis of the British Counter-Terrorism Strategy, better known as CONTEST, and particularly of the ‘Prevent’ pillar of this strategy and the evolution of anti-terror legislation since the Terrorism Act of 2000. Actually, this chapter evaluates the role of CONTEST and in particular the importance of Prevent within the British counterterrorism strategy. The rationale of this analysis is that CONTEST might prove to be a valuable paradigm for the case of Greece, an issue which will be dealt in detail in Chapter 8.

6.1.1 Origins and evolution of CONTEST

The aim of this section is to present the origins and evolution of the British Counterterrorism Strategy (CONTEST) and to assess its effectiveness in the UK context. The aim of CONTEST is to manage and prevent international terrorism, to allow the population of the UK to live secure in the knowledge that their daily lives will not be disrupted by it. The CONTEST strategy has four main components: *Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare*. The last three of these involve what might be considered ‘hard power’ responses to security threat from terrorism, whilst the initial strand, ‘Prevent’, attempts to deploy ‘soft’ power to prevent this threat from ever

emerging.⁴³⁰

The origins of CONTEST may be traced back to early 2003. The plan was to align and inform the government's response to the growing threat of terrorism following the attacks of 9/11.⁴³¹ After the terrorist attacks of 7 July 2005, however, it became clear that current responses were not doing enough to prevent terrorism, and the prospect of tackling the issue at the source and going straight for the root causes of terrorism, rather than taking a reactive approach, became clear. On this basis, the government produced a new report, *Preventing Extremism Together*, which made sixty-four recommendations, including the need to integrate Muslim communities better, to build trust and relationships between Muslim communities and the police, and the introduction of an accreditation system for British mosques. This move was notable, in that it signalled the change in strategy away from counter-intelligence to prevention.⁴³²

A July 2006 report, *Countering International Terrorism: The UK's Strategy*, highlighted the potential to tackle home-grown radicalisation by working with young British Muslims.⁴³³ The report states at the outset that 'the principal current terrorist threat is from radicalised individuals who are using a distorted and unrepresentative version of the Islamic faith to justify violence'.⁴³⁴ The report further endorses the view that improving social policies would be the best step forward in achieving all of these aims regarding prevention. The core elements of prevention include addressing

⁴³⁰ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2006) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf [Accessed 12 May 2019]

⁴³¹ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2009) Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmhaff/212/212.pdf> [Accessed 7 June 2018].

⁴³² Jytte Klausen, 'British Counter-Terrorism After 7/7: Adapting Community Policing to the Fight Against Domestic Terrorism' (2009) *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36 (3) p.p. 403-420.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁴ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2006) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf [Accessed 7 June 2018].

‘structural problems’ such as inequality and discrimination, changing ‘the environment’ to deter radicalisation and ‘engaging in the battle of ideas’.⁴³⁵ This is no endorsement of the ‘clash of civilisations’ argument that the problem is Islam itself.⁴³⁶

CONTEST 2009, the revised version of CONTEST set out the nature of the threat to the UK from transnational Islamist terrorism in unprecedented detail - undoubtedly reflecting the government’s desire to maintain security awareness even though the UK had not suffered a successful terrorist attack since 2005.⁴³⁷ The new strategy placed greater emphasis on preventing terrorism and violent extremism and also quite crucially emphasised ‘shared values’. The strategy ‘challenges views which fall short of supporting violence and are within the law, but which reject and undermine our shared values and jeopardise community cohesion’.⁴³⁸

Although the framework remained as it was in 2003, the new strategy reflected some of the key lessons which had been learned from the UK’s terrorism investigations, and the new research which had come to light since this time. The revised strategy featured a range of programmes (some part of CONTEST but others connected to it) which are distributed across the four main CONTEST strands.⁴³⁹ First, a *Pursue* strand, which focuses on drawing together intelligence, security and police resources to increase the capacity for intelligence gathering and the tackling of terrorist activities. *Pursue* was also necessarily a means of adapting to emerging challenges, such as dealing with identified terror suspects. Second, a revised *Prevent* strand which was borne from the growing body of research carried out into causes

⁴³⁵ Klausen, Jytte (2009), ‘The Cartoons that Shook the World, London’: Yale University Press p.p.403420.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ HM Government, ‘CONTEST’ (2009) Available at: <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2009/mar/uk-terr-strategy.pdf> [Accessed 20 April 2019].

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ HM Government, ‘CONTEST’ (2009) Available at: <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2009/mar/uk-terr-strategy.pdf> [Accessed 20 April 2019].

and motivations of terrorism, was introduced. Third, a *Protect* strand, which served to build upon all progress made over the last decade and which introduced new strategies for tackling threats in high-traffic locations, which were identified as high-risk targets. Fourth, a *Prepare* strand, intended to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

CONTEST 2009 identified four strategic factors which had been drivers of terrorism to date. These were: conflict and instability; ideology; technology; and radicalisation. These have been proven to be pivotal in the development of terrorist threat.⁴⁴⁰ CONTEST 2009 highlights important issues, but does not attempt to set out the framework that will enable them to be addressed. CONTEST needs to ensure interoperability between government agencies, as well as to grasp the challenges posed by the evolving threat of terrorism, and put in place robust frameworks to counter these challenges. Interoperability should become an operational doctrine, pushed forward through funding and cross-government support.

CONTEST 2011 is the third published version of the UK's counterterrorism strategy.⁴⁴¹ The new CONTEST, according to the then Home Secretary Theresa May, remained based on the familiar four Ps of *Pursue*, *Prevent*, *Protect* and *Prepare*, but gave the UK a more targeted and strategic *Prevent* Program; it learned lessons from 7/7 and other attacks; and it prepared the country for the London Olympics in 2012.⁴⁴² The Strategic Defence and Security Review emphasises the need to tackle the root causes of instability in order to confront Islamist terrorism. This approach is reflected in the new CONTEST. In other words, the government needs to mitigate not only immediate threats and results from attacks, but to take a

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2011), Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97995/strategy-contest.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁴⁴² Ibid.

broader approach to disrupting what helps terrorist groups to exist and expand. Whilst the strategy is not expected to address all possible causes of terrorism, it has been developed to fit with existing research and best practice. In order for it to work effectively, it will need to draw upon a multi-agency approach, relying on input from a range of public services and agencies, both at national and international level. As a result, coordination between CONTEST and other government programmes is essential.⁴⁴³

The new *Prevent* strategy has a broader scope than the one of 2006, at least on paper, since it talks more freely about extremist ideologies. In practice, however, we might argue that it is narrower because it says even less - and provides no funding - about how it will be implemented. This broader scope means tackling the social and environmental drivers of terrorism which serve to work together to create a conducive environment for terrorism. Moreover, the new *Prevent* strategy excludes the funding of organisations which do not support the fundamental values of democracy, human rights, equality before the law and gender equality. Finally, the strategy has a much more defined focus. It is complementary to, but distinct from, work on integration led by the Department for Communities and Local Government.⁴⁴⁴

The new British counter-terrorism CONTEST 2018, introduced that there are no safe internationally areas for terrorists, especially in the U.K. In 2017 there were five terrorist incidents in Britain. They were massively over-reported, so much so that it is hard to believe imitation did not play a part. A further nine plots were apparently

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

foiled.⁴⁴⁵ The security services cannot stop everything, but they are clearly having considerable success. The analysis that comes from the Home Secretary unveils the government's updated counter-terrorism strategy, and officials say Britain faces a severe threat from Islamist terrorist groups for at least the next two years.⁴⁴⁶ That's why the creation of a new strategy CONTEST, the new multi-agency approach, will bring new updated powers to public sector agencies, and also place an onus on the private sector to play a role in the fight against terrorism. As a result, CONTEST now includes faster alerts for suspicious purchases, improving security at crowded places across the UK, and reducing the vulnerability of our critical infrastructure.⁴⁴⁷

This era of globalisation has thus far been characterised by increased mobility, and strategies such as containment operating at a national level, have been extended to operate across the world to manage and contain global morbidities. This identifies the emergence of a global mobility regime underpinned by a paradigm of suspicion that operates to treat people differently: to enable the movement of those considered 'safe' while containing and blocking the movement of those constructed as 'dangerous'.⁴⁴⁸ Surveillance practices play a key role in the global management and containment of populations and have led to the emergence of a global surveillance which is in part aimed at containing foreigners on the margins. Surveillance practices such as these work by 'keeping the poorest foreigners at a distance, through controlling the flux of mobile populations'. This logic means that the surveillance of those characterised as 'suspect' and 'dangerous', as opposed to the universal

⁴⁴⁵ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2018) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

surveillance of wider society, sits at the heart of policing.⁴⁴⁹

Attempts to contain a particular population and its political agency using surveillance technologies are a prelude to a broader strategy of social engineering and discipline, aimed at inclusion into a western capitalist order. Using surveillance to manage and contain a population provides the necessary detailed knowledge to ‘see’ it and break it down into governable units. In the ‘war on terror’, a key component of de-radicalisation programmes hinges on a cultural transformation of Muslim identity to view the west and all it stands for (its ways of life, values, and politics) with a more positive attitude. Pro-western or ‘moderate’ Muslims are rewarded by being valued as ‘true’ Muslims, their interpretations and religious traditions are elevated as true reflections of Islam, and they are often referred to as representatives of the Muslim community. If strategies of inclusion fail, then the individual is purposefully excluded from mainstream society and marked as a threat, for intervention, as the final option⁴⁵⁰. Exclusion is aimed at protecting mainstream society by preventing the excluded subjects from reaching, communicating, and working with mainstream society. It enables and legitimises the use of violence, coercion, and intense surveillance, all of which can violate basic human rights.⁴⁵¹

6.1.2 Pursue

The purpose of the *Pursue* strand of the strategy is to stop terrorist attacks in the UK and against its interests overseas. *Pursue* gives importance to the cooperation between the police, security and intelligence agencies for counter-terrorism work. In the earlier CONTEST strategy, *Pursue* had five key objectives: to identify potential

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

terrorist threats; to enhance intelligence at a domestic and international level; to mitigate the threat in the UK and abroad; and to help other nations to strengthen their own counter-terror strategies, so that the collaborative effect can be a reduction in global terrorism; and to support counter-terrorism work elsewhere. Collaborative working included working together on operations, shared reporting, shared technical programmes and the exchange of staff. Undoubtedly, one of the key developments in counter-terrorism in the UK over recent years has been the new collaborative work between the security services such as MI5 and the British police force. The resulting programme, which has been named 'Richer Picture', was set up with the intent to promote understanding of how terrorism and radicalisation are carried out in the UK. Changes included since 2010 are the setting up of new multi-agency teams with streamlined operational priorities, a shared and improved picture of intelligence, and a more coordinated response at an operational level.⁴⁵²

In 2006, the Counter-Terrorism Command (CTC) was created within the Metropolitan Police, born from a merger of the pre-existing Special Branch and Anti-Terrorist Branch, and was supported by smaller Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Units (CTIUs) that didn't have an investigative role. This new network helped the police to work better toward putting into place the measures outlined in counter-terrorism policy, to implement elements of CONTEST in operations, and to improve relations with key partners, including local authorities.⁴⁵³ The government has continued to increase available resources for security agencies, and CONTEST 2006 has enacted legislation to provide the Home Office with additional legal tools to deport and

⁴⁵² HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2006) Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf [Accessed 12 February 2019]

⁴⁵³ Cressida Dick, Counter Terrorism Policing-Past, Present, and Future, (w.w.w.rusi.org 23 June 2014) Available at : <https://rusi.org/event/counter-terrorism-policing-past-present-and-future> [Accessed 23 March 2019]

exclude persons who have participated in terrorism.⁴⁵⁴ More specifically, The Immigration, Asylum, and Nationality Act of 2006, introduced a range of additional measures which are relevant in the counter-terrorism context: a) where an individual is being deported on grounds of national security any appeal before removal is limited to human rights grounds; b) a good character test for registration as a British citizen; c) a lower threshold for deprivation of British citizenship, enabling deportation action to follow; d) a power to deprive a person of their right of abode (a provision allowing certain Commonwealth citizens to enter the UK as if they were British citizens); and e) an interpretation of the Refugee Convention to make it clear that people who commit, prepare, or instigate terrorism, or encourage others to do so, are not entitled to protection as refugees.⁴⁵⁵

CONTEST 2009 drew attention to the need to enhance intelligence capabilities to keep track of threats to the UK; the need to better prosecute those involved; and to find new ways of disrupting terrorist activities.⁴⁵⁶

CONTEST 2011 identified the following *Pursue* objectives for the period 2011-2016: a) assessment of UK's counter-terrorism powers in order to ensure that they are both effective and proportionate; b) improvement of the UK's ability to prosecute and deport those involved in terrorist-related offences; c) increase in capabilities to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist threats; d) ensuring that judicial proceedings in the UK can better handle sensitive and secret material to serve the interests of both justice and national security; and e) to work with other countries and multilateral organisations to enable the country to better tackle the threats it faces at

⁴⁵⁴ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2006) Available at : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf [Accessed 15 May 2019]

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid

⁴⁵⁶ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2009) Available at : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228644/7547.pdf [Accessed 12 June 2019]

their source.⁴⁵⁷

CONTEST 2018 depicts the fear that terror attacks are likely to increase in 2018, with ISIS and al-Qaeda both still dangerous. MI5, the U.K.'s domestic counterintelligence agency, revealed in October that it was overseeing 600 live operations and had 20,000 people on its counterterrorism radar. Between January and October 2017, seven terror plots in the U.K. had been foiled. The numbers paint a sobering picture for the year ahead, despite military victories in the Middle East, as governments grapple with how to tackle the evolving terror threat.⁴⁵⁸

Framing the terror threat (as a Jihadist threat) has given focus to counter-terrorism practices, such as surveillance, which are overwhelmingly directed at Muslims. By introducing new counter-terrorism legislation, it is possible to disrupt terrorist threats in the UK, taking account of the scale of the threat and the speed at which plots are now developing. Moreover, according to the states of Strategic Defence and Security Review 2016, there is a need to recruit and train over 1,900 additional staff across the security and intelligence agencies. The UK still has to develop a series of multi-agency pilots in order to improve intelligence and communication throughout counter-terrorism efforts. There is also an identified need to strengthen the legal and policy framework to ensure that foreign fighters are brought to justice in accordance with due legal process.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁷ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2011) Available at : <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/contest-speech> [Accessed 16 May 2018]

⁴⁵⁸HM Government 'CONTEST' (2018) Available at : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2012]

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

6.1.3 Prevent

The *Prevent* strand of the government's strategy aims to prevent individuals from being radicalised or otherwise involved in terrorism in the first instance.⁴⁶⁰ Its aim is to present potential diversions from terrorism, or to otherwise dissuade those considering getting involved with terrorism to think again.⁴⁶¹ *Prevent* focuses on sub-criminal activity or situations where law enforcement options would be unproductive. Radicalisation, on the other hand, refers to the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and then join terrorist groups.⁴⁶² It must be noted that in 2003, this part of CONTEST was the least developed, but that after the London bombings in 2005, the engagement of Muslim and other faith communities became a priority. CONTEST, published in 2006, identified four areas of work: developing campaigns to address the motivation for violence;⁴⁶³ creating a hostile environment for those who choose to support terrorist causes and attempt to radicalise others; tackling political and economic issues which have been identified as encouraging radicalisation; and enhancing the framework for future strategies⁴⁶⁴

In November 2010, it was announced that the *Prevent* strand was to be revised, and this new version was released in June of 2011.⁴⁶⁵ One of the main changes resulting from the review is a more distinct separation between counterterrorism and integration efforts. Moreover, the new *Prevent* strategy recognises that in order to prevent radicalisation, extremist ideas and organisations

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ HM Government 'CONTEST' (2006) Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf [Accessed 14 October 2012]

⁴⁶⁴ Michael Hallsworth, Simon Parker and Jill Rutter, (2011) 'Policy Making in the Real World: Evidence and Analysis', (London: Institute for Government) p. 8.

⁴⁶⁵ HM Government 'CONTEST' (2011) Available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/contest-speech> [Accessed 15 February 2012]

must be challenged by ensuring that they are subjected to open debate.⁴⁶⁶

The new framework for *Prevent* calls for a strategy to: ‘respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat the UK faces from those who promote it; prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, ensuring that they are given appropriate advice and support; and work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which the government needs to address. Priority areas include education, faith, health, criminal justice and charities. The Internet is also included here as a sector in its own right’.⁴⁶⁷ In prioritising the aims of *Prevent*, there is an emphasis placed on new community projects, police work, and international endeavours. Tackling each of these areas will help to overcome the ideological challenges posed by terrorism, and prevent these from leading to home-grown extremism in the UK. As well as this, new mechanisms for monitoring progress have been established, which will help to demonstrate the effectiveness of the activities undertaken as a part of this strand. The UK has also continued to focus its efforts on building relations with Muslim communities and the promotion of positive representations of Islam.⁴⁶⁸

Prevent’s success is largely dependent upon the ability to integrate Muslim communities effectively into the wider UK society. In doing so, it will be possible to strengthen the kind of community ties at a local and national level which will help to demonstrate to the entire population of the UK the ways that these communities can live cooperatively together. This will also help to promote social mobility, which has itself been identified as a potential causal factor in encouraging radicalisation and hatred. Identifying those populations which are at particular risk of being radicalised will be integral to doing this, and supporting these individuals to stay away from

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

influences which could lead them down the wrong path. The revised *Prevent* strategy in 2011 includes more government departments, aims to establish links in the ways that programmes are delivered at both local and international levels, is better informed than previous strategies, and has a much larger budget. A programme in key cities has been developed, using police, local authority and community resources. According to Part II (section 9) the strategy for *Prevent* works for the adoption of preventing extremism as a strategic theme in the National Community Safety Plan.⁴⁶⁹

Progress has also been made in key sectors and institutions, such as criminal justice, healthcare, the internet, schools, colleges and universities, while collaboration alongside the vast majority of people across all communities in the UK is promoted. For example, the government and the police have given material to schools and colleges, to safeguard children, and in universities a dialogue on radicalisation has been developed with the police. The purpose of *Prevent* strategy is to bring different communities, local authorities, health, cultural and social services together around a set of commonly agreed values, and involve them in isolating and marginalising those who advocate extremism and terror. Communities are encouraged to reject the ideology of violent extremism and terrorism, so that they have more confidence to build stronger relationships and increase their cohesion.

The *Prevent* pillar of CONTEST was initially defined as a struggle against violent extremism rather than extremism per se. The implementation of *Prevent* was complicated by inherent difficulties in government attempts to address security and social issues. It was also challenging to achieve cross-departmental engagement with central and local government departments that had never seen themselves as needing a security agenda. Progress was hampered by uncertainties about which government

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

departments in London had the lead: the Home Office or the Department of Communities and Local Government. This point was only partly resolved in 2007 with the establishment within the Home Office of the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), with overall responsibility for coordination of counter-terrorism work across government.⁴⁷⁰

The role of the police and the Security Service (MI5) in the *Prevent* strategy is crucial. ‘Channel’ is a ‘police-led, multi-agency partnership that evaluates referrals of individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, working alongside safeguarding partnerships and crime reduction panels’, aiming to stop people from engaging in terrorist activity.⁴⁷¹ Prevent Engagement Officers (PEOs) help to bridge the gap between counter-terrorism, neighbourhood and community branches of policing.⁴⁷² Security, intelligence and police agencies have been attempting to tackle terrorism on the internet over recent decades, recognising that it can be used for many different activities, including recruiting, communicating and planning. The *Prevent* strategy aims to identify, investigate and disrupt terrorist use of the internet, to make it harder for the terrorists to exploit the internet for radicalisation, recruitment or conducting cyber-attacks.

The government’s much-derided Prevent strategy in CONSTEST 2018, focuses on radicalisation in schools, prisons and religious institutions. Prevention at source has to be the way forward, and that relies on intelligence within the community – and trust in that intelligence. There is a duty to protect British citizens and is a strong determination to protect UK businesses and their assets.⁴⁷³ Seeing large groups of

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ HM Government ‘CONSTEST’ (2018) Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONSTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf. [Accessed 12 April 2019]

young people who have been radicalised has led to recognition of the fact that there is the potential for intervention in vulnerable groups. The Prevent policy was introduced in the UK in 2003 as part of an overall post 9/11 counter-terrorism approach (CONTEST), with the aim of preventing the radicalisation of individuals to terrorism. In 2016, the Prevent policy became a legal duty for public sector institutions, and as such, its reach has extended much deeper into society.

The Prevent strategy is one strand of the UK counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. It aims to prevent radicalisation to terrorism and has three strategic objectives to that end: (1) respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism; (2) prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and (3) work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation. In 2016, the Prevent strategy was placed on a legal footing in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, so that specified authorities such as Higher Education Institutions, need to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’⁴⁷⁴.

6.1.4 Protect

The purpose of the *Protect* strand of CONTEST is to strengthen the UK’s protective security in order to reduce the country’s vulnerability to a terrorist attack in the UK or against its interests overseas. The *Protect* strand has so far managed to reduce the risk of ordinary people who may be victims of a terrorist attack. In 2007, the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) was established, providing integrated security advice across the national infrastructure on physical,

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

personnel and electronic security.⁴⁷⁵ The CPNI, in partnership with industry, has undertaken research and development into science and technologies to develop protection and detection measures, and evaluated over two hundred security products to recommend security measures at Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) sites. There has been an increase in the level of armed police protection at a number of key sites across the UK. CPNI provides personnel security advice across the national infrastructure on how to protect against terrorism. For the years 2011-2016, the objectives of *Protect* strategy were to strengthen UK border security, to reduce the vulnerability of the transport network, to increase the resilience of the UK's infrastructure and to improve protective security for crowded places.

In CONTEST 2018, anti-terrorism proposals have been unveiled by the UK government that would strengthen the protection against a terrorist attack and reduce the grade of vulnerability. A primary concern has to be gathering and analysing high quality data, in order to enhance the state's ability to effectively target unknown persons and goods that are involved in terrorist activity.⁴⁷⁶ The UK has to be proactive in developing new technology that concerns security systems. It is necessary, as the HM Government in 2018 underlines this as being a focus in the strengthening of security in airports, and generally in public transport, in order for it to be well known to terrorist groups that such places are high-risk targets for any terrorist activity. As the Home Secretary has concluded, the main target must be improving protection in crowded areas all over the UK. As the statistics indicate, the next years will only pose further threats, and so the focus on these areas must be intensified.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ HM Government 'CONTEST' (2018) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf. [Accessed 12 April 2012]

6.1.5 Prepare

The purpose of the *Prepare* strand of CONTEST is to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack where that attack cannot be prevented. The strategy includes building generic capabilities in terms of response and recovery from emergencies arising as a result of terrorism attack. In doing so, it aims to work on enhancing preparedness and building cooperation between emergency response services, generating communication and broadening the potential of information sharing.⁴⁷⁷ It is part of the wider National Resilience Programme, which has focused on planning for potential emergencies and strengthening the country's response to emerging threats. The Home Office has helped promote the strategic element of the programme, and has been integral to enhancing cooperation and coordination between all involved agencies. The Ministry of Defence is also a part of this response and can provide a number of niche capabilities in support of the police if required.⁴⁷⁸

The Strategic Defence and Security Review's (SDSR) priority is to prepare for all kinds of emergencies, to be able to recover from shocks, to maintain essential services, and to enhance cooperation between public and private sector providers of national infrastructure to improve their resilience.⁴⁷⁹ Since 2009, the *Prepare* strategy has included the effective response of the emergency services to most kinds of terrorist attacks, and the improvement of capabilities to respond to a terrorist incident and deal with the consequences. Moreover, central, regional and local crisis management structures are appropriately equipped and trained. Hospitals, schools

⁴⁷⁷ Steven Greer (2010) 'Anti-Laws and the United Kingdom's Suspect Muslim Community: A Reply to Pantazis and Pemberton', *British Journal of Criminology*, 60 (6), p.p. 1171-1190.

⁴⁷⁸ HM Government 'CONTEST' (2018) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf. [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁴⁷⁹ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2009) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228644/7547.pdf [Accessed 14 March 2019]

and prisons have been engaged in this process.⁴⁸⁰

National Resilience Extranet enables web-based planning and crisis management, and around five hundred organisations share classified information with each other via this platform. The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centre (CBRN Centre) trained ten thousand police officers to respond to CBRN incidents in 2010. At a local level, the Local Resilience Forum, made up of a number of different agencies, can help to amalgamate the available emergency response resources. At national level, the Cabinet Office helps to coordinate civilian, police and defence specialists, in the interests of calling upon their differing insight to respond effectively to security threat.⁴⁸¹ Even the health sector is becoming a strategic player in the counter-terrorism effort, being called upon to improve response to potential disruption to supplies of medicines and other essential supplies in the event of an emergency situation. This has also been extended to international efforts, where partnerships with outside interests such as other nations of the EU and US have been poised to help build capabilities in detection and counter-measures.⁴⁸²

The main issue above all as HM Government in CONTEST 2018 stresses, is to mitigate the effects of terrorist incidents and formulate a strategy for recovery from any terrorist activity in the UK. Improving abilities to protect victims of terrorism to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response through multi-agency working has been identified as an important element of ongoing responses. The services in the UK should carry out their tasks in accordance with the Interoperability Principles for the emergency services by 2020, to ensure that they can work together effectively in

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Martin Innes et al, (2011) 'Assessing the Effects of Prevent Policing: A Report to the Association of Chief Police Officers', (London: The Association of Chief Police Officers).

⁴⁸² HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2009) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228644/7547.Pdf [Accessed 15 September 2018]

response to a terrorist attack.⁴⁸³ The new version of CONTEST in 2018 runs to a three-year plan. The massive effort has accumulated a spending of more than £2 billion per year, combined with the new priorities, approach and planned new capabilities set out below. The main priority is to reassure British citizens and communities that the UK is a safe area, and restore feelings of safety and security which were arguably lost following the attacks on London and Manchester in 2017.⁴⁸⁴

6.2 The UK's Threat Level System

In this section, the author presents the UK's Threat Level System. The reason for presenting it is that the author estimates that this system might be usefully adopted by the Greek intelligence and security community in order to better assess the level of the threat posed by potential Jihadist terrorists. Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack. They are based on the assessment of a range of factors including current intelligence, recent events and what is known about terrorist intentions and capabilities. This information may well be incomplete, and decisions about the appropriate security response are made with this in mind.⁴⁸⁵ Together with the detailed assessments behind them, this analysis informs security practitioners in key sectors and the police of the potential threat of terrorist attack. Threat assessments are also produced as necessary for individuals and events. There are five threat levels which inform decisions about the levels of security

⁴⁸³ HM Government 'CONTEST' (2018) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/71607/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf. [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ MI5, 'The UK's Threat Level System' Available at: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels> [Accessed 12 February 2019].

needed to protect Critical National Infrastructure.⁴⁸⁶

- **Low** - an attack is unlikely
- **Moderate** - an attack is possible, but not likely
- **Substantial** - an attack is a strong possibility
- **Severe** - an attack is highly likely
- **Critical** - an attack is expected imminently

In reaching a judgement on the appropriate threat level in any given circumstance several factors need to be taken into account.⁴⁸⁷ These include:

- **Available intelligence:** it is rare that specific threat information is available and can be relied upon. More often, judgements about the threat is based on a wide range of information, which is often fragmentary, including the level and nature of current terrorist activity, comparison with events in other countries and previous attacks. Intelligence is only ever likely to reveal part of the picture.
- **Terrorist capability:** an examination of what is known about the capabilities of the terrorists in question and the method they may use based on previous attacks or from intelligence. This would also analyse the potential scale of the attack.
- **Terrorist intentions:** using intelligence and publicly available information to examine the overall aims of the terrorists and the ways in which they may achieve them, including what sort of targets they would consider attacking.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

- **Timescale:** the threat level expresses the likelihood of an attack in the near term. The JTAC as well as the Security Service know from past incidents that some attacks take years to plan, while others are put together more quickly. In the absence of specific intelligence, a judgement will be needed about how close an attack might be to fruition. Threat levels do not have any set expiry date, but are regularly subject to review in order to ensure that they remain current.⁴⁸⁸

The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) was created in 2003 as the UK's centre for the analysis and assessment of international terrorism. JTAC sets international terrorism threat levels and ministers are informed of its decisions. It issues warnings of threats and other terrorist-related subjects for customers from a wide range of government departments and agencies. It also produces more in-depth reports on trends, terrorist networks and capabilities. The Security Service (MI6) is in charge of assessing the level and nature of the threat arising from domestic terrorism, mainly the Irish-related terrorist threat.⁴⁸⁹ The current threat level from international terrorism (which actually refers to Islamist-connected terrorism) for the UK is assessed as severe.⁴⁹⁰

The Greek national security system has to learn from the UK's Threat Level System. The author estimates that it could be adopted by the Greek Ministry of Citizen Protection and Public Order in order to assess not only the threat level posed by potential Jihadist terrorist operations, but also to assess the threat level posed by domestic terrorist organisations and violent extremists. (i.e. far right and far left extremists).

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

6.3 Evaluation of CONTEST and Prevent Strategy

In this section, the author will try to assess the effectiveness of CONTEST as a concept and its implementation by the British government. The government's counter-terrorism strategy is integral to the wider plan of making the UK a safer place, and as a result, this strategy takes a position within a wider security strategy. One of the major challenges which was identified from the outset in the creation and implementation of the strategy was the previous failures of attempts to coordinate information and operational elements across different organisations and agencies involved. The introduction of Counter-Terrorism Units will hopefully go some way to mitigating this challenge, whilst lessons learned from past mistakes will also help to ensure that the same problems do not continue to blight the operation. New threats following the events of 9/11 have also inspired new changes in law enforcement approaches to terrorism, and attempts to disrupt, detect and deter potential terrorists have been set out for multi-agency response, including community involvement.⁴⁹¹ The idea of winning partnerships in the local community to help the fight against terrorism at a local level has not been as successful as first thought, with issues of funding and locating potential partners preventing more effective work at this level. More issues have arisen from partnerships which have produced less-than-ideal results, with partners not keeping to their agreements or being unable to deliver results expected.

The UK is currently investing a great deal of effort in the preventative approach to terrorism. At the heart of this approach there are a number of counter-radicalisation initiatives, which have been extended under the official Prevent

⁴⁹¹ HM Gornment 'CONTEST' (2011) Available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/contest-speech> [Accessed 14 October 2018]

strategy, and which have gone further to involve local community partnerships.⁴⁹² Strong guidelines have been developed to help those working in partnership to address needs and handle concerns. Whilst issues with the previous strategy centred around the failures of the policy to address threats within communities, the current strategy has overcome the thinking that such issues can be narrowed down to simple black-and-white thinking. Understanding that terrorism does not exist in a vacuum, and that a number of different factors come together to present an environment in which terrorism can flourish, has been integral to advancing the strategy and developing it to a point at which a plethora of research can be integrated into the overall approach.⁴⁹³ Key to local Prevent delivery is the Channel programme, which is a multi-agency programme coordinated by the police, to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalisation and direct them towards appropriate support.⁴⁹⁴

The success of the *Prevent* strategy will depend on implementation. The test of the policy will be the manner in which the definitions of ‘extremism’ and ‘Islamism’ are deployed in practice. Questions over the direction of *Prevent* have turned on whether the initiative should concern itself with extremism or terrorism. There are two schools of thought in this question. The first suggests that *Prevent* strategy should only concern itself with terrorist activity and should deploy ostensibly non-violent radicals, in the hope of diverting potential terrorists into other forms of activism. Such an approach denies the link between terrorist actors, who often draw inspiration from a broader infrastructure of radical preachers, and narratives of

⁴⁹² Wikileaks by the telegraph ‘Engagement with Muslim Communities’ (The Telegraph, 4 February) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/wikileaks-files/london-wikileaks/8304896/ENGAGEMENT-WITH-MUSLIM-COMMUNITIES-IN-THE-UK.html> [Accessed 26 April 2019].

⁴⁹³ Policy Exchange (2011) ‘Choosing our friends wisely’ (Policy Exchange) Available at: <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/choosing%20our%20friends%20wisely%20-%20mar%2009.pdf> [Accessed 20 April 2019].

⁴⁹⁴ Case study, the channel programme (gov.uk. 9 November 2018) Available at : <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/the-channel-programme>

grievance and victimhood.

The second school of thought suggests that the government needs to do more to challenge extremist Islamist ideas, and should therefore involve moderate Muslims, and exclude extremists from involvement with government engagement and state funding. The revised *Prevent* strategy (June 2011) demonstrates a greater acceptance of the second school of thought.

The main representative of the first school of thought is the liberal think tank Demos, which in a report published in 2010, *From Suspects to Citizens: Preventing Violent Extremism in a Big Society*, expressed the view that ‘prevention work should be limited to people believed to have the intention to commit or directly facilitate violence, or those targeted by recruiters’.⁴⁹⁵ The second school of thought is mainly represented by the Policy Exchange think tank. In its 2009 report, *Choosing our Friends Wisely: Criteria for Engagement with Muslim Groups*, its authors, Shiraz Maher and Martyn Frampton, argued that *Prevent* strategy should redirect from preventing violent extremism to preventing extremism in general, and that new criteria should be set for engagement with Muslim groups.⁴⁹⁶

Fenwick and Choudhury attempted to find out more about the issues of Muslim and non-Muslim populations in Britain, to see what impacts had been felt from new counter-terrorism strategies and measures. This study found that British Muslims were unsettled by the lack of accountability evident in the *Prevent* strategy, suggesting that this could undermine confidence in the police and government, leading to potential tensions, and ultimately creating an environment in which

⁴⁹⁵ Jamie Bartlett and Jonathan Birdwell, ‘From Suspects to Citizens’ (DEMOS, 2010) Available at: http://www.demos.co.uk/files/From_Suspects_to_Citizens_-_web.pdf?1279732377 [Accessed 7 June 2018].

⁴⁹⁶ Policy Exchange (2011)

radicalisation attempts could flourish.⁴⁹⁷ This fits with what Jack Barclay argued in his article ‘The Extremist Reaction to the UK’s Prevent Strategy’, that extremists have worked to exploit these suspicions of the governments new raft of counter-terrorism strategies to help undermine trust in government and ultimately persuade British Muslims to engage in terrorist activity. The danger lies in allowing extremists to align the Prevent strategy with a threat to Islamic values, which could further allow them to encourage individuals that there is a need for them to work toward re-Islamising and mobilising other British Muslims in defence of Islam.⁴⁹⁸

The House of Commons Select Committee report on Preventing Violent Extremism in 2010 expressed the view that Prevent had alienated Muslim communities, increased intercommunity tensions, and was threatening to undo a number of good initiatives contributing to community cohesion. It is also extremely difficult to assess its effectiveness, as the relationship between these programmes and countering terrorism is weak. Thus, it concluded that in a time of tightening public sector budgets, the question of value for money is impossible to determine.⁴⁹⁹

The revised *Prevent* strategy is built on the recognition that radicalisation can happen in a whole host of different locations and in a wide range of contexts. It also recognises that institutions can play a key role in the radicalisation process, including those across the education, health and faith sectors. Prevent’s work has traditionally

⁴⁹⁷ Helen Fenwick and Tufyal Choudhury, (2011) ‘The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities’, (London: Equality and Human Rights Commission)
Available at:
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/counterterrorism_research_report_72.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2019].

⁴⁹⁸ Helen Fenwick and Tufyal Choudhury, (2011) ‘The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities’, (London: Equality and Human Rights Commission),
Available at:
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/counterterrorism_research_report_72.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2019].

⁴⁹⁹ House of Commons, ‘Communities and Local Government Committee - Sixth Report Preventing Violent Extremism’ (House of Commons, 2010)
Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmcomloc/66/6602.htm> [Accessed 7 June 2018].

been implemented by a wealth of organisations at both a public and private level, taking into account the added value that other actors and agencies, including those in the charitable sector, can have. The Home Office will now monitor its performance in a much greater detail, involving Prevent coordinators which will work with more than twenty-five different local authorities. Their role will be to ensure the achievement of *Prevent* objectives by bringing together organisations engaged in *Prevent* work. As a result, the government's regional *Prevent* coordinator posts have been closed and local authorities will now be required to work in partnership with Prevent teams in central government departments, and the Home Office in particular. This will allow for much greater due diligence and assistance from the heart of government.

Jarvis and Lister conducted a study which drew upon findings from a number of focus groups with Muslim communities, to explore the ways that these British Muslims felt about the current counter-terrorism policy in the UK. Results suggested that communication and trust between Muslim communities and the police force has broken down as a result of what they believed to be misguided strategies such as Prevent. The perceptions of Muslim communities have already been revealed in relation to feelings of unfairness surrounding the apparent treatment of all Muslims in the UK as suspects or extremists.⁵⁰⁰ The strategy has also been proven to have negative effects on Muslims in the UK, with many suffering from hate crime as a result of the way that the Muslim community is perceived as a result.⁵⁰¹

Imran Awan, a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Police Sciences at the University of Glamorgan, argues that:

⁵⁰⁰ Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister, 'Values and Stakeholders in the 2011 Prevent (London: Muslim Council of Britain 2011) Available at:

<<http://soundings.mcb.org.uk/?p=31>> [Accessed 27 April 2019]

⁵⁰¹ Jonathan Githens-Mazer and Richard Lambert (2011) 'Islamophobia and Anti Muslim Hate Crimes: a London case study', (Exeter: European Muslim Research Centre) Available at:

<http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/emrc/publications/IAMHC_revised_11Feb11.pdf> [Accessed 16 April 2019].

*Prevent has alienated the Muslim community, led to poor relations between Muslim communities and wide civic society, increased tensions between the police and local communities and fuelled further dissent and anger amongst many Muslim communities who feel they are being unfairly targeted. Therefore, the disease will only spread as a result of such ill-informed policies and the only way to eradicate it will require much more emphasis on communication and dialogue.*⁵⁰²

Moreover, he states that:

*... one of the debates about the new Prevent Strategy 2011 is the manner in which it is becoming labelled as an agenda for 'spying' upon local Muslim communities. For example, initiatives such as Project Champion which involved the police using covert and overt surveillance cameras in predominately Muslim areas of Birmingham was heavily criticised for breaching rules of liberal democracy and human rights and also at the same time targeting vulnerable minority communities.*⁵⁰³

Ultimately, the *Prevent* strategy of 2011 aims to tackle and prevent extremism, not only in a reactive way, but in a way which goes straight to the root causes of radicalisation and looks to stop it from spreading.⁵⁰⁴

According to the then British Home Secretary, Theresa May, the previous

⁵⁰² Imran Awan (2011) 'Paving the way for Extremism: How Preventing the Symptoms Does Not Cure the Disease of Terrorism' (Contemporary Voices) Available at:

<<http://ojs.st-andrews.ac.uk/index.php/jtr/article/view/224/239>> [Accessed 20 April 2019]

⁵⁰³ Imran Awan (2011) 'Terror in the Eye of the Beholder: The Spycam Saga: Counter-terrorism or Counter-productive', 60 (2) *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 199

⁵⁰⁴ Theresa May, 'CONTEST Speech' (London: Home Office, 2011) Available at:

<<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/contest-speech>> [Accessed 26 April 2019]

Prevent policy was flawed because it failed to identify the threat of extremism.⁵⁰⁵ However, as Imran Awan argues, the Home Secretary does nothing to ease this confusion, by failing to define key terms, such as ‘extremism’ and ‘radicalisation’, which will be central to the success of the program as a whole.⁵⁰⁶ Ironing out these definitional uncertainties will not only help to ensure that the *Prevent* policy does not worsen relations with the Muslim community by mistakenly labelling all Muslims as terrorists or extremists. It also helps to ensure that there can be no abuses of power by the police force to investigate innocent Muslims on the basis of their religion or ethnicity. It is also important to consider the potential for victimisation amongst the Muslim community, and to mitigate their fears about the potential for suffering from hate speech or other hate crimes. Doing it the right way will ensure that the *Prevent* strategy succeeds from the outset in securing the support of the Muslim community⁵⁰⁷

One of the key areas that the new strategy has worked to develop has been the removal of ambiguities. The three new objectives of the government are challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it; protecting vulnerable people and supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation. The new *Prevent* strategy recognises that ‘ideology plays a central role in the radicalisation process.’⁵⁰⁸ The revised *Prevent* strategy is undoubtedly the most comprehensive such strategy to date. It takes a broader look at terrorism and the causes of radicalisation, and knows the value of gaining the respect, or winning the hearts and minds of the Muslim population of the UK. It also looks beyond the UK’s shores, to the issue of terrorist financing, issues in the Middle East, and challenges produced by radicalisation on the internet. The *Prevent* approach seeks to offset the

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ Imran Awan (2011)

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Innes et al. p.p.26-27

substantial risk through effective communication and the engagement of communities in countering the propaganda of Islamist extremists.⁵⁰⁹

Some other points of the reform that should be mentioned are the following: the term ‘preventing terrorism and promoting cohesion’ recognises that the Prevent work and the broader work of promoting cohesion and integration must be kept separate. The 2011 *Prevent* revision has importantly taken steps to rectify issues surrounding the accusations of undue restrictions on fundamental rights suffered by the previous strategy. The Office of the Home Secretary states, in no uncertain terms, that the government is fully and completely committed to protecting the free speech of its citizens.⁵¹⁰ Learning from past mistakes and incorporating findings from comprehensive research into the topics of extremism and radicalisation will be essential in moving forward with the strategy and in its success. Focusing on the efforts of all available agencies and resources and ensuring effective communication between all involved in the strategy will be integral to its success, and this will come with strong definitions and guidelines, which the Prevent strategy looks capable of delivering. The development of *Prevent* in the face of scepticism and the absence of substantial empirical guidance can be judged a qualified success.

The ‘hard’ strands of CONTEST seem to be working despite the fact that there have been some Jihadist terrorist attacks which have resulted in casualties and deaths of civilians in the UK (See Appendix II-Chronology of Jihadism in the UK). Although the latter changes of CONTEST mark a move towards greater liberty, there should be a government plan to publish new legislation allowing for stringent curfews and restrictions on communications, associations and movements, similar to

⁵⁰⁹ Theresa May, ‘CONTEST Speech’ (London: Home Office, 2011) Available at: <<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/contest-speech>> [Accessed 26 April 2019]

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

those currently seen under control orders. There are planned changes to the rules regarding terrorist suspects who are arrested on hard evidence, with a view to actually going to court. Twenty-eight-day detention without charge was reduced back to fourteen days as the standard maximum period that terrorist suspects in this category can be detained before charge or release. Senior police officers are allowed to authorise stop and search powers where they have reason to suspect a terrorist attack will take place and measures are necessary to prevent it.⁵¹¹

Local authorities will no longer be able to use RIPA regulations except to prevent serious crime, and only when approved by a magistrate. The risk of having a radicalised prison population indicates the need for careful community-based solutions. The *Prevent* policy needs to adapt a lower profile, and initiatives should be integrated into existing local government and voluntary activities.⁵¹² Intelligence and information must be better shared between agencies and organisations and between the public and private sectors. CONTEST relies on international partners and partners across central and local government to achieve many of the strategy's objectives. The government is good at measuring process but not so good at measuring outcomes, which requires significant analytical capability. Attempts to measure effect have been politicised, which has hampered success in the past. In terms of adaptability, the nature of the terrorist threat is increasingly unpredictable, and the government must be able to respond appropriately. Given the unpredictability of the threat, there is a pressing need for top-class horizon-scanning (better still, 'strategic notice') and connectivity between the horizon-scanners and the policymakers.⁵¹³

In conclusion, the success of the *Prevent* strategy will depend on

⁵¹¹ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2018) : Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

implementation. Questions over the direction of *Prevent* have turned on whether the initiative should concern itself with extremism or terrorism.

6.4 British Counter-Terror Legislation

The most important pre-9/11 piece of legislation in the UK was the Terrorism Act of 2000, which contained a broad definition of terrorism, covering political, ideological and religious motivations for acts of terrorism. The Act provided for the proscription of terrorist groups, thus making it an offence to be a member of such a group.⁵¹⁴

The Terrorism Act of 2000 offered additional powers to British counter-terrorism bodies beyond those provided in previous legislation. It was designed to provide permanent regulation, as opposed to the previous temporary anti-terrorism legislation, and to cover all forms of terrorism, both domestic and international. Walker,⁵¹⁵ in his research on anti-terrorism laws, examined the practice and impact of the current process for proscribing terrorist groups. The Terrorism Act of 2000 deals with the proscription of organisations. Under Section 41 of the Act, police gained ‘a special arrest power for use in terrorist cases...where...there is not enough to charge an individual with a particular offence even though there is reasonable suspicion of involvement with terrorism’. In Part II, Section 121 of the Act, the interpretation of the term ‘organisation’ includes any association or combination of persons. This phrase encompasses diffuse networks such as Al-Qaeda, as well as those inspired by its ideology. In a Government report, it is claimed that ‘[I]f the network is looser, it is more difficult to prove group membership, than it is loyalty to personal

⁵¹⁴ Legislation gov Uk, Terrorism Act 2000, Available at : <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents> [Accessed 8 April 2019].

⁵¹⁵ Clive Walker, (2011) ‘Terrorism and the Law’ (New York: Oxford University Press). p.p. 56-57

confederates'.⁵¹⁶ Walker indicates that proscription does not primarily act to criminalise membership. Proscription can only be nationwide. Section 3 of the Terrorist Act of 2000 applies a steadfastly executive approach to the activation of proscription. Proscription orders are kept under rolling review every twelve months by the Proscription Review and Recommendation Group and the Proscription Working Group, convened within the Home Office's office for Security and Counter Terrorism, with the participation of the Northern Ireland Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Cabinet Office, with police and security agency support.⁵¹⁷

The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001, allowed for the indefinite internment of foreign nationals who could not be deported, and authorised the use of intercepted communications as evidence in appeals by groups against their proscription or individuals against their internment or deportation.⁵¹⁸ The use of deportation represented an effective form of counter-terrorism, as recognised by MI5 itself, since it allowed for the 'ejecting' of a terrorism-related problem.⁵¹⁹

The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001 reflects a long-standing notion of 'militant democracy',⁵²⁰ in which any state based on legitimate democratic foundations, respecting accountability and individual rights should confront opponents who abuse its tolerance. The purpose of the Act was also to build on legislation in a number of areas to ensure that the government, in the light of the new

⁵¹⁶ HM Government, 'CONTEST' (2018): Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2019]

⁵¹⁷ Lord Carlile of Berriew, 'Report on the Operation in 2007 of the Terrorism Act 2000' (London: Home Office, 2008), paragraph 42; [Ibid.], 'Report on the Operation in 2008 of the Terrorism Act 2000' (London: Home Office, 2009) paragraphs 53, 55; David Anderson, 'Report on the operation in 2010 of the Terrorism Act 2000' (London: Home Office, 2011) paragraph 4.6.

⁵¹⁸ ISC: 'Annual Report 2011-2012', (London: ISC, 2012); available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm84/8403/8403.pdf> [Accessed 15 July 2019].

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ Karl Lowenstein, (1937) 'Militant democracy and fundamental rights', *The American Political Science Review*, 31 (3) p.p. 417-432.

situation arising from the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, has the necessary powers to counter the threat to the UK. The measures were intended to: cut off terrorist funding; ensure that government departments and agencies can collect and share information required for countering the terrorist threat; streamline relevant immigration procedures; ensure the security of the nuclear and aviation industries; improve the security of dangerous substances that may be targeted or used by terrorists; extend police powers available to relevant forces; ensure that the UK can meet its European obligations in the area of police and judicial co-operation and our international obligations to counter bribery and corruption; and update parts of the UK's anti-terrorist powers.⁵²¹

The Criminal and Justice Act of 2003 amends Section 41 of the Terrorism Act of 2000, by extending pre-charge detention from a period of seven to fourteen days.⁵²²

The Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2005 introduced control orders, placing one or more obligations on an individual in order to prevent, restrict or disrupt his or her involvement in terrorism-related activities. Control orders are imposed by the Home Secretary against individuals suspected of involvement in terrorism-related activities, but who cannot be put on trial or deported.⁵²³ They are subject to regular and rigorous scrutiny, including mandatory review by the High Court. The Act also established an Independent Reviewer, to provide an annual report on the control order system. By 10 March, 2009, 40 people had been subject to control orders under the act.⁵²⁴ However, control orders were abolished by the implementation of the

⁵²¹ Legislation gov UK, Terrorism Act 2000, Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/24/notes/division/1/1/2> [Accessed 5 May 2019].

⁵²² Ibid.

⁵²³ Ibid.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011 (TPIMs).⁵²⁵ This new legislation provides new powers to allow the Home Secretary to impose restrictions on the behaviour of a specified individual via means of a ‘TPIMs’ notice. TPIMs notices can include restrictions on movement, financial activity and communication.

The Terrorism Act of 2006 extends pre-charge detention to twenty-eight days. Moreover, it creates new offences such as the encouragement or ‘glorification’ of terrorism, as well as the dissemination, distribution or transmission of terrorist publications. It also gives greater powers to the Home Secretary to ban groups glorifying terrorism.⁵²⁶

The Counter-Terrorism Act of 2008 confers further powers to gather and share information for counter-terrorism and other purposes; to make further provisions for the detention and questioning of terrorist suspects and the prosecution and punishment of terrorist offences; to impose notification requirements on people convicted of such offences; to confer further powers to act against terrorist financing, money laundering and certain other activities; to provide for review of certain Treasury decisions, and other matters connected with review proceedings; to amend the law relating to inquiries; to amend the definition of terrorism; to amend the enactments relating to terrorist offences, control orders and the forfeiture of terrorist cash; and to provide for recovering the costs of policing at certain gas facilities.

Following the increase in the terrorist threat level in August 2014, the Prime Minister announced new legislation to ensure that the police, as well as security and intelligence agencies, have the appropriate legal powers and capabilities they need to tackle Syria and Iraq related terrorist threats, including the ability to stop people

⁵²⁵ Legislation gov Uk , Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011, Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/23/schedule/1> [Accessed 29 May 2018].

⁵²⁶ Available at: <http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/UKTA3.pdf> [Accessed 5 May 2019].

travelling to fight in the region.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 adds to existing powers by: disrupting the ability of people to travel abroad to fight, and to return to the UK; enhancing the ability to monitor and control the actions of those in the UK that pose a threat; and combating the underlying ideology that feeds, supports or sanctions terrorism.⁵²⁷ The Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act of 2019 was proposed to address activities of "hostile states". According to the Home Office, "After the spate of terrorist attacks of last year and the deadly nerve agent attack in Salisbury, our intelligence services and police made the case for an update of existing legislation and some new powers to help meet their operational needs and respond to the evolving threats posed by terrorism and hostile state activity."⁵²⁸

6.5 Conclusions

In the UK Jihadist organisations are actively operating, and individuals who pose a threat to British national security remain a constant threat. Jihadists who use a distorted interpretation of Islam which justifies violence for political purposes are using various means to radicalise Muslims, especially Muslim youth. They are seeking to radicalise them via the internet, in the Mosques, on British campuses and in a range of sectors and institutions. The British government, in order to counter radicalisation in the wake of the 7/7 London bombings, added the *Prevent* 'pillar' to its Counter-Terrorism Strategy, known as CONTEST. The Prevent strand of CONTEST seeks to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. Although Greece has not experienced a Jihadist terror attack, as Chapter 8 will demonstrate, the

⁵²⁷ Legislation gov Uk, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/pdfs/ukpga_20150006_en.pdf [Accessed 26 May 2018]

⁵²⁸ Legislation gov Uk, Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/pdfs/ukpga_20150006_en.pdf [Accessed 26 May 2018]

Prevent pillar of CONTEST might prove an interesting lesson for Greece in the event that the security situation deteriorates. Are CONTEST and British Counter-Terror legislation a valuable paradigm for the case of Greece? This question will also be answered in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 7: Primary Research-Interview Findings

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter the author will present the interview findings from the primary research undertaken for this thesis. In terms of available research methods, elite interviews were considered the most suitable method for the study as they provided rich, detailed answers to the research questions while allowing the subjects of the research flexibility in terms of challenging the assumptions of the researcher. The interviews findings come out from the primary research conducted in two periods. The first period is from September 2010-February 2011 and the second period is from October 2014-February 2015.

7.2 Research findings

7.2.1 First period (September 2010-February 2011)

The researcher started forming categories after identifying key issues within the interviews, measuring the frequency of the key words or key phrases with the assistance of CAQDAS (Dedoose) as described in detail in Chapter 3. As a result, the following key themes emerged:

i) *Islam in Greece*: The indigenous Muslim minority and Muslim communities of immigrants are peaceful people struggling to earn their living and integrate into the Greek society. They are not interested in extremist ideologies and movements, although a slight fear of younger people being more vulnerable to radicalisation is present.

ii) *Incidents of Muslims' outbursts of violence*: A focus on the riots which took place

in Athens (May, 2009) leads to the clarification of their cause. Far from consciously defending their religious identity or being extremists, Muslims residing in Athens were influenced by far-left agitators, with their behaviour being the result of a misunderstanding.

iii) *Radicalisation in Greece*: Greece is unscathed by the problem of radicalisation among Muslims, mainly because their leaders protect and control the young people who tend to be more vulnerable to radicalisation, although one of the interviewees (a Senior Intelligence Officer who spoke to the author on the condition of anonymity) said that Muslims were being radicalised in Greek prisons.

iv) *The debate over the construction of a mosque in Athens*: It is viewed as a positive development, since Athens is the only capital city in Europe without an official Islamic mosque. Although it is not sufficient for all Muslims in Athens, and despite some negative thoughts expressed by some of the respondents, its construction would contribute to the prevention of potential radicalisation among Muslims.

v) *Pro-Islamist organisations in Greece are officially established and operate under specific rules and regulations*. Their function is to enable Muslims to develop their religious identity and satisfy their religious needs, although some of them might pose a potential security risk for Greece, albeit not one related to Jihadist ideology.

i) Islam in Greece

With regard to the first theme, the author researched the wider frame of the presence of Islam and Muslims in Greece, as it was essential to gain insight into the respondents' opinion about the possibility of radicalisation and any potential threats to the security of Greece. The number of Muslim immigrants was estimated, while

there was reference to the Muslim minority in Western Thrace. Integration of Muslims into Greek society was also discussed by particular people, and problems caused by Greek far right extremists were described.

One of the most serious challenges of the research pertains to the exact number of Muslims in Greece. The greater the difficulty in accurately estimating the total numbers of native and immigrant Muslims, the greater the difficulty in identifying any particular problems within this religious community. Before presenting the estimates of the author's respondents it is worth showing the estimates of a relatively new report published in November 2017 by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. This report estimates that in 2017 in Greece the Muslim population represents 5.7% of the total population which translated into numbers means that in Greece there are 727,000 Muslims.⁵²⁹

Naim El Ghandour, President of the Muslim Association of Greece (MAG), estimates that:

500,000 Muslims are living in Attica, in other words in the greater area of Athens. These Muslims have legal residence permits. To this number you have to add another 250,000 who have applied for political asylum. For the illegal Muslim immigrants, I can't estimate their number. In total, we have 750,000 Muslims living in Attica.

Mehmet Imam, President of the Pan-Hellenic Federation in Support of Muslims in Greece ('Filotita') says that, although there are no accurate data, the approximate number of Muslims in Greece is one million, while the Greek Muslim

⁵²⁹ PEW Research Center, 'Europe's Growing Muslim Population'. PEW Research Center & Public Life, (PEW Center Religion & Public Life 29 November 2017)
Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/>
[Accessed 11 July 2018]

minority reaches 180,000 persons, 70% of whom live in Western Thrace. Moreover, there are at least eighty converts to Islam. However, Imam did not clarify whether this fear of openly professing one's conversion to Islam originated from a negative prejudice of Greek state organs or an intimate attachment of Greek society to Christianity. Judging by the later comments of Imam, the author estimates that the Greek converts simply feared disapproval by their families given the strong family and kin ties in Greece.

Halit Habipoglu, President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe, estimates that there are 25,000 Western Thrace Muslim Turks in Western Europe (*'although there is no certain number, there are approximately twenty five thousand Western Thrace Muslim Turks in Western Europe, apart from Greece'*), while Zaki Sidi Mohammed, President of the Moroccan community in Greece says that in *'...Greece about 2,000 Moroccans live. About half of them live in Athens.'* However, Syed Mohammad Jamil, President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society, gave a more accurate account:

'80,000 Pakistanis and 25,000 people from Bangladesh are living in Greece. About 65,000 Pakistanis live in the broader area of Athens and 15,000 in other cities of Greece. The majority of Pakistanis living in Greece are Sunnis (80%) and the rest are Shia (20%).'

Most importantly, Jamil explained that the vast majority of Pakistanis adhered to Sunni Islam, but did not allude to any conflict between the Shia and Sunni Muslims of Pakistani origin in Greece. This seemed surprising, given the troubled symbiosis of the two factions in Pakistan.

Nader Halbouni, President of the Syrian community in Greece, informed the researcher that “...around 25,000 Syrians are living in Greece’ and that most of them are Muslims, although there are many Christians: ‘*The majority of them are Muslims; however, it is very hard to estimate the exact number. We have also many Christians*’”. Just like Jamil, Halbouni clarified that immigrants from Syria observe different religious doctrines (Christianity and Islam), and co-exist, despite their different religious orientations. Owing to a refugee crisis unprecedented in modern European history, the number of Syrians in Greece has skyrocketed – though the vast majority of them prefer to seek refuge in Germany.

Munir Sindho Badar, President of the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association, says ‘*70,000 Pakistanis are living in Greece, half of them in Athens and the rest in Thessaloniki, Larisa, Patra, Herakleion and Sparta*’. He adds that the majority of Pakistanis living in Greece are Sunni (80%); the rest are Shia (20%). From these Sunnis, the majority follows Sufism, and a minority Deobandism. Similarly to Jamil, Badar pointed to the different sects of Islam among the Pakistani immigrants and stressed the peaceful co-existence of their adherents

Muhammadi Yonous, President of the Afghan community in Greece, estimated that about 10,000-12,000 people from Afghanistan live in Greece. Most of the immigrants who came to Greece from Afghanistan are political asylum seekers, because of the ongoing civil war in that country. Around 70% of Afghans living in Greece are Shias, because Shias are considered unbelievers by the Taliban, which is the reason why they are persecuting them. In Afghanistan only 20% of the population is Shia, but in Greece the vast majority of Afghan immigrants are Shias. In line with other notable figures of the immigrant Muslim community in Greece, Yonous underlined that the Afghan immigrants observing different sects of Islam co-exist

peacefully in Greece despite the sectarian violence in their home country.

Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf, Secretary General of the Association of the Egyptian Community in Greece, provides information about the Egyptians who live in Greece. Zafzaf referred not only to the different religious orientation of the Egyptian immigrants in Greece but also their class stratification. He also added that approximately 70,000 Egyptians live in Greece. 90% of them are Muslims and 10% of them are Christians Copts.

Daadir Daysane, a spokesman of the Somali Community in Greece, estimated that in Greece there are 1,500 Somalis. Only few Somalis applied for political asylum in Greece because Greece serves as a transit in order to immigrate to Northern European countries (UK, Norway, and Sweden). Finally, according to Zainul Abedin, President of the Bangladeshi Community in Greece, '*about 25,000 people from Bangladesh live in Greece*'.

Mehmet Imam draws attention to Muslim immigrants' negative experiences in Greece, as he believes that the Greek state is responsible for their inability to integrate into Greek society: '*The experience we have as a country is negative. Take the example of Greek Muslims of Western Thrace. They were never integrated into Greek society and this is not their responsibility, but the responsibility of the Greek state*'. Imam identified the reluctance of the Greek state authorities to authorise the construction of an Islamic mosque and cemetery as well as a 'prevalent Christian affiliation [of Greek society]' as the two main factors for the alienation of Muslims in Greece. For that reason, the construction of an Islamic mosque and cemetery as a policy suggestion is included in the concluding remarks of this thesis.

By the same token, Shadi Ayoubi, a journalist, administrator of the website *islam.gr* and correspondent of Al Jazeera online in Greece, estimated that a

significant part of Muslims have integrated into Greek society. In contrast to Imam, Ayoubi stressed that the age and, by extension, conservative nature of the Muslim immigrants in Greece, had obstructed the effective integration of all Muslims in Greece – not a specific policy of Greek governments or acts by Greek far-right groups.

Abul Bashar, President of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece, emphasises the fact that they are ‘...*Bangladeshi Muslims living in Greece and ... not interested in Bangladeshi politics.*’ However, he does not fail to mention the problems that the Greek far right extremist movement ‘Chrisi Avgi’ causes to their community. Zainul Abedin, President of the Bangladeshi Community in Greece, voiced opinions in the same vein. The two notable figures from the Bangladeshi immigrant community point to the far-rightist violence that the Bangladeshi Muslims have recently undergone; however, they have noted that this violence has not yet generated a backlash by the Bangladeshi Muslims or fomented radicalisation among them. As underlined in the introduction, the lack of radicalised Muslims in Greece explains why Greece has not experienced Jihadist terrorism yet.

Ioannis Michaletos, a security analyst and Head of the South-Eastern European Office of the World Security Network, tried to estimate the number of Muslims residing in Greece:

The total number of Muslim immigrants residing in Greece, I estimate, is approximately 220,000. In this number I haven't included the immigrants from Albania. The Albanians are approximately 470,000 people. They are considered to be Muslims, but the vast majority of them don't practice their religion. More precisely I estimate that in Greece there are 25,000 Egyptians, 25,000 Syrians, 20,000 Iraqis (most of them

of Kurdish origin) 10,000 Palestinians, 12,000 Moroccans-Algerians and Tunisians, 25,000 Afghans, 50,000 Pakistanis, 40,000 Bangladeshi, 4,000 Somalis, 5,000 Iranians and 2,000 Libyans.

From the perspective of the representatives of the Muslim communities, there is no risk, as Muslims from different countries and diverse backgrounds try to integrate into Greek society. Despite the voices of doubt which express the negative aspect of the Muslims' living-conditions in Greece, it can be concluded that they do not have any political intentions, as they are peaceful people, aiming to improve their lives. Even if some of them are not fully integrated into Greek society, and despite the problems they have due to racial discrimination, caused by the far-right Greek political party named "Golden Dawn", Muslims respect Greek people and want to be part of the society they live in. This reflects Muslims' positive attitude towards Greece and the absence of political intentions, which add, to the reason why Greece remains unscathed by Jihadists.

The Greek respondents use their experience as former officials to evaluate whether there is a Jihadist threat in Greece. By interpreting their data and words, the researcher cannot draw clear conclusions. However, it is only implied that there is a rational risk when Muslims implement orders originating from other countries.

ii) Violent incidents potentially related to Islamism

With reference to the second theme, the researcher tried to estimate the risk of potential violence by radicalised Muslims in Greece. When asked about Muslims' outbursts of violence, there was a specific focus on the riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 – an episode known as the 'Koran incident'. This implies that there is no

systematic course of violence, as all respondents talked about this single event which, according to their words, had no political objective.

The President of the Muslim Association of Greece (MAG), Naim El-Ghandour, explained that there were some misinterpretations of the initial incident, as there were doubts about the defacing of the Koran by the Greek policeman, and his intentions. He stressed the fact that it was a single incident and he estimated that the demonstrations which ended in violent riots were part of a domestic political game, in which Muslims were manipulated. The account by El Ghandour of this incident supports the principal argument of this thesis – Greece has not experienced a terrorist attack by Jihadists thanks to the low levels of radicalisation among the native and immigrant Muslim community in Greece. He stressed that Muslims in Greece remained in fact a peace-loving community whose outburst of violence stemmed from political manipulation – not hatred towards the Greek state or people.

The comments by Zaki Sidi Mohammed and Syed Mohammad Jamil stressed that the native and immigrant Muslims do not harbour negative feelings about Greek society and, therefore, a violent incident stands out as the exception rather than the rule for the behaviour of Muslims; the absence of enmity towards Greece explains the dearth in Jihadist terrorist incidents.

Shadi Ayoubi, a journalist, administrator of the website islam.gr and correspondent of Al Jazeera online in Greece, underscored the political (e.g. violence by right-wing extremists) and social roots (e.g. unemployment and exclusion) of this incident, he nonetheless stated that the Muslim community in Greece has not been radicalised and, as a result, such incidents would be unlikely to recur.

Munir Sindho Badar, President of the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association among other notable Muslim figures, did not perceive any signs of radicalisation

among Muslims in Greece – only a rare violent outburst that was encouraged by Greek left-wing organisations.

Muhammadi Yonous, President of the Afghan community in Greece, explained that this violent incident should not be interpreted as an indication of spreading radicalisation among the sizable Muslim community in Greece, but as a misunderstanding caused by the ignorance of the Greek state organs, and worsened by the actions of Greek leftist organisations.

According to Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf's, Secretary General of the Association of the Egyptian Community in Greece, Muslims desired to peacefully demonstrate, because they felt that their religious symbol the Koran had been insulted by a Greek policeman. The Greek state on the other hand delayed issuing a statement condemning the destruction of the Koran. This delay in issuing a condemnation statement sent the wrong signal to Muslims, resulting in the violent riots we witnessed in May 2009.

Hala Akari, member of the Board of Directors of the European Forum of Muslim Women and Head of the Women sector of the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Centre in Athens, believes that *'...what happened was a huge misunderstanding and that some people from the Muslim community for their own aims incited the people to demonstrate, exploiting their religious sentiments. However, I believe that Muslims overreacted in that case.'*

Daadir Daysane, a spokesman of the Somali Community in Greece, estimated that these riots started because of a misunderstanding and because of the media coverage of this unfortunate incident, started to get angry because they felt insulted and this is how the situation began to get out of control. Abul Bashar, President of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece also attributes the riots to a misunderstanding.

The President of the Syrian community in Greece, Nader Halbouni, played down the importance of the incident: *'These riots were not as important as they were presented by the Greek and international media and of course there is not an indication that Muslims residing in Greece have been radicalised'*. The answers of the above notable figures indicate that they interpreted this incident as a misunderstanding, not a sign of radicalisation of the Muslim community in Greece.

Bangladeshi and Pakistani people did not take part in the demonstrations or the riots, according to the President of the Bangladeshi Community in Greece, Zainul Abedin, and the President of the Pakistani Islamic Forum in Greece, Mathee Ullah.

Finally, Mehmet Imam, President of the Pan-Hellenic Federation, in Support of Muslims in Greece 'Filotita', reminds the researcher of *'the official statement issued by their organisation on May 22nd 2009 in which we condemned in an absolute manner those violent demonstrations.'* This was also condemned by MAG, as Naim El Ghandour said: *'We, as MAG, from the first moment after the 'Koran incident', chose the legal path. We issued a complaint against whoever will be proved responsible for that insulting act'*.

The confusion and misunderstanding experienced by Muslims is the main reason for the demonstration and the riots in May 2009, according to the respondents. The blame is mainly shifted onto the media, as Muslims were not properly informed and were consequently more easily misled and manipulated by specific organisations. Part of the blame is due to the Greek state, which delayed issuing a condemnation statement.

On the other hand, the immediate response from the elder Muslims and the leaders of the Muslim communities was crucial for both the way the riots ended and the interpretations which followed. They tried to control the angry Muslim youth who

participated in the riots and they acted in any legal way to protect the members of their communities and express their disapproval for these violent events officially.

Overall, none of the respondents believe that such incidents are indications of radicalisation, which leads to the next theme.

iii) Radicalisation in Greece

The third theme involves the issue of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece. The researcher investigated the possibility of radicalisation among Muslims, which would impose a serious threat to security. However, as it was inferred, there are no such indications. The statements which the researcher decided to include in this theme form a significant factor which contributes to the answer of the research question. The fact that there is no radicalisation among Muslims differentiates Greece from other countries, which may be part of the answer why Greece remains unscathed by the Jihadist threat.

Syed Mohammad Jamil argues that although some Pakistani organisations in Greece have ties to Islamist organisations in Pakistan (e.g. Jamaat-e-Islami party), they can not be associated with Jihadism (e.g. Al Qaeda) and as a result there is no risk of radicalisation among young Muslims of Pakistani origin living in Greece:

With reference to the Koran incident, Hala Akari does not believe that there were any indications of radicalisation.

Syed Mohammad Jamil admits that there are cases of radical imams preaching, who, however, are being monitored. Moreover, he seems certain that there is no danger of radicalisation: ‘...thanks to our efforts we don't face such a problem. I have close cooperation with the Greek Ministry of Justice and I visit prisons very

often; our aim is to strengthen the morale of Muslim prisoners and to try to counter-radicalise them’.

Muhammadi Yonous believes that the Afgans who came to Greece ‘*are illiterate and because of this more vulnerable to radicalisation’*. However, Yonous stated that his organisation tries to fight off extremism and, in particular, ‘*the Afghan community in Greece is organising seminars for these newcomers in order to help them to adapt more rapidly to Greek reality and prevent them from becoming radicalised’*. Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf reassured the researcher about the peace-loving feelings of the vast majority of Muslim immigrants in Greece.

While there are no incidents or signs of radicalisation reported by the respondents, the danger remains. When there are violations of human rights and cases of inequity, the possibility of radicalisation among Muslims increases substantially. However, the Muslim representatives' and Greek officials' co-operation helps them to prevent incidents of radicalisation. The majority of the interviewees believe that Muslims in Greece are interested in improving their living conditions rather than following extremist ideologies. Moreover, it is reported that although Greece is a member of NATO, it is considered to be a friendly country to the Arab and Muslim world, which is part of the answer to the research question. Therefore, the likelihood of Jihadism terrorism in Greece remains very low, despite the proximity of Greece to the zones of conflict in the Middle East and the presence of a sizable (immigrant) Muslim community in the country. It is reported that every attempt to radicalise young Muslims made by imams is under control, although there is difficulty because they preach in unofficial mosques. This led the researcher to explore the respondents' opinions on the construction of an official mosque in Athens, so that he could make the connection with the Muslims' attitudes and intentions.

Taking the interpretations and opinions of the respondents of the second subgroup of Group A into consideration, the researcher gained a better understanding of radical elements in Greece and the threat of radicalisation. As Ioannis Corantis explains, an *'Intelligence/Security Service is bound to operate, always within reasonable limits, on the basis of the "worst case scenario". With this in mind, even if there were no radical elements in Greece, we should always remain on the alert'*. Commenting on the Koran incident, Corantis expresses his standpoint regarding radicalisation of Muslims in Greece, with reference to the Koran incident. He believes that extremists use propaganda and trigger Muslims' anger, so that they can manipulate them. In contrast to the Muslim leaders, Corantis perceived the incident as a warning about the growing radicalisation trend within the immigrant Muslim community. However, he pointed out that the sensitivity of Muslims to what they consider to be lack of respect to their religion does not necessarily relegate them to the category of extremists.

Dimitrios Chorianopoulos confirms that *'there are existing radical elements and extremists among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece'*. He also states that *'there are also sleeping and active cells of Islamist terrorists living in Greece'*:

However, Chorianopoulos did not elaborate further on why Greece has been unscathed thus far by Jihadist terrorism, despite the presence of terrorist cells on Greek soil. Due to a combination of factors outlined throughout this thesis (such as Greece's friendly relations with the Muslim world, low level of radicalisation among the native and immigrant Muslim community etc.), Greece has not yet been struck by a wave of Jihadist violence; nor does this scenario seem likely in the near future.

Ioannis Michaletos a security expert warns of a visible radicalisation of the immigrant Muslim community in the last few years, he states that the status of Greece

as a transit country does not induce Jihadists to rank Greece as a top priority target.

The senior intelligence officer of the NIS-EYP who spoke to the researcher under the condition of anonymity draws attention to the young Muslim immigrants' vulnerability to radicalisation. He underscored the positive role of the Muslim political and religious figures in restraining the violent urges of young Muslim immigrants and thwarting any attempts to radicalise the latter; thanks to this peaceful stance of the Muslim community's leadership, younger immigrants have not been radicalised, at least to the extent of perpetrating acts of terror in Greece. However, he expressed great concern about incidents of radicalisation of Muslims in Greek prisons.

With the benefit of professional experience on the subject, Evripidis Stylianidis former Minister of Education stated categorically that Greece was not threatened by Jihadist violence, due to the peace-loving feelings of the vast majority of the native and immigrant Muslim community. In order to prevent such an incident, he undertook an initiative in his capacity as a Minister of Education and Religious Affairs to integrate the new Muslim immigrants into Greek society and, in this way, reduce the likelihood of radicalisation.

The Greek respondents find that there is a relative risk of radicalisation among Muslims living in Greece, as there are extremists and recruiters who can manipulate them, as long as they can use their ideology to trigger emotions. It is also reported that there are sleeping or active cells of terrorists among them, especially because the masses of illegal immigrants cannot be monitored or controlled. The term 'transit country' is discussed with regard to Greece, as immigrants, who temporarily stay in Greece on their way to their final destination, may promote radical plans and propaganda. There is also special reference to the vulnerability of young Muslims, in

contrast with the older ones who have acquired the legal residence permits and often cooperate with authorities to prevent young Muslims' radicalisation.

iv) The debate over the construction of a mosque in Athens

The construction of an official mosque at Votanikos, Athens, is the issue of the next theme. The researcher assumed that freedom of religion is appreciated by Muslims and that denying the construction of a mosque could trigger negative emotions and violent manifestations. The respondents seem to confirm that, as a majority of them believe that the Muslims should be free to satisfy their religious needs.

Naim El-Ghandour President of the MAG argued that the construction of the official mosque is a positive development. Anna Stamou, a Greek convert to Islam and member of the Board of Advisors of the MAG draws attention to the funding of the building: *'we are the only Muslim Association in Europe who asked the host state to fund the construction of the mosque and not to accept any funding from Islamic countries'*. These two figures stress that the construction of a mosque by the Greek state authorities in Athens will redress one of the long-standing grievances of the immigrant Muslim community and reduce the threat of radicalisation.

Hala Akari identifies the need for an official mosque and explained that its construction will be a positive beginning which will help to enhance the trust between Muslims in Athens and the Greek authorities. However, she estimated that one official mosque is enough to satisfy the needs of Muslims living in the wider area of

Athens; the Arab community is running about forty informal mosques in Greece.

Abul Bashar seems pessimistic, as he does not believe that *'this mosque will be constructed in the near future; maybe in fifteen years'*. However, his suggestion of constructing smaller mosques instead of one big mosque is an alternative which is not accepted by everyone.

Mehmet Imam recalls that *'...we have been discussing this issue' since 1977, when I first visited Athens'*; but he also provides an alternative idea, which could solve the problems regarding the construction of a new mosque, as he suggests reconstructing the old ones, so that every community has its own mosque.

Mathee Ullah, too, believes that *'one mosque is not enough to satisfy the religious needs of Muslims who are living in the broader area of Athens'*. On the contrary, Zainul Abedin states that *'...one mosque is enough to satisfy the religious needs of Muslims residing in Athens; at least it is an important step to start with'*.

Halit Habiboglu seems disappointed at the fact that Athens is the only European country in which there is no official mosque. Zaki Sidi Mohammed referred to the delay in constructing the official mosque due to bureaucratic obstacles.

Nader Halbouni explains the reasons why the Greek state is avoiding the construction of the mosque, and he focuses on the need for the construction of more mosques: *'...the mosque, due to bureaucratic obstacles is not constructed yet... we have to reach a starting point. The construction of the mosque in Votanikos should be completed'*. The same standpoint is supported by Shadi Ayoubi. Munir Sindho Badar also questions the intentions of the Greek government.

Finally, Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf remembers that the official position of the Greek Orthodox Church in 2005 was in favour of the construction of a mosque, but there was an objection to the construction of an Islamic Cultural Centre in which

converting Christians into Muslims could be attempted. Zafzaf stated pointedly that the construction of a new mosque in Athens presents an insurmountable socio-political challenge, since Muslims in Greece tend to be associated exclusively with the Turks in the collective subconscious of the Greek population. However, he did not mention any open hatred by the Greek population towards Muslim immigrants on the basis of the association of Muslims with the Turkish threat.

As inferred by the comments of the interviewees, the Greek state authorities have not satisfied one long-standing request of the Muslim community (the construction of a mosque), which of course increases the feelings of alienation and deprivation among the Muslims and, by extension, the potential threat of radicalisation. The aforementioned interviewees showed their disappointment about the absence of an official mosque in Athens. However, the Greek state authorities intend to construct a mosque and cemetery for the religious needs of the Muslim community in Athens - the city where the vast majority of Muslim immigrants reside. Although the construction of the mosque and cemetery has been delayed due to the opposition of certain nationalist circles and the typical bureaucratic sluggishness of the Greek state, the major political parties in Greece (from the centre-right to the left) support the construction of an official mosque and a cemetery. The planned construction of the mosque and cemetery will ease the alienation of the Muslim community in Athens and avert their radicalisation.

Although the construction of an official mosque in Athens is considered to be a positive move, it is doubted whether it could satisfy the religious needs of the Muslims living in the wider area. It is of great importance that funding from Islamic countries has not been accepted, so that these countries cannot influence or control the construction and operation of the mosque. In contrast, the fear that the Greek state

intends to control it is expressed. The need for a place of worship is unanimously stressed by the respondents, as a fundamental human right. As the Muslims believe that the construction of the mosque has been delayed due to bureaucratic obstacles and not because of the objection of either the Greek government or the Orthodox Church, their respect towards Greek people and the Greek state is confirmed by the interviewees' answers. An additional feature which differentiates Greece from other European capitals is that there is no official mosque in the Greek capital. Yet another differentiating characteristic of Greece which emerged is that there is no Islamic fanaticism. The respondents all agree that the construction and functioning of the mosque will enhance trust and strengthen bonds between Muslims and Greek people. Greek respondents' opinions about the construction of an official mosque in Athens are different, as some of them believe that it will facilitate the attempts of the Greek state to control Muslims, while others find more negative results than positive ones.

Ioannis Corantis, former Director of the NIS-EYP, argued that the construction of an official mosque will inevitably lead to the creation of 'satellite cells' that will depend exclusively on Muslim clients (restaurants, fast food, bookshops etc). In this way, in the long run Greece will witness the creation of a real Islamic ghetto which will de facto be out of any control by the Greek state. Moreover, since the official mosque will be a Sunni one, the Shia community will demand their own mosque and if Greece does not satisfy their demand, it is probable that there will be unpleasant developments. His opinion is that it would be better if the Greek government gives legal permits to a specific number of informal mosques that are currently operating illegally. In this way the Greek state will satisfy in a proportionate and symmetric manner the religious needs of Muslims who will be under the supervision of the State, and by doing so we will also avoid the potential danger of

radicalisation of Muslims.

Dimitrios Chorianopoulos' (former head the Greek Counterterrorism Unit) remarks are negative in regard to the construction of an Islamic mosque in Athens. He argues that this will not help the Greek security authorities in their efforts to prevent potential radicalisation of Muslim immigrants.

Ioannis Michaletos argued that Islamism, and not a mosque, constituted the real issue in Greece with regard to the status of the immigrant Muslim community. He asserted that the unofficial mosques already serve the religious needs of the Muslims and, therefore, a new mosque is not needed.

Marinos Stagakis supported an opposite view. He estimated that the construction of an official mosque for Muslims residing in Athens is not per se a threat to public security. He added that an official mosque will be much easier to control than all these informal mosques which are mushrooming in the wider area of Athens.

The senior intelligence officer of the NIS-EYP considers the construction of the mosque to be a way to monitor and control the Muslims, as this is impossible in the sixty seven informal mosques, known to have been operating up to 2009, while *'their number is growing rapidly'*:

Finally, Evripidis Stylianidis reminds the researcher that, thanks to the positions that he has held, he has worked for the construction of the mosque, although he believes that three mosques should be constructed, in order to facilitate the Greek state's efforts to counter potential extremism among Muslim immigrants more efficiently.

The aforementioned interviewees stressed the positive impact that the construction of a new mosque would certainly produce for the domestic security of

Greece; using their professional experience, they asserted that a mosque constructed and run by the Greek state authorities would enable the latter to oversee the Muslim immigrants and, thus, prevent their potential radicalisation within or outside the community.

The construction of a mosque is interpreted differently by the Greek respondents. Beyond religious needs, they see social and political consequences, such as the potential formation of a ghetto or possible demands for construction of more mosques. Of course, there are extreme standpoints, as there has been reference to the Islamist intentions to Islamise Greece, questioning the ability of the Greek state to control extremists in a single mosque.

It is suggested that several unofficial mosques should be allowed to operate legally, so that they can be controlled, and all communities are satisfied, which will contribute to the prevention of radicalisation. However, preventing radicalisation by constructing a mosque is also questioned, because experience reveals that constructing mosques and satisfying religious needs have not stopped terrorist acts in other countries.

v) Pro-Islamist organisations in Greece

The last theme is about the presence of pro-Islamist organisations in Greece. The question was explored, as to whether they constitute a real or a potential danger and how they are connected to Jihadists. A deeper investigation of the situation could contribute to a better understanding of the reason why Greece is unscathed by the Jihadist threat.

Hala Akari spoke in favourable terms about the Muslim Brotherhood, stressing that the ideology and activity of this political organisation does not pertain to

extremism and terrorism. Therefore, she insisted that this organisation (which after all retains an insignificant presence on Greek soil) does not pose a threat to Greek national security.

Mehmet Imam and Nader Halbouni do not think that the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Hizb-ut-Tahrir and Wahhabis are present in Greece, and Syed Mohammad Jamil thinks that *'there are no supporters of the Taliban movement in Pakistan, among the Pakistanis living in Greece. However, I cannot exclude this from happening in the future due to the continuous flow of illegal immigrants to Greece on a daily basis'*.

Muhammadi Yonous, too, explains that they *'don't have supporters of the Taliban among the Afghani immigrants living in Greece'*. He also adds that the *'Afghan community in Greece is organising seminars for these newcomers in order to help them to adapt more rapidly to Greek reality and prevent them of becoming radicalised'*.

Shadi Ayoubi also questions the presence of extremist organisations in Greece; although he admits that supporters of these extremist organisations do exist in Greece, he says that their numbers are insignificant.

Although the information about the operation and activities of pro-Islamist organisations in Greece are ambiguous due to lack of evidence, it was made clear that none of the organisations in Greece is extremist or aggressive and that their political intentions do not include waging Jihad on Greece. Without denying the possibility that there are supporters of extremist ideologies, the respondents stress that these cases are individual and cannot be generalised. Therefore, there has not been any reference to any connection with extremists, which contributes to the absence of Jihadist influence.

The presence and activities of pro-Islamist organisations in Greece was also explored through interviewing Greek experts and former officials.

Evrpidis Stylianidis suggested the ‘signing’ of a ‘social contract’ between the Greek state authorities and the representatives of the immigrant Muslim community in an effort to redress the grievances of Muslims and prevent their radicalisation through close cooperation and understanding.

Ioannis Corantis argued that the activities of the Gulen movement and Milli Gorus in Western Thrace clearly show that the two political organisations promote an agenda focused on ethnicity (the affinity of the native Muslim minority with Turkey) – not religion. Therefore, the activities of these political organisations do not promote Jihadism among the ranks of the native Muslim minority in Thrace.

Just like Corantis, Kalenteridis confirms that the above political organisations promote an agenda focused on ethnicity – not religion – within the native Muslim minority in Greece; therefore, the two organisations do not promote Jihadism or religious extremism.

Ioannis Corantis does not confirm the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat, Hizb-ut-Tahrir, Wahhabis or Hamas, although *‘sympathies have been recorded, as expressed by some individuals for one organisation or another’*. However, the senior intelligence officer of the NIS-EYP does confirm the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood and Tablighi Jamaat. He also informs the researcher that Hamas, *‘a designated terrorist organisation, has no official presence in Greece. However, among the 2,000 Palestinians living in Greece, there are members and supporters of Hamas*. However, due to the friendly relations between Greece and the Arab World, these supporters of Hamas have not conducted any terrorist attacks against Israeli or Jewish targets in Greece.

Dimitrios Chorianopoulos enlightened the researcher by providing information about senior operatives of Jihadist organisations. Kalenteridis' and Chorianopoulos' comments fall into the same category as those of the previous interviewees: they highlight the real threat for foreign-masterminded or foreign-backed terrorism through religious or ethnic minorities on the territory of a specific country.

Lack of solid evidence cannot help the researcher draw conclusions, apart from the assumption that there are probably followers of extremist movements and organisations, which do not have an institutional presence in Greece. Since the respondents cannot confirm the presence of any pro-Islamist organisation in Greece, it can only be assumed that extremist organisations are interested in Greece as a transit country.

7.2.2 Second period (October 2014-February 2015)

The same process was followed by the researcher for the second group (Group B) of interviewees. By reading and re-reading the text of the interviews, and with the assistance of CAQDAS (Dedoose) described in detail in Chapter 3, the following themes were identified: i) radicalisation among Muslims in Greece, ii) the construction of an official mosque in Athens and iii) Greece and the ISIS threat.

i) Radicalisation among Muslims in Greece

Considering the first theme, Ioannis Michaletos informs the researcher that there is a risk of Muslims' radicalisation, as about a dozen individuals who have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS, have already returned to Greece. *'All of them were immigrants from the Middle East residing in Greece'* and according to *'all indications and information from authorities, local and*

international media', they were '*radicalised in Greece*'. This prolific writer and researcher on Jihadism warned of the emergence of terrorist cells in Greece. However, the number of ISIS fighters who have been radicalised in Greece is insignificant, and this fact confirms the main argument of this thesis that the risk of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece is not considerable.

According to Vasilis Lambropoulos, a journalist for the newspaper 'To Vima' at least one Jihadist of Syrian origin and Greek citizenship has travelled to Syria in order to fight along with ISIS. Moreover, he stated that according to Greek security services three to four Muslims with Greek citizenship have travelled to Syria to fight with ISIS. He added that according to Europol's 'Traveler' programme, since the beginning of 2014 approximately two hundred individuals have passed through Greece, coming from Western Europe, to fight in Syria and Iraq with Jihadists. Furthermore, the Greek security authorities have been alerted by the CIA to check about fifteen to twenty individuals coming from the Balkans (Albania, FYROM, Kosovo, Bosnia) and travelling through Greece, to reach Syria and Iraq and fight along with ISIS. In addition, the CIA has asked the Greek security authorities to provide intelligence about approximately forty of their relatives living in Greece. Moreover, he stated that there were approximately fifteen to twenty Jihadists who have returned from Syria and Iraq pretending that they were refugees, and who have stayed in Greece.

Georgios Dionysopoulos, a journalist of the newspaper 'Proto Thema' reported that there is a Jihadist with Greek citizenship and a Syrian mother, who has travelled to Syria to join the ranks of the Islamic State. His assessment was that there is a possibility that other Jihadists have also travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State., but he estimated that these are not Greek citizens, but

Muslim immigrants without legal residence permits. However, because these people were not documented by the Greek authorities, he estimated that “*we cannot ultimately know how many of them have been radicalised and decided to travel to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State*”.

Ioannis Souliotis, a journalist in ‘Kathimerini’ newspaper, also confirms that ‘*...there are Jihadists from Greece who have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State*’, and he finds it possible that ‘*these individuals have been radicalised in informal Mosques in Athens*’.

The afore-mentioned Greek journalists verified the story that a few radicalised Muslims had travelled to the Middle East to fight under the black banner of ISIS; yet these Jihadists neither waged Jihad in Greece nor spread Jihadist ideology within the immigrant Muslim community. After all, these radicalised Muslims who travelled to the Middle East in order to wage Jihad remain an insignificant minority – roughly twenty people out of 500,000 to 700,000 Muslim immigrants in Greece. This indicates that Jihadist ideology has not found a fertile ground in Greece.

Although he did not exclude the possibility of radicalisation by the returning Jihadists from Syria and Iraq, Vasilis Lambropoulos did not believe there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece. This standpoint is shared by Georgios Kalantzis, Secretary General of Religious Affairs at the Ministry of Education. He adds that even extremist imams cannot trigger the process of radicalisation.

The comments of the previous interviewees confirm the central argument of this thesis: that Greece is not currently threatened by Jihadist terror due to the low level of radicalisation among the Muslim community.

Although he does not think that there is a problem of radicalisation, Syed Mohammad Jamil reports that cooperation between communities and authorities is

essential for its prevention. He also makes special reference to the use of the Internet for recruiting young people.

Jamil confirmed that the close cooperation between the Greek authorities and representatives of the immigrant Muslim community have prevented the spread of Jihadist ideology in a successful way. As mentioned in the introduction, cooperation and understanding between the host nation-state and immigrants means far lower risk of a terrorist attack.

In contrast, Georgios Dionysopoulos thinks that there is a problem of radicalisation; however, he thinks that *'it is not directed against Greece. Those who are radicalised are more likely to travel to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the so called Islamic State'*. About the riots in Athens in May 2009, Ioannis Michaletos thinks that they *'were the first signs of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants on a mass scale'*. Ioannis Souliotis also thinks that *'these demonstrations were an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism'*.

The above four interviewees claimed that radicalisation has started seeping through the ranks of the immigrant Muslim community, and refer to the May 2009 riots as an ominous sign of this trend. With the exception of Michaletos, the other three interviewees contended that these radicalised Muslims do not threaten Greece *per se* since the would-be Jihadists direct their actions elsewhere.

On the contrary, Vasilis Lambropoulos and the Intelligence Analyst of the NIS-EYP who spoke to the author under the condition of anonymity do not think that those demonstrations were an indication of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants residing in Greece. Georgios Kalantzis and Nader Halbuni also think that they were not a serious indication of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants. Syed Mohammad Jamil describes them as *'isolated incidents which were caused by small groups of*

fanatics and individuals which can be characterised as a provocation'. Andreas Andrianopoulos, and Savvas Kalenteridis believe this, too, as such incidents have not been repeated after 2009. Although Thanos Dokos does not think the riots were serious indications of radicalisation, he argues that “*they should not be ignored by relevant Greek state agencies*”.

The second group of respondents described the May 2009 riots as an isolated incident which should not be attributed to radicalisation among Muslim immigrants in Greece. Angelos Syrigos' (Assistant Professor of International Relations at Panteion University) described these events as a demonstration of power on the part of some leaders of the Muslim ethnic groups residing in recent years in Greece. This fragmentation, however, among the Muslim ethnic groups (for example the Pakistanis) might have prevented meaningful events of violent extremism.

According to him, Muslims fall into two categories: the Muslim minority in Thrace and the legal or illegal Muslim immigrants. The first group shows no signs of radicalisation. Except for a demonstration against Israel that took place in July 2014 and was organised by circles connected to the Turkish consulate we have not seen other real signs of radicalisation. In contrast, among the Muslim immigrants, it seems that there are some extremists. Syrigos pointedly remarked that no real signs of radicalisation have been observed in Greece – a fact that explains why Greece has not experienced Jihadist violence.

Ioannis Michaletos finds mosques to be the most likely places for radicalisation to occur. According to him, ‘*there are around twenty-five ‘hardcore’ ones, mostly in Athens*’. He also holds that ‘lone rangers’ and self-proclaimed imams are part of this process of radicalisation. Vasilis Lambropoulos, Georgios Dionysopoulos, the intelligence analyst of the NIS-EYP who spoke to the author on

the condition of anonymity and Syed Mohammad Jamil agree, also added the Internet as a means of Muslims' radicalisation. Thanos Dokos (Director General of ELIAMEP), says that radicalisation occurs '*in informal mosques and through social (physical) interaction, less through social media (so far)*'.

About potential places for radicalisation, Angelos Syrigos stated that informal prayer rooms are places where the potential to radicalise someone exists. There are, however, no indications that this is happening systematically, as for example in Britain, where some mosques were renowned for their extreme preaching and for the fanatic audience. There are some cases of fanaticism, however, associated with the perception of Islam in the countries from which they come from. For example, Pakistanis or Afghans are more extreme than many Arabs. Most Islamic prayer rooms are connected together in an informal network that has links with the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE) that is influenced by the 'Muslim Brotherhood'.

The above interviewees referred to the Internet and some radicalised imams as a *potential* source of radicalisation; however, with the exception of Michaletos, they ranked the prospects of radicalisation and, by extension, Jihadist violence among Muslim immigrants as very slight.

Finally, it is interesting that the intelligence analyst of the NIS-EYP who spoke to the author on the condition of anonymity fears that the financial crisis and the attacks of right-wing extremists against Muslims may trigger negative emotions among Muslims, which in turn might enhance their desire to react.

According to the respondents, people who fought for ISIS and reside in Greece either permanently or temporarily until they leave for Western Europe may be a threat to national and public security. However, most of the interviewees do not find

that conditions in Greece help recruiters fulfill their aim and that even when this occurs, the young people who are radicalised are not directed against Greece, but are ordered to travel to Syria and Iraq. The researcher tried to identify these conditions, so emphasis was put on the places and methods of radicalisation. The use of the Internet and the operation of mosques are discussed.

ii) The construction of an official mosque in Athens

The second theme refers to the construction of an official mosque in Athens as a way to prevent radicalisation among Muslims residing in Greece. Vasilis Lambropoulos finds it possible, and Georgios Kalantzis believes that if it is not constructed, there will be a problem of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants. The same view is shared by Nader Halbuni who thinks that *'it will be easier for disaffected Muslims to become radicalised if there is no progress on the issue of the construction of an official Islamic mosque in Athens'*.

Syed Mohammad Jamil also believes that *'the construction of an official Mosque...will contribute to the effective prevention of potential radicalisation of the young generation Muslim immigrants'*. Ioannis Souliotis thinks *'it would be easier to control the potential radicalisation of Muslim immigrants in one or more legal mosques than in areas of informal mosques'*.

In summary, the above respondents claimed that the reluctance or refusal of the Greek state authorities to construct an official mosque will contribute negatively to the relationship between the Greek state and the immigrant Muslim community and, in all probability, increase the potential of radicalisation amidst the ranks of the latter.

Andreas Andrianopoulos expressed a different reason for potential radicalisation among Muslims in Greece in relation to the construction of a mosque,

as he believes that radicalisation will occur only if it is controlled by Islamist organisations: *'The construction of an official mosque in Athens might create a problem of radicalisation of Muslims only if it comes under the control of the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia'*.

Georgios Dionysopoulos estimated that *'those Muslim immigrants (because for Muslim Greek citizens of Western Thrace I wouldn't even put such a question) who might be vulnerable to radicalisation, will be affected by the construction or not of an official Mosque in Athens'*. Thanos Dokos Director General of the Athens based think tank ELIAMEP explained that *'it would be a step in the right direction, but it would not suffice, because of the limited number of faithful it would serve (and only in the Athens area). Other additional measures would certainly be necessary'*.

The three respondents above stressed that the construction of an official mosque does not suffice; the Greek state authorities must also monitor the preaching and preachers within the mosque to forestall potential radicalisation.

Savvas Kalenteridis expresses the opposite view: *'that in order to safeguard the cultural identity of Greece, the Greek state should not construct an official mosque in Athens'*. Ioannis Michaletos strongly believes that the construction of an official mosque will not benefit Greek national security; he claims that Western Europe serves as an ideal example of the failure of this policy. Michaletos in fact argues that an official mosque will exacerbate the problem of radicalisation.

Angelos Syrigos expressed the view that *'most informal places of worship should be closed immediately'*, as they *'constitute a direct threat to national security'*. Finally, the Intelligence Analyst of the NIS-EYP suggested the construction of two mosques, one for each of the major Muslim communities in Athens.

The last interviewees maintain that only the construction of one or more

official mosques will help the Greek state authorities to mend a long-standing grievance of the immigrant Muslim community and, moreover, to neutralise the potential for radicalisation among Muslim immigrants.

The construction of the mosque is discussed in relation to prevention of radicalisation. Although most of the respondents do not find the mosque a problem, there are some objections. The fear of Islamist control of the mosque and the threat of the cultural identity of Greece are expressed. However, the construction of a mosque is not directly perceived as a threat to Greek national security, as extremists who have been active before the construction will continue their activity, regardless of the mosque.

iii) Greece and the ISIS threat

The third theme, which answers the research question in a more direct manner, involves the discussion about the potential threat of ISIS. All the respondents think that it is not likely for Greece to be targeted by Jihadist forces.

Ioannis Michaletos argues that Greece is a transit zone and Jihadists don't want for the time being to interrupt this favourable passage. Also, Greece is a rather indifferent 'player' in Middle Eastern affairs; there are quite favourable sentiments in Muslim communities worldwide about Greece in general and, last but not least, the country has very effective domestic counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism services. In addition, the vast majority of Muslim immigrants in Greece are not legal residents, thus there are no 'roots' or 'parallel societies' such as it is the case in many northern European countries. For Jihadists it is very difficult to set up a functioning base without having a stable number of accomplices with legal residence.

Although Vasilis Lambropoulos argues that individual terrorist actions in Greece may occur, he insists that the friendly relations between Greece and the Arab-Muslim world have prevented the radicalisation of the immigrant Muslim community in Greece and terrorist attacks by foreign Jihadists on Greek soil.

After distinguishing the first-generation Muslim immigrants, from the Greek Muslims in Western Thrace, Georgios Kalantzis emphasises that the relations between Greeks and Muslims are mainly built on the basis of mutual respect and friendship.

According to Kalantzis, the immigrant Muslim community in Greece shows no signs of radicalisation; nor is Greece portrayed as a country hostile to Islam and, hence, as a legitimate target for Jihad. Athens has always retained friendly relations with the Arab/Muslim world and, more importantly, Greece never ruled over the Muslim world as a colonial power. The combination of these two factors explains why Greece has been unscathed by Jihadist violence, despite its proximity to the crisis zones in the MENA region.

The above mentioned arguments were in fact endorsed by most of the interviewees who argued in particular that: a) In Greece there is excellent cooperation between Muslim organisations and the Greek State and in particular with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection, in order to have effective control of potential extremists and to prevent the potential radicalisation of second generation Muslim immigrants, b) Greece is friendly towards Muslim countries and, c) Greece does not have a colonial past like other Western countries.

7.3 Conclusions

The main finding of the primary research is that Muslim communities living in Greece are mostly interested in living a peaceful life and the vast majority of them are not interested in politics and of course they are unwilling to support extremist ideas and support Jihadism. Nonetheless, the phenomenon of Islamophobia, discrimination and socio-economic marginalisation of Muslim communities have a primary role in generating disaffection and alienation.

CHAPTER 8: Comparative Analysis-Discussion

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, data collected through elite interviews with representatives of the Muslim community in Greece as well as Greek experts and officials are analysed thoroughly. Thereafter, the conclusions about the level of the Jihadist threat to Greek national security and the real reasons behind this state of affairs are drawn. In summary, the analysis of data demonstrates that Greece faces a very low level of threat emanating from Jihadi terrorism. Furthermore, in this chapter a comparative study between the Greek and UK case studies is taking place. Finally, the factors that may lead to an increased threat level in Greece are discussed as well the lessons that Greece might learn from the UK experience.

8.2 Greece unscathed by Jihadism

Although Greece has been a member of both the EU and NATO for decades, in contrast to other European countries and NATO members who have an equivalent percentage of Muslim population such as the UK, it remains unscathed by the phenomenon of Islamist radicalisation and terrorism. The author in this chapter analyses the findings of the primary research through the use of elite interviews explaining the reasons why Greece has not so far been the target of Jihadi terrorists, as well as the reasons why the country does not face a serious problem of radicalisation from/of Muslims living within its territory. The list of Jihadist terrorist attacks in European and NATO countries is long and has increased in recent years following the rise of ISIS. Greece, as illustrated by the primary research as well as by

hard facts (no terrorist incident reported with connection to Jihadi Terror), has not been a target of this type of Jihadi terrorism. Before analysing the findings of the primary research, it is necessary to illustrate that according to a training manual titled “Actions against radicalisation and extremism” published by the Directorate of State Security of the Hellenic Police in cooperation with the Center for Security Studies (KEMEA) in October 2018, Greece until the present day faces a low level threat emanating from Islamist radicalisation and terrorism. As the training manual points out: “Greece was not systematically involved in the ‘war on international terrorism’”. The country only sent a mobile medical unit in Iraq, while troops in Afghanistan participated mainly in technical and medical activities as well as in training missions. In addition, it has not been involved in recent aviation operations against ISIS.

In addition, Muslims have a positive view of Greece, and the country has no involvement in colonial wars.⁵³⁰ Moreover, since February 2015 when the researcher interviewed the last of his interviewees of the second period of research (October 2014-February 2015), the refugee-immigration crisis, coupled with the escalation of terrorist attacks on European soil (Paris attacks in November 2015, Brussels attacks in March 2016), had caused polarisation in the societies of several EU member states. Maintaining and sharpening polarisation may:

- a) cultivate the ground for "cumulative" radicalisation, a situation in which Islamist extremism, as well as the left-wing / anarchist extremism, fuel and fire each other.
- b) permit exploitation by extremist organisations through the recruitment and mobilisation of people, resulting in increased divisive speech and hate crimes.
- c) provide an opportunity for Jihadist networks, mainly through online propaganda to radicalise and recruit vulnerable refugees and immigrants who have been ill or have

⁵³⁰ OSCE Secretariat, Training Manual of the Directorate of State Security and the Center for Security Studies: “Actions Against Radicalisation and extremism” (October 2018), p.81 Available at <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/420563?download=true> [Accessed 10 April 2019]

suffered verbal or other form of violence during their journey.

d) refugees and immigrants may be exploited by Islamist terrorist organisations and used as a propaganda tool to promote their basic position on the abuse of Muslims in the West.⁵³¹

Furthermore, since 2015, the European Jihadists who travelled to the war zones in Syria and Iraq in order to join and fight along with ISIS and other terrorist organisations have begun to return to Europe. This development has already affected various EU countries. In Greece however, despite this deteriorating security environment it is startling that to this day it has been unscathed by Jihadi terrorism.

8.2.1 Summary of Research Findings of First Period (September 2010-February 2011)

The findings of the field research of the first period are interesting. In Greece there are two kinds of Muslim population. The first is the indigenous Muslim minority who live in the region of Western Thrace close to the border with Turkey, and the second is the Muslim population of immigrants who have settled in Greece in the last 20 years and they come from a variety of predominantly Muslim countries. Both of these groups, according to the findings, are not vulnerable to radicalisation, although the younger generation of Muslim immigrants is more susceptible to becoming radicalised. However, with this said, there hasn't been any real signs of radicalisation among the younger generation of Muslim immigrants yet. Even the outburst of violence which took place in Athens in May 2009, better known as the

⁵³¹ Position Paper KEMEA: 'Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe': Challenges for Greece and the actions of KEMEA' (30 June 2017) p.12 Available at <http://www.kemea.gr/el/nea-prokirykseis/teleftaia-nea/578-deltio-typou-imerida-me-thema-islamistiki-rizospastikopoiisi-kai-tromokratia-prokliseis-kai-apantiseis-se-ellada-kai-evropi> p.12 [Accessed 30 June 2018].

‘Koran Incident’, was a result of a misunderstanding among young Muslims who perceived the act of a Greek police officer as an insult to the Koran and their religious faith. Moreover, the existence of several pro-Islamist associations in Greece doesn’t necessarily fit with the concept of the “conveyor belt” to violent radicalisation and Jihadi terrorism. These associations focus on the promotion of political Islam and there is no evidence that some of their members have followed the path to Jihadism. Last but not least, among the findings of the field research is that although Athens is the only European capital city without an official place of worship for Muslims, this fact has not led to an increased level of radicalisation despite the disappointment of Muslims living in Athens.

Drawing on the responses of the second group of interviewees, the researcher concluded that the reasons why Greece remains unscathed by the Jihadist threat are as follows: Muslims' positive sentiments towards Greece and the good relations of Greece with the Arab and Muslim world is a factor that explains to a certain extent the current state of affairs. This is strengthened by the fact that Greece has mainly indifferent position, despite being a NATO member, and does not have a colonial past. This positive attitude is also enhanced thanks to the respect shown to the Muslim community’s religious traditions. Apart from these, it is reported that counter-terrorism and counter-intelligence in Greece is effective, and there is cooperation between the Greek authorities and the Muslim organisations to prevent radicalisation. Finally, Greece is a transit country, so Jihadists do not want to attract the attention of the Greek security authorities.

Overall, the conclusions drawn by the researcher from the analysis of the interviews of the first period can be thus summarised: i) freedom of religion and the construction of an official mosque in Athens could contribute to preventing potential

radicalisation among Muslims, ii) there is no evidence of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece, and iii) there is no evidence of support for the ideology of Jihadism. These conclusions were useful for the researcher in order to examine if Greece faces a Jihadist threat.

8.2.2 Summary of Research Findings of the Second Period (October 2014-February 2015)

The findings of the author's field research for the second period (October 2014-February 2015) are revealing. Despite the turmoil in the MENA region and the rise of ISIS there were still no signs of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece. The most interesting finding is that even in the case of a couple of radicalised individuals who travelled to Syria to fight in the ranks of ISIS there is no evidence that these individuals have ever returned to Greece or directed their extremist activities against Greece. Another important finding is that according to the interviewees Greece has not been targeted by Jihadists because its territory serves as a transit point between mainland Europe and the Middle East and they wanted to keep themselves under the radar of the Greek security authorities. Furthermore, the respondents argued that Greece has been unscathed by Jihadi terror also because of the traditional very good relations of the Greek state and the Arab and Muslim world, as well as due to the fact that Greece was not a colonial power in the past and has not actively participated in the wars of the West against Muslim countries. Moreover, unlike other European countries Greece does not have a significant number of second or third generation Muslims who are most vulnerable to radicalisation as the experience from these countries has shown. As for the construction of an official Mosque in Athens despite the delay in its construction and the disappointment among Muslims residing in

Greece for this incomprehensible delay this has not yet led to an increased level of radicalisation among Muslims.

8.3 Comparative Analysis of the research findings of the two periods

Comparing the two periods of the field research, it is possible to argue that the most astonishing finding is that despite the deterioration of the security environment in the broader region of Greece (rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, significant increase in the flows of immigrants and refugees coming to Greece) the level of radicalisation among Muslims residing in Greece is still very low, and as a result Greece has been unscathed by Jihadi terror.

The research findings derived from the qualitative analysis of the primary data are very interesting and revealing. The majority of the first sub-group (September 2010-February 2011) of Muslim interviewees (fifteen out of sixteen respondents) expressed their willingness to be able to worship and practice their faith in a proper environment, and that is why they declared that they want the construction of an official mosque in Athens. Interviewees argued that the construction of an official mosque will not only provide them with the basic human right to manifest freedom of religion (they argued that Athens is the only EU capital without an official mosque), but will also help Greek security authorities to better control potential threats related to Jihadist terrorism. They argued that the current situation, with hundreds of informal mosques mushrooming in every corner of the greater area of Athens, is not only a shame for them as practitioners of a religious faith, but also makes it difficult for Muslim leaders as well as Greek security authorities to control the activities and preaching of extremist imams who may transmit a distorted interpretation of Islam, potentially leading young Muslim immigrants to violent extremism.

The same view was shared by the majority (four out of seven respondents) of

the second sub-group of interviewees, comprising security experts and officials as well as a Greek politician (September 2010-February 2011) who supported the construction of an official mosque in Athens, because not only would this mosque properly satisfy the religious needs of Muslims, but also help Greek security authorities to better monitor potential Jihadist activities.

Moreover, the qualitative analysis of the primary data showed that only a minority (six out of sixteen) of the author's Muslim interviewees (September 2010-February 2011) supported Islamist organisations and thinkers and the vast majority (ten out of sixteen) of them did not express any support for Islamist organisations (Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut Tahrir, Jamaat e-Islami), while all of them condemned Al Qaeda's violent extremism, regarding it as un-Islamic.

Furthermore, only a tiny minority (two out of sixteen) of the Muslim respondents expressed the view that Jihadists might be present among the Muslim population of Greece. The vast majority of the Muslim interviewees expressed the view that Muslims residing in Greece are law-abiding people who do not wish to create any kind of problems for Greek society. Conversely, a minority (three out of seven) of the non-Muslim interviewees (September 2010-February 2011), representing the Greek security and political elite, expressed their concern that Islamist organisations and individuals are present in Greece and that they might pose a potential security risk to the Greek state and society.

Another interesting and revealing finding indicating that Greece is facing a low-level of threat emanating from Jihadism is that the totality of the Muslim respondents (September 2010-February 2011) expressed the view that there was no problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece, and only a minority (three out of seven) of the security experts, officials and a politician argued that there was such

a problem. The majority (four out of seven) expressed the view that there was no real problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece. Finally, the majority of the second sub-group (four out of seven) of non-Muslim interviewees (September 2010-February 2011) estimated that the Jihadist threat in Greece was low, and only a minority (three out of seven) argued that the threat was moderate.

Another important research finding that derived from the analysis of the second group of interviewees (October 2014-February 2015), is that Greece has been unscathed by the Jihadist threat for a variety of reasons that were described in detail earlier, a fact that makes Greece an exception in the European context. From the author's second group of interviewees (October 2014-February 2015), the majority (nine out of twelve) concluded that Greece does not face a problem of radicalisation among the immigrant Muslim community. Only one of the respondents argued that there might be a problem of radicalisation among the Muslim immigrants (and not the indigenous Muslim population of Western Thrace), and two interviewees out of twelve argued that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants, but that this radicalisation is not directed at Greece. Furthermore, with regard to the issue of the construction of an official mosque in Athens and how this will affect the security environment, eight out of twelve interviewees argued that its construction in Athens will improve the security situation, since it will help the Greek security authorities to better monitor the activity of potential extremists. Only one of the respondents estimated that the construction of an official mosque will make things worse, and three of them expressed the view that the construction of an official mosque will not affect the security environment. Finally, all the interviewees thought that the level of the threat from Jihadist terrorism was low, while eight out of twelve respondents argued that the threat connected to Jihadist lone-wolf attacks might be

moderate.

8.4 Greece's Counter-Terrorism & Counter- Radicalisation Policies

Greece, according to all the available data, does not have a National Strategy for Countering Jihadi Terrorism, such as CONTEST in the UK that was described in detail in chapter six. However, according to KEMEA⁵³², Greece follows the directions of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy as elaborated in November 2005 (in response to the terrorist attacks in Madrid in March 2004 and London in July 2005) and was revised in May 2014 during the Greek Presidency of the EU Council. More specifically, the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy also has four pillars to tackle International Terrorism (not named as Jihadi Terrorism but implied) as the UK CONTEST has. The three pillars are identical in name and are similar in content to UK CONTEST (Prevent, Protect, Pursue) while the fourth pillar is essentially the same in the content but uses a different name (Prepare in UK and Respond in the EU).

EU Member States naturally have the primary responsibility for the fight against terrorism and the EU, as stated in the aforementioned Counter-terrorism Strategy document, adds value in four ways: a) strengthening National Capabilities, b) facilitating European Cooperation, c) developing collective capacity, d) promoting International Partnership. With the revision of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy in May 2014, greater emphasis was placed on some actions such as: a) promoting counter-narratives at national and local levels emanating from community leaders, teachers, families, youth workers, public figures, thinkers, scholars, academics, religious

⁵³² Position Paper KEMEA: 'Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe': Challenges for Greece and the actions of KEMEA' (30 June 2017) p.15 Available at <http://www.kemea.gr/el/nea-prokirykseis/teleftaia-nea/578-deltio-typou-imerida-me-thema-islamistiki-rizospastikopoiisi-kai-tromokratia-prokliseis-kai-apantiseis-se-ellada-kai-evropi> [Accessed 30 June 2018].

leaders, businesspeople, media personalities and others who lead or shape public opinion and who can tell a positive and credible story; b) countering online radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism; c) training and engaging front line practitioners across sectors; d) supporting individuals and civil society to build resilience (Radicalisation Awareness Network-RAN); e) supporting disengagement initiatives (de-radicalisation programmes); f) supporting further research into trends and challenge of radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism; and g) aligning internal and external counter-radicalisation work.

On 7 March 2017, the EU Council adopted a directive on the fight against terrorism. The new rules reinforce the EU's legal arsenal to prevent terrorist attacks and to tackle the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. In particular, this directive criminalises: a) travelling inside, outside or towards the EU for terrorist purposes, e.g. to participate in terrorist group activities or to commit a terrorist attack; b) the organisation and facilitation of such movements, including through the provision of logistical and material support, e.g. through the purchase of tickets or route planning; c) providing or monitoring training for terrorist purposes, e.g. for the manufacture or use of explosives, firearms, harmful or dangerous substances, corresponding to the existing provisions for the deliberate provision of such training; d) providing or collecting funds with intent or awareness that they will be used to commit terrorist crimes or crimes related to terrorist organisations or terrorist activities.

On the same day, the Council adopted a Regulation amending the Schengen Borders Code to strengthen external border controls by using relevant databases. This amendment obliges Member States to carry out systematic checks using national databases of all persons, including those who enjoy the right of free movement under European law (i.e. EU citizens and their family members not citizens of the EU)

when crossing external borders. The databases on which the checks will be carried out include the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the Interpol database on stolen and lost travel documents (SLTD). The controls will allow Member States to verify that these persons do not pose a threat to public policy, internal security or public health. This obligation will apply at all external borders (air, sea and land borders) both on entry and exit.⁵³³

On 19 June 2017, the Council adopted conclusions on the EU's external action to combat terrorism. The EU has a vital interest in continuing to work with its partners at bilateral, regional and multilateral level to combat this multifaceted threat. In particular, in its Conclusions, the Council states:

a) anti-terrorist structures, in order to increase the capacity of the EU; for cooperation in the fight against terrorism (including EU Delegations through counter-terrorism / security experts), b) the linkage between internal and external aspects, in order to ensure greater coherence between internal and external actions in the field of security, c) enhanced cooperation with the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the Western Balkans, Turkey, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, d) strengthened international cooperation, notably with key strategic partners, as well as with regional and multilateral organisations, e) Strengthening the EU's response to key thematic areas, such as the prevention and tackling of violent extremism, the need to tackle effectively recruitment and radicalisation via the Internet, the thorny problem of foreign terrorist fighters, especially

⁵³³ European Council, 'EU Strengthens rules to prevent new forms of terrorism' (European Council, 7 March 2017) Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/07/rules-to-prevent-new-forms-of-terrorism/> [Accessed 12 July 2018].

*those returning, the security of air transport, smuggling of firearms, the issue of terrorist financing and money laundering, as well as the interconnections between organised networks crime and terrorism.*⁵³⁴

In its communication of the 20th April 2018, the European Commission proposed further actions to strengthen the effectiveness of Member States' national policies in tackling radicalisation, by improving the EU's coordination structures, the use of networks at the EU level, the best use of capital and the realisation of projects on a European scale. It is worth noting that this Commission Communication complements the United Nations Action Plan on the Prevention of Violent Extremism presented in January 2018. Furthermore, the European Council's Conclusions of the 30th and 31st of May, 2018, referred in particular to the role of youth in a framework for the development of an integrated and cross-sectoral EU approach to prevent and combat the violent radicalisation of young people.⁵³⁵

The European Commission, on the 14th of June, 2018, introduced additional measures to support Member States in their efforts to prevent and combat violent radicalisation that leads to terrorism. The Communication focuses on how work at EU level can support Member States in managing this challenge in seven specific areas: (a) supporting research, gathering data, monitoring and networking; (b) combating terrorist propaganda and internet hate speech; (c) tackling radicalisation in prisons; (d) promoting the EU's education and common values; (e) promoting inclusive societies and youth attitudes; (f) dealing with the external dimension of security in addressing radicalisation; and (g) focusing on the international dimension

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ European Commission, 'Delivering on the European Agenda on Security' (EC, 20 April 2016) Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/legislative-documents/docs/20180420/communication_eas_progress_since_april_2015_-_annex_1_en.pdf [Accessed 12 July 2018].

of combating violent radicalisation beyond the borders of the EU.⁵³⁶

In accordance with the EU strategy for combating extremism and terrorism and preventing radicalisation, the Directorate of State Security of the Hellenic Police in cooperation with KEMEA published in October 2018 a Training Manual titled “Actions against Radicalisation and Extremism”. This publication was almost exclusively funded (75%) by the EU Fund for Internal Security-Sector of Police Cooperation. It is worth to mention that KEMEA has systematically been involved since 2012 in researching the radicalisation that leads to violent extremism and terrorism and has developed a series of actions both through European programs and with special training for the staff of the Hellenic Police Force and other related agencies and since 2014 it has been systematically collaborating with the European Commission's "Radicalisation Awareness Network" (RAN).⁵³⁷

In this training manual a presentation of the challenges Greece faces in regard to Islamist radicalisation was offered (we will come back to this later in sub-chapter 8.8). Moreover, strategies and measures that may lead to the prevention of radicalisation of young people (not only Muslim youth) were presented in depth. The manual suggests that a number of institutional reforms should take place in Greece: a) the creation of a service which will design and implement a coordinated policy for preventing and fighting violent radicalisation; b) the creation of a network of experts in a National Level; c) a task force which will monitor the web; d) the implementation of de-radicalisation programmes inside prisons; e) promoting the concept of community policing (Implementation of the EU Plan CoPPra- Community

⁵³⁶ European Commission, ‘Supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism’ (EC, 14 June 2016) Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2018/EN/COM-2018-379-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF> [Accessed 12 July 2018].

⁵³⁷ Position Paper KEMEA: ‘Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe’: Challenges for Greece and the actions of KEMEA’ (30 June 2017) p.15.

Policing and Prevention of Radicalisation); f) intelligence sharing and best practices (interoperability approach); g) training programmes for first-line professionals working with groups or individuals vulnerable to radicalisation.

8.5 Factors that might lead to an increased level of vulnerabilities and risks in Greece

In this section, the author will try to examine the factors that might lead to an increased level of vulnerability and risk in Greece in regard to the potential threat of Jihadism. We could classify these factors into two broad categories: domestic and external. The author was able to identify three main domestic factors that may lead to an increased level of vulnerability and risk in Greece: i) the continuing economic crisis, which has led to less job opportunities and greater unemployment, affects not only the indigenous Greek population but also immigrants (both legal and illegal), of whom a significant part are Muslims. These unemployed and frustrated Muslims could be more vulnerable to radicalisation and to efforts by Jihadists to recruit them. As a result, this potential increase in radicalisation among Muslim immigrants may lead to an increased level of risk for Greece's domestic security; ii) the issue of the construction of an official mosque in Athens or, to put it more accurately, the delay in the construction of the official mosque in Athens might be a factor that will increase radicalisation among Muslim immigrants, because they might take this delay as an unwillingness on the part of the Greek state to acknowledge and respect their religion and the fundamental human right of freedom of religion. This potential increased level of radicalisation may of course lead to an increased threat level; and iii) the violent activism of Golden Dawn, the neo-Nazi political party, against immigrants in general, and Muslim immigrants in particular, is also an important factor that might

lead to an increased level of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants, leading to an overall increased risk for Greek domestic security. Academics and experts refer to this as ‘cumulative’ or ‘reciprocal radicalisation /extremism.’⁵³⁸ However, the UK literature that refers to cumulative extremism tends to refer to the radicalisation of groups on the far-right, as a response to Islamists.⁵³⁹ Research into the factors creating support for Islamist extremists reveals a combination of mixed and varied factors, with the size and activities of the far right not generally considered significant.⁵⁴⁰ At this point it is important to note that Islamist extremism as compared to other forms of extremism in Greece, such as far right and far left extremism, is of relatively less importance.

The external factors identified by the author leading to a potential increased level of vulnerability and risks are the following: i) the continuing conflicts in the MENA region, which have already led to an increased wave of refugees coming to Greece, might worsen the domestic political and economic situation and as a result lead to an increased level of extremism in the country. In other words, this deterioration of the security environment might lead to an increased level of violent activism on the part of Golden Dawn against Muslim immigrants and the risk (as described above) of an increased level of radicalisation among the population of Muslim immigrants residing in Greece; and ii) although unlikely to happen, the fear that Greece could become a failed state and as a result be chosen by Jihadists as an operational and logistical base against Western targets.

Moreover, the Center for Security Studies⁵⁴¹ has mentioned a number of

⁵³⁸ Jamie Bartlett and Jonathan Birdwell (2013) ‘Cumulative Radicalisation Between the Far-Right and Islamist Groups in the UK’: A Review of Evidence (London: Demos). p.p. 145-147

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Position Paper KEMEA: ‘Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe’: Challenges for Greece and the actions of KEMEA’ (30 June 2017) p.15.

challenges that Greece will face in the future and if not addressed properly might lead to an increased level of risk in regard to Islamist radicalisation and terrorism. These challenges are: a) Issues of integration and identity crisis of the second and third generation of Muslim migrants and refugees from the countries of the Middle East, North Africa and Asia, b) Possible exploitation of migratory and refugee flows by members of extremist and terrorist groups, c) Geographical proximity to countries that export extremist and terrorist ideas and from which a significant number of foreign fighters departed for battlefields in Syria and Iraq, d) Difficulties in locating "returnees" combatants who are not only citizens of EU Member States but also third-country nationals who will attempt to travel to Europe via Greece, e) Increasing risk of radicalisation within immigrant and refugee housing structures, as among people in structures there are people with traumas that are particularly vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation, f) Likely use of existing organised crime networks to account for radicalised individuals and terrorists (fake documents, travel facilitation, etc.), g) Sharpen polarisation from the refugee-immigration crisis, resulting in the targeting of Muslim communities by extremist far right groups and the increase in Islamophobia, h) Possible radicalisation of immigrants in prisons, i) Fragmentation and lack of central coordination of migrant communities' associations and organisations

8.6 Comparative case study analysis between UK and Greece

UK and Greece were selected by the author in the initial phase of his research for a comparative case study analysis because both countries belong to Western institutions (EU and NATO) and both of them share an approximately same percentage of Muslim population (6.3% in the UK and 5.7% in Greece) on their

territory.⁵⁴² Their similarities seem to end somewhere here and I will elaborate later on the similarities vis a vis their Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation Strategies.

However, hard evidence demonstrates that the UK has suffered numerous attacks connected to Jihadi terrorism in the last fifteen years while Greece till today remains unscathed by Jihadi terrorism. Which are the reasons which constitute also the differences between the two cases behind this startling reality? The most important reason as highlighted in the previous sections is that Greece serves as a transit and logistical support hub for the Jihadists who travel from Europe to the Middle East and vice versa. This according to my judgment is the cardinal factor and explanation why Jihadi forces have not chosen to attack Greece so far.

It is worth telling that ISIS in a video published immediately after the Paris attacks of November 2015 had included Greece's flag along with the flags of other 59 countries as part of the international coalition against it⁵⁴³ and had also included Greece's territory as an integral part of the global caliphate⁵⁴⁴ that it seeks to establish. Despite this fact and the more or less direct threats against Greece ISIS as well as other Jihadi organisations have never targeted Greece. The explanation as mentioned before is that Greece serves Jihadists for the practical reasons stated above and they do not wish to undermine their activities on Greek soil by planning and executing an attack against Greece. This reality which emanates also from Greece's geographical position as a bridge between continental Europe and the Middle East is not a fact common with the UK and therefore the UK has been targeted many times

⁵⁴² PEW Research Center & Public Life, 'Europe's Growing Muslim Population' (PEW Center Religion & Public Life 29 November 2017) Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/> [Accessed 11 July 2018]

⁵⁴³ Newspaper "TA NEA", 'The Islamic State targets Greece' (16 November 2015) Available at: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00066699/0009628>.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

by Jihadi terror. Another difference between the UK and Greece is that the later is not a major player in the global arena and lacks the symbolism of countries like the UK which play a major role in international politics.

Furthermore, in contrast to the UK, Greece has never been a colonial power and as a result there is no particular resentment against Greece by the Jihadists. Moreover, because of its lack of a colonial past Greece has had excellent relation with the Arab and Muslim world. This for historical reasons is not the case for the UK. Yet another important difference between the UK and Greece is the fact that radicalised individuals who have turned to terror in the UK were second or third generation British citizens of Muslim origin. In contrast to the UK, Greece has a very small number of second or third generation Muslim immigrants who became Greece citizens and as experience has shown these individuals are the ones most vulnerable to Islamist violent radicalisation. As a result, Greece does not face a high level threat from radicalisation and this explains to a certain extent the fact that Greece has not suffered yet an attack linked to Jihadi forces. Another difference between the two cases is that in the UK Islamist organisations have a record for serving as “conveyor belts’ for individuals who have been radicalised and then followed the path of terror while in Greece there is no hard evidence that pro-Islamist organisations have served as “conveyor belts’ for radicalised individuals. As for the Counter- Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation Strategy, Greece as mentioned in a previous section adopts the EU’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy which has many similarities to the UK model.

8.7 Lessons Greece might learn from the UK Experience

Although Greece, as analysed in the previous section, is a very different case to that of the UK, the author’s view is that it would be wise for Greek policymakers to learn from the UK experience in regard to the Jihadist threat. First of all, Greece

has to learn about the various places where radicalisation among Muslims has taken place in the UK, and learn how to identify potential places where radicalisation among Muslims might occur in Greece. In the British case, key places where radicalisation occurred were: mosques, Islamist organisations, universities and Islamic student groups, Islamic bookstores, prisons and various Islamist websites.

Furthermore, Greece might learn from the British Counter-terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) and especially its four strands (Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare). More specifically, the Greek security community has to learn from the application of these strands. This does not of course mean that the author advocates the adoption of British security strategy in Greece, because it would be unwise to implement such a costly policy when the level of the threat that the two countries face are completely different. However, there is a need to continue to assess Greece's counter-terrorism powers and ensure that they are both effective and proportionate, as well as to improve the ability to prosecute people for terrorist-related offences and increase the Greek state's ability to detect, investigate and disrupt potential terrorist threats. Moreover, there is a need to work with other countries and multilateral organisations to enable the security forces to better tackle potential threats at their source.

Although Greece follows the EU's Counter-terrorism Strategy (which is similar in design to the UK's strategy), it has to learn from the application of the *Prevent* strand of CONTEST by the UK government. In order to keep the level of the threat low, as it is today, there is a need to prevent radicalisation of young Muslim immigrants, by challenging Jihadist extremist ideology. Learning from *Prevent*, Greek authorities must not waste the scarce public funds on projects irrelevant to its objectives. They should carefully evaluate the credibility of those that they will choose to support. Special attention has to be paid to young Muslim immigrants who

are more vulnerable to potential radicalisation. Greece might also learn from the *Protect* strand of CONTEST. It will have to devote more resources to border security, improving both the technology for identifying who enters and leaves the country, as well as to the coordination and intelligence-sharing level of the security agencies. Greece, as we have discussed previously, is the main EU entry for illegal immigrants coming from predominantly Muslim majority countries, and it goes without saying that the Greek state should improve border security in cooperation with the EU agency FRONTEX.

Greece has to learn from the application of the *Prepare* strand of CONTEST and try to build generic capabilities to respond to a wide range of terrorist and other civil emergencies, to improve the ability of the emergency services to work together during a potential terrorist attack and enhance communications and information-sharing for terrorist attacks. Apart from the lessons to be learnt from CONTEST, Greece might also learn from the application of the UK's Threat Level System, as we described in detail in Chapter Three. It would be a wise move, in the author's view, for the Greek Ministry of Citizen Protection and Public Order to adopt in this case the UK paradigm, in order to enable the Greek government to assess better the changing level of the potential threat. Moreover, Greek anti-terror legislation might adopt some of the provisions of the UK anti-terror legislation, such as the penalisation of the glorification of terrorism, of the dissemination of terrorist publications, and of attendance at terrorist training camps abroad. Last but not least, the Greek intelligence and security community has much to learn from the high level of cooperation and intelligence-sharing among the British intelligence and security agencies.

8.8 Conclusions

Greece, in contrast to the security situation in the UK, remains unscathed by the Jihadist threat. There are a variety of reasons for this state of affairs. To name a few, Greece has a long history of excellent relations with the Arab and Muslim world, its indigenous Muslim minority is well integrated into Greek society thanks to the respect that the Greek state has shown for the cultural identity of Greek Muslims. Moreover, it does not have second or third generation immigrants who have become citizens of the country (and as the UK experience has shown, these people are more vulnerable to radicalisation); and last but not least, Greece serves as a transit country for Jihadists, and it is not, as a result, in their best interest to target this convenient passage from Western Europe to the Middle East and vice versa. However, the geographic proximity of Greece to the Muslim world, the continuing conflicts in the MENA region, the threat of the returning fighters, are problems that will not end in the foreseeable future, and this is why complacency should not be an option for the Greek security authorities. Finally, the author's qualitative analysis and his research findings led to the conclusion that for the moment in Greece the threat level related to Jihadist terrorism is low, although it might be raised to moderate, if we are speaking of Jihadist-inspired lone-wolf terrorism

CHAPTER 9: Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

Contemporary Jihadist terrorism constitutes a major threat to the West, as the violent terrorist incidents in the USA and Europe during the first decade of the 21st century and beyond has proven.

Jihadism is an ideology rather than a religion, and has little if anything to do with the Islamic faith. In fact, Jihadism is a distorted interpretation of the Islamic religion, which justifies violence as a means of achieving political goals. Indeed, Jihadists view violence as the necessary means to both protect the community of believers (*ummah*) against the infidels or apostates, and promote (by the sword) the word of God (Allah). In other words, Jihadists unleash ‘apocalyptic violence’ due to their Manichaeic worldview which divides the world into absolute good and absolute evil.⁵⁴⁵ Jihadists believe that they answer only to God for their deeds and, consequently, do not hesitate to wage indiscriminate violence (such as the use of chemical gas and suicide bombing attacks) against their real and imagined ‘enemies’.⁵⁴⁶

Although Greece belongs to Western political and military institutions such as the EU and NATO for years, the country has not been targeted by Jihadists, as have other Western states. Why has not even one incident of Jihadist violence ever been recorded in Greece? Have the Jihadists intentionally avoided attacking Greece? Or

⁵⁴⁵ Robert J. Lifton (2015) ‘Destroying the World to Save It’: *Aum Shinrikyo, Apocalyptic Violence, and the New Global Terrorism* (New York: Picador, 2000); Frances L. Flannery: *Understanding Apocalyptic Terrorism: Countering the Radical Mindset* (London: Routledge).

⁵⁴⁶ Bruce Hoffman (2002) ‘Holy Terror: The Implications of Terrorism Motivated by a Religious Imperative’, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1995), pp. 271–284; Michael Whine: *The New Terrorism* (Herzliya, Israel: International Policy Institute for Counter Terrorism).

have the Jihadists missed attacking Greece only by chance, due to the relatively second-rate status of Greece within the EU and NATO? Or have the security agencies of Greece successfully forestalled such an attack for years? Although significant literature on Islam exists in Greece, little – if any - research on Jihadism related to Greece has been ever conducted in a systematic way. Sporadic references to the Jihadist threat to Greece have usually been confined to newspaper articles and policy papers. This thesis aspired to answer the afore-mentioned questions in a systematic and objective way.

In this thesis one variant in particular of Islamism in relation to Greece was studied in a thorough way: Jihadist terrorism. Although a controversial concept,⁵⁴⁷ in this thesis terrorism is identified as the intentional use of violence against civilians and state authorities by non-state actors for various reasons, with the ultimate objective of submitting the former to the latter's will through terror. Obviously, Jihadism stands out as a serious threat to established Western values: respect for human rights and political liberties and the rule of law.

This thesis researched why Greece has not yet suffered an attack from Jihadists who might have infiltrated Greece from other countries with the sole purpose of conducting terrorist attacks, or from extremists within the populous Muslim community of Greece – comprising predominantly immigrants who have crossed over to Greece during the last two decades. Security threats from Jihadists originate, as recent incidents in Western Europe have clearly proven, not only from foreign Jihadist terrorists, but also from second or third generation Muslims who have been radicalised and, by extension, seduced by Jihadism into violent action.

The Greek state and society constitute the main referent objects of security in

⁵⁴⁷ Indicatively, a scholar recently recorded an astonishing 212 different definitions of the term. Jeffrey D. Simon (1994) 'The Terrorist Trap: America's Experience with Terrorism' (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

this thesis. However, the UK state and society have also been presented as referent objects, but only to serve as a paradigm for the purpose of a case study comparison. The national, political and societal security of Greece was discussed within the theoretical framework of different approaches. Drawing conclusions from the UK experience of the Jihadist threat was useful for proposing the development and enforcement of a sound and consistent Greek security policy in order to contain any potential threat emanating from Jihadist forces.

9.2 Key research findings

The findings of the research did not indicate a threat of radicalisation among the indigenous or immigrant Muslims in Greece and, as a consequence, the Jihadist threat remains at a surprisingly low level. Despite the recent influx of hundreds of thousands of Muslim immigrants from Africa and Asia to Greece and the emergence of ISIS as a potent ideological and political point of reference for radicalised Muslims worldwide, the Muslim community in Greece has not been radicalised to the extent that Jihadism could thrive. This fact was corroborated through elite interviews that were conducted in the first and fourth year of this study, with individuals who have acquired a relative expertise on the subject of Jihadism. Chapter 3 of this thesis explains why elite interviews were employed as a data collection method, and Chapter 8 analyses the data in a critical way.

The first set of research questions concerned the Jihadist threat. As explained above, Jihadism constitutes a militant ideology which preaches apocalyptic violence due to a distorted interpretation of the Islamic faith. Representing less than 1% of Muslims, Jihadists (who have misinterpreted the Islamic doctrine of Jihad) believe

that they must create the prerequisites for the establishment of a so called Islamic state. However, the attempts of Al Qaeda and ISIS to threaten international security are rejected by mainstream Muslims and condemned by their leaders worldwide.

The second set of research questions clarified the indicators of the Jihadist threat. In the UK, London has become home to extremists from North Africa and the Middle East as well as to extremist second generation Muslims, Afghan Arab warriors and Algerian extremists. Islamist organisations in the UK have been proven responsible for instilling extremist political and religious ideas in individuals, who will participate in violent actions, or in other organisations directly connected to political or religious extremism and Jihadism.

Since the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), the terms ‘home grown terrorism’ and ‘radicalisation’ have been studied continuously. According to the Intelligence and Security Committee Report on the London Terrorist attacks, the Security Service (MI5) admitted the difficulty in identifying Islamist extremists, since they could either be marginalised individuals or people who appear to have been assimilated perfectly into British society. Although not every radical turns out a terrorist, radicals do indirectly foment Jihadism through their actions and ideas. Violent radicalisation involves a process during which an individual gradually accepts the use of violent means in order to attain political or ideological goals.

The driving factors behind radicalisation cannot be easily identified, and even when they are determined, one cannot accurately ascertain to what extent they urge specific individuals to change radically their thinking and behaviour or whether they accelerate the process of radicalisation. Poor integration, international relations, poverty, globalisation and modernisation pose as important root causes, as do self-categorisation and social identity, social interactions and group processes, personality

characteristics and personal experiences. Within the context of British society, the identity crisis of the second and third generation young Muslims, the British people's indifference and sometimes hostility towards Muslims, a slow or non-effective process of integration into the mainstream by the Muslim immigrants, and stereotype images of a medieval Islam in the European media, have been identified as contributory factors. The British case stands out in comparison to the Greek case: in other words, the juxtaposition of the two cases showed why one country remains vulnerable to Jihadist radicalisation and, by extension, terrorism, and the other not.

New virtual forms of militant Islamist activism have emerged. The use of the Internet for recruitment and radicalisation and, in particular, for organising and coordinating terrorist activities through websites or forums, and even chat rooms, has increased, regardless of the UK's security efforts. In addition, extremist organisations have found in universities in the UK a fertile ground for the dissemination of their propaganda and the recruitment of new Jihadists. In fact, the universities still stand out as convenient and safe 'spaces' for radicalisation and recruitment. Several young Muslims have radicalised in the mosques and on British university campuses and, later on, been recruited to fight for Jihad against the West.

The third set of research questions covered the manifestations of the Jihadist threat in the UK in relation to the current threat level of the country. After a thorough and elaborate report on extremist activity in the UK, an analysis was offered on how the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) sets international terrorism threat levels and informs the government. Security responses are designed after examining and evaluating factors and issues concerning the available intelligence, recent events and knowledge about the intentions and capabilities of the terrorists and the timescale. Five threat levels (low, moderate, substantial, severe and critical) informing decisions

about security threats have been established. It is noteworthy that the threat level for the UK can be assessed as severe, despite the efforts of the British state to integrate Muslim immigrants into British institutions and society, since most of the Jihadists come from second or third generation immigrants. The factors contributing to an upsurge in Muslim radicalisation can be summarised as such: British foreign policy (namely, the armed intervention of Britain alongside the USA in Muslim countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq); exposure to powerful Islamist propaganda of young Muslims in the mosques and on the Internet; the relative inaction of British state authorities against radical Muslim clerics; the racist attacks by right-wing British groups; and the continuing civil war in Syria.

The fourth set of research questions compared the afore-mentioned conditions in the UK with the current situation in Greece, in an attempt to identify similar indicators of the presence of a Jihadist threat. The indigenous Muslim minority living in Greece, mainly in Western Thrace and the Dodecanese islands accounts for just 4.7% of the total population. The Muslims of Western Thrace enjoy full civil rights as ordinary Greek citizens. The right to establish political parties, Muslim candidates in the election lists, respect for Islamic family law, the presence of Muslim jurists, and the simultaneous operation of three religious courts of law in Western Thrace elevate Greece to the status of the only European country which accepts legal pluralism on the grounds of the policy of recognising and respecting the cultural rights of the Muslim minority.

Apart from the Arab Muslim immigrants who settled in Greece legally in the 1970s and 1980s, a tidal wave of illegal immigrants from the war zones in the Middle East, South Asia and North Africa since the 1990s has been recorded, since immigrants use Greece mostly as a transit to other European countries such as

Germany, France or the UK. In Athens and other large cities, Muslim communities and organisations have been established, and they have not caused any problems to Greek state authorities or posed any security threats. According to security experts, journalists, government and security officials, academics and leading representatives of the Muslim communities in Greece whom the author of this thesis had the opportunity to interview, the threat of radicalisation remains insignificant for the time being and partly explains why Greece has remained unscathed by Jihadist terrorism so far.

The reasons for this situation can be set out as follows: the modest size of the community (although the recent influx of Muslim immigrants has certainly increased its numbers); the relative fragmentation of the community into various ethnic and religious groups (indeed, the native Muslim minority in Thrace stands out as a Muslim enclave totally isolated from the Muslim communities in Athens and Southern Greece); and the non-provocative stance of Greece towards Muslim countries (with the exception of Turkey, Greece retains amicable relations with Muslim countries). However, experience shows that neither disparity and diversity nor non-aggressive foreign policies can ensure protection from radicalisation and terrorism. Moreover, the social mobility of immigrants who use Greece as a springboard to other countries does not exclude radicalisation in the near future. As a matter of fact, radicalisation appeals to second generation adolescents, who are notorious for their rebellious nature. In addition, illegal Muslim immigrants with no prospect of legal residence and employment are vulnerable to radicalisation, while imprisoned Muslims may also succumb to radicalisation. The prolonged financial crisis (and the accompanying unemployment and frustration for the Muslim immigrants), the aggressive attacks by Greek right-wing extremists (namely the neo-

Nazi militants of Golden Dawn) and the propaganda by certain imams preaching in informal mosques may also lead to radicalisation. Furthermore, Muslims have expressed their discontent with the persistent delay in the construction of a mosque and a cemetery in Athens and the lack of religious education of younger Muslim imams (who preach in the informal mosques spread out throughout the capital). The ingredients of radicalisation could be found in Islamist organisations and radical preachers whose activities have been outlawed in several Muslim-majority countries – such as the political offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In Greece the Muslim community was formed only fifteen years ago (with the exception of the native Muslim minority in Western Thrace); in addition, Muslim leaders and older immigrants monitor the young radicals and keep them under control, often in close collaboration with the Greek police and state authorities. The vast majority of the Muslim community in Greece consists of moderate people who struggle for better living conditions and who do not show a keen interest in politics – let alone in extremist ideologies. The native Muslim minority in Western Thrace, in particular, shows no signs of radicalisation.

Violent incidents and protests by Muslims, e.g. the incident with the alleged abuse of a Koran by a Greek police officer in May 2009, seldom occur in Athens. Strong reactions, after all, do not necessarily imply support for Jihadist ideology among the Muslim immigrants, since no other mass demonstration or violent incident occurred, let alone a terrorist attack. Apparently, these overreactions probably occurred due to a misunderstanding or even a provocation by several Muslim radicals. Alternatively, the immigrants may have participated in the riots only to vent their anger about their exclusion and deprivation, rather than to trumpet their Islamist credentials. The exaggeration of both the cause and the incident by Greek and

international media certainly poured more oil into the fire. However, this incident did not constitute a watershed for Greek-Muslim relations in a negative manner. Surprisingly enough, the data collected by interviews with leading Muslim figures and various Greek specialists in two periods showed no variation despite the influx of Muslim immigrants and the rise of the far-rightist Golden Dawn: with the exception of one or two individuals, the interviewees stated that Greece is not threatened by a spreading radicalisation among the immigrant Muslim community and, for that reason, the likelihood of Jihadist terrorism remains extremely low.

Greek right-wing extremists who undertake violent actions toward Muslims may provoke radicalisation – although several examples of good practice have been reported such as the moratorium on non-aggression agreed upon by the representatives of the right-wing parliamentary party of Golden Dawn and the Bangladeshi immigrant community. Finally, it was reported that even when radicalised, Muslims are more likely to join the ranks of ISIS or other Jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq, rather than attack Greece. The presence and operation of Muslim organisations in Greece does not constitute any risk, because in most cases they function in collaboration with the Greek authorities – thus in fact decreasing the risk of radicalisation.

In Greece there has been no officially reported terrorist incident linked to Jihadist forces or any other Islamist-related offence. Although Jihadists consider Greece an integral part of the global caliphate they intend to establish (owing to the fact that for centuries Greece was occupied by the Ottoman Empire), they do not pose an immediate threat. In fact, Jihadists use Greece only as a transit point due to its geographical position: they channel weapons, supplies and men from other countries of the Balkans (e.g. Kosovo) or Western Europe (e.g. UK and France) to Greece, with

Syria and Iraq as the final destination.

Moreover, the traditionally friendly ties of Greece with the Arab and Muslim world have also drastically reduced the probability of Greece being targeted by Jihadists. Greece always adopted a pro-Palestinian stance in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute and a neutral attitude in the majority of the conflicts in the Middle East – only assisting NATO and the USA indirectly (mainly through the usage of the NATO bases on Greek soil).

Nonetheless, concern has arisen recently about the potential threat that the returning Jihadist foreign fighters might pose to Western countries. The Greek state authorities collaborate with their European counterparts for the discreet surveillance of individuals who are connected to Jihadism and who use Greece as a transit point. An attack would certainly provoke the attention of the Greek and international security authorities – a development which would destroy their safe path to Europe. Since Greece, for ideological and political reasons, always abstained from conflicts in the Middle East or played only an auxiliary role and, most importantly, never had a colonial past (in sharp contrast to several European powers), the country does not rank high on the target list of Jihadists. Moreover, the integration of the native Muslim minority in Western Thrace into Greek society and politics, and the rejection of first-generation Muslim immigrants in Greece of the extremist message of radical Muslim clerics and organisations contribute to the absence of an immediate Jihadist threat, despite the proximity of Greece to the hot spots in the MENA region.

The fifth set of research questions involved issues of policy. The first part presented the policy responses of the UK to the Jihadist threat. The British Counter-terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) has proven quite effective in the UK. The four-component strategy (*Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare*) demonstrates the

application of soft and/or hard power. Social policy was considered to represent by far the best means of preventing terrorism, since the most important threat originated from radicalised individuals among the Muslim community. Improving relations between the British police and Muslims, promoting education for imams, and accreditation procedures for mosques in Britain, addressing inequality, discrimination and radicalisation, constituted some of the main proposals.

A revised strategy elucidated four strands. In 2009, the *Pursue* strategy involved cooperation between the police, security and intelligence organs, as well as the use of new resources. The *Prevent* strategy would involve new data on radicalisation, and address ideological and political challenges through initiatives and projects in the following areas: education, charities, health, criminal justice, faith and the Internet. The purpose of the *Protect* strand intends to reduce the country's vulnerability and strengthen British security against terrorism. And finally, the *Prepare* strand intends to reduce the destructive effect of the terrorist attack when it cannot be prevented. According to CONTEST 2009, conflict and instability, ideology, technology and radicalisation stood out as the key factors for the continued existence of the terrorist threat.

In CONTEST 2011, the *Prevent* Programme acquired a more targeted scope due to lessons learnt. Apart from the immediate threats, British policymakers suggested that their underlying factors must be addressed as well. Although the *Prevent* strategy remains more ambitious, little information about its implementation has been revealed thus far. The *Prevent* strategy 2011 focuses primarily on forestalling radicalisation among the Muslim community and on facilitating the precise and timely identification of extremists – a field in which its predecessor failed. Limited research and inadequate definition of the vague terms posed

difficulties in identifying an extremist or a radicalised individual – leading in the recent past to unpopular counter-terror legislation, suspicion and intrusive powers of surveillance against Muslim communities.

British anti-terrorism legislation has been reviewed and updated with respect to the given conditions and the lessons learnt. Despite occasional difficulties and problems, improvements in the function of the British counter-terrorist services have contributed to the absence of terrorist-related casualties in the last years and improved the popularity of the measures, since the implementation of the revised CONTEST respects the rights and freedoms of British citizens. This thesis recommends that a risk-based approach to security should be adopted and that the Prepare and Protect strands should be rendered mutually dependent, and implemented in unison. Problems in the implementation of this policy owing to the dependence on international and domestic partners, difficulties in the assessment of the outcomes, the process or progress, and the need to respond to the unpredictable nature of the terrorist threat, should all be taken into account when effectiveness is discussed.

The last set of research questions involved suggestions for Greek policy responses in order to counter or avert the appearance of a Jihadist threat, after using the policy responses of the UK as a paradigm, and discussing the effectiveness of British Counter-terrorism (CT) and Counter-radicalisation (CR) policies. It appears that the UK Threat Level System should be adopted by the Greek national security system, due to the former's effectiveness. Since no evidence currently exists of a presence of a Jihadist threat in Greece, Greek policy-makers should be oriented towards the prevention of its appearance. The Greek Intelligence and Security community could learn from the mistakes made by the UK Government in the implementation of the various versions of CONTEST since 2006, in order to avoid

making these same missteps.

In conclusion, the main research finding of this thesis is that Greece remains unscathed by the Jihadist threat for various reasons, despite the startling reality that Greece has participated in the Euro-Atlantic institutions (NATO and the EU) for decades. The reasons why Greece has not been targeted by Jihadists are the following: a) Greece maintains excellent political, economic and cultural relations with the Arab and Muslim world; b) Greece has no record of colonial rule over the Muslim countries of the Middle East and North Africa that would generate hostility among the Muslim population towards Greece; c) the policies of the Greek state have integrated the indigenous Muslim minority in Western Thrace well into the Greek state and society and, as a result, native Muslims do not show any inclination to subscribe to the extremist message of Jihadists; d) the sizable Muslim community in Greece predominantly consists of first-generation Muslim immigrants who show interest only in improving their poor standards of living rather than participating in organisations that promote Jihad (in sharp contrast to their counterparts in Western Europe who, despite the inclusive policies of their host countries, choose to support Jihadist organisations); and e) Greece serves the Jihadists only as a transit point and, as a result, they do not therefore wish to target Greece, because such an act would provoke the attention of the Greek security authorities.

Obviously, the level of the security threat originating from Jihadism remains low in Greece which, according to the British threat level system, indicates that Jihadist attacks will probably not occur in the near future. Greece enjoys a crucial advantage over other European countries: extremist ideologies have not entrenched themselves within the psyche of the immigrant Muslim community for the reasons outlined above. A key finding resulting from the author's field research is that

according to most of the interviewees, no real problem of radicalisation among immigrant Muslims in Greece has been recorded – nor do current data indicate that such a process may occur in the near future. This state of affairs seems rather surprising since Greece, a country adjacent to the volatile MENA region, remains vulnerable to migration flows, transnational crime and other spill-over effects of the wars and crises in this region.

However, certain factors could in fact reverse this situation for the worse. The violent actions of Golden Dawn, the militant neo-Nazi party, may incite certain Muslims to respond violently or promote radicalisation among the Muslims in Greece. In addition, the reluctance of the Greek state to naturalise a substantial portion of the immigrant Muslim community (and even the second-generation Muslims) due to the complex legal system of Greece (which favours *jus sanguinis* over *jus solis*), has dissatisfied the Muslim community (and certain Greek parties as well). As a consequence, Greece should undertake certain pro-active measures to pre-empt any potential radicalisation among its Muslim community.

9.3 Policy Recommendations

In advanced democracies, policy-making should be evidence-based, but also rational and considered. Greece is currently not a target for Jihadists, for the reasons set out in this thesis. However, again for reasons set out in this thesis, the threat level could evolve differently in the near future. Research in security studies should, in the author's view, not take place in an academic vacuum, or be regarded as a simple 'ivory tower' activity. Therefore, the author will venture here to make some policy recommendations which Greek political leaders might care to consider.

Upholding the rule of law (which in other words involves the cessation of racist attacks against immigrants) and promoting equality and justice for all citizens

of Greece, irrespective of their religious beliefs, would profoundly increase the sense of justice among the immigrant Muslim community of Greece. Recently, several Greek parties united against racism, and the leadership of Golden Dawn was seized and tried for perpetrating crimes against the immigrants in Greece either directly or indirectly (i.e. by inciting others to commit crimes against Muslim or other immigrants).

The naturalisation of the Muslim immigrants, however, remains a thorny issue. Despite the expressed intention of the previous Centre-Right government (as well as the current radical Leftist government of SYRIZA) to naturalise all the second-generation immigrants, legal issues obstruct this. In fact, the Greek legal system upholds *jus sanguinis* over *jus soli* and, as a result, the Council of State (Greece's supreme court of justice) has recently ruled against the naturalisation of second-generation immigrants. However, awarding (Muslim) immigrants full civic rights would certainly constitute a step in a positive direction.

Moreover, constructing a mosque and cemetery in Athens (and in Salonika, Greece's second largest city) would undoubtedly create the impression to the Muslim immigrants that the Greek state does not treat them as second-class Greek citizens – therefore raising a solid barrier to the potential radicalisation of the Muslim community. According to Act 3512 of 2006, the (then Centre-Right) Greek government decided to establish a mosque in Athens. Because of the high number of Muslim immigrants, more mosques than one would probably constitute a better solution; nowadays, between 100 and 150 mosques operate unofficially in Athens within apartments rented by Muslim immigrants. The Greek state has permitted Muslims to pray on the premises of the Olympic stadium during the most significant Muslim feasts – although this does not constitute a permanent solution. The

construction of a new mosque (and, in a complementary way, the legalisation of the existing unofficial places of worship) would provide a durable solution.

However, none of the above suggestions has been implemented due to strong reactions by the Greek Orthodox Church and nationalist Greek parties – as well as the usual bureaucratic obstacles in a country with a cumbersome state apparatus. The establishment of a new mosque evokes memories of the past Ottoman rule in a deeply religious and nationalist society. After all, the recent endeavours of Ankara to patronise the indigenous Muslim minority in Thrace and the Muslim immigrants, and by extension, to portray itself as the protector of all Muslims in Greece and the Balkans, has stimulated the defensive reflexes of the Greek political system.

In addition, the probable intense concentration of the Muslims in the vicinity of the mosque may establish a ghetto with its own rules which could, in turn, attract more Muslim immigrants. The new mosque could also prove a breeding ground for extremists under the guidance of radical imams whom the Greek state authorities may not control entirely. Last but not least, several Greek parties oppose this plan, claiming that a new mosque would mar the physiognomy of Athens and in effect prove the first step in a process that will eventually lead to the naturalisation of the Muslim immigrants and the Islamisation of Greek society.

Conversely, other Greek political parties and academics argue that Greece must first and foremost safeguard the right to free worship for all its citizens. In fact, Greece remains the only country within the EU without a mosque in its capital. In addition, the proponents of the foundation of an official mosque maintain that the Muslim worshippers and clerics would be better monitored in the premises of an official mosque. Additionally, Greece would educate and appoint the imams for the new mosque and, therefore, ensure the close collaboration of the Muslim religious

and political leadership with the Greek state authorities.

Current and future developments that might increase the level of the Jihadist threat in Greece could include continued illegal immigration, despite the EU-Turkey Statement (18 March 2016),⁵⁴⁸ which was supposed to lessen the flow of illegal immigrants to Greece and the rest of the EU, tackle the weak control of borders (especially eastern and southern sea borders), and stem the new waves of refugees from war torn countries. Despite the obvious socio-political differences between Greece and the UK, as well as the absence of an immediate security threat, Prevent should be adapted to the Greek reality by Greek policy-makers, to solve a series of current problems in relation to the condition of the Muslim community in Greece. Despite the fact that Greece follows the directions of the EU's Counter-terrorism, Strategy (which is similar in design to the UK's strategy), there is a lot that Greece has to learn from the implementation of the UK's CONTEST strategy. Interaction between the Greek State and Muslim communities could be improved, and extremists among the Muslim community isolated, so that the social, political and cultural integration of Muslims in Greece could be enhanced. Public funding and cross-governmental support remain essential for the implementation of this legislation.

Greek policymakers should not copy-paste the British CT and CR models, since the security situation in Greece does not resemble even slightly the one in the UK. Moreover, the severe economic crisis has crippled the public finances of Greece and, by extension, does not provide the opportunity to invest in such a costly policy. Besides this, combating Jihadism does not rank high on the priorities of the Greek government, since the country has not yet suffered from any terrorist attack by Jihadists. However, the UK paradigm might present an interesting lesson for the

⁵⁴⁸ European Council, EU-Turkey Statement (Press release 18 March 2016) Available at : <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/> [Accessed 18 March 2019].

future, should the security environment deteriorate.

Greece does not have a National Strategy of its own for countering Jihadi Terrorism. However, as illustrated above, Greece as an EU member state follows the general guidelines of the EU's Counter-Terrorism Strategy and should learn from the implementation of CONTEST in the UK. Greece, on the contrary to the UK, has never been a colonial power and as a result there is no particular resentment against Greece by the Jihadists because of its lack of a colonial past, Greece has had excellent relation with the Arab and Muslim world. Yet another important thing is the fact that radicalised individuals who have turned to terror in the UK were second or third generation British citizens of Muslim origin. In contrast to the UK, Greece has a very small number of second or third generation Muslim immigrants who became Greece citizens and as experience has shown these individuals are the ones most vulnerable to Islamist violent radicalisation. In conclusion, Greece does not face a high level threat from radicalisation and this explains to a certain extent the fact that Greece has not suffered yet an attack linked to Jihadi force

9.4 Conclusions

The main contribution of this thesis to current scholarship, is the selection of Greece as an intrinsic case study and the subsequent analysis of the nation's situation. Greece was selected as a case study not on the grounds that it is illustrative of different cases, but rather in light of its uniqueness. Moreover, the research question of why Greece is unscathed by Jihadism, is important, because it helps the author to explore the unique state of affairs in Greece, vis a vis the threat emanating from Jihadi terrorism. In other words, the main research question itself, the selection of Greece as a case study, and the analysis of the research findings, have contributed to current understandings of why Greece has remained unscathed by Jihadi terror - a

fact which highlights a unique case for a country which is both an EU and NATO member and has a significant Muslim population. It is worth underlining that the idea of exploring why Greece has remained unscathed by Jihadism evolved during the process of conducting this research. The author, when initiating his research project, had the intention to investigate the threat of Jihadism to Greece and the assumption that Greece as a member state of the EU and NATO, with a significant number of Muslims living in the country, would be exposed to Jihadi terror as was the case with other Western countries. However, as this research developed over a period of years (especially with the primary research being conducted in two distinctive periods), it became clear that Greece was a unique case in the EU and NATO, since it had remained unscathed by Jihadism. With this said, the author cannot exclude the possibility that this state of affairs will change in the future, and as such, it would be wise to further develop this research into more specific areas, in order to monitor the development of the security situation in Greece in regard to Jihadi terrorism.

An area of further research could be the radicalisation of Muslim immigrants and refugees within Hotspots (Hosting structures) in Greece, the radicalisation of Muslims in Greek prisons and the vulnerability to radicalisation of second-generation Muslim immigrants. Furthermore, it would be interesting to research the importance of the implementation of CR policies in preventing acts of Jihadi terrorism. Finally, it would be interesting to research whether the selection of targets by Jihadists has any relevance to a country's geopolitical importance and historical record.

APPENDICES

I. Interviews

First Period (September 2010-February 2011)

Interview with Dr. Evripidis Stylianidis, former Minister of Education and Religious Affairs and current MP (Western Thrace region) of the Conservative Party (Nea Demokratia)

1. Do you think that Shariah law should be abolished in Western Thrace?

I believe that the Greek approach towards Muslims is more successful than the British, French and American model. The political approach of the aforementioned countries towards Muslim communities created terrorists. In contrast to these countries, Greece respected the cultural traditions of its indigenous Muslims and led them to adopt a more moderate stance. How we succeeded in this? The Greek tradition led us to respect the different religious doctrines and this tradition was incorporated into Greek law. As a result, Greek Muslims of Western Thrace were allowed to follow the Shariah law (inheritance and family law) of course under the restriction that the implementation of Shariah should not contradict the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). When a decision of a Shariah court opposes the Greek civil law, the Greek Constitution and the ECHR then this decision is considered by the Greek authorities as invalid. When a decision of a Shariah court is compatible with Greek and European law, then it can be implemented. This is a way of educating Greek Muslims in adopting a religious model that is respecting European democratic values. In a conversation I had with the legal (appointed by the Greek state) Mufti of Komotini, he told me that the implementation of Shariah law in Western Thrace has helped him in his effort to teach moderation to Greek Muslims. Of course not all times this system worked well. In a few occasions we had decisions that were incompatible with the Greek and European law. For example, once many

years ago the Mufti of Xanthi approved the marriage of a 12 years old child. However, this decision was taken as a result of bribery. When jurists of the Greek state realised what happened they immediately revoked that decision. There are voices from renowned jurists and politicians in Athens that Shariah should be abolished in Western Thrace. Of course, they have in their minds how Shariah is implemented in certain Islamic fundamentalist states. My opinion is that since we have these restrictions I described above; we don't have any reason to tell Greek Muslims what to do. They have the right to choose freely whether to follow the Greek civil law or the Shariah law. In many cases when I discussed this matter with my fellow MPs, with jurists and foreign diplomats I tried to explain to them that the decision to abolish or not the Shariah law in Western Thrace should rest upon the Greek Muslims themselves. If the Greek state would like to abolish the Sharia law in its own initiative, then probably we would create a reaction that would lead to the radicalisation of the Muslim population of Western Thrace.

2. Do you think that Shariah law should be implemented as a parallel legal system also for Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

This is another issue. As we know according to International Law immigrants don't have full rights as the citizens of the host country. Muslims from Western Thrace are Greek citizens, not immigrants. Of course, if one Muslim immigrant will take Greek citizenship in the future then probably he can choose to follow the Shariah law as this is implemented in Western Thrace. In conclusion I believe that Sharia law should not be implemented for Muslim immigrants.

3. Do you think that Muftis in Western Thrace should be elected?

The Muftis are not religious leaders, they are jurists. In other words, they are public servants. In Greece, public servants are appointed, and they are not elected. In addition to this I have to say that the Muftis are appointed and not elected in all Muslim countries, Turkey included. In conclusion I believe that the Muftis should not be elected.

4. What is your opinion about the activities of the Turkish consulate in Komotini, the pseudo-Muftis and the various associations of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace?

The Turkish Consulate of Komotini is a diplomatic mission that in many cases throughout history violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. In other words, it didn't work as a bridge of cooperation and friendship among the peoples of the two countries, but it operated in an interfering manner, trying to manipulate a part of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace, especially the most nationalistic part of the population which is of Turkish origin, in order to achieve the main goals of Turkish foreign policy in Western Thrace. Which are these main goals? First to feel the agenda of our bilateral relations with one more issue in order to avoid the criticism for the violation of human rights of its own minorities (Greeks, Kurds etc.). Secondly, to try to alienate the Pomaks and Roma and turn them against the Greek state, and thirdly, to fulfill various policies that are aiming at the creation of an Islamic Arch in the Balkans, especially after the governmental change in Turkey (2002) and the adoption of the neo-Ottoman policy of Ahmed Davutoglu. When a diplomatic mission like the Turkish Consulate of Komotini doesn't respect its mission as a tool of bilateral cooperation and friendship among the two countries, then it is transformed into a tool of destabilisation. As for the elected pseudo-muftis in my opinion they are not even elected because they were not elected by a legal body. Here we witness a political effort from the part of Turkey to create political symbols among the Muslim minority that will not be legally elected and that will be subordinated to Turkey in order to advance the destabilisation of the region when the Turkish government thinks that this is necessary. As for the various associations of Muslims of Western Thrace, I have to tell you that they are operating freely. However, sometimes the Greek justice banned some of these associations because in their "mission statement" they were promoting pan-Turkism. Greece has ratified the international treaty which gives the right to everyone to self determine himself/herself individually. This treaty by the way has not been ratified by Turkey. However, when we speak of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace, we are talking about collective and not individual self determination. According to international treaties the Greek minority of Constantinople-Istanbul and of Imvros and Tenedos is a national minority

and the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is a religious one. This is the reason why the Lausanne Treaty is referring to minorities (Turks, Pomaks and Roma) and not to a single minority.

5. Do you estimate that the Turkish strategic aim is to achieve the autonomy of Western Thrace, following the model of Kosovo?

There are some nationalistic circles in Turkey that are promoting this kind of policy. I believe that if this policy is ever implemented, it would be disastrous for the stability not only of Greece and Turkey, but also for the Balkans and Europe. The policy that the Greek state is following towards the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is very successful and has led to the improvement of the conditions of living of all citizens residing in Western Thrace.

6. What is your opinion about the Muslim Association of Greece?

Greece is considering adopting toward the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece, a policy that resembles the French model. The then Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy in 2002 initiated the creation of a “French Council of Muslim Faith” which included the Union of Islamic Organisations of France. In that way the French government had an interlocutor to discuss with. In Greece the Muslim immigrants are coming from countries with different cultural and political background so it is difficult to create a unified body like the one mentioned in France. However, we have to find a way in order for the Greek state to discuss officially with the representatives of Muslim immigrants.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 as a result of the “Koran incident”?

I estimate that among Muslim immigrants living in Greece are operating Islamist extremists and recruiters. That is why the Greek state has to know exactly who is living here and what they are doing. The Greek state of course has to protect the

rights of Muslim immigrants on one hand, but on the other it has to make them understand that they have to follow some rules.

8. Do you know if the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is receiving any funding from Islamic Charitable Organisations?

For sure the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is receiving funding from Turkey and from some moderate Muslim countries like Egypt for example. The Greek policy is aiming at avoiding the influence from fundamentalist Muslim countries and of course from nationalistic circles from Turkey. In other words it is trying to support moderate Muslims. However, I have to mention that Turkey even when it had a Kemalist-secular government (before 2002) tried to use Islamic religion in order to advance the Turkish strategy in Western Thrace. Of course now with the AKP in power it is continuing the same policy in a more explicit manner. The Greek state also organised the Special Educational Academy of Thessaloniki in order to enable the Pomaks to study there and help them to represent a moderate strand of Islam when they would turn back in Western Thrace in order to teach at schools the children of the Muslim minority. When I was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, I visited Jordan and I cultivated personal relations with the Minister of Interior who worked with King Abdullah II in order to support moderate Islam and I tried to use their approach as a model for Western Thrace.

9. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Athens-Votanikos area?

When I served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2006, I supported the introduction of the 3512/2006 Act which provided the legal frame for the construction of the official Mosque in Athens. During my tenure as Minister of Education (2007-2008) and Religious Affairs, I worked towards the implementation of the aforementioned law. However due to bureaucratic difficulties the project proceeded slower than it was originally planned. In my opinion there is a need for the construction of three mosques in the wider area of Athens, in order to avoid

overconcentration of worshippers in one single mosque. In this way the Greek state will have a better control of the Muslim immigrants and it will prevent the influence of Islamic extremists among them.

10. Do you think that Greece needs an updated anti-terror legislation?

The problem in Greece is not the frequent amendment of existing laws but the correct implementation of laws. If we have competitive law enforcement and intelligence services, then we can enhance domestic security. Greece proved this before and during the 2004 Olympic Games when we shared intelligence with other countries, and we succeeded in organising secure Olympic Games. In other words, I believe that we must put emphasis in prevention and not in enforcement. I would like also to add that because of Greece's historical background (Civil War, Junta) the public opinion is keen to adopt more leftist approaches in regard to security. That is why when we want to implement this kind of legislation, we must carefully plan and present it to the public, in order to have the public opinion in our side.

11. How the Greek state can confront the radicalisation of Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

During my tenure as Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, I introduced a pilot programme for the education of immigrants, in which they were taught the Greek language, the Greek civilisation as well as the European civilisation. All immigrants were required to master the Greek language in order for them to be able to get a legal permit. Through this pilot programme, immigrants were also taught the basic principles of a democratic legal order. Furthermore, I would like to mention that the Greek education system accepts also children of illegal immigrants to follow the elementary and secondary school. This humanistic approach is unique in the world, but unfortunately international organisations are unwilling to aid Greece with the necessary funds to confront this financial burden. Additionally, the Greek state is also providing immigrants with free social healthcare. These two pillars, education and healthcare, are an important tool in order to integrate immigrants in Greek society and prevent their radicalisation. Of course, we also need a stricter policy in order to

prevent the flow of illegal immigrants-mainly Muslims- from our borders with Turkey. The EU has to support Greece in this issue, in order for us to counter more effectively the flow of illegal immigrants.

Interview with Dr.Zainul Abedin President of the Bangladeshi Community in Greece

- 1. How many people from Bangladesh do you estimate that are living in Greece?**

There are about 25,000 people from Bangladesh living in Greece.

- 2. Do you think that Shariah law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?**

I believe that Muslims immigrants living in Greece should follow the Greek Constitution and the secular laws of the Greek state. Bangladeshi Muslims living in Greece only want to have the right to worship freely and they don't want the application of Sharia law.

- 3. What is your opinion about Tablighi Jamaat, and do you know if it has any presence in Greece?**

Tablighi Jamaat is a missionary group calling Muslims to follow the Koran and the Hadith, in other words to follow the path of God. For example, Tablighi Jamaat is telling Muslims that they have to pray five times per day, to go to the mosques etc. Missionaries of Tablighi Jamaat are peaceful people who are just following the teachings of the Koran and they are inviting not only Muslims from Bangladesh but also from other communities. Tablighi Jamaat has not a permanent presence in Greece. Missionaries from Asia, Arabic countries and the UK are visiting Greece

several times per year and they are inviting Muslim immigrants residing in Greece to listen to their teachings.

4. How many informal mosques are under the “jurisdiction” of the Bangladeshi community in Greece?

30 to 35 informal mosques are under the “jurisdiction” of the Bangladeshi community.

5. What is your opinion about Jamaat e-Islami in Bangladesh? Does the Jamaat e-Islami have any followers among the Bangladeshi community in Greece?

Jamaat e-Islami is an Islamic political party in Bangladesh. It is a strict party which advocates that Islam should be dominant in politics and society. There are some people from the Bangladeshi community in Greece who are following this party. They are about 400-500 people.

6. Islam is just a religion or a holistic socio-political system?

Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a way of life that embraces all aspects of human and social life.

7. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

Jihad means devotion for something good. Jihad means struggle for peace. Jihad never speaks about suicide bombings.

8. Does the Bangladeshi community receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No, we never received any funding from Islamic charities and we also didn't have any offer from them.

9. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Mosque in Athens, in Votanikos area?

I believe that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will be for the benefit not only of Muslims, but also of the Greek government and the Greek people. I estimate that one mosque is enough to satisfy the religious needs of Muslims residing in Athens; at least it is an important step to start with.

10. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece?

I have met the President of the MAG Mr.Naim El Ghandour only once, but I will tell you that he was never democratically elected to represent all Muslims living in Greece. Maybe he is representing the Arab community, but for sure he doesn't represent the Bangladeshi community.

11. Does the Bangladeshi community face any problems with the activity of Greek right-wing extremists? Do you think that the activity of these extremists could radicalise Bangladeshi people?

Bangladeshi people are peaceful people who came to Greece to find work in order to achieve better conditions of life. They respect Greek society and Greek people and they are not only interested in Islam. They want to be part of Greek society. However a few right-wing extremists are creating problems, they are beating us and they even put fire to one informal mosque of the Bangladeshi community in Plateia Attikis. However, despite this situation, the Bangladeshi community took the initiative and organised a meeting on November 19th 2010 with representatives of "Chrisi Avgi" the right-wing extremist political party, we explained to them that we are peaceful people and we achieved a kind of "moratorium" of non-aggression. In regard to your second question I don't believe that the activity of Greek right-wing

extremists will radicalise Bangladeshi people, because Bangladeshi people believe that violence brings more violence.

12. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 as a result of the “Koran incident”?

Bangladeshi people didn't participate in those demonstrations and of course we condemn the violent riots that took place.

Interview with Mr. Abul Bashir President of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece

1. Do you think that Shariah law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

Shariah law is difficult to be implemented as a parallel legal system in Greece for the time being. Muslim immigrants started coming to Greece 10 years ago. It is premature to ask for the implementation of Shariah law in Greece. Maybe after 15 years we can discuss it again. At that time will also be living second-generation Muslims in Greece.

2. What are the activities of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece?

Islamic Forum is trying to educate the fellow Muslims to follow the teachings of the Koran. For example, we are trying to persuade them that they have to pray five times per day, not to drink alcohol, not to go to clubs etc. in order to have a good life based upon the teachings of the Koran.

3. In other words, does the Islamic Forum participate in similar activities to Tablighi Jamaat?

Tablighi Jamaat is involved only in religious activities, not in social or political activities. The Islamic Forum is also interested in promoting a welfare agenda for our fellow Muslims.

4. Does the Islamic Forum have any affiliation with the Jamaat e-Islami of Bangladesh?

We are Bangladeshi Muslims living in Greece and we are not interested in Bangladeshi politics.

5. What is your opinion on Abul Ala Mawdudi?

Mawdudi was a very important Islamic thinker of the 20th century who wrote many books about how Islam should be implemented in the modern world. I think that his ideology is positive and helpful for contemporary Muslims. He tried to popularise the teachings of the Koran in order that the message of the Koran would be simple and understandable for every Muslim.

6. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Islamic Mosque in Athens-Votanikos?

I think that all Muslims residing in Athens want the construction of a big Mosque in Athens. However I am not optimistic that this Mosque will be constructed in the near future, maybe after 15 years.

7. Do you think that one Mosque will satisfy the religious needs of Muslims residing in Athens?

No I don't believe in this. In November 2010 I was a candidate with the leftist party "Antarsya" for the Municipality of Athens Board of Advisors. In discussions I had with fellow party members I told them that it would be a good idea to build small Mosques of 300-500 people capacity in many areas of Athens that has a high concentration of Muslim inhabitants. They agreed with my proposal. This is in my

opinion a solution that would satisfy the religious needs of Muslims residing in Athens. Of course “Antarsya” elected only one representative at the Municipality of Athens Board of Advisors and so we don’t have the power yet to promote this proposal.

8. Do you have any kind of cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We don’t have any kind of cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece.

9. Do you have any kind of cooperation with the UK based Islamic Forum of Europe?

We used to have some contacts and cooperation with them but now we don’t have.

10. Do you receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No, the Islamic Forum doesn’t receive any kind of funding. We are working on a voluntary basis.

11. Do you face any kind of problems with Greek far right extremists of “Chrisi Avgi” party?

Of course we face serious problems with them. They want all immigrants, not only Muslims, to leave Greece and go back to their countries but this is not impossible to happen. During the celebration of the Kurban Bayram last November members of Chrisi Avgi started throwing eggs and yogurts to Muslims who were peacefully praying at Plateia Attikis (Attikis Square) in central Athens. Muslims didn’t react and left. A more important and dangerous incident took place two months ago when members of Chrisi Avgi put fire in an informal Bangladeshi Mosque in Agios Panteleimonas area. Thank God we didn’t have any casualties.

12. Do you think that the activity of right-wing extremists will potentially radicalise Muslims residing in Athens?

No, I don't think so. Islam is a religion of peace and as long as we are Muslims living in Greece, we are not going to answer to violence with violence. We trust that the Greek authorities will do their job and arrest these people who are violating the law.

13. Is Islam just a religion or a socio-political system?

Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a guide organising and embracing all aspects of human life.

14. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

Jihad means effort, Jihad is a struggle. Jihad is the struggle of every human being against Satan who is putting inside human souls evil and the temptations of evil. Jihad also means an armed struggle against an aggressor. Jihad is not Holy War. Islam is a religion of peace and has nothing to do with terrorism.

15. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 as a result of the "Koran incident"

I think that those riots were the result of a misunderstanding. The police officer who allegedly defaced the Koran didn't know that those pages were a copy of the Koran. My opinion is that those papers were not the Koran. The Koran is a book not just a couple of pages. Anyway the Bangladeshi community didn't participate in those demonstrations and the subsequent riots.

Interview with Mr.Daadir Daysane spokesman of the Somali Community in Greece

1. Do you think that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

I believe that Muslims living in Europe and in the West in general should accept and follow the secular laws of the host countries. Myself, I am totally opposed to the implementation of the Sharia law and this is one of the main reasons I left my country and came to Greece three years ago asking for political asylum. In Somalia as you may know there is civil war since 1991 and there are several Islamist groups trying to impose Sharia law by force in the country.

2. What is your opinion about the Al-Shabab Islamist movement in Somalia?

I think that these people are not true Muslims. They think that they are but they are not. If you read the Holy Koran, you will see that Islam is a religion of Peace. Islam is against killings of innocent people. Al-Shabab is an affiliate of Al-Qaeda.

3. How many people from Somalia do you estimate that are living in Greece?

In Greece there are 1,500 Somalis living. Most of them are under 18 years old. They don't want to live in this country permanently. Only 75 Somalis applied for political asylum in Greece and this is because they are using Greece as transit in order to immigrate in Northern European countries (UK, Norway, and Sweden).

4. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens as a result of the “Koran incident”?

I think that these riots started because of a misunderstanding. I believe that the Police Officer, who defaced the Koran, didn't really know that what he tore up was the Holy Koran. Muslims living in Athens, because of the media coverage of this unfortunate incident started to get angry because they felt insulted and this is how the situation began to be out of control.

5. Does the Somali community receive any funding from Islamic charities?

We don't receive any funding from Islamic charities. Even if they would offer us money we would not accept because these charities are funding poor people and in return, they expect political gains. For example, in Somalia, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are funding the Islamist groups, because they don't want to put an end to civil war. Somalia has a strategic position in the Horn of Africa and it is an oil rich country and if there is peace our country will become competitor to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

6. What are the relations between the Somali community and the Muslim Association of Greece?

We don't have any particular cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece.

7. Do you think that the construction of one official mosque in Votanikos will satisfy the needs of Muslims living in Athens?

If the construction of the Mosque is allowed according to Greek constitution and Greek laws then it is fine for us. If Greek laws allow the construction of more mosques like in UK for example, then is again fine.

Interview with Mr.Ioannis Corantis former Director General of the NIS (2004-2009)

1. Do you know if the Gulen movement is active in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

It is an established fact that the Gulen organisation is active in almost all countries, first and foremost those of particular interest to Turkey. I cannot provide you with specific information on the matter at hand, but I would note that the Gulen sect is made up of several religious groups, whose members are in close touch and cooperation with one another, both at the spiritual level and also in more “operational” issues. It would be therefore interesting to know in which specific group one could find some Turkish officials who play an active role in promoting Gulen’s vision of things and, through it, Turkey’s interests.

2. Do you know if the Milli Gorus movement of former Turkish Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan is active in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

I know that Milli Gorus is very active in Europe, particularly in the Netherlands and Germany. However I honestly have no knowledge of it being present and active in Greece and particularly in Western Thrace. I would assume nevertheless that several of its members may have joined Gulen’s ranks, since the two organisations are intertwined, and their split did not occur out of differences over religious matters but rather as a consequence of the persecutions they suffered by the then all-powerful military.

3. Do you know if the Islamist NGO IHH is active in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

Relations and links between IHH and members of the Turkish Government – Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Arinc in particular- are an established fact. Therefore, it is only normal that IHH would enjoy the full support of the Turkish authorities in promoting Turkey's and its own goals and agenda, both on the domestic scene as well as abroad.

4. Are the Turkish secret services and MIT in particular active in Western Thrace?

It goes without saying that Greece has been and remains a primary target for the Turkish services and MIT in particular. Bearing this in mind, given the strategic importance (we should not forget that the area in question is the only one which offers the appropriate settings for a clash between major Greek and Turkish military formations) and the special characteristics of the region. Western Thrace offers to the Turkish side the possibility to collect a maximum of intelligence and operational advantages with a minimum of cost and danger. Obviously, in such a venture, Turkey makes ample use –and abuse- of the religious factor.

5. Mustafa Sarnic the head of the Turkish consulate in Komotini according to the local Thracian newspaper “Phoni tis Komotinis” (Voice of Komotini) is an officer of the MIT and not a diplomat. What is your opinion on this issue?

Mr Sarnic has served in different diplomatic postings in the past and this is presently his second assignment in Greece. Throughout his career, he served in certain areas of strategic interest to Turkey, particularly at a time when these areas were experiencing fast and deep political changes. Kosovo is one such example. However I consider that what matters is the overall attitude and activity of a given individual, and less so his official capacity. Throughout his tenure at the Turkish Consulate general in Komotini, Mr Sarnic has made clear what his instructions and his goals are.

6. Do you think that Sharia Law should be abolished in Western Thrace?

Religious beliefs should bear no legal or other consequences. Greek citizens of Muslim faith are subject to exactly the same rights and obligations as their fellow Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics etc. The recognition of and respect for one's religious beliefs and practices should not, and cannot, extend to the acceptance of a status and a regime which are a far cry from our present-day society and rather refer to obnoxious situations as Taliban's Afghanistan (e.g. status of women). The maintenance of the Sharia is one more proof of how Greece has yielded, and keeps doing so, to Turkey's demands since we have allowed Ankara to achieve –or should I say impose- the differentiation of Greek citizens before the Law on the basis of their religious faith. I consider this to be totally unacceptable, since the state sovereignty (and thus the due respect to the laws it promulgates) has a territorial character and cannot be bound by cultural or religious considerations.

7. Do you know if the NIS has specialised staff dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?

NIS has experienced, able and specialised staff, with a keen sense of commitment to duty, tasked to confront Islamic extremism and terrorism. At this point I would like to note that NIS, being one of the basic pillars for the security of this country, is bound to –and does- confront and react to threats of all kinds, regardless of their origins. By that I mean to say that NIS looks at terrorism as an overall phenomenon and threat in all its facets and expressions, one of which, unfortunately, is Islamic fundamentalism.

8. Do you know if the NIS has any cooperation with foreign intelligence services that have a record in dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?

Most Intelligence and Security Services develop common actions and strategies in synergy to confront terrorism, which is a global, and not merely national, phenomenon. A clear example in this matter is offered by the funds, owned by terrorist organisations, which are transferred throughout the global banking system. Is there any Intelligence Service which could be in a position to check the flows of money transfers without the help of other agencies, both domestic and foreign?

9. What policies do you think that the NIS should be implementing in order to confront more effectively the Islamist threat?

So far, strategies and actions carried out by NIS in cooperation with other relevant agencies have proven to be successful, since we have not recorded any major attack or other hostile action on Greek territory. However, “the better is the enemy of the good”. Should we recognise a need, this would be for an even more systematic study of the deeper reasons for Islamist terrorism, as well as the ways and means to both prevent it and suppress it. In order to maximise the positive results of NIS’ activities and operations, the help of other state bodies and authorities and an improved cooperation with police and Justice Authorities are a clear necessity.

10. Do you think that there should be a restructuring of the NIS, so that two separate agencies should take the place of the existing one? The first agency to deal with domestic security like MI5 and the FBI model and the second agency to deal with foreign intelligence like the MI6 and the CIA model?

Without claim to ownership of the ultimate wisdom, my answer to your question is a clear and unambiguous “no”. Copy-cat solutions are not the proper and effective answer to problems and issues in a given country. For example, there are good reasons why in several former Eastern European countries there are at present four or even five Intelligence/Security Services. Sources for such a situation are to be traced back to the Soviet bloc times and the need for the then communist regimes to divide power among several agencies so as to be able to control them better. While it is true that at present many EU countries, particularly among the “15” have two or more Intelligence/Security Services, it is equally true that several others are quite happy with only one(e.g. Spain, Luxembourg, Denmark etc). My own experience, having spent five years at the helm of NIS (2004-2009) has taught me that Greece was right in having had NIS as the sole Intelligence Service since it was created back in May 1953. It is in the nature of things in this country that the dispersion of power, under various guises, has proven to be catastrophic, for instance in managing the economy or even running the foreign policy. Intelligence is too sensitive and delicate an area to allow for burden-sharing under any name or form.

11. The 3649/2008 Act in articles 7 and 8 is introducing a Joint Intelligence Council (JIC) and an Intelligence Council respectively. Are these Councils based on the concept of the British Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC)?

The idea of creating a Greek JIC(Article 7) was originated by the former Minister of Interior Prokopis Pavlopoulos in order to have a coordinated approach for issues concerning national security at a political level. The Greek JIC is similar to the logic of the British Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). However, during my tenure as Director General of the NIS the Greek JIC never held a single meeting.The

Intelligence Council (Article 8) already existed since 1992 and it was created by the Presidential Decree 360/92. Therefore it was not an innovation of 3649/2008 Act. However article 8 of the above mentioned Act introduced a more detailed description of the functions of the Intelligence Council. The concept of the Intelligence Council is similar to the British JIC too.

12 . Do you know if there is an ongoing activity of the secret services of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan on Greek soil, more specifically among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

Every Secret Service develops, on an occasional or permanent basis, operational activities in countries which are interesting from an intelligence standpoint, like ours. Intelligence activities can be carried out by individuals having an official capacity, or by others under false identity. Every Intelligence Service has its own modus operandi. It is clear however that these activities cannot remain unnoticed for long....

13. Do you know if there are living radical elements among the Muslim immigrants who are residing in Greece?

An Intelligence/Security Service is bound to operate, always within reasonable limits, on the basis of the “worst case scenario”. With this in mind, even if there were no radical elements in Greece, we should always remain on the alert.

14. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Mosque in Athens-Votanikos area?

The government of the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK) is insisting on the implementation of the 3512/2006 Act that the former conservative government of Nea Demokratia voted in favor. The current government is moving to the wrong direction. The construction of an official Mosque will inevitably lead to the creation of ‘satellite cells’ that will depend exclusively on Muslim clients (restaurants, fast

food, bookshops etc). In this way in the long run we will witness the creation of a real Islamic ghetto which will de facto be out of any control from the part of the Greek state. Moreover, since the official Mosque will be a Sunni Mosque, the Shia community will demand to have their own Mosque and if we don't satisfy their demand it is probable that we will have unpleasant developments. My opinion is that it would be better if the Greek government would give legal permits to a specific number of informal mosques that are currently operating illegally. Of course these places of worship must meet the safety and hygienic standards set by the Greek state and they should be located in areas that could be easily accessible by Muslims. In this way the Greek state will satisfy in a proportionate and symmetric manner the religious needs of Muslims who will be under the supervision of the state, and by doing so we will also avoid the potential danger of radicalisation of Muslims.

15. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the “Koran incident”? Are these violent riots an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece?

These violent clashes and events should be understood as a clear warning signal as far as the more general attitude is concerned about the Islamist element in Greece. These mass demonstrations, which had a violent and subversive character, are a tangible proof of the growing radicalisation of the Islamic element in this land. On the other hand, given the specificities of the Islamic faith, strong reactions by Muslims for what they considered to be lack of respect or even clear-cut offenses against their holy symbols, should not automatically relegate them to the category of extremists. By that I mean to say that some extremists may have fuelled the anger of the faithful and otherwise peace-loving Muslims, and instigated mass demonstrations involving moderate individuals who were attracted and impressed by the propaganda of a radical gang.

16. Do you know if we have in Greece Al-Qaeda's sleeper cells?

I am aware of these rumours, which surface from time to time in some international media, particularly US based, and keep the intelligence community busy. "Information" and hearsay, particularly if it is ill-intended, is one thing, intelligence is another. There is no such intelligence, to the best of my knowledge. May I add that Omar bin Laden, Osama's son, in an interview granted to the Greek magazine "EPIKAIRA" (nr 47, dated 09/15-09-2010), was asked the following question: "According to the French External Security Intelligence Service, Greece and Cyprus were possible targets of Al Qaeda. The French secret services had this information months before the attacks against the Twin Towers. At that time, you were with your father on the Tora Bora mountains. Had you heard anything about this eventuality? What was Osama thinking about Greece?" His answer was: "To be honest, I never heard my father saying anything about Greece. I don't know what his thoughts or his plans were".

17. Do you know if there is any presence in Greece of three foreign Islamist organisations: The Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

No. However sympathies have been recorded, as expressed by some individuals for one organisation or another.

18. Do you know if the Wahhabis are active in Greece?

No, at least not during my tenure at NIS.

19. Do you know if the Somali immigrants residing in Greece have any ties with the Islamist-terrorist Somali organisation Al-Shabaab?

Same answer as in the previous question. I wish to note however that several of these organisations have reportedly been involved with rings smuggling illegal immigrants into Greece. For obvious reasons, it is impossible to carry out a thorough background check on every single of these uninvited guests.

20. Do you estimate that the Greek anti-terror legislation should be updated in order to face more effectively the threat of Islamist terrorism and subversion?

Terrorism is a global phenomenon and a terrorist should be treated as such, whether he is an Islamist, a Christian, an atheist or follower of any sect. In my view, the Greek anti-terror legislation, as it presently stands, responds adequately to the needs of confronting effectively the threat of Islamist terrorism and subversion, on the clear understanding that the law will be squarely implemented by Justice.

21. Do you estimate that an updated anti-terror legislation should penalise subversive activities?

“Subversive activities” should be clearly defined. Basic rights and freedoms should not and could not be curtailed by dumping in the same bag all forms of protest, even violent ones. Provisions of the Greek criminal legislation cover the notion of “subversive activities” in a satisfactory way.

22. Do you know if Hamas has any presence or activities in Greece?

While there are, undoubtedly, Hamas sympathisers among the members of the Palestinian community in Greece, there are no traces of a structured presence of Hamas, and even less of its activities, in this country. I would add that since 1991, when a botched terrorist attack against the British Consulate in Patras ended with the tragic death of the would-be Palestinian suicide bomber, unlawful behavior by

Palestinians in Greece has been nil. Their occasional participation in protest marches and demonstrations against e.g Israel or the USA, alongside other Greek protesters, cannot obviously be considered a subversive or terrorist activity.

23. Do you think that it would be effective to implement in Greece a counter-radicalisation strategy like the “Prevent Violent Extremism” project in the UK?

We are talking here about two completely different socio-political structures. Greece never had a colonial past and therefore never experienced its sequels, as the UK does. While at present the need for a counter-radicalisation project does not seem to be immediate, I would recommend policy planners to give it some thought.

Interview with Mr.Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf Secretary General of the Association of the Egyptian Community in Greece

1. Do you believe that Sharia Law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslim living in Greece?

I believe that Sharia Law could be implemented for Muslims living in Greece, only in regard to family and inheritance law. Of course Sharia Law is already implemented in Western Thrace. Many Muslims living in Athens for example when they want to get married they are travelling to Western Thrace.

2. How many Egyptians are living in Greece?

Approximately 70,000 Egyptians are living in Greece. 90% of them are Muslims and 10% of them are Christians Copts. Most of the Egyptians living in

Greece are educated in contrast to other Muslim communities. They also belong to all social classes, not only labor class.

3. What is your opinion about the burqa ban in France?

I personally don't agree with the burqa ban, because this is an act of discrimination against Muslims and moreover is incompatible with the European Convention of Human Rights and it is also against a coherent integration policy from the part of the French state. European societies are multicultural societies and I think that everybody has to respect this fact.

4. Is Islam just a religion or a complete political and social system?

Islam is not just worship of God. Islam is a holistic system embracing and regulating all aspects of human life.

5. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Votanikos area?

Let me first tell you one story. In 2005 I met with the then Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church Christodoulos and I discussed with him the prospect of constructing an official Mosque in Athens for the Muslims living here. As you may know Athens is the only European capital without an official Mosque. He told me that he had no objections with the construction of the Mosque, but he was opposed to the construction of an Islamic Cultural Center beside the Mosque. His argument was that the Islamic Cultural Center will be used as a tool for converting Christians into Muslims. However, what I see as the heart of the problem is that Greek people associate the construction of an official Mosque in Athens with the past Ottoman rule in Greece. They falsely think that the official Mosque will indicate an unofficial return of Turks in Greece. They have to realise that the construction of the official Mosque is about Muslims living in Greece and not Turks.

6. What is your opinion about the violent riots in Athens that followed the “Koran incident” in May 2009?

What I believe is that from the part of the Muslim community residing in Athens there was no intention to create problems. What Muslims wanted was to peacefully demonstrate, because they felt that their religious symbol the Koran was insulted by a Greek policeman. The Greek state on the other hand delayed to issue a statement condemning the destruction of the Koran. This delay in issuing a condemnation statement, I estimate sent the wrong signal to Muslims and this resulted in the violent riots we witnessed in May 2009.

7. Are these riots indicating that a part of the Muslim community residing in Athens is radicalised?

These riots were connected to the “Koran incident” and there is no way that they are indicating a radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece. Muslims living in Greece and I am speaking not only for the Egyptian community are not interested in extremist ideology. They only care about having a job, having social care and living an ordinary life. Furthermore, Greece is considered a friendly country to the Arab and Muslim world. Greece is a country which is supporting Palestinian rights and the Arab people in general. Even in Afghanistan where Greece is part of the NATO forces there, it has only an auxiliary presence. In conclusion I don't believe that Greece is a target for Islamist extremists and of course it is not a target for the Muslim people living in Greece.

8. What is your opinion about the Muslim Brotherhood? Is the Muslim Brotherhood an extremist organisation?

The Muslim Brotherhood is not an extremist organisation; it is a political movement which was founded in Egypt in the late 1920s. They want of course to seize power in Egypt and implement Sharia Law, but till now they didn't succeed to convince the majority of the Egyptians that they will form a better government than the secular one we have.

9. What is your opinion about the plan of Islamist extremists to establish a global Caliphate?

This is complete nonsense. These people have this plan because they are extremists and as a result of this, they are totally unrealistic. We are not living at the time of the Prophet Muhammad; we are living in the modern world. Even the concept of the Dar-Al-Islam and the Dar-El-Harb was valid at that time and not for today. Today this concept is simply irrelevant.

10. Do you have any kind of cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We have cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece, but this cooperation is limited to cultural matters. We are not involved in religious affairs. For example we did not participate as “Association of the Egyptian Community” at the mass celebration of Eid-ul-Fitra, after the end of the holy month of Ramadan, at Plateia Kotzia. We celebrated it in a more discreet way.

Interview with Mr. Muhammadi Yonous President of the Afghan community in Greece

1. How many people from Afghanistan are living in Greece?

In Greece, there are around 10,000-12,000 citizens who come from Afghanistan. About 60% of them are living in Athens and the rest are in other Greek cities. Most of the immigrants who came to Greece from Afghanistan are political asylum seekers, because of the war in their country. 60-70% of Afghans living in Greece are Shias, because Shias are considered unbelievers by the Taliban, and as a result they are persecuting them. In Afghanistan only 20% of the population is Shia, but here in Greece the vast majority of Afghan immigrants are Shias.

2. Do you think that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

I don't believe that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece. Muslims should abide to the constitution and the secular laws of Greece. To the best of my knowledge the Greek constitution guarantees the freedom of religion and worship and I think this is the essential thing for Muslims.

3. What is your opinion about the Muslim Brotherhood and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

I am Muslim but I don't have any particular opinion on these two organisations. In Greece the Afghan community is cooperating with the Muslim Association of Greece.

4. What is your opinion about the Taliban?

Afghanistan as you may know is a very poor country and about 80% of the population is illiterate. These illiterate people, who have no alternative education apart from the one given to them in the religious schools-madrassas, are more vulnerable to the radical ideology and message of the Taliban. The problem is the radical preaching given to poor and illiterate people in these religious schools. Furthermore, I want to state that I am totally opposed to the Taliban's agenda to create an Islamist state and impose the Sharia.

5. Do you know if there are supporters of the Taliban among the Afghani immigrants living in Greece?

We don't have supporters of the Taliban among the Afghani immigrants living in Greece. However we have a few sympathizers.

6. Do you agree with the decision of the French government to ban the burqa?

I don't agree with the French government's decision to ban the burqa, because I believe in the freedom of every individual to follow his own culture and choose what she/he likes to wear. Furthermore, I believe that when you are trying to impose something on someone, then you are creating the opposite results. You are provoking in other words his reaction.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the "Koran incident"?

I think that the "Koran incident" was an opportunity for disaffected young Muslim immigrants to demonstrate against the Greek state, because they don't have legal permits. I believe also that the policeman who supposedly destroyed the Koran didn't know that these papers were part of the Koran. Again there is a lack of education and training even from the part of the Greek police. We are living in a multicultural society, so the Greek police needs to know about the culture and sensitivities of the immigrants living in Greece. I would also like to mention here, that some activists from Greece and in particular from the Greek Communist Party exploited the "Koran incident" in order to foment social unrest.

8. Do you know if there are violent Islamists among the Afghans living in Greece?

When people are coming from Afghanistan in Greece, they are confused because they face a new and completely unknown to them social and cultural reality. These people as I have already told you are illiterate and because of this more vulnerable to radicalisation. The Afghan community in Greece is organizing seminars for these newcomers in order to help them to adapt more rapidly to Greek reality and prevent them of becoming radicalised.

9. Do you think that Islam is just a religion or a complete socio-political system?

Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a way of life. However, evolution is the rule of life and in this sense Islam has to develop itself. I don't believe that Islam should be the same as the one at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Islam has to develop and adjust itself according to new social realities. The Shia strand of Islam which I follow is more progressive than the Sunni strand of Islam.

10. Do you receive any support or funding from Islamic charities from abroad or from foreign states?

Fortunately, we are not receiving any funding from Islamic charities coming from countries like Saudi Arabia. However, I have to mention that the Iranian embassy in Athens is trying in many ways to penetrate and exploit the Afghan community in Greece for political reasons. Iran is using religion in order to pursue its own political aims. In Afghanistan for example they are helping the Taliban, despite the fact that the Taliban are considering the Shias as deadly enemies. In Greece agents from the Iranian embassy, are trying to exploit the fact that the vast majority of Afghans living here are Shias. They are trying to penetrate for example our cultural centre at Peristeri. They are attending the events we are organising. However, the aim of our community is to minimize their attempts to influence us.

11. What is your opinion about the construction of the Islamic Mosque in Votanikos?

I believe that the Islamic Mosque in Votanikos should be built as soon as possible. However, in my opinion the biggest problem that Muslims are facing in Athens in particular is the lack of a Muslim cemetery. When people die, we have to send them back to Afghanistan and pay 3,000 euros. Furthermore in regard to the Mosque, I believe that one Mosque in Athens is not enough to satisfy the needs of Muslims living in the broader Athens area.

Interview with Mr.Munir Sindho Badar President of the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association

1. Do you think that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

Greece where we live is not a Muslim country. I don't think that we need Sharia law here in Greece. Also in many Muslim countries they don't have Sharia courts, they have secular courts.

2. What is your opinion about the Tablighi Jamaat?

Tablighi Jammata is a missionary organisation. In Greece many Pakistanis living here come from the young generation from 16 years old up to 40. Most of them didn't go to schools, and they don't go to mosques or read the Koran and so they need to learn the Koran, the Hadiths, the Islamic traditions etc. Also the young people should avoid betting, going to discotheques or being involved in useless fightings. This is Tablighi Jammata, a kind of guidance for young people in order for them to follow the right path and avoid doing wrong things.

3. Is Tablighi Jamaat active in Greece?

Last year during summer vacations some Islamic seminars were organised by the Pakistani community in the city of Chalkida not by Tablighi Jamaat specifically but under the general concept of the activity of Tablighi Jamaat.

4. How many people from Pakistan do you estimate that are living in Greece?

70,000 Pakistanis are living in Greece, half of them in Athens and the rest in Thessaloniki, Larisa, Patra, Herakleion and Sparta.

5. What are the activities of the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association?

First of all I would like to say that the vast majority of Pakistanis living in Greece is working 12-14 hours per day in order to earn their living and be able to survive. So they don't really have much spare time for cultural activities. Most Pakistanis living in Greece as I told you before are illiterate so they need some kind of guidance. Every year we are organising some sport activities like for example volley-ball tournaments.

6. Is your association involved in Dawa activity?

No we are not participating in religious activities. We are working on issues like Greek-Pakistani friendship and culture. We are also taking initiatives for donating blood and we are organising sport activities.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the "Koran incident"?

After the murder of student Alexis Grigoropoulos in December 2008 by a police officer, as you know violent riots took place in the centre of Athens as a result of this incident. Some immigrants from Afghanistan and Algeria along with Greeks were involved in these violent riots. In May 2009 after the destruction of the Koran by a Greek policeman, some Greeks from the leftist organisation "Steki Metanaston" invited the leaders of the Muslim community in Greece and they told they support us and that we had to organise a protest. They said to us that we will protest anyway, they didn't ask us, they just wanted Muslim people to join the protest.

8. The majority of the Pakistanis living in Greece are following the Deobandi movement?

The majority of Pakistanis living in Greece are Sunni (80%) the rest 20% are Shia. From these Sunnis, the majority is following Sufism and a minority is following Deobandism. However, I have to say that there are no major differences between Sufis and Deobandis. The only difference is in the way they are praying. Islam is one. Every year many Sufi saints from Pakistan visit Greece.

9. What is your opinion about the famous Islamic scholar Abu Ala Mawdudi?

He is a great Islamic scholar, he wrote a lot of books and he has still influence over Pakistanis. Many Pakistanis are following his teachings and ideology.

10. Does the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No we don't receive any funding from Islamic charities. We are funded by members of the Pakistani community in Greece and also by Pakistani businessmen living and operating in Greece.

11. What is your opinion about the construction of the Islamic Mosque in Votanikos?

I think that the Greek government is not sincere with us. For political reasons they don't really want the official mosque to be constructed in Votanikos. Pakistanis and Bengalis are worshipping God in informal mosques. There are 60 unofficial mosques operating in Greece. Forty (40) of them are run by the Pakistani community and twenty (20) of them by the Bengali community.

12. Do you think that one Mosque is enough for the Muslims living in Athens or they need more than one Mosque?

Yes I believe that one official Mosque is enough for covering the religious needs of Muslims living in Athens.

13. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece and the Greek-Arab Cultural Centre in Moshato?

We don't have any particular cooperation with these two organisations.

Interview with Mr. Nader Halbouni President of the Syrian community in Greece

1. Do you think that Sharia Law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece?

No, I don't think so. Muslims living in Western countries should accept the secular laws of these countries.

2. What is your opinion on the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

I have no particular opinion on these organisations.

3. Do you know if the aforementioned organisations have a presence and activity in Greece?

Unfortunately, I don't know.

4. Do you know if the Wahhabis have any presence or activity in Greece?

To the best of my knowledge, they don't have any presence or activity in Greece.

5. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

Jihad is the daily struggle for every Muslim. When I wake up in the morning to go at work, this is Jihad. The original meaning of the word Jihad is distorted by the West. Except from the meaning I told you, Jihad at the time of the Prophet Mohammad and his companions had the meaning of expanding the religion of Islam. Today of course if all Muslim countries unite and wage war against Israel in order to liberate Palestine, this will be Jihad.

6. How many Syrians are living in Greece?

Around 25,000 Syrians are living in Greece.

7. How many of them are Muslims?

The majority of them are Muslims; however, it is very hard to estimate the exact number. We have many Christians also.

8. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the “Koran incident”? Are these violent riots an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece?

These riots were not as important as they were presented by the Greek and international media and of course there are not an indication that Muslims residing in Greece have been radicalised.

9. Is Islam just a religion or a coherent socio-political system?

Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a way of life and a complete social, economic and political system. I will tell you one example. Islam as you may know is prohibiting interest. Today in Greece and in the world in general we face a severe economic crisis. This crisis would not have happened if the Western banks didn't impose high interest rates on their customers. Moreover, ordinary people who have debts to banks, would be in a much better economic position if they had to return to the banks only the capital they borrowed and not the interest. In such a way the money would flow in the economy and we would have growth, not recession like now.

10. Do Islamic charities from countries like Saudi Arabia for example fund the activities of the Syrian community in Greece?

No. We don't receive any funding from abroad.

11. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque at Votanikos?

This is an old story. However, the Mosque due to bureaucratic obstacles is not constructed yet. We will wait to see.

12. Do you think that one official Mosque is enough to satisfy the needs of Muslims living in the broader Athens area?

No, of course not, but we have to reach a starting point. First the Mosque in Votanikos should be completed.

13. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We have no particular cooperation with them.

Interview with Mr. Shadi F. Ayoubi journalist, administrator of the website islam.gr and correspondent of Al Jazeera online in Greece

1. Can you please describe to me what the web site islam.gr is all about?

The idea to launch a website about Islam in the Greek language was not a new idea. Basically it was not my initiative. The idea for this site belonged to a Greek man who had married a Turkish- Muslim woman and his job was a tourist guide. His intention was to lift the misunderstandings between Islam and the Western world. I contacted this man, Giorgos was his first name but I can not recall his surname, in 2006 in order to help him and make this website more attractive to readers. In 2007, I became administrator of the website. We are not receiving any funding; we just pay yearly the Internet Provider to host our webpage. This web site is appealing to whoever it might be interested in Islam, not just to Greek people. Of course the main target group of this website is Greek speaking people, because in English and Arabic we have already many websites speaking about Islam. The activity of the website is not Dawa activity. I would describe it more as an informational activity. The team of our website consists of young university graduates from different faculties and from different religious background. They are not all Muslims.

2. I have read somewhere, I can not recall now, that many Greek converts to Islam were influenced online by your website. Is this true?

No, I don't think so, because our site is basically an informational website about Islam and not a religious one. As I told you, we are not involved in Dawa activity and we don't want to be involved in proselytising. We are informing people about our religion, users can also download in the Greek language the Holy Koran, but this can not be considered as proselytising. At the end of the day everybody is free to choose his religion.

3. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Votanikos area in Athens?

I don't believe that the Greek government and the Greek Orthodox Church don't want to allow Muslims worshipping in an official Mosque like in every other European country. There is a delay in the construction of the Mosque due to bureaucracy and due to a fear from the part of the Greek government that they will have to "pay" the "political cost" for allowing the construction of the Mosque during their tenure in government. I was reading in a newspaper the other day that the capacity of the new Mosque will be up to 500 people. As you can understand, this mosque will not satisfy the needs of thousands of Muslims who are living in the broader area of Athens. With the construction of only one Mosque in Athens the problem can not be solved. In Athens as a result of this problem are operating about 70 to 80 informal mosques.

4. Do you believe that the provision of the Act 3512/2006 that the funding of the construction of the Mosque is responsibility of the Greek state is positive?

Every Law has positive as well as negative aspects. The provision for example of the aforementioned Law that the majority of Administrative Committee of the Islamic Mosque should be constituted from Greek state's employees is not a wise one. What do these public servants know about how a Mosque is working? It is like you invite me and give me the responsibility to run a Greek Orthodox Church. Is this ever

possible? As for the provision that the funding of the construction of the Mosque is a responsibility of the Greek state, this is a clear indication that the Greek state wishes to control the Mosque. This is fine, but since the Greek state due to the economic crisis doesn't have the money to construct the Mosque, why is it excluding others from funding it? Anyway, the money is not the problem. If for example the Greek government has a problem with Saudi Arabia, there are people from Qatar, from Bahrain, or even Muslims from European countries who are ready to contribute and fund the construction of the Mosque in Athens. I will tell you another example. Recently the Greek government signed with the government of Qatar an investment agreement of 5 billion euros. Qatar is an open minded state that has a lot of foundations that are ready to contribute and fund the construction of the official Mosque in Athens.

5. Do you know if there are Muslim extremists living in Greece?

I am reading the Greek newspapers every day and I know that sometimes they are writing that Islamist extremists are present in Greece. My opinion is that all this is complete nonsense because nobody ever came with hard evidence supporting this allegation.

6. Is Islam just a religion or a coherent socio-political system?

Islam is a way of life, but this doesn't mean that a Muslim residing in a Western country is opposed to the secular laws of the host country. Muslims have to respect the secular laws of the host countries.

7. Do you think that Sharia Law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece?

I believe that Sharia law could be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece, for family issues. For example, when a Muslim couple wants to get married, I don't think that there should be a problem for Muslims to get married according to Sharia. In UK for example to the best of my knowledge this aspect of

Sharia law is implemented. Of course the penal code of Sharia law can not be implemented in a Western country. In general, I believe that the implementation of Sharia law as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in the West, not only in Greece, is part of the solution for Muslims living in non-Muslim countries. Furthermore, there is a public debate in some Western countries like France and the UK, to implement Sharia also in regard to economics. It is what we say Islamic finance and Islamic banking. Islamic finance and banking is a very good and secure economic system. For example, it is irrational to lend you 10 euros and then you to be obliged to give me back 50 euros. Islamic finance is helping also the economy to have more liquidity and more investments. Also the inheritance law in Islam is more just in comparison with secular laws of the West.

8. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

First of all I would like to mention that Jihad doesn't mean Holy War. This is a meaning completely alien to Muslims and Islam. Jihad is a defensive war not an offensive one. I would like to add here that people like Osama Bin Laden or his deputy Dr. Ayman Al- Zawahiri are not Islamic scholars, but a businessman and a physician respectively. They misinterpreted the meaning of the word Jihad. Anyway 9/11 has still a lot of unanswered questions. Most Muslims are against Islamist terrorism, but they are also against the War on Terror launched by George Bush and Tony Blair. Furthermore, I would like to say that many Muslims who are living in suppressive regimes in their countries, are imprisoned and tortured and of course this situation is leading to extremism.

9. What is your opinion about the Muslim Brotherhood and do you know if this organisation is present in Greece?

There is no official presence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Greece. Of course in Greece there are Muslims who are influenced by this movement. It is a religious, cultural, social and welfare movement and I think that Western governments have a wrong approach in dealing with this movement. As long as they try to suppress it, this movement will expand and become stronger. There are some people within European

governments that are slandering the Muslim Brotherhood and they are telling for example that all Muslims are extremists and that the only difference is that some of them are violent extremists like Al-Qaeda and others like the Muslim Brotherhood are trying to hide their extremist views. I believe that this approach is wrong. The Muslim Brotherhood is a moderate Islamic movement.

10. Do you think that Muslims living in Greece are integrated in Greek society?

Some of them have been integrated others not. Of course Greece is not a similar case like other European countries. In European countries there are Muslims of the second, third and fourth generation, in Greece now the second generation of Muslims is getting into adulthood. Most of the Muslim immigrants who reside in Greece are young. There are people from 15 years old to 45 years old. The second generation of Muslim immigrants is about 20% of the total population of Muslim immigrants.

11. What is your opinion on the French government's decision to ban the burqa?

I don't agree with this decision. I would argue that it makes no sense for example to let women walking almost naked on the one hand and on the other hand to ban the burqa. The French government's decision was allegedly taken on security grounds, but is burqa a real security threat? How many women in France are wearing burqa? I believe that this legislation was targeting Muslims and it is absolutely a discriminative policy. Before the burqa the French government had banned also the headscarf, so the real issue is not security but a policy of discrimination against Muslims. In Greece I don't believe that this kind of legislation will be implemented.

12. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the "Koran incident"? Are these violent riots an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece?

The riots that took place in Athens as a result of the “Koran incident” were something that no Muslim wanted to take place. These riots damaged the image of Muslims living in Greece. The people who participated in these riots were illegal immigrants who were living in a ruined building in the centre of Athens like animals. As a result of this situation, they found the opportunity to demonstrate in that violent way. These were young people who were living in Greece only for two or three years. Fortunately, the elder Muslims tried to control them. However, unfortunately the anger of young disaffected Muslim went out of control. I don’t believe that these riots were an indication that Muslims residing in Greece are radicalised. These riots were the result of social exclusion of Muslims living in Athens. Many Muslims living in Athens have no legal residence permit, they are suffering attacks from extremists of extreme right groups, they are unemployed etc. All these factors are leading to social exclusion and as a result we had that outburst of violence in May 2009.

Interview with Mr. Syed Mohammad Jamil President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society

1. How many Pakistanis are living in Greece?

In Greece are living 80,000 Pakistanis and 25,000 people from Bangladesh. About 65,000 Pakistanis are living in the broader area of Athens and 15,000 are living in other cities of Greece.

2. Do you believe that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

I personally believe that the implementation of Sharia law as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece is not feasible. But even if it was feasible I wouldn’t agree with this option and if some Muslims are asking for this, I believe they are

wrong. I have been for 40 years in Greece and I never felt any restriction in practicing my faith.

3. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Votanikos and how many informal mosques are under the responsibility of the Pakistani community?

The Pakistani community in Greece is responsible for running 40 informal mosques. Athens is the only European capital without an official Mosque. For 22 years I have been participating in all the committees and all the working groups that have been introduced by the Greek Ministry of Education and Religion to discuss and decide the construction of the official Mosque. In these committees the Pakistani ambassador to Greece was also present. Before the Athens Olympic Games, we came very close to an agreement for the construction of the official Mosque at the municipality of Paiania close to the Athens International Airport. However, the mayor and the inhabitants of Paiania demonstrated against that decision. Saudi Arabia was ready to fund the construction of the Mosque; however, the Greek government was skeptical to allow such a funding due to the fact that the Saudis at that time were indirectly involved in the funding of Islamist terrorist organisations. According to the 3512/2006 Act in the Board of Advisors of the “Administrative Committee of the Islamic Mosque of Athens” there should be two representatives of Muslims living in the broader area of Athens. One of the two representatives at this Advisory Board was agreed to be a representative from the Asian (non-Arabic Muslims) and I am proud to tell you that I will be this representative. The issue of the construction and the subsequent functioning of the official Mosque are very sensitive and important. In Greece fortunately, unlike other European countries we don't face the problem of Islamic fanaticism.

4. Is the missionary organisation Tablighi Jamaat active in Greece?

The majority of Pakistanis living in Greece are Sunnis (80%) the rest 20% are Shia. In Greece we have ten (10) different religious organisations of Pakistanis. Eight (8) of them are Sunni organisations and two (2) of them Shia. Five (5) from these eight (8) organisations are moderate organisations like for example the Minhaj-ul-

Quran, a Bareilvi organisation and three (3) of them are more radical, like for example the Bareilvi missionary organisation Dawat-e Islami and the Islamic Forum of Greece which has links to the Jamaat-e- Islami party of Pakistan. Tablighi Jamaat has not a permanent presence in Greece. However, every year missionaries from Tablighi Jamaat are visiting Greece and they are organising seminars for the Pakistanis living in Greece. I would like also to mention that the Minhaj-ul-Quran is running ten (10) informal mosques. Most Pakistanis living in Greece are following the Sufi strand of Islam and a minority of Pakistanis is following the Deobandi movement. Overall, I would say that the vast majority of Pakistanis living in Greece are moderate Muslims. Personally I am trying to prevent radical imams from preaching at the informal mosques. However, there are three (3) radical imam's followers of the Deobandi movement preaching at three informal mosques in the areas of Menidi and Egaleo. We are monitoring them and trying to keep them under control. Moreover, I would like to add that the Iranian embassy is actively involved in supporting the two (2) Shia organisations that I mentioned before. The Iranian ambassador in Athens is frequently attending the events that they are organising.

5. Do you know if there are any supporters of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan among the Pakistanis living in Greece?

No, to the best of my knowledge there are no supporters of the Taliban movement in Pakistan, among the Pakistanis living in Greece. However, I can not exclude this from happening in the future due to the continuous flow of illegal immigrants to Greece in a daily basis.

6. Is the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society you are leading actively involved in Dawa?

No, we are not active in Dawa. As I mentioned to you before the organisations that are involved in Dawa activity are Dawat-e-Islami and Tablighi Jamaat in cooperation with the Islamic Forum.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens as a result of the “Koran incident”?

My opinion was at that time that first we should seriously investigate that incident, to see how it happened and then to ask from the Greek authorities to punish the policeman for his inappropriate act and only if the Greek authorities would not take their responsibilities to organise a demonstration. Furthermore, I would like to add that leftist organisations and some people from the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK) tried to exploit for their own political aims the grievance of Muslim immigrants residing in Athens.

8. Do you know if the Wahhabis are active in Greece?

To the best of my knowledge the Wahhabis are not active in Greece. However, it is probable that the embassy of Saudi Arabia in Athens is helping in various ways the Muslim communities. Last week I had a meeting with the First Secretary of the Saudi embassy in Athens and we had a very interesting conversation. The purpose of my meeting was to ask from the Saudi embassy to supply us with copies of the Holy Koran, in order to give them to Muslim prisoners.

9. Do you know if there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslim prisoners?

No, thanks to our efforts we don't face such a problem. I have close cooperation with the Greek Ministry of Justice and I very often visit prisons very often and our aim is to strengthen the moral of Muslim prisoners and to try to counter-radicalise them.

10. Does the Pakistani community receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No, we are not receiving any funding from Islamic charities. The various organisations of the Pakistanis living in Greece are receiving donations from their own members and from Pakistani entrepreneurs.

11. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We have very good cooperation with the Muslim Association of Greece even if we have some ideological differences. The Muslim Association of Greece has for example ties with the Muslim Brotherhood and Saudi Arabia.

Interview with Mr. Zaki Sidi Mohammed President of the Moroccan community in Greece

1. Do you know how many Moroccans are living in Greece?

Around 2,000 Moroccans are living in Greece. About half of them are living in Athens.

2. Is Islam just a religion or a complete socio-political system?

Islam is a way of life, Islam is about politics, Islam is about economics, Islam is not just worshipping. Islam is a complete socio-political system as you put it.

3. Do you believe that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece?

As I told you Islam is a holistic religion, a complete socio-political system. Sharia law is part of this system and as a Muslim I believe that the implementation of Sharia would be for the benefit of Muslims. If the Greek state says that Muslims living in Greece are permitted to follow the Sharia law, I would agree for sure.

4. What is your opinion on the following Islamist organisations that are active in Morocco: Harakat al-Islah wa at-Tawhid, Hizb al Adala wal Tanmia και Al-Jamma al Adl wal Ihsan?

Moroccan Muslims living in Greece are not interested in politics and we are not categorising our fellow Moroccan Muslims according to their political preferences. I believe that these Islamist parties that you are referring to want to implement the principles of Islam in Moroccan society and as long as they don't oppose the Moroccan constitution, I agree with their political agenda.

5. Since the early 1980s Wahhabis are trying to infiltrate Moroccan Islam. What is your opinion on this?

Moroccan Muslims are following the Koran and the hadith and they don't need people from abroad to teach them which are the right interpretations of Islam. Wahhabis are trying to influence poor and illiterate people who don't study properly the Koran and the hadith.

6. What is your opinion about the decision of the French government to ban the burqa?

I don't agree with this decision and I don't understand it. I think that the burqa ban is part of a wider design to present Islam as an evil religion.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots in Athens that followed the “Koran incident” in May 2009?

What I understood later was that the police officer didn't destroy the Koran. What he destroyed, was an ordinary book with some notes from the Koran. However the media presented the incident in a different way and these made many Muslims to feel insulted and as a result of this feeling they spontaneously demonstrated against this insult. What happened in May 2009 in Athens has similarities with the demonstrations that took place in European cities in winter 2006 in the aftermath of the Prophet Muhammad cartoons publication in a Danish newspaper in autumn 2005. That time Muslims across Europe felt insulted and demonstrated because some cartoonists from Denmark didn't respect Islam.

8. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

There are two meanings of the word Jihad. First there is the greater Jihad, which is the daily struggle of every Muslim to avoid the temptation of evil and do the right thing. Then is the lesser Jihad, which is the armed struggle of a Muslim nation against an invader of Muslim lands.

9. Do you receive any funding from Islamic charities from abroad?

No we don't receive any funding from Islamic charities.

10. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Votanikos area?

First of all I believe that one Mosque is not enough to satisfy the needs of Muslims residing in Athens. Athens is a big city and the Muslims living in Athens are almost 500,000 and as you can understand one Mosque is not enough. However, we will be happy if finally, the official Mosque in Votanikos is constructed at last. I don't understand how the Greek state is avoiding its responsibilities. For example, before

the Athens Olympic games of 2004, an official Mosque should be built in order to host thousands of Muslims coming from all destinations to attend the Olympic games. However due to bureaucratic reasons the official Mosque is not yet built.

Interview with Mr. Halit Habipoglu President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe

1. Do you think that Shariah should be implemented as a parallel legal system also for the non-Greek Muslims living outside Western Thrace?

The religious jurisdiction of the muftis, the representatives of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace in the religious field, is restricted to the 1913 Athens, the 1920 Sevres and the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaties. However, the Turkish community in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands, which became part of Greece in 1947, did not have the same rights with the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace. This problem has not been solved till today due to the indifferent approach by governments. Greece which is now going through a deep economic crisis should solve this problem in the future together with the Turks living in these islands.

The application of the Shariah for other Muslims in Greece, who are not Greek citizens can not be at stake. The shariah is defined by treaties, and it only applies to the Muslim minority that is officially recognised by the state. However, the Muslim community which numbers over a million in Athens and Thessaloniki face a considerable number of problems in Greece. The solution of the problems that the migrant Muslim population face is very important in order to preserve the stability in the country. Otherwise, it is possible to have similar problems with regard to its migrant Muslim population, that today's France does have.

2. What is your opinion about the Shariah which is being practiced in Western Thrace today?

The practice of Shariah in Western Thrace is a legal situation that is defined by bilateral treaties. The religious representatives are administered with Shariah jurisdictions due to the sovereignty in the religious field. However, these religious jurisdictions are restricted to the marriage, divorce and inheritance issues within civil justice. Besides it should also be remembered that the espousal which is performed by the Orthodox Christian Church has a legal affect in Greece, too. Furthermore, members belonging to the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace have the right to apply civil justice rather than to the muftis, if they wish to do so. Therefore, there is no reason to abolish the Shariah law in Western Thrace.

3. How many Western Thrace Muslims are in Western Europe?

Although there is no certain number, there are approximately 25 thousand of Western Thrace Muslim Turks in Western Europe, apart from Greece.

4. According to your opinion, should the muftis in Western Thrace be charged in duty by elections?

It is not so easy to answer this question as “yes” or “no”. This question must be seen in two dimensions. What is this? A population exchange agreement was signed between Greece and Turkey after the Lausanne Peace Treaty, and the Greek population in Turkey and the Turkish population in Greece were exchanged. However, the Greeks in İstanbul and the Turks in Western Thrace were exempted from this exchange of population. Therefore, religious jurisdictions of the Muslim and

non-Muslim minorities in Greece and Turkey were determined within the framework of international treaties, in full consideration of their sovereignty in the religious field. The religious rights and the jurisdictions of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace were defined by the 1913 Athens Treaty. However, Greece unilaterally adopted a law in 1990 which envisaged the appointment of muftis by the state on the ground that muftis had some juridical powers based on shariah law. In reaction to this decision, the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace elected Mehmet Emin Aga (now departed) in Xanthi and İbrahim Şerif in Komotini as muftis. In another words, the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace elected its own muftis in reaction to the

appointment of muftis by the state, however, this issue has then been politicised in years and acquired another dimension. However, the demand of Turkish Minority is to determine its own muftis in accordance with provisions of international treaties.

5. Is there a danger of radicalisation of Western Thrace Muslims?

If you mean radicalisation in religious terms, the Minority looks at this question in a broader sense, although the religious sovereignty of the minority has severely been destroyed. The first priority for the minority is the recognition of its ethnic Turkish identity and the establishment of equality in every field of life with eradication of violations of all human and minority rights. This includes the solution to the problems with regard to freedom of religion and belief, too. If Greece continues to present the minority as a threat, and if it continues to ignore the Turkish Minority, and if it does not establish a dialog mechanism for the solution of problems, the situation will even get more complicated. Remember that a 15 year- old boy, Alexis Grigoropoulos, had been killed by police in 2008, and afterwards incidents had erupted, almost an outbreak stirred up in the country. The Turkish Minority refrains to give any harm to its country, although it flames against the inequity. In this fragile situation, the only aim of the minority is to establish a dialog mechanism for solutions of its problems. For this aim, the minority together with the efforts of its associations, politicians and its political party and the efforts of the Western Thrace Turks living as a diaspora want a real equality to be established in its country.

6. According to your opinion, do you think that it would be for the benefit of the Western Thrace Muslims, if Western Thrace got independence on the basis of the Kosovo example?

Definitely not! This is an unfortunate question... Even, comparing the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace with Kosovo shows that the facts are being interpreted in the wrong way. After the signing of the Lausanne Peace Treaty, there is no period of time when the Minority tries to get its independence, even in periods when the problems were on the peak. Therefore, it is not ever possible that Western Thrace might be a second Kosovo in the Balkans.

7. What is your opinion about the activities of Fethullah Gulen and the Milli Gorus and what is the relationship between ABTTF and these movements?

As I previously mentioned, the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace struggles for the restoration of its human and minority rights in order to have an equal life in its country. There are many problems in the religious field, as a part of the freedom of religion or belief. However, neither ABTTF nor other minority non-governmental organisations have any connection with either Gulen or the Milli Gorus movements. Having registered to the German Associations Law, ABTTF is a member of the UN Economic and Social Council, EU Fundamental Rights Platform and Federal Union of European Nationalities, and accredited to the European Parliament. As stated in its charter, ABTTF is a pluralist, libertarian, democratic non-governmental organisation which is strictly attached to legal principles, and it is independent from any political parties, governmental authorities and governments.

8. What is the relationship between ABTTF and the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe?

ABTTF is a non-governmental organisation which is established with an aim of addressing the problems of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace, and of contributing to the solution of these problems and defending the rights and interests of members belonging to the minority... Since ABTTF is not a religious or faith organisation, it has no relationship with the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe.

9. What is the relation between ABTTF and the Muslim Association of Greece?

ABTTF has no relationship with any non-governmental organisation in Greece except the ones that are established by the Turkish minority living in Western Thrace, Kos and Rhodes islands.

10. What is the meaning of Jihad for a Muslim?

This question is not related to the aims and activities of ABTTF. Therefore, it is not appropriate to ask me this question, it would be more appropriate to ask this question to our muftis.

11. What is your opinion about the ban on burqa in France?

This question is again not related to ABTTF's field of study. This would be more appropriate to ask the question to our muftis.

12. Is Islam a holistic socio-political system or is it just a religion?

This would be more appropriate to ask this question to our muftis, again.

13. Do Islamic charitable organisations abroad give financial assistance to ABTTF?

ABTTF has no connection with religious-based faith and religious charitable organisations. ABTTF is a non-governmental organisation which displays its activities on international platform with an aim of defending democratic rights and freedoms of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace...Therefore, it is not possible to have any financial assistance from any Islamic charitable organisation...

14. What is your opinion about the construction of a mosque in Athens?

Freedom of religion and worship is one of the fundamental human rights... It is sad that there is not a mosque which will enable the millions of Muslims in Athens and around to worship freely therein... Athens is the only capital in Europe that does not have a mosque... Therefore, a mosque that will satisfy the needs of the Muslims in Athens and around should immediately be built, as promised...

15. Do you agree with the Greek government's statement that the official Mosque in Athens should be built with the expenses of the Greek state in order to avoid the funding of the Mosque from sources that represent radical Islam?

It is the Greek government that will give this decision. Our demand is the solution of this longlasting dispute over the building of a mosque in Athens in a way that the needs of the Muslims living in that region are satisfied that would enable them to worship freely therein.

Interview with Mr. Mathee Ullah President of the Pakistani Islamic Forum in Greece

1. Do you believe that Shariah law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

Islam and Christianity are very similar religions. For example, Islam believes in Jesus and Mary. I don't think that it is necessary to implement Shariah law as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece. In Pakistan for example the Constitution gives the right to minorities to worship freely their religion. The same concept is valid for the Greek Constitution, so we are fine with this and we don't need the implementation of Shariah law for Muslims living in Greece.

2. Which are the activities of the Islamic Forum in Greece?

We are trying to educate people about the true face of Islam. In order to achieve this, we are organising various events. We are following the teachings of Abu Ala Mawdudi and we have an affiliation with the Pakistani political party Jamaat e-Islami, but of course we are not interested in promoting JI political agenda in Greece.

3. How many people among the Pakistani community of immigrants do you estimate that are followers of JI?

There are a lot of Pakistani immigrants in Greece who are supporting JI, however I can not give you an exact number.

4. Do you receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No, we don't receive any funding from Islamic charities. However, we are cooperating with the UK's Islamic Mission. (UKIM)

5. Is Islam just a religion or a holistic socio-political system?

Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a way of life. Islam embraces all aspects of human life.

6. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

Jihad means struggle. Jihad is to defend Muslim lands against aggressors. For example in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kashmir Muslims are defending their land against aggressors.

7. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Islamic Mosque in Athens, in Votanikos area?

We agree of course with the construction of an official Islamic Mosque in the city of Athens. However, we believe that one mosque is not enough to satisfy the religious needs of Muslims who are living in the broader area of Athens.

8. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We don't have any kind of cooperation with them.

9. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens, because of the “Koran incident”

We didn't participate in those riots.

Interview with Mr.Mehmet Imam President of the Pan-Hellenic Federation in Support of Muslims in Greece aka “Filotita”

1. Do you think that Shariah law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims residing in Greece?

In a democratic state everything can happen, because in a democracy there are solutions for all of its citizens. However, in Greece this is not feasible, because the Greek Constitution is negating the rights of minorities. In Greece despite the fact that Islam is recognised as a religion in practice it recognises full rights only for the Greek Christian Orthodox Church.

2. Do you think that Shariah law should be abolished from Western Thrace?

First of all Shariah doesn't really exist in Western Thrace. What is implemented there is a peculiar form of Greek style Shariah. Of course this kind of system is serving a variety of aims that are considered to be of national importance. As a result, whatever change in this system can provoke unpredictable developments not only in Western Thrace but also in the broader Balkan area. The Muslim minority in Western Thrace is obliged to continue to live under this situation. However, I consider as ridiculous and misleading the claim that in Western Thrace Shariah is implemented.

3. Do you think that the Muftis in Western Thrace should be elected?

The issue of the election or not of the Muftis, is a very important one, especially for Muslims Greek citizens. The Mufti should be a personality who has to be respected not only from Muslims, but from Christians too. However, I am afraid that this doesn't happen today. That is why we need a serious dialogue between the Greek state and representatives of the Muslim minority in order to achieve that. Unfortunately, the Muslim minority doesn't have an official body, except "Filotita" that will negotiate with the Greek state. My opinion is that the Mufti should be involved in Greek politics.

4. How many Muslims are living in Greece?

Accurate and official data about this doesn't exist. According to our estimate, they are approximately 1,000,000 Muslim living in Greece.

5. How many Muslims Greek citizens from Western Thrace are living in Greece?

According to the data we have the population of the Greek Muslim minority is about 180,000 people. In Western Thrace, they are living about 120,000 Greek Muslims.

6. Do you know how many Greek converts to Islam are living in Greece?

According to our data there are about 80 persons. However, there is a much larger number of converts to Islam who, for social reasons, are afraid to admit that they converted to Islam.

7. Do you estimate that Turkey's strategic objective is the autonomy of Western Thrace, following the example of Kosovo?

"Filotita" is a social, inter-cultural organisation which supports Muslims living in Greece. From my position, I am not able to estimate or know the real intentions of Turkey, because for me this is irrelevant for Western Thrace. The Muslim minority of Western Thrace is composed not only from Turks, but also from Pomaks and Roma.

The demographic issue in Kosovo is totally different than that of Western Thrace. For those who know Greek history, Western Thrace was incorporated to Greece after a peaceful referendum. Our parents decided for our future and I think that their decision was correct. If there is such an intention from the part of Turkey, this means changing the borders. As President of “Filotita” I am not accepting such kind of ideas, because we are an organisation representing Muslims in Greece and we condemn such kind of political aspirations.

8. What is your opinion about the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

These organisations do not have any presence in Greece. However, as a Greek Muslim in order to have an opinion about these organisations I should live in the countries from which they are coming from. I can not shape my opinion according to what the Western media are telling us about these organisations, because the media don't have a neutral stance toward them.

9. Do you know if these organisations have any presence in Greece?

I have been leading “Filotita” for the last 10 years and to I have never met with a representative of these organisations. “Filotita” is not a political organisation. We are involved in the daily struggle to support the rights of Muslims living in our country. We are an organisation which adheres to the legal order of Greece and the European Union. In other words, we don't belong to the Middle East.

10. Do you think that the Wahhabis are a radical strand of Islam?

In Greece Wahhabis don't have any presence. In Islam also the clergy doesn't exist. Everyone can take the Koran, read it and acquire knowledge about Islam. In this sense what you ask doesn't exist in reality. We don't have radical Islam as we don't have light Islam.

11. Do you know if the Wahhabis have any presence in Greece?

As I mentioned to you, to the best of my knowledge this group has no presence in Greece. What I do know is that Greek Muslims from Western Thrace rejected an offer from Saudi Arabia to help our community about 20 years ago.

12. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim?

Jihad means struggle. This struggle can be in a personal or a general level.

13. What is your opinion about the burqa ban in France?

This was an undemocratic and inconsistent decision. How is ever possible that one woman can walk down the street undressed and not to be provocative and on the other hand a woman wearing burqa and the niqab to be provocative. This doesn't mean that I agree with the one or the other "dressing code". Extremist behaviors must be condemned, but the democratic fundamental rights must be applicable for all citizens.

14. Do you think that Muslim immigrants are integrated in Greek society?

The experience we have as a country is negative. Take the example of Greek Muslims of Western Thrace. They were never integrated in Greek society and this is not their responsibility, but responsibility of the Greek state. How can we expect Muslim immigrants to integrate in Greek society?

15. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 as a result of the "Koran incident"?

We have an official statement that our organisation issued on May 22nd 2009 in which we condemned in an absolute manner those violent demonstrations.

16. Do you think that those riots are an indication that a part of the Muslim immigrants living in Greece have been radicalised?

No I don't believe so. These people were exploited from some people inside the Muslim community for political purposes. Of course a part of the Greek system of power exploited the "Koran incident" as well.

17. Do you think that Islam is just a religion or a holistic socio-political system?

Islam is a holistic socio-political system. You have two options or to reject it or to accept it.

18. Is "Filotita" active in Dawah?

"Filotita" is not a religious institution and we are not active in Dawa activities. We are active in social activities.

19. The members of "Filotita" are Sunni Muslims?

"Filotita" is incorporating all Muslims who are living in Greece. I would like to mention that in our "Scientific Board of Advisors" we have also Greek Christians.

20. "Filotita" members are only indigenous Greek Muslim coming from Western Thrace or you have as members also Muslim immigrants?

"Filotita" as I already mentioned to you includes all Muslims living in Greece. We don't discriminate between Greek and immigrant Muslims. We all face similar problems. 25% of our members are Greek Muslims from Western Thrace and the rest 75% are Muslim immigrants.

21. Do you receive funding from the Greek state or from Islamic charities?

We never received any funding from the Greek state or any other source. We are funded from our own members.

22. What are your relations with the Muslim Association of Greece?

We have absolutely no relations with the Muslim Association of Greece. This organisation is not an association of Muslims but an association of his own family (*he is referring to the President of the MAG Mr.Naim El Ghandour and his wife Anna Stamou*). In Greece if you collect 19 signatures you can create your own association, regardless if these people are your relatives or not. This family association is a burned card for us.

23. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Athens-Votanikos area?

Since 1976, when I first visited Athens we are still discussing about this issue. In the broader area of Athens 67 informal mosques are operating. We don't want the construction of one official Mosque. We want every community to operate its own mosque. We can also reconstruct the mosques that were operating during the Ottoman period in Athens. We want to satisfy the religious needs of Muslims living in Athens. We don't want to construct a new Mosque and use it as a public relations opportunity.

Interview with Mr. Naim El-Ghandour President of the Muslim Association of Greece(MAG) and Mrs Anna Stamou a Greek convert to Islam and member of the Board of Advisors of the MAG

1. How many Muslims do you estimate that are living in Greece except from those who are living in Western Thrace?

Naim El Ghandour: 500,000 Muslims are living in Attica, in other words in the greater area of Athens. These Muslims have legal residence permits. To this number you have to add another 250,000 who have applied for political asylum. For the illegal Muslim immigrants I can't estimate their number. In total, we have 750,000 Muslims living in Attica.

2. Islam is just a religion or a complete socio-political system?

Naim El Ghandour: Islam is not just a religion. Islam is a way of life. Islam is founded on five (5) pillars. *Shahada* is the confession of a Muslim that he believes to one and unique God and his acceptance that Muhammad is the messenger of God. *Salah* is the five times per day prayer. *Zakat* is the practice of charitable giving by Muslims, based on accumulated wealth and is obligatory for all who are able to do so. *Siyam* is the ritual fasting, fasting as a compensation for repentance. *Hajj* is the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. Every able-bodied Muslim is obliged to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if he or she can afford it. Islam is built upon these five pillars. The daily acts of each Muslim who is conducting his life according to the Koran and the Hadith are the building. I would like to add something in regard to the *Zakat*. Every Muslim has to pay 2.5% of his accumulated wealth which has not been circulated in the market within one year. This Islamic provision gives an incentive to people to circulate and invest their money in order to avoid paying the *Zakat*. Islamic finance is the solution for economic stagnation especially in an environment of economic crisis, like the one we are facing today. Islamic finance

is giving to savers an incentive to take their money from bank deposits and supply the markets with liquidity. Furthermore, the world would not have faced a debt crisis, if interest would be outlawed as it is in Islam. In Greece, we don't have yet Islamic finance institutions.

3. Do you believe that Sharia law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece?

Naim El Ghandour: Sharia is the Sacred Islamic Law. First of all, Sharia is not implemented in Muslim countries. How will we implement it in non-Muslim countries? Secondly Sharia in regard to marriage is a kind of contract between a man and a woman. I would say that marriage in Islam is like the pre-marital agreement that in the last few decades is discussed in the West. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and especially after the terror attacks of 9/11 the West is seeking to find an enemy and it seems that they found this enemy in Islam. Today in the West they are not so much concerned about Islamic terrorism and they invented a new threat, the threat from Sharia. Ordinary people in the West do not know what Sharia is all about. Some people in the West are slandering Sharia by saying that Sharia is a strict and inhuman law which is cutting thieves hands and stoning women accused of adultery. Sharia is telling that a woman who is accused of committing the crime of adultery is punished, only if there are four witnesses who witnessed the crime simultaneously. As you can understand, this is impossible to happen. I would tell you now something else. In the West it is permissible for a gay couple to get married. That is one of the reasons why population of Europe is not reproduced and as a result of this Europeans are afraid of Islam. However they are responsible for this situation and they will disappear in the next generations as a result of their mentality.

Anna Stamou: Sharia is a complete legal system which embraces all aspects of human life. Sharia is not only about the penal code and marriage or divorce. Sharia is a law faculty by itself and it is taught in Islamic universities and also PhDs are offered on the subject of Sharia. How people in the West are criticising Sharia so easily when Islamic scholars themselves are struggling to learn all aspects of this complicated legal system. Of course there are some provisions of Sharia law that are incompatible with human rights, but because of these few provisions we can not reject the whole system. I would like also to mention something else. Saudi Arabia is

claiming to implement Sharia law. However, women in Saudi Arabia are excluded from inheritance. Which Sharia is telling this? This is an example that also Saudi Arabia does not implement correctly the Sharia. As for the cutting of thieves' hands, only thieves who committed their crime because of greediness are punished, not poor people who are stealing because they are starving.

Naim El Ghandour: Since 1947 only 17 people were punished. There is also another parameter I would like to mention. Where do you feel greater security in a state like Greece where every day we are reading in newspapers about armed robberies or in Saudi Arabia where every citizen is not afraid of leaving his house or shop open? My point here is that a very strict law is deterrence for wannabes criminals. Security is the most important element in human societies. When someone is killing a fellow citizen, he doesn't deserve a death penalty? However Islamic law is flexible also in this occasion. It says that if the family of the victim accepts compensation from the immolator then there is no death penalty against him. I believe that Sharia is a very just system. Anyway, I am coming to your original question. According to Islam Muslims who are living in non-Muslim countries have to respect the secular laws of their host countries.

Anna Stamou: What is striking me is the fact that Greek people are adopting the Western propaganda in regard to Sharia, when they were living with Sharia for almost four hundred (400) years under the Ottoman rule. Greeks at that time were free to worship their Christian religion without any problem. People of the West have a different past from people living in the Balkans like Greeks. Western people like English, French or Dutch have a colonial past which Greece does not share. Sharia is not only about punishment, Sharia is also about justice. When Islam conquered Egypt in the 7th A.D century, Muslim Arabs returned to the Egyptian people the taxes that the Byzantines imposed on them. We as Greeks can teach Western Europeans about the benefits of Sharia.

4. What is the meaning of the word Jihad for a Muslim and also what you think about the concept Dar al-Islam and Dar- al-Harb?

Naim El Ghandour: First of all one of the most common myths and misconceptions in the West about Islam is that Muslims are plotting to convert all humanity into Islam. If these people who are claiming this absurdity can find the

slightest extract in the Koran or the Hadith that concurs with what they say, we are waiting for them to tell us. If there is one plot, this is derived from the international media which are trying to persuade Western citizens that Islam is a threat. On the other hand this propaganda campaign from the Western media has benefited Islam, because since 9/11 many highly educated Westerners converted to Islam.

Anna Stamou: This misconception that Islam seeks to Islamise the world is a pure fabrication. I will tell you one simple example. When a Muslim is getting married with a Christian or a Jew she is giving her full rights to keep her own religion. If Islam wanted to Islamise all people the first one who should be Islamised is his wife. Isn't it? I didn't convert to Islam because I married a Muslim. I converted because I believed in Islam.

Naim El Ghandour: Jihad is what I am doing right now with you in order to help you with your research. When I am waking up in the morning and I am going to work is Jihad, when I am studying is Jihad etc. In other words, Jihad is the daily struggle of every person in all aspects of his life. Jihad is also the obligation of every Muslim to defend his country from an attack, but this is also the right and obligation of all citizens of all countries. Many think tanks in the West are investing money in research, in order to slander Islam and present it as an evil cult. Islam is a peaceful religion which has a lot to offer to humanity. When Islam conquered Spain in the 7th century A.D, they introduced a great civilisation. Christopher Columbus' right hand, who helped him discover America was a Muslim. Why people in the West don't speak about this? Why people in the West are speaking only about Osama Bin Laden?

Anna Stamou: In English they are translating the word Jihad as "Holy War". This is a completely false interpretation of the meaning of the word Jihad. This is a paradox. How can ever be a war Holy? Is it ever possible that God is commanding war? Jihad means struggle.

5. What is your opinion about the Wahhabis? Many people in the West believe that they constitute a threat, not Islam in general. Do you agree?

Naim El Ghandour: There are many schools of Islamic thought in Islam. There are schools that are more flexible and schools that are stricter. Prophet Muhammad himself was follower of the more flexible school of thought. However, every Muslim

is free to choose which school of thought he prefers to follow. We in Egypt are following a more flexible school of thought. Wahhabis are following a stricter interpretation of Islam. Wahhabis are not aggressive in general. However, when the war in Bosnia started in 1992, the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia along with Muslims from other countries went to fight against the Serbs who not only massacred innocent Muslims there but they were also brutally violating all rules of war. The Greek Orthodox Church at that time sided with the Serbs, because the Church is afraid of Islam, because of the fact that many Christians are converting to Islam. The Wahhabis came into the public debate in the West as a result of 9/11. Osama Bin Laden himself is a Wahhabi. However, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the U.S decided to use Bin Laden and the Wahhabis against the Soviets in order to win the Cold War. The Americans trained Bin Laden and his fellow fighters. At that time, I was serving my military duty in the Egyptian Army and I recall that the then President Sadat opened the borders and told the Egyptian youth that whoever wants can live the country and go and fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. Who funded all these people? The answer is that CIA funded them. After the withdrawal of the Soviets in Afghanistan these young fighters wanted to return back to their home countries. However, these people after fighting in Afghanistan against the Soviets were useless for the U.S and for the regimes of their countries. Their countries issued death penalties for all of them and they were landlocked in Afghanistan. After Afghanistan Bin Laden left for Sudan and soon after he came back to Afghanistan. A great mystery however, was how the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 1996. The Taliban didn't fight the Soviets. The Taliban initially were allies of the U.S, but because of disagreements on the opium trade, suddenly they became enemies of the U.S. I would like to note that the Taliban had close cooperation with the Wahhabis too. I believe that geographical reasons can explain why the Wahhabis and the Taliban are following a stricter interpretation of Islam. The Wahhabis are living in the desert and the Taliban are living on the mountains. The geographical conditions make them harsh and inclined to follow stricter interpretations of Islam. I am coming back to Bin Laden. What happened with him? Did he organise the attacks against the Twin Towers and the Pentagon? I doubt if he really was behind those attacks. Take also for example the videos with the public statements of Al-Zawahiri. All his statements and his calls to fight America were published when George Bush Junior was in a difficult political position. I estimate that both Bin Laden and Al- Zawahiri

were cooperating with Western forces. May be not on their own will, but because they were blackmailed. We don't have any proof about these theories, however as we do believe in God even if we have never seen Him, only by using the strength of our minds, in the same way we can reach some conclusions for things that we have insufficient evidence. The same game is repeated now with Iran. Iran is a threat to the West etc. Whenever Ahmadinejad is threatening the West and Israel the oil prices are skyrocketing. The people of the world have to understand this sinister game that is played behind their backs and react. The Wahhabis in Greece have no significant presence. Wahhabis have an obsession with appearance and in the shake of this they are sometimes ignoring the substance of Islam. They are growing beards and they have to keep a certain length to their beard. When I was younger I had a beard too. It was at the time when Egyptian authorities hunted me and put me in prison because of my religious activities in Greece. Wahhabis are trying to imitate the dress code of Prophet Muhammad. The dressing of Prophet Muhammad was in fashion at his time. If he were living today, he would wear suit and tie.

Anna Stamou: At his time Prophet Muhammad was a modernizer.

Naim El Ghandour: I will tell you another example for the Wahhabis. When Prophet Muhammad and his companions were eating camel's meat at one lunch, they were eating this meat by hands. After the end of the lunch their hands were dirty. However, the Prophet didn't want to insult them and he said "please go and wash your hands because now we have to pray". The Wahhabis till today, when they eat camel's meat they are washing their hands. In other words Wahhabis are scholastics. However, you can not tell them that they are wrong.

6. Do you know the number of Greek converts to Islam?

Naim El Ghandour: This is very hard to estimate. I can tell you that 5,000 Greek women married with Egyptians and 80% of them converted to Islam.

Anna Stamou: There are many Greeks who converted to Islam too, but they are not telling this publicly. They are not telling this either to their own families. Most of the Greeks, who converted to Islam, are university students, who converted to Islam after an in depth study of Islamic theology.

Naim El Ghandour: We have Greeks who converted to Islam in the UK, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Canada, Australia etc

Anna Stamou: One world famous Greek convert to Islam is Andreas Hamza Tzortzis, who is an international public speaker on Islam, a writer and intellectual activist. He is active in Dawa in the UK.

7. What is the definition of the word Dawa? Is the MAG active in Dawa?

Naim El Ghandour: Dawa means invitation to Islam. Dawa also means that a Muslim has to inform non-Muslims about Islam in order to alter any misconceptions of Islam. Dawa does not mean proselytism. The Muslim Association of Greece is active in Dawa.

Anna Stamou: I think that is a blessing that proselytism in Greece is outlawed by the Greek constitution. Dawa can take various forms. It can take the form of open debates between Muslims and Christians or Atheists. This kind of Dawa is very popular in the U.S. In Greece the form that Dawa usually takes is for example the printing and distribution of books about Islam.

8. Do you receive any funding from the Greek state or from Islamic charities?

Naim El Ghandour: No we don't receive any funding from the Greek state, but it is in our plans to ask funds from the Greek state. We are not receiving funds from Islamic charities either.

Anna Stamou: Our strategic planning as association is not to accept any funding from third parties. However if we have a specific project we can apply for funding first from Greek sources and then from European source. There are a lot of EU programmes which are subsidising initiatives and projects in regard with immigrants and Islam. It is not our priority to ask for funding from Islamic sources, because these sources too often seek to influence our policy.

Naim El Ghandour: We are trying to avoid the mistakes of Islamic organisations in Europe.

Anna Stamou: It is our policy not to accept any interference from third parties. We are seeking cooperation with various institutions on the basis of organising a joint

project. One project is the fulfillment of a long time ambition to translate the Hadith in Greek language. There are nine volumes of the Hadith to be translated. We have already found the translators and we are planning to contact the Qatari embassy in Athens and ask them to fund this specific project. The copies of the translated Hadith can be distributed from the Greek state or a foreign embassy, like the embassy of Saudi Arabia for example which in cooperation with the Latsis Foundation is distributing already for free the Holy Koran. This cooperation for example with the Qatari embassy doesn't mean that they will have interference in the strategy and administration of the MAG.

9. What is your opinion about the violent riots in Athens that followed the “Koran incident” in May 2009? Where these riots an indication that Muslims living in Greece are being radicalised?

Naim Ghandour: First of all there was confusion in the Greek media, because the President of an insignificant association which claims to represent Muslims in Greece told the journalists that no Koran was ever defaced and that all what happened was a fabrication. That statement of course was nonsense, because I granted an interview to a national TV network and I was showing the defaced Koran. The policeman who defaced the Koran knew very well that what he was defacing was the Koran. Of course we can not condemn 11 million Greeks because of a stupid policeman. We, as MAG from the first moment after the “Koran incident”, chose the legal path. We issued a complaint against whoever will prove responsible for that insulting act. In the mean time young Muslim immigrants went out in the streets and started demonstrating and their demonstration soon degenerated in violent riots. Members of leftist organisations like the “Stop the War Coalition” incited the young Muslims to go out to the streets and demonstrate. I tried personally to calm down the Muslim crowd and explain to them that what they were doing was wrong. However, as a result of the riots one young Palestinian has been spending his time in jail for 18 months now. Who is supporting him? Maybe the members of the leftist organisations who incited him and other young Muslims? Of course not. The MAG is paying for his lawyer. At that time in May 2009 MP Mr. Alavanos the then President of the Greek parliamentary Left invited to his office in the Greek parliament the leaders of the Pakistani and Afghani communities. Next day we had a big meeting of

representatives of all Muslim communities of Athens in the informal mosque in the area of Neos Cosmos. I told at that assembly that we as Muslims have to keep distance from the political game in Greece and not let some political parties use Muslims in order for them to show that the then conservative government is weak. The representative of the Pakistani community Javed Aslam said that they will participate in the next mass demonstration. In total we were 20 representatives at that meeting. We decided in a vast majority 18 against 2 that we should not participate in the next mass demonstration organised by leftist organisations. The two persons who were in favor were the representatives of the Pakistani and Afghani community who the day before met with MP Mr. Alavanos. What conclusion do you make out of this? In the next demonstration only 500 people members of the Pakistani and Afghani communities participated.

10. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque in Votanikos area?

Naim El Ghandour: The construction of the official Mosque is a positive development. However even if the 3512/2006 Act of the Greek parliament is describing that an official Mosque should be constructed in Athens, till today due to bureaucratic obstacles the construction of the Mosque has not started yet. The provision of the law that the construction of the Mosque should be funded by the Greek state was our original idea. The informal mosques that are operating in Athens are more than 100.

Anna Stamou: We are the only Muslim Association in Europe who asked from the host state to fund the construction of the Mosque and not to accept any funding from Islamic countries. The MAG will have one representative in the “Administrative Committee of the Islamic Mosque in Athens”.

Interview with Mr.Savvas Kalenteridis ex intelligence officer of the NIS

1. Do you know if the Gulen movement is active in Greece and more specifically in Western Thrace?

Fethullah Gulen is a controversial personality both in Turkey and internationally. Yesterday I was reading in a Turkish newspaper, a report of the American Congress stating that the property of the Gulen movement is enormous, estimated at \$5 billion. Gulen movement has a network of hundreds of schools and educational institutions worldwide. These schools are teaching a concrete way of thinking and a particular way of social behavior, which is described by some analysts in Turkey as a Turk-Islamic synthesis. The Gulen movement has the support of some particular centers of power within the U.S.A. I estimate that the U.S.A have a strategic design to counter Shia Islam (Iran) and Wahhabi Islam (Saudi Arabia), through the empowerment of the Turkish Islam as this is expressed by the Gulen movement. They seek to achieve a certain balance of power between the three different strands of Islam. In Turkey the AKP's strategic advantage derives from the activity and support of the Gulen movement. Gradually people who work in the Police and Army forces are becoming members of the Gulen movement. In other words, there is a developing parallel structure within the secular Turkish state. In Greece the Gulen movement has its own supporters among the Muslims who are living in Western Thrace. However, my estimate is that the Gulen movement does not have an institutional presence in Greece in general or in Western Thrace in particular through its network of schools etc., like in other countries.

2. Do you know if the Milli Gorus movement of ex Turkish Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan is active in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

The Milli Gorus (National Opinion) movement is a front organisation of the Refah Party (Welfare Party) of the ex Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, with a strong presence in Western Europe. The members of the Milli Gorus movement were

benefited from the democratic freedoms in Western Europe and were able to plan and achieve the seizure of power during the 1990s first in the two most important municipalities in Turkey, Ankara and Istanbul, and then by the participation of Islamists in a coalition government with Erbakan as Prime Minister in June 1996. The Turkish secular state and its long arm the military establishment, because of Erbakan's radical political and religious views, organised a post-modern coup and removed Erbakan from power in June 1997. The Refah Party and Erbakan himself were consequently outlawed and the road opened for Recep Tayyip Erdogan to found a new party and to seize power in 2002. This means that the Milli Gorus movement lost its importance in Turkey and its place was taken by the Gulen movement which supported the AK Party of Erdogan. In Western Europe the Milli Gorus movement still has a significant presence, less important than the past, and has an indirect presence in Western Thrace, through the influence of Muslims from Western Thrace living in Western Europe. However, the control that the Turkish consulate in Komotini exerts on the Muslim population of Western Thrace is so intense that it does not allow any space for the Milli Gorus and Gulen movements to achieve any significant influence on the Muslim minority of Western Thrace.

3. Do you know if the Turkish Islamist NGO IHH(Insani Yardim Vakfi) is active in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

The IHH is a humanitarian organisation not an Islamist one. It is a front organisation of Turkish Islamists. The question is who is involved in this organisation and where is its funding from. The humanitarian aspect of its activity is however secondary. What is important is the political and religious aspect of its activity. The leading members of the IHH have ties with services of the Turkish "Deep state". Furthermore it is murky where its funding is coming from. The activity of this organisation is the extension of Turkish neo-Ottoman foreign policy. I do not know if IHH has a presence in Greece. What I would like to mention is that according to the pro-secular Turkish press IHH has an involvement in Islamist-terrorist operations in Caucasus.

There is an inflow and outflow of funds between Islamist organisations in Caucasus and the IHH. This money is the product of illegal trafficking of drugs and arms.

4. Do you know if there are any connections between the IHH and the Gulen movement?

I am not in a position to know this.

5. Do you know if the Turkish secret service (MIT) has any kind of activities in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

Turkey has a long standing policy, regardless of secular or Islamist governments, of exerting absolute control over the Muslim minority in Western Thrace till the last Greek-Muslim citizen who is living there. This policy can not be fulfilled if there are no people acting on behalf of the Turkish state. This also means that in this activity the Turkish embassy and consulates (Komotini, Thessaloniki and Rhodes) in Greece, Turkish diplomatic authorities and of course the Turkish secret services are de facto involved. It is not possible to achieve control without the flow of “black” money from various centers of power within Turkey.

6. Mustafa Sarnic the head of the Turkish consulate in Komotini according to the local Thracian newspaper “Phoni tis Komotinis” (Voice of Komotini) is an officer of the MIT and not a diplomat. What is your opinion on this issue?

I can not comment on this particular report and the allegation that Mustafa Sarnic is an officer of the MIT. The real issue is to observe and comment his actions. His actions are unacceptable and outrageous. Instead of acting as a diplomat within the norms of international law, he is acting as a prefect or better as a head of the Greek region of Western Thrace. The consulates have precise jurisdictions, to issue visas, to renew passports, etc for their own citizens, Turkish citizens in our case. They have no role to deal with the citizens of another country Greek-Muslims in our case. In conclusion, I do not know if Mustafa Sarnic has organic ties to the Turkish secret

services, however he is implementing designs and orders that originate from the Turkish secret services.

7. As you may know the Sacred Islamic Law (Shariah) is still implemented today in Western Thrace, when in Turkey it is abolished since 1926. There is a debate among specialists and Greek politicians, if Shariah in Western Thrace should be abolished or not. Greece is the only state in Europe where Shariah is implemented as a parallel legal system. What is your opinion on this?

In this issue we have two aspects, the first is the legal aspect and the second is the political one. The question should be if Shariah is abusing human rights, or if it is compatible with the Greek constitution and the European Law. From what I am in position to know it does not violate any human rights and it is compatible with the Greek Constitution and the European Law. The Greek-Muslim Muftis who are responsible for the implementation of Shariah are public servants appointed by the Greek state. There is a supervision of the Greek state over them, and through them there is a concrete presence of the Greek state among the Muslim minority. If we abolish the Sharia and deprive the Greek-Muslim Muftis from the power they possess, then we are playing the “dirty” game of Turkey, which is demanding that the Muftis should be elected by the Muslim population of Western Thrace. It is important to note here that nowhere in the world the Muftis are elected. Even in Turkey they are appointed by the Turkish state. Turkey by demanding the election of the Muftis is trying to subvert the Greek state. In conclusion the abolition of Shariah Law in Western Thrace is not just a simple legal issue, but also a political and national one.

8. Do you know if there are radical elements among the Muslim immigrants who are residing in Greece?

First of all I would like to mention that a Saudi NGO named Rabita (Muslim World League) was active in Western Thrace and was exerting some kind of influence on the Muslim population mainly in the 1980s and 1990s. Rabita was trying to counter the Turkish influence in Western Thrace. From what I know Rabita

recently asked to fund the construction of the Islamic Mosque in Athens. The immigrants originating from Muslim countries started to immigrate into Greece during the last decade. Since 1999, I am no longer working for the Greek state and I am not in a position to say how many Muslim immigrants are currently residing in Greece. What I can say is that in Greece several informal mosques are functioning which are under the influence of the Arab, the Egyptian and the Pakistani communities. I would also like to mention that the Muslim countries do not consider Turkey as a real Muslim country, because they think that Turks are theologically illiterate. They do not know what the Koran says, because the Koran is written in Arabic. In Turkey Muslims are implementing the sacred rules of Islam based on superstition and not in real religious knowledge.

9. Do you know if there is any presence in Greece of three foreign Islamist organisations: The Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

I have a theoretical knowledge on the subject. I estimate that the first two organisations (Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat) have a presence in Greece, but I do not know anything more concrete. The third organisation, Hizb-ut-Tahrir is under the microscope of the Russian security services and the West, because this organisation is active in the Fergana valley in Central Asia, which is a cross road of drug trafficking and more specifically opium which is produced in Afghanistan.

10. Do you know if the Somali immigrants residing in Greece have any ties with the Islamist-terrorist Somali organisation Al-Shabaab?

I do not think that the Somali immigrants in Greece are numerous.

11. Do you know if the NIS has specialised staff dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism and do you know if there is personnel speaking Arabic, Urdu etc?

I can not say what exactly is happening inside the NIS, but I can say that there is a “professional conscience” within the security and intelligence community in Greece, which is considering the presence of a large Muslim community as a potential pool for Islamist extremists and terrorists to recruit people for their sinister aspirations. As a result all Greek security services not only the NIS, have departments and personnel who are dealing with this issue. Even if there is no personnel speaking Arabic and Urdu you can always find people that can help you. However, I would like to say that with the only exception of the “defacing Koran” incident in May 2009, but still then, the Muslim organisations that are active in Greece have generally presented a very moderate stance (with the exception of some provocateurs). This I estimate is a result of the friendly behavior from the part of the Greek society. This does not mean that Muslims living in Greece are fully integrated in Greek society, because full integration is difficult to happen when we deal with Islam. Of course this does not mean that the Greek’s state authorities will not do their job.

12. Do you know if the NIS has any cooperation with foreign intelligence services that have a record in dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?

From what I know the NIS has also cooperation with the intelligence services of countries which are “exporting” immigrants to Greece.

13. Do you know if there is an ongoing activity of the secret services of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan on Greek soil, more specifically among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

Generally speaking, in the world of intelligence services, we do not have “friendly” intelligence services. However, Greece I estimate is not hostile to the aforementioned countries, so if there is any kind of activity from the part of these intelligence services is for the monitoring of their own citizens living in Greece.

14. What policies do you think that the NIS should be implementing in order to confront more effectively the Islamist threat?

I believe that it should be implemented a general policy of integration for the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece. First of all, the Greek authorities, preferably the local authorities (municipalities) should register all Muslim immigrants residing in Greece, legal or not. I mean that even the illegal immigrants should be registered even if they do not have a residence and work permit. Secondly I believe that at least one official Mosque should function in Athens, because this is an easier way for the authorities to monitor and control its activities. It is almost impossible to monitor the activities of all these informal mosques that are operating currently in Greece, mainly in Athens.

15. Do you think that there should be a restructuring of the NIS, so that two separate agencies should take the place of the existing one? The first agency to deal with domestic security like the MI5 and FBI model and the second agency to deal with foreign intelligence like the MI6 and the CIA model?

I believe that the NIS should work entirely like a foreign intelligence agency. The current domestic security functions of the NIS should be removed and transferred to the Greek Police. This will allow the NIS to leave behind the burden of its notorious past, which had to do with its domestic activities. I believe that in this way the Greek people will love the NIS and put it in a high position of appreciation, because a National Intelligence Service is the bastion of the nation.

Interview with Mr. Dimitrios Horianopoulos former Commandant of the Greek Counter-terrorism Unit of the Greek Police (March 2009-November 2009)

- 1. Does the Counter-Terrorism Branch have specialised staff who deals with Islamist extremism in general and Islamist terrorism in particular?**

The Greek Counter-Terrorism Branch is employing approximately 400 people. During my tenure in office, I can tell you that the Counter-Terrorism Branch had personnel who had been trained in special schools in Jordan. Some of them were also graduates of Middle Eastern Universities and they spoke Arabic fluently.

- 2. Is the Counter-Terrorism Branch dealing with Islamist terrorism or also Islamist extremism and Islamist subversive activities?**

The Counter-Terrorism Branch is dealing with all kinds of Islamist activities.

- 3. Is the Counter-Terrorism Branch cooperating with security agencies with experience in facing Islamist extremism and terrorism?**

Yes, of course. The Counter-Terrorism Branch has close cooperation with the security agencies of the U.S.A, UK, and Israel as well as with the security agencies of E.U and non E.U countries.

- 4. How you judge the level of cooperation between the Counter-Terrorism Branch of ELAS (Greek Police) and the NIS?**

During my tenure in office I met in a weekly basis with the Director General, the Deputy Directors and the operational Directors of the NIS. We had an extensive

cooperation in issues of Counterterrorism. However, generally speaking the level of cooperation and intelligence sharing between the Greek Counterterrorism Unit and the NIS is not at a desirable level and it doesn't match the level of cooperation and intelligence sharing of similar agencies in Europe and the U.S.

5. Do you know if there are any radical elements living among the communities of Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

Of course there are existing radical elements and extremists among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece and I would take a step further and estimate that there are also sleeping and active cells of Islamist terrorists living in Greece. The huge and continuous wave of illegal immigrants coming from Turkey, is bringing Muslims from Middle East countries, North Africa and South Asia and this constitutes a continuous threat for our national security, because apart from the other consequences of illegal immigration, agents of foreign secret services and members of terrorist organisations are finding the ideal opportunity to penetrate our country.

6. Do you know if there is any activity of Pakistani, Saudi and Iranian intelligence services on Greek soil?

As I mentioned in my answer to your previous question agents of foreign secret services are coming in Greece along with the wave of illegal immigrants and their goal is to subvert the Greek state. In addition to the countries you mentioned, I would add Turkey.

7. Do you know if Al-Qaeda and the Lebanese Hezbollah have any presence in Greece?

I don't have any evidence about Al-Qaeda presence in Greece. However, I do know that senior figures of the Lebanese Fatah al Islam which is affiliated with Al-Qaeda have a presence in Greece. Last Saturday, on February 12 2011 Greek authorities arrested as senior operative of Fatah al Islam named Galeb Taleb. This is an old story. When I was in charge of the Greek counter-terrorism branch in September 2009 we

had arrested another senior operative of Fatah al Islam Mohamed Moussa. In regard to your question about Hezbollah to the best of my knowledge this organisation was active in Greece during the 1980s. At present time maybe it has some sleeping cells on Greek soil.

8. Do you know if there is any presence in Greece of Islamist organisations like the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

I don't know about these specific organisations you mentioned.

9. Do you know if Somali immigrants residing in Greece are affiliated to the Somali Islamist terrorist organisation Al-Shabaab?

I don't know this, however the Somalis have the reputation of being fanatic and harsh people and it is probable that they will create problems.

10. Do you think that the violent riots that took place in Athens in May 2009 in the aftermath of the Koran incident are showing that parts of the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece are radicalised?

My estimate is that the Koran incident was a provocative act from some circles that used the Muslim immigrants in order to destabilize Karamanlis government. Of course this doesn't mean that there are no Muslim immigrants who are not radicalised.

11. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Mosque in Athens in Votanikos area?

I estimate that the effort of constructing an official Mosque in Athens is part of a wider plan of Islamists to Islamize Greece. The plan to construct an official Mosque in Athens is a political act which wants to prove that Islam has a significant political presence in Greece. I would like also to add that the argument that the construction of an official Mosque will help the security forces to control better Islamic extremists, because they will be all concentrated in a regulated area is nonsense. Islamist

terrorists and Islamic radicals will not conspire against the Greek state within the official Mosque. Anyway, the Greek counter-terrorism branch is monitoring the activities of Islamist extremists operating in the informal mosques.

Interview with Mr. Marinos Stagakis, Criminal Intelligence Analyst of the Greek Police and former liaison officer to the Greek Embassy in Ankara.

1. Does the Greek Police have specialized personnel dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?

The Greek Police (EL.AS) has the Special Directorate for Confronting Violent Crimes, which is better known as the Counter-Terrorism Branch of the Greek Police. Inside the Counter-Terrorism Branch there is a Department dealing with International Terrorism and is focusing on Islamist terrorism and extremism. There is also a Department dealing with Domestic Terrorism which is focusing on domestic far left terrorist organisations, the anarchist movement and far right groups.

2. What is your opinion about the level of cooperation inside the Greek intelligence and security community?

The level of cooperation inside the Greek intelligence and security community is not satisfactory. However, this phenomenon is not only a Greek one. It is a fact that different intelligence and security agencies and services are not cooperating as they should do in many Western countries too. For example in the USA, the CIA and the FBI prior to the 9/11 faced such problems. The lack of intelligence sharing was one of the reasons that caused the intelligence failure which led to the disaster of 9/11. In Greece NIS and the Greek Police have their own data bases and in many cases they are unwilling to share intelligence. Also many Directorates and Departments inside the Greek Police have their own data bases and they are not sharing crucial information between each other. We must change this mentality in the Greek security

community in general and in the Greek Police in particular and we are working in this direction.

3. What has to be done in order to improve the cooperation of the Greek intelligence and security community?

In my opinion we should create an institution similar to the Joint Intelligence Committee of the UK. The creation of such an institution is underway within the Greek Police which will take and assess intelligence in regard to criminality.

4. Do the Greek Police cooperate with international law enforcement institutions like Europol for example?

Inside the Greek Police there is the special International Police Cooperation Directorate, which deals with the various European and International agencies, like Europol, Interpol and the Sirene-Schengen Information System.

5. What is your opinion about the construction of the official mosque in Votanikos?

I believe that the construction of an official Mosque for Muslims residing in Athens is not per se a threat to public security. I don't estimate that the official Mosque in Athens will attract Muslims from other countries. I don't believe that the serious problem of illegal immigration coming from Muslim countries will deteriorate because of the construction of the Mosque. In any case I estimate that an official Mosque will be much easier to be controlled than all these informal mosques which are mushrooming in the wider area of Athens.

Interview with Mrs. Hala Akari member of the Board of Directors of the European Forum of Muslim Women and Head of the Women branch of the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Centre in Athens

1. Can you please tell me when the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Centre was founded? and also tell me about its activities

In October 2001 we received the permit from the Greek state and the Hellenic-Arab Culture Centre started to operate in a small building in Abelokipi area close to the center of Athens. In 2006 a Saudi businessman bought the building of an ex textile factory in the area of Moshato and he rented it to us. Currently the President of the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Center is an Egyptian Mr.Said. The main activity of the Cultural Center is the teaching of the Arabic language to Greeks and also of the Greek language to Arab immigrants. There is also a place for worship inside the building something like an informal mosque which has a capacity to host about 3,000 people. The people who are coming to pray every Friday are Arabs coming from various countries but mainly from Egypt and Syria. The people who are praying every Friday are around five hundred (500). Before the Friday prayer an Imam is making a short speech to the people speaking mainly about religious issues. Rarely when there is an occasion such as a big tension between Palestinians and Israel – for example -he is speaking to the people also about hot political issues. I will give you one example: When Israel attacked Gaza by the end of 2008 many people from the Arab community among them myself urged the Imam to speak at last about the Palestinians. We don't have only one Imam, we have several Imams but all of them are coming from Arab immigrants living in Greece. They lead the prayer on a voluntary basis. We cannot afford to bring a well known Imam from an Arab country, because he will want to have a salary and we don't have the money.

2. Is the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Center active in Dawa?

Every Muslim should be active in Dawa. Dawa is the call to Islam. Dawa doesn't mean proselytism. Dawa is the duty of every Muslim to inform people about Islam, regardless if they follow Islam or not. Dawa means to inform people about what Islam really is and what it is not, in order to avoid misconceptions of Islam.

3. Does the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Center receive any funding from Islamic charities?

No we are not receiving any funding from Islamic charities. The people who pray in the center on Fridays are contributing to the expenses of the Cultural Center

4. Is Islam just a religion or a complete socio-political system?

Islam first of all is an egalitarian religion which does not discriminate between the rich and the poor. Even the King of Saudi Arabia when he is a Pilgrim in Mecca is dressed like an ordinary person. Islam is also a way of life and a holistic socio-political system.

5. What is your opinion about the Muslim Brotherhood and do you know if it has any presence in Greece?

Muslim Brotherhood is a modern Islamic movement which adopts a moderate ideology, exists in Egypt and some other Arabic countries and has influence in Europe. Several Islamic organisations and associations even individuals are adopting its ideology without being formal members of the movement .I believe that the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood is appropriate for Muslims living in Europe, because it is a highly spiritual ideology which is helping Muslims to keep their faith in non-Muslim countries and encourage them to be good citizens in the society they live. This model of Muslims in Europe founded the European Council on Fatwa and Research which is located in Dublin and is headed by one of the most prominent contemporary Muslim scholars Yusuf Al-Qaradawi adopter of a moderate Islamic

ideology. I respect very much Yusuf Al-Qaradawi and I am always listening to his opinion before shaping my own one. On the contrary of what is widely believed in the West, I believe that Qaradawi is a moderate Muslim and not an extremist. Some radical movements are against him, because he is too moderate and tolerant according to their standards. He has for example issued a fatwa that allows Muslims in Western countries to borrow money from banks with interest to buy their houses. This is a revolution. I can not tell, however, that the Muslim Brotherhood has a significant presence in Greece.

6. Do you know if the Wahhabis are active in Greece?

To the best of my knowledge Wahhabis are not active in Greece.

7. Do you believe that Sharia Law should be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece?

Sharia is the law of Islam that organises the Muslims way of life and deals with all aspects of daily life in societies, and it is not only about sanctions and punishments. In order for the Sharia to be correctly implemented we need to meet some preconditions. I will try to explain you this by using one example: According to Sharia one woman is punished for the sin of adultery only if there are four male witnesses present at the time of the sin which are not her relatives or have enmity with her or if she confesses this sin herself. As you can understand, this is quite impossible to happen. You will ask me then why we are reading in the media that women in Nigeria, Somalia or Afghanistan are stoned because of adultery? This is exactly what I am trying to say, these people are falsely interpreting and implementing Sharia Law. I saw women half naked, living in difficult living conditions in a village without infrastructure under non acceptable social or economic or health situation and the authority in this village decided to stone a woman till death because of adultery. In my opinion they can't implement Sharia by imposing punishment while this authority can't provide a better living condition to this society – which is part of the Sharia too-. They implement Sharia according to their own conception and this is one of the reasons that people in the West are so fearful of

Sharia. Another example is the dressing code of women. In other words you can not implement the penal code of Sharia if people are not following first an Islamic way in their lives. Another misconception about Sharia is the penalty for theft. According to Sharia when someone steals and he is caught then the penalty is to cut his hand. People in the West consider this cruel. However Sharia is imposing this penalty only if someone steals as a result of greed. This protects the property of people and society from crimes and injustice. If someone is in big need and he is starving then even if he steals there is no such penalty. I believe that Sharia is slandered by some people in the West and through Sharia they are targeting and slandering Islam. As a conclusion, I believe that the circumstances are not mature for the Sharia law to be implemented as a parallel legal system for Muslims living in Greece. In addition to this, the fact is that Arabs and Muslims in Greece are not organized as a community. In other words I don't believe that the Muslim community has understood well the spirit of the Islamic law and because of this deficit in understanding, the Islamic law will not be implemented correctly.

8. What is your opinion on the burqa ban in France?

France is the country of enlightenment and freedom. This legislation passed against the spirit of freedom. In Islam the headscarf for women is obligatory, this is written in the hadith and Koran .The Islamic dress must not be transparent or tight and allows showing face and hands. The burqa and the niqab are not obligatory according to Islam and as a proof woman in Pilgrimage are asked not to cover their faces. Furthermore, in France a few years ago the headscarf was banned too, in schools as well as for women employees in the public sector. Muslim women with PhD were not able to work in the public sector, because they refused to comply with this unjust law and they were obliged to find humble jobs. This in my opinion was one of the reasons of the violent riots that took place in Paris and other major cities in 2005 by young French who had immigrant roots. I believe that this policy of the French government radicalised the young generation of Muslims and made France lose them.

9. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the “Koran incident”? Are these violent riots an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece?

I believe that what happened was a huge misunderstanding and that some people from the Muslim community for their own aims incited the people to demonstrate exploiting their religious sentiments. However, I believe that Muslims overreacted in that case. I don't estimate that these particular riots are an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece. I believe however that among the Muslim community, there are people who can be considered as radicals. Furthermore, I would like to mention that a Muslim has to give always a good example and not to be violent without reason. They had to resort to legal methods because after all we live in a country which respects the rule of law.

10. What is your opinion about the construction of the official Mosque at Votanikos?

I hope this finally happens; it will be a positive beginning which will help to enhance the trust between Muslims in Athens and the Greek authorities. However I don't believe that one official Mosque is enough to satisfy the needs of Muslims living in the wider area of Athens; The Arab community is running about 40 informal mosques in Greece.

11. Does the European Forum of Muslim women have any ties with the Federation of Islamic organisations in Europe?

We have ties with this organisation. Actually this organisation is our mother organisation.

Interview with Senior Intelligence Officer of the NIS-EYP

- 1. Do you know if the NIS-EYP has specialised staff dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?**

The NIS-EYP has specialised staff speaking Arabic, Farsi and Urdu, but they are investigating only Islamist terrorism and not Islamist extremism and subversion.

- 2. Do you know if the NIS-EYP has any cooperation with foreign intelligence services that have a record in dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?**

The NIS-EYP has bilateral and multilateral cooperation and it is sharing intelligence with its American and European counterparts.

- 3. Do you think that there should be a restructuring of the NIS-EYP, so that two separate agencies should take the place of the existing one? The first agency to deal with domestic security like the MI5 and FBI model and the second agency to deal with foreign intelligence like the MI6 and the CIA model?**

The answer is negative. NIS-EYP should not split in two separate agencies.

- 4. Do you know if there is an ongoing activity of the secret services of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan on Greek soil, more specifically among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?**

To the best of my knowledge there is no special activity of the secret services of these countries in Greece. Of course in the embassies of these countries there are working secret agents under diplomatic cover; however, they are not interested in

creating problems for the Greek state by exploiting the Muslim communities living in Greece. I think that they have this attitude because they want to avoid the deportation of Muslims back to their countries of origin.

5. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Mosque in Athens in Votanikos area?

I believe that at least one official Mosque should function in Athens, because this is an easier way for the authorities to monitor and control its activities. It is almost impossible to monitor the activities of all these informal mosques that are operating currently in Greece, mainly in Athens.

6. Do you know if there are radical elements among the Muslim immigrants who are residing in Greece?

Most of the Muslim immigrants living in Greece are ordinary people who are interested in earning their living and regulate their presence in Greece through the acquisition of legal residence permits. Of course the young generation of Muslim immigrants is more vulnerable to radicalisation, however the older generation and the leaders of the Muslim communities are keeping this young Muslims under control.

7. What is your opinion about the violent riots that took place in May 2009 in Athens because of the “Koran incident”? Are these violent riots an indication of radicalisation of Muslims residing in Greece?

I estimate that these riots were the demonstration of anger of mainly young Muslims, because they were insulted by an inappropriate act of a police officer. However, as I mentioned in my previous answer even if young Muslims are more susceptible to radicalisation, I don't believe that this is an indication that the Muslims living in Greece are radicalised. On the contrary, I believe that the older generation of Muslims and the leaders of the Muslim communities are in close cooperation with the NIS and the security branch of the Greek Police in order to control the more radical

young Muslims. However, Muslims in Greek prisons are being radicalised and this is a problem.

9. Do you know if we have in Greece Al-Qaeda's sleeper cells?

To the best of my knowledge we don't have.

10. How many informal mosques are operating in Greece?

Till the end of 2009 NIS had monitored 67 informal mosques. However, their number is growing rapidly.

10. Do you know if the Turkish secret service MIT is active in Western Thrace?

MIT is fully active in Western Thrace. Moreover, I would like to mention that the Turkish state through the consulate of Komotini is fuelling money to the Muslim minority residing in Western Thrace. For example, it is funding Muslim families to send their children to study in Turkish universities.

11. Mustafa Sarnic the head of the Turkish consulate in Komotini according to the local Thracian newspaper "Phoni tis Komotinis" (Voice of Komotini) is an officer of the MIT and not a diplomat. What is your opinion on this issue?

Mr.Sarnic is not a diplomat. This is correct. However, I can not tell you if he is a MIT intelligence officer. What I can tell you is that he is doing his best to serve the Turkish subversive strategy in Western Thrace.

11. Do you think that Turkey has a subversive strategy towards Western Thrace?

This is obvious. Recently I read a report saying that in Turkish elementary schools they are teaching children that Western Thrace is an integral part of Turkish territory. I can not imagine a more provocative and subversive policy than this.

12. Do you believe that Greece faces a threat from Islamist terrorism?

No one can say for sure that Greece will never be targeted from Islamist terrorists. However Greece traditionally is a country which has no colonial past, is not involved militarily in areas like Iraq and Afghanistan (except only from auxiliary troops), has a pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian stance and all these factors make the possibility of a future attack from Islamists less probable. Of course recently Greece has strengthened its bilateral cooperation with Israel and this may irritate violent Islamists. A few days ago Syria, as a result of the enhanced cooperation between Greece and Israel, recognised FYROM with its constitutional name “Republic of Macedonia”

13. Do you know if there is any presence in Greece of three foreign Islamist organisations: The Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb-ut-Tahrir?

To the best of my knowledge the first two Islamist organisations that you mentioned have a presence in Greece. For example, Naim El Ghandour President of the Muslim Association of Greece is a Muslim Brother.

14. Do you know if Hamas has any presence and activity in Greece?

Hamas because it is a designated terrorist organisation, has no official presence in Greece. However, among the 3,000 Palestinians living in Greece, there are members and supporters of Hamas.

15. Do you know if the Wahhabis have any presence and activity in Greece?

There is no evidence that the Wahhabis have any significant presence and activity in Greece.

Interview with Mr.Ioannis Michaletos security analyst and Head of the South-Eastern European Office of the World Security Network.

1. Do you know if the Turkish secret service (MIT) has any kind of activities in Greece in general and in Western Thrace in particular?

The Turkish MIT has more than certain been active in Western Thrace, especially after 1974. There have been several arrests over the past few years of Greek citizens of Turkish origin that acted as operational agents for MIT. The most recent case was one of an individual that in a space of two years took tens of thousands of photos of Greek classified military installations and handed them to his handlers from MIT, as he confessed in the court of law in early 2010. He was working as a photographer and studied his bachelor degree in Turkey where he was recruited. According to Police findings he was paid around 800 Euros per month for his service.

Apart from the above, the Greek press, as well as research by independent institutions, reveal that there is increased activity by anonymous individuals that create websites that propagate the annexation of Western Thrace into Turkey. The Greek intelligence service in several cases in early 2008 leaked to the press that the websites were professionally made and were part of a wider propaganda warfare directed by MIT agents within the Western Thrace region, since the IP numbers were based in villages and localities within that area and were using advanced non-disclosure software in order to avoid tracking by the authorities.

2. Can you estimate how many Muslim immigrants in total are residing in Greece?

Unfortunately, due to the large number of illegal immigrants and the lack of state official data nobody can tell exactly how many Muslims are residing in Greece. With talks I had with members of the intelligence and security community and my own research I can give you only an estimate. The total number of Muslim immigrants residing in Greece, I estimate is approximately 230,000. In this number I haven't included the immigrants from Albania. The Albanians are approximately 460,000 people. They are considered to be Muslims, but the vast majority of them don't practice their religion. More precisely I estimate that in Greece there are 25,000 Egyptians, 25,000 Syrians, 30,000 Iraqis (most of them of Kurdish origin) 10,000 Palestinians, 12,000 Moroccans-Algerians and Tunisians, 25,000 Afghans, 50,000 Pakistanis, 40,000 Bangladeshi, 4,000 Somalis, 5,000 Iranians and 3,000 Libyans.

3. Do you know if the NIS has specialised staff dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism and do you know if there is personnel speaking Arabic, Urdu etc?

The Greek intelligence service was especially active during the preparation period of the Olympic Games (2000-2004) in order to counter-act asymmetrical threats relating to Islamist terrorism. At that period officers were trained in the USA, the UK, France, Germany, and Israel and acquired considerable expertise. Moreover, there was intense and concentrated effort in order to monitor some 2,000 suspected radicals within the Greek territory and there was close cooperation with neighboring Balkan countries that hosted groups of radical Islamists. Since then the efforts by the Greek intelligence have been less due to a variety of reasons, the most important being the shift of interests which is now directed mostly in the organised crime sector rather than in purely anti-terrorist policy.

According to reliable but unverified information, there are only a few officers that are specifically in duty concerning the monitoring of Islamist terrorism in Greece with insufficient funds in their disposal. However, the Greek police through its state security directory, maintains networks of informants within the Muslim communities,

especially in Athens. Lastly Greece maintains through its intelligence and police agencies, close cooperation with the USA, in terms of intelligence sharing regarding this kind of terrorist activity.

4. Do you know if the NIS has any cooperation with foreign intelligence services that have a record in dealing with Islamist extremism and terrorism?

According to available information, the Greek intelligence maintains close relationship in this field with agencies from the USA and to a lesser extent with British, French, Italian and German counterparts. Over the past few years there has been close cooperation with the Israeli secret services and traditionally the Greek intelligence maintains intelligence sharing with the Bulgarian and Serbian intelligence in issues relating to Islamist extremists in the Balkans.

5. Do you know if there is an ongoing activity of the secret services of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan on Greek soil, more specifically among the Muslim immigrants residing in Greece?

The Iranian intelligence is thought to be active due to the existence of a few thousands Iranian immigrants that mostly left the country due to political reasons. Furthermore, an Iranian state bank which is “blacklisted” in the USA “Bank Saderat of Iran”, maintains a presence in Athens, which is a significant element that points out to an Iranian presence in Greece, since the Iranian state will most probably need to maintain counterintelligence network in case countries such as the USA pressure towards the closure of that banking institution. Furthermore the current (September 2010) Ambassador of Iran to Greece Mr.Mahdi Honardoost, is widely described in diplomatic circles as following a hardcore line comparable to that of the “Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps”. It should also be noted that Greece is the main gate-

away –after Turkey- for Iranian dissidents trying to flee to Western Europe, therefore it is quite certain that Teheran has established its intelligence network in order to monitor political opposition abroad. About Pakistani and Saudi intelligence presence, although the probability of their presence is valid, there are no data or definite assumptions on that matter.

6. Do you know if the Somali immigrants residing in Greece have any ties with the Islamist-terrorist Somali organisation Al-Shabaab?

The Somalian community in Athens has been involved in several cases of smuggling of the narcotic “Khat” which according to a variety of reports is being used as a source of income for Al-Shabaab in Somalia. Over the past three years, around 10 arrests have been made and it is widely known that Somali immigrants in the center of Athens have formed their own closed communities barring access to any outsiders which according to reliable sources indicate the possibility of extremists in their circles.

Even though, there are indications, it is hard to have a definite assumption for the linkage of Al- Shabaab organisation with “extremist cells” in Athens. Lastly the vast majority of the Somali immigrants in Athens is religious and is considered as one of the most devout Islamic elements within the entire Muslim community in Greece.

7. What is your opinion about the construction of an official Mosque in Athens in Votanikos area?

The issue of the construction of an ‘official mosque’ in Athens finds me in opposite terms. There are a few reasons for that. First of all the proposed Mosque is a Sunni one, meaning that rather soon the Shia adherents will demand their own Mosque to be built. Afterwards ethnic Mosques will be demanded (Algerian, Egyptian, Pakistani, etc). Therefore, although the Greek state is talking about one Mosque in reality dozens of them will soon be sought by a population of Muslims in the country that are in their vast majority illegal immigrants, so the real issue should be if it is legitimate to have such demands in the first place. Moreover, the expansion of radical Islam, and not just the Muslim religion, is primarily based on a peaceful domination through the establishment of religious organisations and of course Mosques in

countries where a significant number of Muslims reside. This has been the case in recent history also in Europe and elsewhere. The real question should be if Greece and any other European country, needs a specific Muslim immigrant population in the first place. In other words, is it worth the trouble after all? As far as the religious practices of the existing Muslim population are concerned in Athens, they are currently catered so far by ‘informal Mosques’. They could be adjusted as ‘official ones’ thus eliminating the danger of creating a specific centre that will mobilise the entire Muslim communities in Greece. Lastly, the fear that if a Mosque is not built, then radicals could take over the Muslim communities, is unfounded since they can do that in any case, as the experience has shown in many countries in the world so far. The issue is not the Mosque but radical Islam itself.

8. Do you know if there are radical elements among the Muslim immigrants who are residing in Greece?

Since May 2009 and the first demonstration of Muslims in Athens protesting against an alleged destruction of the Koran by a Greek police officer there have been notable public appearances by Muslims in Greece that forcibly demand the establishment of mosques within the territory, as well as the recognition of their community organisations as policy partners with the state authorities, even though the majority of their members are illegal immigrants residing in the country.

On the other hand since Greece is mostly a “transit” country for all kinds of Islamic-source immigrants venturing into Europe, the existence of well-established extremist networks is difficult to be specified; the social mobility of the immigrants is high and most of them stay in the country for a while and they are not interested into forming their own organisations and promote a radical agenda. However, a notable case was the arrest in 2008 of a Sudanese suspected terrorist in Italy-Ancona who previously was operating in Greece as a human trafficker and maintained also a wide range of contacts within the religious Muslim communities in Greece.

9. Do you know if the Wahhabis have any presence in Greece?

The existence or not of a Wahhabi movement or network in Greece, cannot be estimated fully due to the lack of considerable evidence. Nevertheless, there are notable data by which a conclusion can be derived. In early 2010, a Greek citizen named Efstathios Tsionis aka Abu Alia appeared in a public Wahhabi gathering in Serajevo-Bosnia. He was sent from Athens in order to present a speech on the virtues of converting to this Islamic sect and according to all available information his own conversion took place in Greece, consequently showing that there is indeed a network of Wahhabis here.

Moreover, in several areas in Athens, in the center of the city where a large concentration of Arab-Muslim communities is located, there are several individuals that can be identified as Wahhabis due to their outlook appearance and behavior which is identical to any Wahhabi follower anywhere in the world. The Greek press during the Olympic Games period back in 2004 estimated that there may be some 15 "undocumented mosques" at that time where concentration of radicals is very likely. Since then, due to the transit nature of the Muslim communities in Athens, where a lot of individuals emigrate from Greece in order to travel to Western Europe, it is not safe to fully estimate if the number of the undocumented mosques with potential radicals has changed, increased or decreased.

Lastly, during the demonstration by Muslims in Athens in late May 2009, there were quite a few individuals that were noted by the authorities to be dressed as Wahhabis and having plakats which resemble the same anti-Western, anti-Christian rhetoric that the followers of this faith have showed in other European cities. Since none of them proceeded into any illegal action they could not be apprehended and then questioned on the nature of their actions, so it remains to be seen if there is indeed a sizeable group of Wahhabis or in the case of Greece if we could talk about small clusters of individuals with minimum influence in the overall local immigrant Muslim population.

Second Period (October 2014-February 2015)

Interview with an Intelligence Analyst of the NIS-EYP who spoke to the author under the condition of anonymity

- 1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?**

There is confusing information on this issue

- 2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?**

Unfortunately, I don't know

- 3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?**

There are cases of Jihadists returning to countries of Western and Northern Europe using Greece as a passage.

- 4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?**

The main reason is practical and has to do with the fact that Greece is a transit country for Jihadists, a safe passage and they do not wish to target their passage to Europe for obvious reasons. It is a myth in my opinion, the view that Greece is not targeted by Islamists because of the traditionally good relations with the Arab and Muslim world. The main reason, as I said is that Greece is used as a transit country.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

I answered previously

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I think that the level of threat regarding violent extremism and terrorism emanating from radicalised individuals whom we usually call 'lone wolf terrorists' is moderate while the level of the threat emanating from Al Qaeda style organised Islamist terrorist organisations is low. Let me note also that in relation to the United Kingdom the level of the threat in Greece is significantly lower because in Greece there are no second and third generation Muslim immigrants with Greek citizenship as in the UK where second and third generation Muslims are British citizens. Moreover, in Greece the numbers of converts to Islam are very low, when in the UK the number of converts to Islam is significant.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?

In connection with the threat of violent extremism the threat level is increased in relation to the period you mentioned. The level of the threat from organised Islamist terrorist organisations was and remains low.

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

Developments in the Middle East will shape the level of threat in Greece in the future. My assessment is that the level of threat will increase slightly in the coming

years, always under the condition that we will continue to experience an unstable geopolitical environment in our neighborhood as a result of the activity of ISIS.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

No, these violent demonstrations were not an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece.

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims?

Factors that could contribute to a potential radicalisation of Muslims in Greece are mainly the prolonged economic crisis and the provocative actions by the neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn. Moreover, some young disaffected Muslims might be radicalised by hatred sermons on the part of some extremist imams in some informal mosques that are operating in Athens

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

Potential radicalisation of Muslims might occur in both informal Mosques and on the internet.

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

My response is positive. Indeed I think that for security reasons the Greek state should construct two official Mosques in Athens. One Mosque for the Sunnis and one

for the Shia. This will enable the security authorities to effectively control the potential radicalisation of Muslims by Islamists and generally they will have a better grasp of the actions of extremists while the Imams who preach will be approved by the Ministry of Education according to Law no. 3512 / 2006 and will reasonably ensure that these people are not extremists.

Interview with Angelos Syrigos, Secretary General for Social Cohesion and Immigration at the Greek Ministry of Interior and Senior Lecturer of International Law and Foreign Policy at Panteion University in Athens

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq in order to fight with ISIS?

It has been reported the case of a mother who took together her son in Syria in order to fight for ISIS. These individuals are of Syrian origin and became Greek citizens in 2002. The father of the young man and husband of the woman disagreed with their choices in life.

2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?

I do not know. However, it is estimated that for their radicalisation social networks via the Internet and relational ties with Syria played an important role. I do not know, however, if there were other reasons.

3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq that have returned to Greece?

To date, the cases that have been identified come from other countries f.e Chechnya, France. None of them has chosen to remain in Greece.

4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

Greece as a country, while it belongs to the West, is not, however, a characteristic example of a Western country. Greece was not related to the hatred for the people of the Middle East Crusaders, and we did not intervene in the region as patrons or colonial power. At present there is no reason for Jihadists to turn against Greece.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece or they use Greece as a transit country?

To date, Greece appears as a neutral or transit country. Given the fact that Turkey informed in mid-February 2015 Western embassies and consulates that there is a risk of an attack by the Islamic Caliphate, I think that the next few months there is an increased risk of attacks on embassies or targets in Greece related to Western interests. I do not think that the country is a goal per se.

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

Theoretically we should be on the low level. However, I would estimate the level as Moderate mainly due to the large flow of refugees and illegal immigrants from Syria to the Aegean islands and then to the mainland. Caution is needed because violent extremists may have infiltrated these people.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?

Compared to the year 2009, certainly yes.

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

This, will depend on developments in the Middle East and any desire by the Caliphate carry the "holy war" in Europe. The decline of the Caliphate after the battles with the Kurds and the support of the latter from the West, may change their plans.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslims in Greece?

I would describe these events as a demonstration of power on the part of some leaders of the Muslim ethnic groups residing in recent years in Greece. This fragmentation, however, among the Muslim ethnic groups (e.g. the Pakistanis) might have prevented meaningful events of violent extremism.

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation?

Muslims who live in Greece belong to two groups:

I. Muslim minority in Thrace.

II. Muslim immigrants (legal and illegal).

The first group shows no signs of radicalisation. Except from a demonstration against Israel that took place in July 2014 and was organised by circles connected to the Turkish consulate (see http://www.thrakitoday.com/2014/07/video_25.html), we have not seen other real signs of radicalisation .

In contrast, among the Muslim immigrants it seems that there are some extremists.

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

Informal prayer rooms are places where the potential to radicalise someone exists. There are, however, no indications that this is happening systematically, as for example in Britain that some mosques were renowned for their extreme preaching and for the fanatic audience. There are some fanatical cases associated, however, with the perception of Islam in the countries from which they come from. For example Pakistanis or Afghans are more extreme than many Arabs. Most Islamic prayer rooms are connected together in an informal network that has links with the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE) that is influenced by the "Muslim Brotherhood".

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

Absolutely. The semi-illegal status that exists today, allows the action of Islamist extremists who are trying to penetrate a few, for the moment, places of worship. However, the construction of the mosque will not lead to closure of existing places of worship. Tens of thousands of Muslims are not going to attend every Friday the sermon at the Mosque in Votanikos area in Athens where the official Mosque is planned to be constructed. They will still use informal places of worship within neighborhoods where immigrants live and serve their everyday needs. At this point we should make sure that the recent law 4301/2014 is implemented which is a very good tool to remedy the current situation.

Most informal places of worship should be closed immediately.

I would stress the following points:

I. Enforcement of the rules in regard to public order and security. This means that every place of worship should be represented by an individual who will be held responsible from the Greek state and who will act as interlocutor for problems of this particular place of worship .

II. Financial transparency of each place of worship that allows control of any funds from illegal organisations.

III. Ensure the safety of the premises used by worshipers with planning permission to

be included in the conditions for public congregation areas. In this way, all the places of worship that do not meet the safety standards will be closed. Informal places of worship constitute a direct threat to national security. The combination of the function of the official Mosque in Athens and the correct implementation of the law might help to address the problem of potential radicalisation among Muslim immigrants.

Interview with Dr. Thanos Dokos Director General of ELIAMEP

- 1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq in order to fight with ISIS?**

No, I am not privy to such information.

- 2. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq that have returned to Greece?**

No I don't.

- 3. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?**

A possible explanation is that Greece is not a target of high priority. Another is that they don't (yet?) have enough assets in the country. On the other hand, there is no proof that outside Iraq and Syria there is a united organisation of "Jihadist forces" that is planning attacks in Western countries. So far attacks appear to have been carried out by 'lone wolves', without any centralised planning.

4. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

Impossible to estimate at this stage, especially if one has no access to intelligence sources.

5. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I would say 'moderate', but this is only an educated guess, not an assessment based on information.

6. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

It is a reasonable assumption since there was no ISIS during that period, and Al Qaeda was severely weakened at the time.

7. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

Impossible to say at this stage. It depends on the course of events in Syria/Iraq, as well as on the objectives and plans of Jihadist organisations.

8. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslims in Greece?

Not as such, but they should not be ignored by relevant Greek state agencies. In this context, they are not fundamentally different than their counterparts in other Western countries. The rise of extreme right political parties in Greece may cause an increase in their potential for radicalisation.

9. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation?

In general, they are vulnerable to the nationalist messages of Turkey, not the religious calls of Jihadists. There are always individual exceptions, of course.

10. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

Mainly in informal mosques and through social (physical) interaction, less through social media (yet).

11. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

It would be a step in the right direction but it would not suffice because of the limited number of faithful it would serve (and only in the Athens area). Other additional measures would certainly be necessary.

Interview with Andreas Andrianopoulos, Director of the Athens based Institute of Diplomacy (Deree College) and former Minister of State of the Constantine Mitsotakis Government (1990-1993)

- 1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?**

Unfortunately, I do not have this kind of information

- 2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?**

Same answer to your previous question

- 3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?**

No I do not know. What I know is that there are many Albanians jihadists (mainly from the Tetovo region) who have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State and that when they will return back to the Balkans, they may constitute a destabilising factor also for Greece.

- 4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?**

There are various reasons and I will refer briefly to them: a) Greek citizens of Muslim religion residing in Western Thrace and the Dodecanese are officially recognised as a Muslim minority in Greece and they are moderate as mainly they follow Sufism and the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence both practiced in the former Ottoman Empire

b) The Muslim immigrants living in Greece come from different countries with

different versions of Islam and do not constitute a homogeneous group and that in my opinion, prevents to some extent their radicalisation and extremism,

c) Greece has no colonial past that have other European countries (Britain, France), no Muslim nationals of second, third and fourth generation and for this reason has not been targeted by Jihadists till today.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

I have answered you in question 3.

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I estimate that the level of threat coming from Islamist terrorism in Greece is low and that the level of the threat emanating from violent Islamist extremism is moderate.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

I am not able to make an assessment in regard to your question

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

This will depend on two factors in my opinion. The first factor has to do with the possible destabilising effect of Albanian Jihadists who have returned from the Middle East and the second factor is the possible radicalisation of the Erdogan regime in

Turkey. If the Turkish government becomes more extreme then it is possible to attempt to radicalise Greek Muslims in Western Thrace, as well as if an Islamic Center influenced by the Wahhabis is constructed with Saudi funding.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

No, I don't think that these demonstrations were an indication of radicalisation and extremism of Muslim immigrants living in Greece. These were isolated incidents, however they make us think of how is it possible for so many people to be mobilised in such a short time.

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims?

I replied to this question previously.

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

I don't think that any serious radicalisation process might occur among Muslim immigrants unless a single Cultural Center is created with Wahhabi influence and funding.

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

The construction of an official mosque in Athens might create a problem of radicalisation of Muslims only if it comes under the control of the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia.

Interview with Mr. Georgios Dionysopoulos, Journalist of the newspaper “Proto Thema”

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

According to the information I know there is a Jihadist with Greek citizenship and a Syrian mother, who has travelled to Syria to join the ranks of the Islamic State. My assessment is that there is a possibility that also other Jihadists have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State. But I believe that these are not Greek citizens but illegal Muslim immigrants without legal residence permits. However, because these people are not listed by the Greek authorities we can not ultimately know how many of them have been radicalised and decide to travel to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State.

2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?

Given the economic crisis in our country many of the illegal Muslim immigrants are vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation. If we take into account the fact that a large proportion of Jihadists who have joined the ranks of the Islamic State are mercenaries with high fees, you realise that the financial incentive is an additional incentive for them, beyond the ideological fanaticism in order to travel to Syria and Iraq and join the ranks of the Islamic State.

3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?

No I do not know, though I estimate that they don't have an incentive to return to Greece, since when they lived in Greece they were living in semi-illegal status and I suppose that due to the economic crisis in very bad economic conditions.

4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

Greece has traditionally good relations with the Arab and Muslim world. Moreover, Greece didn't actively participated in the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and has no colonial past and is known and respected in the Muslim world mainly for its ancient culture. For these reasons I consider that Greece has not been and probably will not be the target of Islamist terrorism.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

No, Greece according to all the data is not a target for the Jihadists for the reasons I explained in the previous question. Regarding whether used as a transit country for Jihadists to travel to other European countries, this is something I don't know.

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I would define the level of threat low both in terms of Islamist terrorism and violent Islamist extremism.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

No. I think that the period referred to the level of the threat was low.

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

I estimate that most probably in the future the threat level in Greece will remain low.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

Yes these violent incidents were a sign of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants living in Greece, but this does not mean that their radicalisation might lead to extreme acts such as acts of terrorism (eg public transportation) or beheadings.

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that Greece has a problem of radicalisation among Muslims?

I estimate that there is a problem of radicalisation, but it is not directed against Greece. Those who are radicalised are more likely to travel to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the so called Islamic State.

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

To the extent that such a radicalisation process does occur is considered to take place both in the informal Mosques and the Internet. However, I don't think that those who have been radicalised have any incentive to turn against Greece for the reasons I mentioned previously.

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

I do not think that those Muslim immigrants (because for Muslim Greek citizens of Western Thrace I wouldn't even put such a question) who might be vulnerable to radicalisation, will be affected by the construction or not of an official Mosque in Athens.

Interview with Mr. Georgios Kalantzis Secretary General of Religious Affairs at the Ministry of Education

1. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

First I start by saying that in Greece there are two categories of Muslims: a) Greek Muslims of Western Thrace and b) Muslim immigrants (primarily first generation) who have come to Greece in the last 15 years. For Greeks Muslims the Greek state decided, out of respect to their religious tradition (and not because of the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923), to implement the Sharia restricted on matters of family and inheritance law and consequent to take responsibility for the appointment of muftis who are employees of the Greek government. Because of this tolerant policy of the Greek State Greek Muslims of Western Thrace they were never radicalised and thus they did not embrace extremist Islam. Regarding Muslim immigrants as I mentioned are primarily first generation economic immigrants who are interested to feed themselves and their families and are not interested in promoting an Islamist agenda using violent methods. In Greece there is not the phenomenon of second and third generation Muslims who feel foreign to Western society and its values and therefore are vulnerable to radicalisation. Also note that Greece is mainly a passage (transit) for Muslim immigrants and not their final destination in Europe. In addition to that in Greece there is a culture of respect for all religions and not a country that wants the ultimate implementation of the secular standard like France for example set headscarf ban issue which we here in Greece we

do not even conceive. Finally, the fact that Greece has never been a colonial power in Muslim countries, as well as the timeless friendly attitude of Greece on the Palestinian issue are additional factors that explain the reason why there has not been a terrorist attack by Islamists in Greece so far.

2. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I can not answer this question because I do not know the criteria for this classification and certainly whatever the criteria are it will surely differ between Britain and Greece. Overall my assessment is that the level of threat regarding Islamist terrorism and violent Islamist extremism is low in Greece.

3. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

I think it has not changed. The fact that some Syrian immigrants might have travelled to Syria to join the ranks of the "Islamic State" does not mean that there is a threat to Greece. I do not consider this as a threat and that is why the level of the threat still remains low.

4. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

This will depend on many factors, but mainly on the attitude to be adopted by the Greek State in relation to the Muslims residing in our country and the effect of right-wing extremist organisations such as the Golden Dawn.

5. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslims in Greece?

Certainly these facts should be evaluated although I do not consider these events as a serious indication of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants. Mostly I would say that these Muslims immigrants were motivated and mobilised by organisations of the extreme Left, because the extreme Left in Greece along with its virulent anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism considers political Islam as its natural ally. In no way they were radicalised by Islamists or extremist Imams.

6. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims?

Not for the reasons I explained in my first answer I do not think that there is such a problem today. But the extremist activity of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party if continued could lead to the radicalisation of Muslim immigrants.

7. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

I will put it the other way around. I estimate that if the official Mosque is not constructed then it will be certain that we will face a problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece.

8. What are the legislative initiatives taken by the Ministry of Education to control informal Mosques?

The Ministry of Education recently (May 2014) issued a directive which specifies the conditions for authorising the establishment and operation of worship for heterodox religions and religious communities, directive concerning also the so-called informal

Mosques of Muslim immigrants. Those interested can now get permission from the Ministry of Education when they fulfill certain conditions related to the security of the site to be used as a house of prayer. Regarding imams operating in these informal Mosques and the occasional rumors that extremist imams preach inside them are considerably in my opinion unfounded. Even if there are some extremist imams I do not think that there is a radicalisation issue of faithful Muslims because in Greece we don't have the objective conditions for their radicalisation. The fact that someone is an extremist imam does not automatically mean that his audience will be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism.

Interview with Mr. Ioannis Souliotis Journalist in "Kathimerini" Newspaper

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

Yes there are Jihadists from Greece who have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of the Islamic State. A typical case that I can tell myself is that of 23 year-old Iraqi Shamal Ahmad Tofiq who embraced extremist interpretations of Islam in 2009-2012 when he used to live in Athens before he returned to Iraq. Today according to the information I have published in the newspaper "Kathimerini" on 21.09.2014 Shamal is a fighter of the Islamic State.

2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?

It is very likely as the case I described before that these individuals have been radicalised in informal Mosques in Athens

3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?

No, I don't know cases of Jihadists who have fought in Syria and Iraq in the ranks of the Islamic State and have returned to Greece.

4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

There are several reasons. The most important in my opinion is that Greece is a country of transit for them on their journey to the countries of Western and Northern Europe. Several of them use illegal immigration channels and come to Greece via Turkey. In Greece these circuits provide temporary shelter and make false travel documents (false passports) to travel in the countries mentioned. Typical is the case of two Syrian militants of the Islamic State who travelled by charter flights from the airports of Zakynthos and Rhodes to Charleroi Brussels Airport with false French passports. In conclusion just because Greece is a landmark for them to obtain false travel documents they don't want to strike Greece because then they risk getting targeted by the Greek Security Authorities and captured before reaching their final destination. Other reasons have to do with the traditionally good relations between Greece and the Arab and Muslim world, the lack of a colonial past and the non-participation of Greece in the forefront of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

Not at all. As I have explained to you in my previous answer Greece is not their target.

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

My assessment is that the level of the threat to Greece regarding violent Islamist extremism is moderate and with respect to Islamist terrorism low.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

In relation to violent extremism I think it is increased from low to moderate. The risk of Islamist terrorism remains low.

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

Depending on geopolitical developments in the wider “neighborhood” of the country (Balkans, Middle East) the threat will evolve. In my opinion because I see a deterioration of the surroundings of this in the near future I think the level of the threat would be correspondingly increased.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

Yes certainly these demonstrations were an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism, which is why I said that the extent of the threat from violent extremism acts is currently moderate.

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece?

Yes they are as far as I pointed out earlier. However, this radicalisation seems to be limited with the participation of radicalised individuals in the ranks of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. Greece is not in their immediate priorities.

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

In all these places that you mentioned.

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

I think it would be easier to control the potential radicalisation of Muslim immigrants in one or more legal Mosques than in areas of informal Mosques.

Interview with Mr.Nader Halbuni President of the Syrian community in Greece

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

I am not in a position to know and answer your question

2. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?

My answer is the same as the previous one.

3. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

Firstly, I have to mention the traditionally excellent political, economic and cultural relations between Greece and the Muslim world. Secondly the Muslim immigrants who live in Greece are interested to improve their ordinary lives and therefore they are not interested in participating in politics or even more in extremist politics.

4. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

I don't think so.

5. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

Non existent

6. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?

No it is at the same level

7. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

I estimate that it will remain at the same level

8. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

No these demonstrations are not an indication of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants

9. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims?

No, as I have explained to you Muslim immigrants living in Greece are moderate and they are not vulnerable to radicalisation.

10. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation among Muslim immigrants living in Greece?

I believe that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will absolutely help to prevent radicalisation among Muslim immigrants living in Greece and especially in Athens. On the contrary if the Greek state does not keep its promises then it will be easier for disaffected Muslims to be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Interview with Mr.Savvas Kalenteridis former Intelligence Officer of the NIS-EYP

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

There is at least one Jihadist of Syrian origin, who travelled from Greece to Syria to join the ranks of the "Islamic State".

2. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?

No I don't know.

3. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

In my opinion there are two main reasons: a) The traditionally good relations between Greece and the Arab and Muslim world, b) the fact that Greece has never been a colonial power and for this reason the Arabs and Muslims do not nourish hatred towards Greece as they have against the West.

4. Do you think that the jihadists use Greece as a transit country in order to organise attacks on Western countries?

Greece is not a transit country for Jihadists. Turkey is a transit country because through the Turkish Territory Jihadists are promoted in Syria and Iraq.

5. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I would describe the level of the threat from Islamist terrorism and violent extremism as low. Of course I can not rule out the possibility that Turkey will stage a provocation against Greece using Islamist extremists.

6. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-20012?

It is slightly increased

7. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

It will depend on developments regarding the "Islamic State" and the attitude of Turkey

8. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslims in Greece?

No they were isolated incidents and not a sign of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants. Evidence that they were not repeated.

9. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation?

No there is no problem of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants or of Greek Muslims in Western Thrace.

10. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

My view is that in order to safeguard the cultural identity of Greece, the Greek state should not construct an official Mosque in Athens.

Interview with Mr. Syed Mohammad Jamil President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural & Welfare Society

- 1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?**

I have not at my disposal information about this issue

- 2. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?**

I am afraid I don't know.

- 3. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?**

There are several reasons: a) In Greece there is excellent cooperation between Muslim organisations and the Greek State and in particular with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection in order to have effective control of potential extremists and preventive actions address the potential radicalisation of second generation Muslim immigrants, b) Greece is a friendly country to Muslim countries, c) Greece does not have a colonial past like other Western countries

- 4. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?**

I believe that Greece serves more as a transit country for Islamist extremists and it is not itself a target of organised attacks by Islamists.

- 5. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?**

Regarding Al Qaeda style Islamist terrorism I would say that the level of threat is low, whilst recognising the potential danger because of what is happening in the Middle East with the atrocities of the "Islamic State". In regard to violent Islamist extremism and the potential for terrorist attacks by Jihadists "lone wolves" I would describe the level of threat as moderate.

- 6. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?**

Yes definitely it has increased in relation to the level of threat of the period you mentioned and this is a result of the extremist activity of so-called "Islamic State". Please note that it is impossible to exclude the possibility that Jihadists cross Greece pretending they are refugees from conflict zones of Syria and Iraq and for this reason alone the level of threat I believe has increased.

- 7. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?**

This will depend on developments on the future of the "Islamic State"

- 8. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslims in Greece?**

No these violent demonstrations were not an indication of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants living in Greece. These were isolated incidents which were caused by small groups of fanatics and individuals which can be characterised as a provocation.

9. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation?

At present there is no such problem. However, in collaboration with Mr. Georgios Kalantzis Secretary General of Religions Affairs at the Ministry of Education we attempt to put under control informal mosques in order to prevent the potential radicalisation of the new generation of Muslim immigrants. Let me add that there are unconfirmed reports that talk about attracting young unemployed Muslims through advertisements on the Internet to work with semi-annual or annual contracts. These advertisements are used by jihadist organisations to recruit young Muslims with high rewards in order to fight in Syria and Iraq.

10. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

I estimate that radicalisation might occur in some informal Mosques where Imams with questionable training and Islamic education preach and of course on the Internet.

11. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

Yes I think that the construction of an official Mosque which will be recognised by the Greek state as provided by Law no. 3512 / 2006 will contribute to the effective prevention of potential radicalisation of young generation Muslim immigrants.

Interview with Mr. Vasilis Lambropoulos (Journalist- Newspaper “To Vima”)

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

I have written a report which was published in the newspaper “To Vima” on September 21st 2014, and I explain that at least one Jihadist of Syrian origin and Greek citizenship has travelled in Syria in order to fight along with ISIS. Moreover, from what I am in position to know according to sources from the Greek security services there are 3-4 Muslims with Greek citizenship who have travelled to Syria to fight with ISIS. Moreover, I can tell you that according to the programme “Traveler” of the Europol since the beginning of 2014 approximately 200 individuals have passed through Greece, coming from Western Europe, to fight in Syria and Iraq with Jihadists. Furthermore, the Greek security authorities have been alerted by the CIA to check about 15-20 individuals coming from the Balkans (Albania, FYROM, Kosovo, Bosnia) and travelling through Greece with final destination to reach Syria and Iraq and fight along with ISIS. In addition the CIA has asked the Greek security authorities to provide intelligence about approximately 40 of their relatives living in Greece. Moreover, I am in position to know that there are approximately 15-20 Jihadists who have returned from Syria and Iraq pretending that they were refugees and have stayed in Greece.

2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?

The Jihadist I mentioned in my report of Syrian origin has been radicalised by his mother who lived in Syria while he was living in Greece with his father. She was responsible for radicalising her son and calling him to travel to Syria and fight along with ISIS.

3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS in Iraq and Syria that have returned to Greece?

I have answered this question before.

4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

The main reason according to my opinion that Greece has not been targeted so far by Al Qaeda style terrorism is that Greece maintains excellent political, economic and cultural relations with the Arab and Muslim world. Of course at this point it would be worth to mention that there is a difference between Al Qaeda style organised terrorist activity and lone wolf terrorism who act violently on their own after having been radicalised by Islamist ideology mainly via the internet. I mentioned that in order to say that my estimate is that although Greece is not threatened by Al Qaeda style Islamist terrorism it might be threatened by Jihadists who have travelled to Syria and Iraq and will decide to commit acts of violent extremism as reprisal for the participation of the Greek Government in the international coalition against ISIS. Greece is not participating in the air strikes, however it supports the anti-ISIS effort and has provided ammunition to the Kurds fighting against ISIS.

5. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

I would say that the current level of threat in regard to Al Qaeda style Islamist terrorism is low to non-existent. In regard to the current level of threat linked to Islamist lone wolf style terrorism I would consider it as moderate. Of course my estimate is that Greece if targeted by Jihadist lone wolves will be the last to suffer such an attack in Europe. It is far more probable to witness such an attack first in another Western country which participates actively in the fight against ISIS.

6. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?

In regard to the threat linked to Al Qaeda style Islamist terrorism the level of the threat is the same. What has changed in comparison to the period you mentioned is the level of the threat connected to Islamist violent extremism. This has increased from low to moderate.

7. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

The threat from Al Qaeda style Islamist terrorism is not likely to increase in the coming years. However, the threat from violent extremism is likely to increase if the situation in the Middle East deteriorates and ISIS consolidates its position.

8. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

No these demonstrations were not an indication of radicalisation among Muslim immigrants residing in Greece.

9. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation?

No I don't think that there is a problem of radicalisation among Muslims in Greece. However, I can not exclude the possibility that some of them might be radicalised from the returning Jihadists from Syria and Iraq.

10. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

I think that radicalisation is easier to occur via the internet than in the so called informal Mosques.

11. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

It is hard to answer in a definitive way to this question. However, I estimate that the Official Mosque will satisfy the religious needs of Muslims living in Athens and will prevent their potential radicalisation from violent extremists.

Interview with Mr. Ioannis Michaletos Security Analyst and Head of the Southeast European Office of the World Security Network

1. Do you know if there are any Jihadists residing in Greece that have travelled to Iraq and Syria in order to fight with ISIS?

There are around 10 persons that have accomplished this journey. All of them were immigrants from the Middle East residing in Greece.

2. Do you know if these people were radicalised in Greece?

All indications and info from authorities, local and international media show that this was the case-radicalised in Greece

3. Do you know if there are any Jihadists fighting with ISIS and Syria in Iraq that have returned to Greece?

As of mid-October 2014 no known cases exist-although the authorities are investigating, after US notification that there are a number of people that are returning

4. Why do you think that so far Greece has not been targeted by Jihadist forces?

Greece is a transit zone and the Jihadists don't want for the time being to interrupt that favorable passage. Also Greece is a rather indifferent "player" in Middle Eastern affairs, there are quite favorable sentiments in Muslim communities worldwide about Greece in general and last but not least, the country has a very effective domestic counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism sector as far as international extremist elements are concerned. Also the vast majority of Islamists in Greece are illegal immigrants, thus there are no "roots" or "parallel societies" such as it is the case in many northern European countries. For Jihadists it is very difficult to set up a functioning base without having a stable number of accomplices with legal residence.

5. Do you estimate that returning ISIS Jihadists aspire to attack Greece?

For the moment Greece as transit is their main goal.

6. Taking into consideration the British threat level system (low, moderate, substantial, severe, critical) what is your estimate about the current level of threat in Greece deriving from Islamist connected terrorism and violent extremism?

Moderate.

7. Do you think that the current level of threat in Greece is higher than in the period 2009-2012?

Yes.

8. What is your estimate about the future development of the threat level in Greece?

Yes the threat will increase but gradually and in the mid term, 3-5 years if the situation of instability in Middle East progresses.

9. Do you think that the violent demonstrations of Muslim immigrants that took place in Athens in May 2009 and September 2012 are an indication of radicalisation and violent extremism among Muslim immigrants in Greece?

Yes, these were the first signs of radicalisation of Muslim immigrants on a mass scale

10. Do you think that Muslims residing in Greece are vulnerable to radicalisation or that there is a problem of radicalisation?

It is a gradual process, depending on the overall situation in the Middle East and the perception of Islamic communities worldwide

11. Where do you think that radicalisation might occur (informal Mosques, internet etc.)?

Mostly in mosques, there are around 25 “hardcore” of them, mostly in Athens. Also “lone rangers” self-proclaimed imams are part of this process.

12. Do you think that the construction of an official Mosque in Athens will help also to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims living in Greece?

In fact it will make things worse. The “unofficial” mosques due to their hazy legal status can be “visited” by authorities at any moment. An official mosque on the other hand would be a holy place not welcome even for police authorities. It will have an asylum system and it will energise all elements that want to radicalise the local Muslim community to focus into acquiring presence there. Greek intelligence has specific information by German and French authorities on their own experience over

the past 40 years in the exactly same subject and the consultation was that it would be a mistake to formalise a Mosque. Right now there are more than 800 mosques in the country, out of which 60% are legal and reserved for the indigenous Muslim communities, mostly in Thrace. There are also Muslim cemeteries and dozens of Islamic seminars. In fact regarding the ratio of mosques/population of Muslims in the country it is considered adequate compared to international standards. Lastly there are specific information and accusations by many members of the Islamic society in Athens that the mosque to be built is lobbied by the infamous Muslim Brotherhood, which in my view is a terrorist organisation, something that countries such as Saudi Arabia, gulf states, Russia, Israel and China amongst others already recognise legally as such.

II. Chronology of Jihadism in the UK (2000-2018)

In the first part of this appendix which covers incidents occurring from 2001 to 2007 the author has used as main secondary source Peter Nesser's excellent survey.⁵⁴⁹

In December 2001, the Al-Qaeda-associated Richard Colvin Reid, commonly known as the shoe bomber, tried to blow up a transatlantic flight from Paris to Miami, with plastic explosives hidden in his shoes. Reid, who converted to Islam whilst in a British prison, was prevented from accomplishing his task, because passengers and crew restrained him.⁵⁵⁰ Reid justified his actions ideologically, with reference to Osama bin Laden and the USA's support for secular regimes in Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Jordan. According to indictments, he had trained and received support in Al-Qaeda's camps in Afghanistan. In November 2002, the Al-Qaeda-associated preacher, Abu Qatada, told British interrogators that Al-Qaeda was planning to attack London's Heathrow Airport. The then President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, wrote in his memoirs that Al Qaeda's plans involved the hijacking of aircraft en route to London from Eastern Europe, which would then be crashed into Heathrow and other prominent sites in the British capital in early 2003.⁵⁵¹ A British convert to Islam, Andrew Rowe, was convicted to fifteen years in prison for terrorism related offences

⁵⁴⁹ Nesser, Peter (2008) 'Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994-2007': *Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 31:10, London: Routledge.

⁵⁵⁰ Michael Elliott, The Shoe Bomber's World (16 February 2002) Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,203478,00.html> [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁵¹ Musharraf P. (2006), *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*, New York: Free Press

in 2005, and was linked to the above-mentioned plot to crash planes into Heathrow.⁵⁵² In February 2003, *The Guardian* reported that British authorities had received ‘high quality intelligence’ that extremists with links to Al-Qaeda were attempting to smuggle portable SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles into Britain, intending to fire them at airliners taking off from Heathrow airport.⁵⁵³

In February 2002, Moinul Abedin was convicted to 20 years in jail at Birmingham Crown Court. He was arrested in November 2000, because police found large quantities of bomb-making materials in his possession, but since relevant laws had yet to be put into place, he was prosecuted under the 1883 Explosives Act. Abedin is recognised as the first Al-Qaeda inspired member to be prosecuted in the UK. The MI5 listed him at the top of a list of terrorists convicted this century.⁵⁵⁴

In November 2002, British newspapers reported that a group of North Africans (of Algerian, Tunisian, and Moroccan descent) had been arrested, suspected of planning a cyanide attack on the London underground. It was alleged that the suspected leader of the group was an associate of GSPC and Al-Qaeda. Three of those who had been arrested were released after interrogation. Reportedly, British intelligence had infiltrated the group and detected plans to smuggle cyanide into the country. Three suspects were charged under the Terrorism Act of 2000, but evidence of concrete, planned attacks was poor.⁵⁵⁵

In January 2003, British police arrested several North Africans (almost exclusively Algerians) in North London, suspecting them of having ties to Al-Qaeda

⁵⁵² Hugh Muir, British Muslim convert jailed for terrorism offences (24 September 2005) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/sep/24/terrorism.politics> [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁵³ Nich Hopkings – Richard Norton, Huge hunt for missile smugglers (The Guardian, 13 February 2003) Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2003/feb/13/september11.terrorism> [Accessed 8 March 2018]

⁵⁵⁴ Phil Mackie, Moinul Abedin: UK's first al-Qaeda inspired bomber (BBC News 2 March 2012) Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-17231013> [Accessed 16 May 2018]

⁵⁵⁵ Joanna Walter, Gabby Hinshiff, Robie Mickie, three held over 'poison gas' bomb plot on Tube (The Guardian 17 November 2002) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2002/nov/17/terrorism.september11> [Accessed 8 March 2019]

and the GSPC, and of producing lethal toxin ricin for terrorist purposes. During police raids, one of the suspects, Kamel Bourgass, stabbed to death police officer Stephen Oake.⁵⁵⁶ House searches revealed poison recipes, bomb-making instructions and a very amateurish ‘laboratory’ for making poisons. Prosecutors failed to produce sufficient evidence to charge the suspects with a terrorist conspiracy. All but Burgass were acquitted.⁵⁵⁷

In May 2003, the journalist and acknowledged Al-Qaeda specialist, Jason Burke, cited German intelligence documents saying that members of the Jordanian-Palestinian al-Tawhid organisation had ‘plotted to use poison in the UK and elsewhere’. Al-Tawhid’s operational leader was Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The militants considered the London-based radical preacher Abu Qatada to be their religious guide.⁵⁵⁸

In December 2003, British police arrested the 24-year-old British Malawi Sajid Badat, for his intention to detonate a shoe-bomb on a transatlantic flight in 2001. Badat was arrested at his home after surveillance operations by the police and MI5.⁵⁵⁹ Police found explosives and a detonator in Badat’s house, similar to the device used by the convicted shoe-bomber Richard Reid. Badat had been radicalised and recruited by Al-Qaeda associates in Britain and Pakistan.⁵⁶⁰ He is believed to have been trained in Pakistan and/or Afghanistan, together with Reid.⁵⁶¹ Badat had second thoughts about becoming a terrorist and notified his Tunisian ‘handler’, Nizar Trabelsi, that he would back out. During his trial, Badat pleaded guilty as charged and

⁵⁵⁶ BBC News, Killer jailed over poison plot (BBC News 13 April 2005) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4433709.stm [Accessed 6 February 2019]

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ Jason Berk, Terror cell's UK poison plot (The Guardian 25 Mayh 2003) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/may/25/terrorism.alqaida1> [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁵⁹ BBC News, Terror suspect admits plane plot (BBC News 28 Febuary 2005) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/gloucestershire/4304223.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁶⁰ Nesser P. (2008), ‘Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994-2007’: *Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 31:10, London: Routledge.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

was convicted to thirteen years in jail for his intentions in 2005.⁵⁶²

In February 2004, British police arrested a group of British-Pakistani militants, aged between 17 and 32, suspected of planning attacks in London with fertiliser-bombs. The suspects had gathered 500 kg of ammonium nitrate, commonly used by terrorists to build bombs. Suspects allegedly trained and tested bombs in Malakand, Pakistan, and were suspected of being connected with, and having received support from, militant Kashmiri separatists, Al-Qaeda and UK based extremists.⁵⁶³ The leader of the cell was Omar Khyam, trained by the Jihadist terrorist group Lashkar-e-Toiba, which later became notorious for planning and executing the Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008.⁵⁶⁴

In August 2004, British police arrested a group of British-Pakistanis in London, Luton, Hertfordshire and Lancashire. The arrests came after interrogations of a captured 25-year-old Al Qaeda operative and computer expert, Muhammad Naeem Noor Khan, in Pakistan. Files from Noor Khan's computer indicated that a UK-based terror cell had planned to launch terrorist attacks against targets in Britain and the United States. In November 2007, UK courts convicted the leader of the cell, a Hindu convert to Islam named Dhiren Barot, to life imprisonment for plotting explosions and murder. In June 2007, UK courts convicted the seven other members of the cell (all of whom were of Pakistani origin) to long prison sentences (between 15 and 26 years).⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Katharine Myrphy, UK seven 'were ready to start bombing' (The Guardian 21 March 2006) Available at:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2006/mar/21/terrorism.world> [Accessed 8 March 2018]

⁵⁶⁴ Zahid Hussain, Islamabad Tells of Plot by Lashkar (The Wall Street Journal 29 July 2009) Available at:
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124872197786784603.html?mod=googlenews_wsj [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁶⁵ Katharine Myrphy, Barot operation posed complex challenge (The Guardian 7 November 2006) Available at:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2006/nov/07/usa.terrorism> [Accessed 8 March 2019]

On 7 July 2005, a terrorist cell composed of three British nationals of Pakistani origin and one of Jamaican origin, launched terrorist attacks against the Underground and a double-decker bus in central London. The terrorists killed fifty-two people and injured hundreds.⁵⁶⁶

On 21 July 2005, a group of East Africans launched a similar terrorist attack targeting the London Underground and a bus in central London, causing commotion and fear, but failing to kill anyone.⁵⁶⁷ The four would-be suicide bombers of 21/7 - Mukhtar Said Ibrahim, Yassin Omar, Omar Ramzi Mohamed and Hussein Osman - were not British-born and had completely different backgrounds and profiles to the 7/7 bombers. They were all first-generation immigrants from the Horn of Africa.⁵⁶⁸

In August 2006, British police arrested twenty-four young Muslims suspected of planning and preparing suicide-bombings on transatlantic airliners taking off from Heathrow Airport. Most of them were British citizens of Pakistani descent, but the group also included an ethnic 'Briton'. According to British authorities, the terrorists planned to smuggle homemade bomb devices (liquid explosives) on board, by using sports drinks bottles. Investigations revealed substantial evidence, such as bomb-making materials, 'martyrdom videos' and Jihadi propaganda. Investigators suspected that the group had ties to Kashmiri separatists, UK based extremists and Al-Qaeda. Evidence suggests that this group were ideologically inspired by Al-Qaeda.⁵⁶⁹ On 4 April 2008, the trial of the eight British Muslims implicated in the trans-Atlantic bomb plot began in Woolwich Crown Court in east London. The prosecution alleged

⁵⁶⁶ BBC News, , London Attacks (BBC News 8 July 2008) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/uk/05/london_blasts/what_happened/html [Accessed 6 February 2011]

⁵⁶⁷ Katharine Myrphy, The July 21 failed bombings (The Guardian 4 Febuary 2008) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/feb/04/terrorism.world1> [Accessed 6 February 2019]

⁵⁶⁸ Pargeter A. (2008), 'The New Frontiers of Jihad', London: I.B. Tauris. p.p. 45-48.

⁵⁶⁹ Don Van Natta, E. Scolino, S. Grey, Details Emerge in British Terror Case (The New York Times 26 Augoust 2006) Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/28/world/europe/28plot.html?_r=1 [Accessed 8 March 2019]

that the men planned ‘wholesale death and destruction in the skies above Europe and North America’. The scale of the attacks was described as ‘unprecedented’.⁵⁷⁰ A computer memory stick seized by police from one of the defendants detailed at least seven specific flights, departing within 2 ½ hours of one another from Heathrow Airport’s Terminal 3, that had been selected as targets.⁵⁷¹ British authorities have described the investigation into the airline plot as ‘the biggest operation of its kind’ ever in the UK. The trial has similarly been termed ‘one of the most protracted and complex ever held in a terrorism case in Britain’.

In January 2007, nine Jihadists were arrested, suspected of planning to abduct and kill a Muslim soldier in the British Armed Forces, who had served in Iraq (two of them were released without charge—the day after the arrests). All the suspects were British and of Pakistani origin. A central figure belonging to UK Jihadi networks was supposedly involved in the plans. Reportedly, the suspects planned to videotape the killing and distribute the tape on the internet via Al-Qaeda propagandists situated in Pakistan.⁵⁷²

In March 2007, the UK press reported that Al-Qaeda was plotting to ‘bring down’ the country’s internet infrastructure in order to damage the economy. In a series of raids, detectives recovered computer files revealing that terrorist suspects had targeted a high-security internet ‘hub’ in London. The facility, in Docklands, houses the channel through which almost every bit of information on the Internet passes in or out of Britain. Security experts say that the plot against Britain’s internet

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁷¹ Richard Edwards, Gordon Rayner and Duncan Gardham ‘Airline terror plotters wanted heavy casualties’ (Telegraph, 3 April 2008) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1583792/Airline-terror-plotters-wanted-heavy-casualties.html> [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁵⁷² Ian Cobain, A British beheading on the net - police claim to foil plot (The Guardian, 1 February 2007) Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/feb/01/topstories3.terrorism> [Accessed 8 March 2019].

‘hub’ reflects the constantly evolving threat from Al-Qaeda and related Islamist extremist groups. In 2006, MI5 uncovered intelligence which suggested that Jihadist terrorist suspects had carried out reconnaissance of the huge Bacton complex of gas terminals on the Norfolk coast. The threat led to the deployment of armed guards around the plant.⁵⁷³

A senior Whitehall security official said that the internet plotters appeared to be planning to infiltrate the ‘hub’, possibly to blow it up from the inside, according to evidence on a computer hard drive seized in raids on the homes of terror suspects in southern England the previous year.⁵⁷⁴ ‘The Telehouse facility was the subject of intense reconnaissance. The evidence suggests that it was one of a range of options considered by the suspects’, the official said. The discovery led Eliza Manningham-Buller, head of MI5, to set up the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure in February 2007.⁵⁷⁵ This is a special MI5 unit to help to protect ‘infrastructure’ sites from terrorist attacks, such as telecommunications, internet hubs and key utilities such as oil, gas installations and nuclear power stations. ‘Without these services, the UK could suffer serious consequences, including severe economic damage, grave social disruption, or even large-scale loss of life’, the MI5 website indicated.⁵⁷⁶

In June 2007, an Al-Qaeda-inspired militant Islamist attempted to bomb a night club in Haymarket, central London, and another in Cockspur Street.⁵⁷⁷ The attacks were planned and prepared as remote-control car-bomb attacks. The bombs in London failed to explode, and the police began an intensive hunt for all perpetrators. The day after the failed attacks in London, the terrorists attempted a suicide car-

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Nesser P. (2008), ‘Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994-2007’: *Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, p.p. 31:10, London: Routledge

bombing against an airport terminal in Glasgow, using a car loaded with gas canisters. One of the terrorists was fatally wounded during the attacks and later died. Another operative was arrested on the spot. Eight people were arrested (seven in the UK and one in Australia). The operatives were of Middle Eastern/Asian origin and hospital workers. Their links to militant organisations remain unknown.⁵⁷⁸

On November 16, 2008, Bilal Abdulla, a 29-year-old Iraqi citizen who worked as a doctor at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley, Scotland, was convicted of conspiracy to murder and cause explosions in central London and Glasgow Airport. He was sentenced to life with a minimum of thirty-two years imprisonment.⁵⁷⁹

In November 2007, a 23-year-old calling herself the ‘Lyrical Terrorist’ became the first woman in the UK to be convicted under the Terrorism Act of 2000.

Samina Malik, from Southall, west London, was found guilty at the Old Bailey of owning terrorist manuals.⁵⁸⁰

A married couple, Amjad Mahmood and Shella Roma, were arrested on 3 February 2008 and charged with distributing terrorist propaganda.⁵⁸¹ They had allegedly designed and printed two hundred leaflets calling on Muslims to fight in Jihad, and Mahmood ‘is also said to have distributed leaflets outside his local mosque’.⁵⁸² The couple was charged under Section 2 of the Terrorism Act of 2006, which provides criminal penalties for an individual who ‘distributes or circulates a

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁰ Claire Truscott and agencies, Lyrical terrorist' sentenced over extremist poetry (The Guardian, 6 December 2007) Available at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/dec/06/terrorism.books> [Accessed 9 March 2019]

⁵⁸¹ BBC News, Terror pamphlet charge two bailed (BBC News, 12 February 2008) Available at:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7241432.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁸² Manchester Evening News, Oldham (18 Jan 2008)

Available

at:http://www.oldhamadvertiser.co.uk/news/s/1036335_bail_for_couple_accused_of_proterrori_sm_propaganda [Accessed 8 March 2018]

terrorist publication’, or ‘gives, sells or lends such a publication’.⁵⁸³

Roma, who authored the pamphlet, received a three-year community order with a two-year supervision requirement, after pleading guilty.⁵⁸⁴

On April 17, 2008, Andrew Ibrahim, aged nineteen, was arrested and held by Avon and Somerset police under the Terrorism Act of 2000.⁵⁸⁵ At the end of April 2008, he was charged with intending to commit acts of terrorism, possession of explosives, and possession of articles for terrorist purposes.⁵⁸⁶ These materials ‘included a CD-Rom, two home-made vests, a quantity of ball bearings, a quantity of air gun pellets, a quantity of nails and screws, wired circuitry, batteries and electric bulb filaments’.⁵⁸⁷ The explosive substance he possessed was reportedly hexamethylene triperoxide diamine.⁵⁸⁸

On June 16, 2008, a second teenager, Hashi Ahmed Omer, was arrested in Bristol and charged with failing to provide information that he knew about Ibrahim’s plot.⁵⁸⁹ Two men, Mohammed Abushamma and Qasim Abukar, were arrested on terrorism charges in late April 2008. The men were arrested when they got off a flight at Heathrow Airport, on suspicion that they were planning terrorist attacks abroad.⁵⁹⁰ Both men were from North London. In November, Abushamma pled guilty to attempting to reach Afghanistan with the intention of joining mujahidin, who were

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴ Manchester Evening News, ‘Holy war’ mum spared jail (18 Jan 2013) Available at: http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1105509_holy_war_mum_spared_jail [Accessed 8 March 2019]

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ Christian Broughton, ‘Teenager terror suspect charged (Independent , 11 June 2009) Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/teenager-terror-suspect-charged-817840.html> [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁰ BBC News, ‘Student sentenced over terror bid’, (BBC News, 17 June 2009), Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/8106092.stm [Accessed 10 April 2019]

fighting coalition forces. Abukar pled not guilty, and is awaiting trial.⁵⁹¹

On May 22, 2008, twenty-two-year-old convert to Islam, Nicky Reilly - who suffered from mental disabilities - attempted to activate a rudimentary homemade nail bomb in the Giraffe restaurant in Exeter. However, the device failed to work properly and it detonated in Reilly's hands in the restroom, injuring no one else but himself.⁵⁹² Reilly, a Plymouth resident, had converted to Islam around the age of seventeen. For a time, he regularly attended local mosques. The British press noted that he was 'believed to have Asperger's syndrome, a form of autism, and may also suffer from schizophrenia'.⁵⁹³ Both MI5 and the British police stated that his mental disability 'may indicate a new strategy of targeting vulnerable people with mental health problems to carry out attacks'.⁵⁹⁴ In October 2008, Reilly pleaded guilty to attempted murder. At the end of January 2009, he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He must serve a minimum of eighteen years for his crimes.⁵⁹⁵

In August 2008, three men were charged as a part of an investigation into an assassination threat made on the internet against Prime Minister Gordon Brown and former Prime Minister Tony Blair. The BBC noted that 'no actual plot was in place, but officers discovered a written threat on an extremist Jihadi website'.⁵⁹⁶ In addition to the internet threat, Ishaq Kanmi was charged with 'belonging or professing to belong to al Qaeda, inviting support for al Qaeda, and dissemination of terrorist publications', while Abbas Iqbal and Ilyas Iqbal were charged with 'possession of an article in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that possession is

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² The Telegraph, 'Exeter Explosion: Police search suspect Nicky Reilly's home' (The Telegraph, 23 May 2008), Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2012790/Exeter-bomb-Nicky-Reilly-white-Muslim-convert-is-named-as-suspect-in-Giraffe-restaurant-explosion.html> [Accessed 15 February 2019]

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ BBC News, 'PM terror threat' three charged (BBC News, 28 August 2008) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7586801.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019]

for a purpose connected with the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism'.⁵⁹⁷ Two more men were arrested in late August 2008, for their role in the threats. Muhammad Ali Mumtaz Ahmad was accused of 'having material such as camouflage clothes and plans for urban combat' and was charged with possessing an article that could be useful for preparing or instigating an act of terrorism.⁵⁹⁸ A fifth man implicated in the threats, Krenar Lusha, was charged with five terrorist offences, including possession of four kilograms of potassium nitrate, and 'collecting or recording information likely to be useful to someone wanting to commit or prepare a terrorist act'.⁵⁹⁹

In October 2008, three men - Ali Beheshti, 40, Abrar Mirza, 22, and Abbas Taj, 30 - were arrested and charged with conspiring to damage the home and office of the publisher of the controversial novel *The Jewel of Medina*, by American author Sherry Jones.⁶⁰⁰

On October 17 2008, Houria Chahed Chentouf was arrested by the Greater Manchester Police, and was charged with 'keeping a computer memory stick for terror-related purposes'.⁶⁰¹ She was arrested after the police executed searches in Manchester and the Netherlands. After Chentouf made a court appearance, the judge said she would remain in custody due to the severity of the charge.⁶⁰²

The conviction in December 2008 of Rangzieb Ahmed for directing terrorism as a member of al-Qaeda was the first time someone had been found guilty of these offences in England and Wales, said Mark Topping, reviewing lawyer in the Crown

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ BBC News, PM threat' - fourth man remanded (BBC News, 2 September 2008) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7593873.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁵⁹⁹ BBC News, Fifth man facing terror charges (BBC News, 9 September 2008) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7606384.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁶⁰⁰ BBC News, Three charged over novel attack (BBC News, 2 October 2008) Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7649712.stm> [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁶⁰¹ BBC News, Woman remanded on terror charge (BBC News, 1 November 2008) Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7704098.stm [Accessed 8 March 2019].

⁶⁰² Ibid.

Prosecution Service's Counter Terrorism Division.⁶⁰³ He said that:

Rangzieb Ahmed was an important member of Al-Qaeda and in a position to direct some of its activities. In one recorded conversation he described himself as 'more than a manager'. He was involved in a mission which was called off when al-Qaeda's director of operations was killed and Rangzieb Ahmed returned to the UK. Those in charge would not send a low-level member on this exercise, but a trusted and trained member of the organisation. We believe that he was a significant player and the maximum sentence for such activity is life imprisonment. The actual sentence is a matter for the judge.

Rangzieb Ahmed's co-accused, Habib Ahmed, was also found guilty of membership of al-Qaeda and of possessing books and a document for a purpose connected with terrorism. Habib Ahmed's wife, Mehreen Haji, was found not guilty of arranging funding for the purposes of terrorism.⁶⁰⁴

In January 2009, the then head of MI5, Jonathan Evans, stated that 2,000 individuals in the UK were directly connected to Jihadist terrorist plots and that many more supported terrorism, through fundraising or propaganda.⁶⁰⁵

On 8 April 2009, the police arrested eleven Pakistani nationals and one UK-born Briton over an alleged plan to coordinate suicide bomb attacks on shopping centres in Manchester during Easter.⁶⁰⁶ The men, who were arrested in Manchester and Liverpool, were said to be in direct contact with Al-Qaeda in Pakistan, using coded e-mail messages that talked about cars and girls. They were said to be

⁶⁰³Duncan Gardham, Al-Qaeda terror trial: British Muslim was director of terrorism (Telegraph, 18 December 2008) Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/3832883/Al-Qaeda-terror-trial-British-Muslim-was-director-of-terrorism.html> [Accessed 9 March 2019].

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ The Henry Jackson Society, 'Islamist Terrorism: The British connections 2nd Edition, 2011, Available at: <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Islamist+Terrorism+2011+Preview-1.pdf> [Accessed 22 April 2019]

⁶⁰⁶ Duncan Gardham, Al-Qaeda terror plot: searches continue over alleged plan to bomb Easter shoppers (Telegraph, 10 April 2009) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/politics/lawandorder/5136227/Al-Qaeda-terror-plot-searches-continue-over-alleged-plan-to-bomb-Easter-shoppers.html> [Accessed 15 January 2019],

‘operating in a similar manner’ to those planning the mass-casualty attacks of 7 July 2005 and the trans-Atlantic airline plot of 2006.⁶⁰⁷ Police had to move fast to arrest the suspects, because of intelligence from MI5 surveillance that the alleged plotters had the clear intent and capability to mount a terrorist attack. Security sources said that the threat was considered grave enough to justify the arrests. A judgment had to be made between continuing the intelligence operations, led by MI5, and the risk to the safety of the public of failing to make immediate arrests.⁶⁰⁸ Members of the alleged Al-Qaeda cell suspected of plotting a Bank Holiday terror atrocity, worked for a firm based at Manchester Airport. At least one drove vans for a cargo company which had access to sensitive locations. A further two had passed security industry checks which enabled them to guard premises overnight, further raising fears that members of the gang - all but one of them Pakistani students - were planning to infiltrate high-profile targets before an attack.⁶⁰⁹ However, the nine men detained in the security operation, intended to thwart what the Prime Minister said was ‘a very big terrorist plot’, were released without charge on April 21, 2009. Aged between twenty-two and thirty-eight, they had been detained for thirteen out of a possible twenty-eight days, but were released because there was no evidence connecting them to terrorist activity.⁶¹⁰ Subsequently, on April 22, 2009, all twelve suspects were released without charge. Eleven of the men - all Pakistani nationals who were in Britain on student visas - faced being deported after they were transferred into the custody of the UK Border Agency.⁶¹¹ Eventually, all were released without charge, because the Security Service (MI5) and the police had not collected enough evidence for them to be convicted. This was the result of the decision they (the security

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

services) took to stop the surveillance of the group and make immediate arrests in order not to risk the lives of innocent citizens.

Britain's student visa system has been the weakest link in immigration controls for years, offering a loophole for thousands of immigrants who otherwise would fail to gain entry. Bogus colleges have enabled migrants from around the world to come to Britain by claiming that they were students on further education courses or learning English. The absence of automatic interviews for every applicant for a visa has allowed bogus students to escape proper scrutiny by British officials who issue the travel document overseas.⁶¹² 'That these visas might be used by terrorists is no surprise. Warnings have existed since 2005 that terrorists regard our campuses as safe havens', said Professor Anthony Glees, Director of the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Buckingham. Glees also argued that there is a 'need to vet and interview every applicant from Pakistan and other areas associated with terrorism.'⁶¹³

On Christmas Day, 2009, Omar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Muslim Nigerian citizen, attempted to detonate plastic explosives hidden in his underwear while on board Northwest Airlines Flight 253, en route from Amsterdam to Detroit, Michigan.⁶¹⁴ The connection to the UK is that Abdulmutallab had been recruited by Al-Qaeda in London, according to a claim made by the Yemeni government on January 7 2010.⁶¹⁵ Abdulmutallab had studied for an engineering degree at University College London between 2005 and 2008, and was known by the UK security services

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Anthony Glees, 'Terror plot: universities seen as safe havens', (Telegraph, 10 April 2009) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/lawandorder/5133542/Terror-plot-universities-seen-as-safe-havens.html> [Accessed 10 March 2019].

⁶¹⁴ The Telegraph, 'Detroit: British student in al-Qaeda airline bomb attempt', (The Telegraph, 26 December 2009) Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/6886600/Detroit-British-student-in-al-Qaeda-airline-bomb-attempt.html> [Accessed 10 February 2019]

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

to have contacted radical Islamist preachers while in Britain.⁶¹⁶

On 20 December 2010, in what has been characterised as a large-scale intelligence-led operation, police forces across the country arrested twelve men on suspicion of commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism. It has been suggested that all or some of the suspects are UK nationals, with possible connections to Bangladesh or Pakistan. These were the largest anti-terror raids since Operation Pathway in April 2009. The plot, disrupted by MI5 and the police, suggests a rather traditional Al-Qaeda style plot of executing multiple bomb attacks, possibly implying the use of suicide bombers, rather than the kind of urban jihad that was carried out in Mumbai in November 2008.⁶¹⁷

On 15 November 2011, the West Midlands Counter-terrorism Unit arrested four men at their homes in Sparkhill, Birmingham, on suspicion of conducting terrorist offences. The four appeared in court in Westminster, London, on 19 November 2011, charged with terrorism offences. They were named as Khobaib Hussain, Ishaq Hussain and Shahid Kasam Khan, all nineteen, and Naweed Mahmood Ali, twenty-four. They were charged with fundraising for terrorist purposes and for travelling to Pakistan for terrorist training.⁶¹⁸

On 27 June, 2012, two Muslim converts were arrested in East London on suspicion of plotting an attack against the London Olympic canoeing venue.⁶¹⁹

On 26 April, 2013, eleven British Muslims were sentenced to prison terms ranging from forty months to life imprisonment, ending one of the largest ever

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

⁶¹⁷ Soria V. (2010), 'What do the latest arrest tell of the UK Terror Threat?', London: RUSI, 21 December 2010. p.p. 23-25.

⁶¹⁸ Dalian, Atinchon, Four Birmingham men remanded on terrorism charges, (19 November 2011) Available at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15798572> [Accessed 17 November 2018].

⁶¹⁹ Duncan Gardham, London 2012 Olympics: Muslim converts held over 'Games plot' (Telegraph, 29 June 2012) Available at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9363829/London-2012-Olympics-Muslim-converts-held-over-Games-plot.html> [Accessed 17 November 2018].

counter-terrorism operations in the UK. The investigation in Birmingham, known as Operation Pitsford, uncovered a cell of would-be suicide bombers who were trying to recruit others to their cause.⁶²⁰

On 30 April, 2013, six British Muslims from the West Midlands pleaded guilty to planning to bomb an English Defence League Rally held in June 2012.⁶²¹

On 22 May, 2013, a British Army Soldier and Drummer, Lee Rigby, of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, was attacked and killed by two men near the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, southeast London, in what has been described as a Jihadist terrorist attack.⁶²²

In June, 2014, Tarik Hassane, a medical student in Khartoum, Sudan, declared his allegiance to the Islamic State and his extremist ideology became clear through his writings on social media.⁶²³ His plan, along with other extremist students, was to attack London by driving through streets and shooting at people. In late September, 2014, the first plotters were arrested, and in October, 2014, Hassane was arrested too.⁶²⁴ Apart from this event, David Cameron has revealed that during 2014, British intelligence services managed to stop seven terror attacks.⁶²⁵

On 22 July, 2015, Mohammed Ammer Ali was arrested by the police in

⁶²⁰ Dalian Attinchon Operation Pitsford: The 11 men (BBC News, 26 April 2013) Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22305095> [Accessed 17 November 2018].

⁶²¹ Dalian Attinchon, Six admit planning to bomb English Defence League rally (BBC News, 30 April 2013) Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22344054> [Accessed 17 November 2018]

⁶²² Vicram Dodd Man killed in deadly terror attack in London street (The Guardian, 22 May 2013) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/may/22/police-respond-serious-incident-woolwich> [Accessed 17 November 2018].

⁶²³ Vicram Dodd, Two convicted over moped drive-by London terror plot (The Guardian, 23 March 2016) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/mar/23/two-convicted-over-moped-drive-by-london-terror-plot> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

⁶²⁴ Tom Whitehead, Medical student in plot to assassinate police and soldiers in drive-by London shootings, court hears (Telegraph, 18 Jan 2016) Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/12105374/Isil-inspired-plot-for-drive-by-London-shootings-Old-Bailey-hears.html> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

⁶²⁵ Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11997853/Revealed-Britain-foils-seven-terror-attacks-in-just-six-months.html> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

Liverpool after ordering 500mg of the chemical ricin, an amount that was enough to kill 1,400 people.⁶²⁶

On 6 December, 2015, another incident of terrorism related to Jihadism took place at Leytonstone tube station, after a man attacked several people with a knife. The attacker was arrested by the police.⁶²⁷

On 29 December, 2015, London's police forces arrested Mohammed Rehman and his wife, after the undercover investigator found out that the two terrorists were about to carry out a suicide attack in the centre of London, or at the London Underground, in memory of the suicide attacks of 7 July, 2005.⁶²⁸

In early April, 2016, five people were arrested and detained on suspicion of preparing terrorist attacks in the UK. The suspects were all linked to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels.⁶²⁹

On 10 May, 2016, three people were arrested in Italy, two men were arrested in Bari, and a further one person was arrested in Milan. It is suspected that the three men were planning terrorist attacks in Italy and the UK, with airports, ports and hotels as their main targets. In their personal items, police found photos of Taliban and Jihadists.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁶ John Siddley, Ricin trial: Jury shown timeline of Liverpool dad's alleged bid to buy enough poison to kill 1,400 people. (ECHO News, 22 July 2015) Available at <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/ricin-trial-jury-shown-timeline-9705720> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

⁶²⁷ Dalian Atchinson, Leytonstone Tube station stabbing a 'terrorist incident', (BBC News, 6 December 2015,) Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-35018789> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

⁶²⁸ Owen Bowcott, Couple found guilty of 7/7 anniversary London bomb plot https: (The Guardian, 29 December 2015) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/dec/29/couple-guilty-july-7-anniversary-bomb-plot-london> [Accessed 16 May 2018]

⁶²⁹ Vikram Dodd, Five arrested in UK after inquiry linked to attacks on Brussels and Paris, (The Guardian, 15 April 2016). Available at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/apr/15/five-people-arrested-in-west-midlands-uk-over-planning-terrorist-acts> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

⁶³⁰ Stephanie-kirchgaessner, Three held over alleged terror plots in Italy and UK , (The Guardian, 10 May 2018). Available at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/10/two-held-italian-terror-plot-inquiry-bari-london> [Accessed 16 May 2018].

On 22 March, 2017, 52-year-old Muslim convert Khalid Masood drove a car into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge, killing four and injuring over 40 others. He then crashed his car into the fence of the Palace of Westminster and fatally stabbed an unarmed policeman before being shot dead by other officers.⁶³¹

On 22 May, 2017, a suicide bombing was carried out by Salman Ramadan Abedi, a 22-year-old British Muslim of Libyan ancestry, at Manchester Arena after a concert by American singer Ariana Grande, killing 22 civilians.⁶³²

On June 3, 2017, three assailants used a van to ram pedestrians on London Bridge and then drove to Borough Market, where the three attacked people with knives before being shot by police. Eight people were killed and 48 were injured. The injured included four unarmed police officers.⁶³³

On September 15, 2017 an attacker placed a bomb containing TATP on a District Line train at Parsons Green tube station, where it detonated, leaving thirty people requiring treatment for injuries. The main suspect arrested was an 18-year-old Iraqi refugee.⁶³⁴ On December 31, 2018, a 25-year-old man with Somali ancestry stabbed three people at Manchester Victoria station before being arrested.⁶³⁵

⁶³¹ Vicram Dodd, Police unravel multiple aliases of Westminster terrorist Khalid Masood , (The Guardian, 24 May, 2017), Available at : <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/23/westminster-attack-police-arrest-seven-people-in-raids-at-six-addresses> [Accessed 10 November 2018]

⁶³² Vicram Dodd, At least 22 killed, 59 injured in suicide attack at Manchester Arena, (The Guardian, 23 May 2017) Available at : <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/may/22/manchester-arena-police-explosion-ariana-grande-concert-england> [Accessed 10 November 2018]

⁶³³ Steven Erlanger, Another Terrorist Attack Strikes the Heart of London, (The New York Times, June 3, 2017) Available at : <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/03/world/europe/london-bridge-van.html> [10 November 2018]

⁶³⁴ Alexandra Ma, The Parsons Green bomb had the hallmarks of an ISIS-favoured chemical explosive, according to security, (BBC News, September 18, 2017), Available at : <https://www.businessinsider.com/parsons-green-london-underground-attack-bomb-not-worked-properly-experts-2017-9?r=nordic> [Accessed 10 November 2018]

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18.09.2010- Savvas Kalenteridis (Former Intelligence Officer of the NIS-EYP), Athens

21.09.2010- Munir Sindho Badar (President of the Greek-Pakistan Friendship Association), Athens

22.09.2010- Ioannis Michaletos (Security Analyst-Head of the Southeast European Office of the World Security Network), Athens

22.09.2010- Naim El Ghandour and Anna Stamou (President and Public Relations Director of the Muslim Association of Greece), Athens

23.09.2010- Daadir Daysane (Spokesman of the Somali Community in Greece), Athens

24.09.2010- Ioannis Corantis (Former Director-General of the NIS-EYP), Athens

01.10.2010- Muhammadi Yonous (President of the Afghan Community in Greece), Athens

01.10.2010- Zaki Sidi Mohammed (President of the Moroccan Community in Greece), Athens

02.10.2010- Hala Akari (Member of the Board of Directors of the European Forum of Muslim Women and Head of the Women sector of the Hellenic-Arab Cultural Centre in Athens), Athens

04.10.2010- Syed Mohammad Jamil (President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society), Athens

05.10.2010- Mohamed Rashad El Zafzaf (Secretary General of the Association of the Egyptian Community in Greece), Athens

07.10.2010- Shadi Ayubi (Journalist, administrator of the web site islam.gr and correspondent of Al Jazeera online in Greece), Athens

11.10.2010- Senior Intelligence Officer of the NIS-EYP, Athens

15.10.2010- Nader Halbuni (President of the Syrian community in Greece), Athens

29.10.2010- Mehmet Imam (President of the Pan-Hellenic Federation in Support of Muslims in Greece aka "Filotita"), Athens

05.11.2010-Marinos Stagakis (Criminal Intelligence Analyst of the Greek Police and former liaison officer to the Greek Embassy in Ankara), Athens

19.11.2010- Evripidis Stylianidis (Former Minister of Education and Religious Affairs and current Minister of Interior and MP of Rodopi District in Western Thrace for the Greek Conservative Party-Nea Demokratia), Athens

30.11.2010- Zainul Abedin (President of the Bangladeshi Community in Greece), Athens

07.12.2010- Mathee Ullah (President of the Pakistani Islamic Forum in Greece), Athens

08.12.2010- Abul Bashar (President of the Bangladeshi Islamic Forum in Greece), Athens

10.01.2011- Halit Habipoglu (President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe), [via e-mail]

18.02.2011-Dimitrios Chorianopoulos (Former Commandant of the Greek Counterterrorism Unit of the Greek Police), Athens

Group B (October 2014-February 2015)

13.10.2014- Vasilis Lambropoulos (Journalist specialised in security issues- Newspaper 'To Vima'), Athens

14.10.2014- Georgios Dionysopoulos (Journalist specialised in security issues- Newspaper 'Proto Thema'), Athens

14.10.2014- Ioannis Michaletos (Security Analyst-Head of the Southeast European Office of the World Security Network), Athens

18.10.2014- Ioannis Souliotis (Journalist specialised in security issues- Newspaper 'Kathimerini'), Athens

21.10.2014- Andreas Andrianopoulos (Director of the Athens based Think Tank 'Institute of Diplomacy and Global Affairs-American College of Greece' and former Minister of the Greek Government), Athens

29.10.2014- Nader Halbuni (President of the Syrian community in Greece), Athens

31.10.2014- Intelligence Analyst of NIS-EYP, Athens

5.11.2014- Savvas Kalenteridis (Former Intelligence Officer of the NIS-EYP), Athens

11.11.2014- Syed Mohammad Jamil (President of the Pak-Hellenic Cultural and Welfare Society), Athens

3.12.2014- Dr. Georgios Kalantzis (Secretary General for Religious Affairs at the Ministry of Education), Athens

21.12.2014- Dr. Thanos Dokos (Director General of the Athens based Think Tank ELIAMEP), [via e-mail]

26.2.2015- Dr. Angelos Syrigos (Former Secretary General for Immigration and Social Cohesion at the Ministry of Interior and Senior Lecturer of International Relations at Panteion University), [via e-mail]

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