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**RELIGION AND TERRORISM: A CASE STUDY OF  
TERRORIST ATTACKS IN EUROPE IN THE 21st CENTURY**

Master's thesis

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## **ABSTRACT**

Lampinen, E. Religion and terrorism: a case study of terrorist attacks in Europe in the 21st century. Master's Thesis, Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn 2018, 55 pages, 122 references, in English.

Religion and terrorism: a case study of terrorist attacks in Europe in the 21st century.

This thesis aims to find out how much, if at all, has religion influenced the five most lethal terrorist attacks in the Europe during the 21st century. The hypothesis of this thesis is that religion was highly influencing factor behind the attacks, starting from radicalization. Additionally, a supportive research question is formed. The supportive research question is, whether religion triggered the process of radicalization. The attacks are analysed in order to find a motive and to see whether those had economic, social, political or religious goal traits in them. The background of the terrorists is analysed in order to bring visible the possible radicalization point. Secondary sources from various academic journals, books and internet materials such as newspaper articles, working papers and videos are among the sources used in this qualitative research. As a method of this thesis explanatory multiple-case studies are being used. Majority of the results supported the hypothesis strongly and religion can be seen as the dominating factor behind the attacks and in majority of the radicalization processes. The motives for the attacks can be seen as purely religious, however some of the attacks had an overlap of religious and political goal traits in them. For the individuals behind the attacks, religion is seen as the main cause of radicalization for 70 percent of the cases.

**KEYWORDS:** religion, terrorism, radicalization, jihad.

## INTRODUCTION

*“I am fascinated by religion. (That's a completely different thing from believing in it!) It has had such an incalculably huge effect on human affairs... I've thought about it so much over the years that that fascination is bound to spill over into my writing.”*

*-Douglas Adams (Goodreads n.d. a.)*

The main aim of this thesis is to analyse how much, if at all, has religion influenced the five most lethal terrorist attacks in the Europe during the 21st century. For the sake of completing the research the attack timeline is only taken until January 2018. The geographical area chosen for analysis is Europe, excluding the transcontinental countries such as Turkey and Russia. The five most lethal attacks were chosen by the number of casualties. If the attack demanded more than 50 casualties, then it is analysed in this thesis. Additionally, there needed to be a known perpetrator(s) for the chosen attacks. This topic is chosen because it can be characterized as a controversial topic. There are many scholars who argue that religion plays no role in terrorism and scholars who argue the opposite. Thus, this research of five terrorist attacks and 20 perpetrators aims to shed a light to this controversial issue. This thesis is also relevant when thinking about the increased numbers of homegrown terrorists in Europe. This is because these terrorists many times seem to have it all, so to speak, thus leaving the question from where the terrorism in these circumstances get the motivation from. The topic of possible causal relationship between religion and terrorism is additionally personally interesting to the author. The topic is chosen to benefit the future career goals of the author. It is good to mention already here that the aim of this thesis is not to blame some certain religious group as no one religion holds the monopoly of violence.

The hypothesis of this thesis is that religion was highly influencing factor behind the attacks all the way from getting radicalized and the supportive research question is, whether religion triggered the process of radicalization. In order to find answers, this thesis aims to research the motives and goals of the attacks as well as the background of the perpetrators. The possible similarities and differences between attackers are important to note as well as trying to find possible radicalization

point is important. The limited length of the thesis could be said to have been a restriction for the research to meet its full potential. The author was able to only focus on five attacks and their attackers on certain area and timing in order to fit it into the length. However, as the attacks chosen are the most lethal ones, it can be seen as compensating the fact that not all the attacks are taken into analysis. Additionally, limited amount of scientific data on some certain attackers brought challenges. The author has not found a similar study to this day, thus this thesis contributes to the academic literature with its broad research.

The structure after this chapter goes as follows. In the next chapter the methodology of this thesis is presented. In the theoretical background part, the most important concepts in relation to this thesis are introduced as well as previous studies made about the issue. The theoretical background part covers the issue from multiple sides as the topic is complicated as well as one might get biased by trying to understand it only by looking into one direction. The two extreme ends of the debate about the relationship between religion and terrorism are presented there. There the concepts of terrorism, religion and securitization are introduced. The goals of religious terrorism and their possible targets as well as the possible radicalization paths are presented there. The section of case studies provides evidences about the five chosen attacks and perpetrators in a chronological order. The Madrid attacks on 11.3.2004 are the first ones introduced. The London attacks on 7.7.2005 are next. The Norway attacks on 22.7.2011 are third. The Paris attacks on 13.11.2015 fourth and last one is Nice attack on 14.7.2016. There the possible motives, goals and radicalization links are presented. These attacks are analysed in order to see if those had economic, social, political or religious goal traits in them. The results and analysis part goes through and analyses the evidences provided in the case studies section more deeply making links to the previous studies as well. Lastly there is the conclusion, which goes briefly through the main findings and discussions of this thesis.

# 1. METHODOLOGY

*“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.”  
-Albert Einstein (Einstein 1941)*

This thesis can be said to be a qualitative research using explanatory multiple-case studies in order to find evidence for the hypothesis and answer to the research question. As this thesis tries to understand the motives, goals and radicalization process of the attacks by focusing on the certain selected group of individuals it can be characterized as a qualitative research. (Sage 2017, 2) By using qualitative methods one can find answers to the underlying questions about intangible factors such as religion. (I J Pre Clin Dent Res 2015, 81) Case study method is chosen for this thesis as it can be used even when the borderlines between phenomenon and context are not readily apparent and when various sources are used in order to collect the evidence. To be more precise this thesis uses explanatory case studies because it seeks to analyse and research the data not only closely from the surface but deeper as well. Likelihood of causal relationships are also possible to research by explanatory case studies which brings additional value for the chosen method. (Zainal 2007, 2,3) The analysis is conducted using explanation building strategy. Explanation building happens in narrative terms. First, the initial theoretical statement is drawn, which in this case means the hypothesis of this thesis. (Nelson and Martin 2013) Using multiple-case studies, relevant material of each attack and perpetrator was collected first into its own sections. In order to do the analysis, a framework was constructed with the help of previous relevant researches done. The evidences were then compared to the hypothesis trying to draw an explanation that would fit all the cases. (Nelson and Martin 2013) The search for the relevant materials was conducted with the help of internet and library. In the search of relevant materials, the author used key words such as the attack name and perpetrator’s name. Key words also had extra words such as “motives”, “goals”, “radicalization” and “religious” added to them. Various academic journals, books and internet materials such as newspaper articles, working papers and couple of videos are among the secondary sources used in this thesis. The sources were selected because those provided relevant material for the hypothesis and research question.



## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

*“Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.”  
-Peter L. Berger ( Berger 1999, 18)*

The important terms that are used in this thesis are introduced next as well as previous studies that will be helpful in case of this thesis.

### **2.1. Terrorism**

Defining terrorism is challenging as there exists rather little consensus among decision makers. It is argued by Walter Laqueur that there is not only one branch of terrorism and the reasons behind the attacks, ways of conducting these attacks and actors of the attacks are changing over the time thus making it hard to agree on one definition for it. (Laqueur 1999, 6) The missing agreement about the definition is problematic not only in case of this thesis but also as Frayman argues, for the ones wishing to effectively fight against terrorism. (Frayman 2006) After carefully researching various scholars' opinions and policy makers' statements this thesis decides to use the definition that The Global Terrorism Index (2015) uses because their definition takes into account the long lasting psychological effect it has on a society, rather than focusing to the physical act of an attack alone. Terrorism is stated to be the act where a non-state actor threatens or executes the use of illegal force and violence in order to reach the goal, be it political, economic, religious or social with the help of fear, coercion or intimidation. (GTI 2015, 6) The goals for religious terrorism are introduced more widely in this thesis however it is important to shortly introduce the three other possible goals in order to fully be able to analyse the reasons behind the five attacks chosen for analysis.

Revolutionary terrorism is according to Paul Wilkinson the first category of political terrorism. It includes a will to use systematic violence in order to change the existing political system

completely. The second category of political terrorism according to him is subrevolutionary terrorism. This includes a will to use systematic violence in order to force some certain changes to the existing political system. The third category according to him is repressive terrorism. This includes a will to use systematic violence used by the governmental bodies in order to repress others to their will. (Wilkinson 1974 referenced in Gross 2006, 12) Social terrorism could be characterized as extreme behaviour for the cause of social single issue or policy such as animal rights, rights for minorities, different races and ethnicities as well as anti-government and environmental issues. (Air University 2007, 9) Economic terrorism includes acts that can be coordinated, sophisticated or massively destabilizing in their nature for the cause of cluttering the economic and financial stability of state(s) or a society. These actions do not necessarily have violent traits in them and can cause immediate consequences or result in psychological effects that at the end have economic effects. (Reich and Gelbstein 2012, 12)

As there can be said to be few types of terrorism, this thesis introduces two of those. First is good to understand what the so called traditional terrorism constitutes of. According to Gregg (2014 a) left wing, right wing and ethnic-separatist attacks can be said to be the three sub-categories of traditional terrorism. Anarchist, Marxist and socialist inspired ideologies fit into the left-wing terrorism. This type of terrorism was most prominent in Western and Eastern Europe, Latin America and to some extent in Middle East from 1960s till 1980s. (Gregg 2014 a; Shughart II 2006, 8,21) In Russia and all-around Europe there were numerous Anarchist groups already in the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Italian Red Brigades, the German Red Army Faction and the Palestinian Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine are all examples of groups that had Marxist or socialist ideologies inspiring their actions. Right wing terrorism then again can be said to been active between the World Wars and become stronger again in the 1980s and has not faded away. This sub-category can be seen to give racist, fascist or nationalistic reasoning for their behaviour. Ku Klux Klan in the United States, the Rumanian Iron Guard, neo-Nazi groups as well as violent anti-immigration groups all around the world can be said to be examples of this sub-category. The third sub-category, ethnic and separatist terrorism includes groups that want an autonomy or independence from a state or a military group such as the IRA under British occupation and Jewish Irgun in Palestine under the British Mandate. (Gregg 2014 a)

Next the religious terrorism is to be introduced. The definition for religious terrorism is just as contested as the definition for traditional terrorism and many argue it contains elements from all branches of traditional terrorism or that it should not even be divided into its own branch. (Gunning

and Jackson 2011, 374; Gregg 2014 a) That is because it is claimed that it does not differ greatly when comparing to some other types and it is stated that as one defines something to be a religious act, it is not impossible to find a secular act that fits into that definition as well. Thus clearly distinguishing religious from its counterpart, the secular phenomenon is challenging. As an example, in case of functional and behavioural part there are secular counterparts for religious structures and practices such as community halls that can represent mosques as well as one can find party leaders, prophets and priests that perform their rituals, have foundational text and guard those from almost every country. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 374) One could also see religion as a system of beliefs, however still one could find secular counterparts. It all depends on how one defines religion. If one sees it as something that is about their ultimate values or people's sense of self then one can find contemporary political ideologies that have traits that could fit into that definition as well, ideologies such as Marxism, nationalism and liberalism. Even trying to define religion more narrowly as something sacred then again in secular world one can find counterparts such as Marxism and nationalism and this definition would exclude some types of Buddhism and non-theistic Hinduism. One might argue that religion is still something different because it is exceedingly beyond reason however when thinking about certain leaps of faith that some secular ideologies such as Marxism, nationalism and neo-liberalism demand, then this argument can be contested. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 374)

However, this thesis uses definition provided by Mark Juergensmeyer (2003) as he sees religious terrorism to be terrorism that has religion as its focal point all the way from having motivation, justification, the organization and the whole world view derived from it. (Juergensmeyer 2003, 7) Many scholars argue that the very first known terrorist based their actions on religion such as the Jewish Zealots, the Muslim Hashashins as well as the Hindu Thugs and some state that religion was the only way to justify terror before 18th century. (Frayman 2006) It is argued that before the 18th century religious terrorism was active form of terrorism but then the three sub-categories of traditional terrorism became more prominent however after Cold War the religious terrorism saw rise in its numbers again. It is also argued that the rise of liberal-democratic values gave rise to anti-modern ideas and through that to religious terrorism instead of secular. (Frayman 2006; Gunning and Jackson 2011, 371)

Bruce Hoffman's (2006) ideas about religious terrorism go well together with that of Mark Juergensmeyer's introduced earlier. Hoffman (2006, 82) states that one thing that is most prominent in today's terrorism is the religious imperative in it. He also adds that religious terrorism

is able to give so profoundly differing values, motives, justifications, concepts of morality and the worldviews thus this is why it could be seen as different branch of terrorism and perhaps even the most lethal type. (Hoffman 2006, 88,272) Political and economic problems are marked as major contributors to the mobilization of religious terrorism. (Schmid 2011, 274) According to Gregg (2014 b) there are four aspects that affect to religious terrorism, the context, leaders, followers and resources. In case of context it is about individual's social and political environment that might trigger the, first and foremost religious action and beyond that to violent action. In case of leaders it is about by whom the faith is being interpreted, how and what level of authority does the person represent. In case of followers it is purely about the conditions in which they believe the interpretations and interpret themselves and lastly different kind of resources that allows spreading of the religious violence. (Gregg 2014 b, 27)

As an example alienated, marginalized young people are in great threat to being brainwashed by the recruiters, preachers and by internet materials. The existence of absolute certainties and promises of something better are proven to guide alienated, marginalized and troubled young men towards religious terrorist groups as they feel that through that they will be appreciated and even lift to the podium which is a grand difference from the reality they live in. Thus they join the group to escape the reality of being nobody and gaining a sense of power through the acts of the group. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 373) It could be also said that seek for social acceptance and friendship, pressure from others or a reaction against something one perceives as important can lead into joining a religious terrorist group, thus at first the ideology is not necessarily the main motif behind the decision. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 381) Another example to these four variables introduced by Gregg (2014 b) comes from the concept of martyrdom and teachings of Islam. Suicide was not acceptable if one wanted to go to heaven thus in order to move forward with the idea groups needed religious rulings to tell them that even doing something forbidden in teachings of Islam, if done for the will of God, it will deliver a place in the heaven. Sheik Yusuf al-Qaradawi and many others thereby announced that perfect jihad is committed by the people who defend the religion of Islam through their very acts of self-martyrdom. He added that these acts are rightful terrorization and not in any definition suicidal. (Frayman 2006) Europe is facing a growing problem of homegrown terrorism and especially problematic are the individuals who join ISIS lines and come back to Europe to do terror. The top five European nationals who have joined ISIS come from France, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium and Netherlands. (Schnyder 2015) Some researchers according to Stepanova (2008, 72) rather ignore the whole notion of religious terrorism as being too marginal than acknowledging it as a threat.

## **2.2. Religion**

Religion as a concept is hard to define without getting biased because it can be and has been lived and interpreted in countless different ways. (Frayman 2006; Gunning and Jackson 2011, 378) According to Frayman (2006) religion can best be understood through four domains as with those one can freely add one's own understanding of religion into it and practice it accordingly. The first domain to be taken into account is a discourse whose concerns temporally and incidentally transcends the human. Second is a set of certain customs to produce a proper world with its human subjects. Third is a community that lays down the identity and last one is an institution that contends eternal validity.

## **2.3. Goals behind religious terrorism**

In order to see why religious terrorism has its own branch is to look at the goals behind this kind of acts. The goals behind this type of terrorism are according to Gunning and Jackson (2011, 371) in many cases rather utopian, many times religious or otherworldly goals whereas in the traditional terrorism the goals many times happen to be more pragmatic and political aims with known limits. Trying to unite all Muslims and dominate the world is many times the goal behind Islamic terrorist and many religious terrorist rather destroy the world in order to speed up the return of "God", "the Messiah" or "the Mahdi" or rather have a total rebuild of the society with eliminations of certain sections of the population from the modern society into a more God-fearing society, than develop a better world. Thus making their goals many times anti-modern with the passion for destroying secular governments and bringing societies back to the godly social order of past times. When talking about an act of purification through the act of martyrdom many Islamic terrorist think they will be sent to a bed in heaven after the act is done where the most delicious sexual fulfilments will await them just like the self-martyrs in the Hamas movement think. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 371) There are three specific goals for religious terrorism according to Gregg (2014 a). First one is inciting the apocalypse which means that they drive for total destruction of the world in order to create new world with religious values. Second goal is to form a religious government like some Islamic groups drive for formation of religious government under Shari'a law. In order to do so these groups can be said to use tactical targets such as historically important buildings,

government offices and so on. Tactical targets are used in order to reach some particular earthly goal. Third goal is religious cleansing of culture, groups, ideas or norms that do not match with theirs. It is also important to note that this form of cleansing differs from ethnic-cleansing done by non-religious groups. In religious terrorist group's mandate the cleansing happens based on religious choices which means that the group can be multi-ethnic but not multi-religious. These represent the so called symbolic targets when certain cultures and values are being attacked because those do not represent the one group has. As an example, symbolic target attacks happen in movie theatres, concerts, bars, stores and in other social gathering points. (Gregg 2014 a)

Negotiating with the terrorist of this branch is impossible because they think their acts are what is their theological demand, a sacramental act, divine duty or an act of purification. Their acts can be said to be way more lethal than traditional terrorist acts when they lack the moral restrictions in the use of violence because they are in a cosmic war against the evil thus trying to maximize casualties. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 372)

Table 1. Casualty rates of international terrorist attacks by terrorist categories, 1968 to 2005

Type	Number of dead and injured per attack	Total number of attacks
Left-wing	9.82	2240
Right-wing	2.41	879
Nationalist-Separatist	9.06	2041
Religious	38.10	809
Other	3.23	255

Source: Piazza 2009

The table 1 illustrates the statement agreed by many scholars, stating that religious terrorism is the most lethal type of terrorism. The table 1 shows that during the time period of 1968 to 2005 the terrorist attacks committed by left wing, right wing, nationalist-separatist and other type are not even all together as lethal as the religious type alone even when the number of attacks in many of them are higher. (Piazza 2009) Not all the attacks committed in this category are always purely religious. According to Mark Sedgwick the goals of the attack can include political traits even the aim itself is religious. (Sedgwick 2004, 795)

## **2.4. Relationship between religion and terrorism**

There exists arguments stating that there is no link between religion and terrorism and arguments stating the opposite. Some scholars according to Schmid (2011) argue that there is no connection between religion and terrorism at all. Scholars stating that there might not be connection but religion can be seen as some sort of a motivating factor for terrorism. Scholars who state that many terrorists at least justify their acts based on religion and this might be because if one sees God being on one's side then that is the most powerful partner to have. (Schmid 2011, 23-24) Thus it could be said that there is a causal relationship between religion and terrorism and religion can be seen as a worsening factor of negative feelings and ideas because it can create the illusion of what is true, what is good, what are absolute and create ultimate realities as such. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 379; Schmid 2011, 23-24) Others view religion playing the central role in today's terrorism as it has the power to cause violence. (Gunning and Jackson 2011, 373) The relationship between religion and terrorism or just towards violence for all that matter is according to some unclear as the mythology of most of the religions is full of violence and bloodshed even religion can be also linked with positive aspects such as peace. (Schmid 2011, 23-24)

Ekaterina Stepanova (2008) finds there to be a link between religion and terrorism and thus acknowledges two theoretical ways of approaching the issue. She suggests that religious terrorism justifies, motivates and gets ideological support either through basic use of manipulation or through some socio-ideological factors. She however argues that the first approach, the manipulative one simplifies too much the whole issue. It according to Stepanova, most importantly makes it seem like terrorist groups and their leaders' genuine religiousness is downplayed when this approach makes it seem like religious views are basically taken advantage of in order to communicate effectively, create effective propaganda and grow the scope of the group. The second one she sees as a reactionary approach towards globalization, Westernization, secularism and everything possessed as danger towards terrorist's values, religion and ways of living. (Stepanova 2008, 68-72) Stepanova's second approach is also proven by other scholars stating that some trait of today's world, be it secularisation, modernisation, globalization, is seen by many as a threat and people end up finding religiously based rejection of the modern world issues which often works as a platform towards violence. (Gregg 2014 b, 27; Schmid 2011, 26)

Robert Pape (2005) in his book that studied 315 suicide attacks all around the world from 1980 till 2003 argues that religion can be said to be rather irrelevant for the motives of suicide attacks. He

argues that not religion but defence of the land they see as their own is the main motive. (Pape 2005, 4) Religion is portrayed as a victim in the violent situations by religious defenders. This is because religion is seen as opposing violence in general. (Richardson 2006, 138) Additionally there are scholars who see globalization not religion being the main motive of terrorism nowadays. Media is also portrayed as providing flawed picture about the relationship between religion and terrorism. (Kingsley 2010, 550,562) There are people like Richard Dawkins (2006, 306-308) who say that there is no decent religion and extremist religion from which only the extremist one would be dangerous. Dawkins state that there is only religion as such and one trying to find peace can find verses for that from religion but one seeking violence can find verses for that from religion thus it could be said to be the evil of the world. The fact that religion is taken as something so holy that it can never be argued against or talked negatively about is part of the problem because when looked rationally there is no reason why this topic needs more protection than let's say election campaign opinions. (Dawkins 2006, 20,21) Additionally if one sees faith as sacred concept that needs to be respected just because it is religious faith, one should then respect the faith of the terrorist just the same way. (Dawkins 2006, 306) It could be argued that the lack of belief in a supernatural God, atheism, does not provide enough reasons to get violently radicalized. (Caro et al. 2013)

## **2.5. Radicalization**

Next the concept of radicalization is introduced as it is important in case of this thesis to try to understand what radicalization means and how one could get radicalized. Radicalization could be according to McCauley and Moskalkenko (2008) said to appear when there is a notable change in behaviours, beliefs and feelings of someone and those all are linked to the growing justification of violent intergroup acts and an urge to sacrifice in the name of the ingroup. The social psychology provides a distinction of three basic radicalization means, belief, feeling and the most problematic one, behaviour. Increasing time, money, risk-taking and violence for a certain cause is characterised as behavioural radicalization. There exists different levels of radicalization. One might think it as a pyramid where the apex represents terrorists and base represents all of those who sympathize about the goals of the terrorists and the higher one reaches in the pyramid the higher the level of radicalization is but the amount of people decreases. (McCauley and Moskalkenko 2008)



Table 2. Pathways towards radicalization

Level of radicalization	Mechanism
Individual	Personal victimization
	Political grievance
	The slippery slope
	The power of love
Group	Like-minded groups
	Group isolation
	Exploiting State power
	Division of groups
	Exploiting conflicts and power
Mass	Hate
	Martyrdom

Source: McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008

Mechanisms that are used in order to radicalize individuals, groups and masses vary and the paths towards radicalization introduced next are not the only possible ones and in many cases there is a mixture of many of the mechanisms in people's radicalization process. From the table 2 one can see all the 12 paths McCauley and Moskaleiko (2008) lay down and next those are going to be introduced. Personal as well as political grievances may trigger someone to the radicalized path. The latter possible path is many times also accompanied with some levels of psychopathology. Third path towards individual radicalization is called the slippery slope and it is about step by step radicalization in groups with gradually growing justification about the growing radical behaviour. One famous example could be said to be Zimbardo's prison experiment where the level of behavioural radicalization grew gradually within the group. Another path for individuals to end up to the path towards radicalization can be seen to exceedingly many times happen through loved ones, close friends and family members who are already inside radicalized groups as love increasingly determines who will join. The number of siblings and loved ones in the terrorist groups is many times high for this reason. (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008)

Next the pathways towards radicalization for groups is to be introduced. McCauley and Moskaleiko (2008) lay down five different paths for group radicalization. The first one is the obvious one, like-minded people tend to group and in groups the discussions might bend towards radical ideas. Also, groups that are able to isolate their members totally from other social

gatherings are working as a powerful way to radicalize people as this way the members become increasingly interdependence of other group members as well as they grow the unity of the group. Groups that are competing of the same audience are likely to engage even more radical actions to prove they are better than the other group. As an example, many times different terrorist groups claim responsibility of the same attack. Some groups also gain more followers by first arranging some sort of civil disobedience movement such as protest march and to make end to this movement the State uses its power, sometimes even violently. This increases the sympathy towards the members of the group and that creates new followers. The so-called survival guilt plays a role of radicaliser here as well. If some of the group members are being take into prison or if a group member dies while on a mission or in prison, then the survived group members need to payback the death of those martyrs. Lastly in case of group radicalization, arguments inside groups can often lead into a division of set of new groups. Masses are radicalized by exploiting political conflicts, state conflicts and power. Hate is an effective radicaliser. Masses are radicalized using the hate towards certain things, or groups. Martyrdom also radicalizes masses. Some state that martyrs cannot be said to be crazy or not knowing what they are doing as it would be hard to see a person giving up on its life for a cause and still lying about the personal motifs. Additionally, the higher status in life the martyr had the more effective the death is. Having multiple other choices in life, being well educated and successful in life suggests that the one knew that the solution was the best even they had all the other options available as well. (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008)

Additionally continuity, where person shows lifelong interest and participation in certain group(s) actions, conversion, where person shows sudden dramatic change to their past self when joining extremist group and compliance where person joins the group because of close relationship with someone who is already inside the group, are also introduced as a paths towards radicalization by McCauley and Moskaleiko (2008). The conversion path could be seen to happen because of some dramatical changes in one's life and the compliance could be seen to happen even without earlier interest in the groups' actions. (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008) Radicalization can also happen during imprisonment and in European prisons the problem is growing and thus needs new ways of approaching the issue. (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2016, 1)

## 2.6. Securitization

The theory of securitization is introduced next. It is important in case of this thesis especially if the hypothesis earlier introduced turns out to be true as then securitizing religion could be taken into consideration. How this would be possible is another question that this thesis will not touch because of the limited length of this research. However, if it is possible to politicize religion like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Burma have done according to Buzan et al. (1998, 24) then it should be possible to securitize it as well. According to Buzan et al. (1998) as some topics are politicized some can also be non-politicized meaning some issues are on the list of the issues that State deals with and some are not. In essence, securitization works the same way. Some topics are seen as a threat to the State meaning the State needs to add it to their list of issues to be dealt with and some can be non-securitized meaning that State does not see it as a concern to be dealt with. Securitization could be defined as a speech act where one gives an argumentation about certain issue as a security threat and if there is collective agreement by the audience about it then the issue is securitized and thus State can use emergency measures in order to counter it. The ways of countering these securitized threats are labelled as emergency measures because in other situations these would not be allowed to use. Identification of existential threat, emergency action(s) and effects on interunit connections by breaking free of rules are said to be the three steps that needs to go through if wanting to securitize something and thus preventing everything from getting securitized. If there is no agreement by the audience about the issue being securitized, it therefore only went through the securitizing move. (Buzan et al. 1998, 23-26)

As noted earlier religion is viewed as something so sacred that it should not be offended and by securitizing it one would do just that. Religion is according to Dawkins (2006, 22) not only wrongfully respected above anything else but also privileged above anything else. He gives example from the United States where law was changed to not to concern and prohibit the use of hallucinogenic drugs for the religious church members in New Mexico. These members of Centro Espirita Beneficiente Uniao do Vegetal believe that they can understand God by using these hallucinogenic drugs. Thus, only the claim that they believe that they can do this is sufficient enough to privilege them. Hallucinogenic drugs have also proven to ease the pain of cancer sufferers however for them it is illegal to use those drugs. (Dawkins 2006, 22) Another example of Dawkins' (2006) comes from Denmark. Danish magazine called Jyllands-Posten published 12 cartoons that portrayed prophet Muhammad and it resulted in brutal killings and violence towards Westerners and objects that portrayed West. (Dawkins 2006, 24-25) These same cartoons were

later republished in the French magazine Charlie Hebdo that was a target of a terrorist attack in 2015 because it continuously satirized Prophet Muhammad. (Bilefsky and de la Baume 2015) These acts prove that even living in a modern world, religion stands to be something above everything else and we all should take it seriously because if one does not take it seriously, it can result in getting killed.

To conclude, according to Gregg (2014 b) violence in the name of religion might for the ones who do not feel any form of threat or crisis seem very irrational and even against the faith itself. Yet religion is a heavily influencing force that affects deeply the whole humanity and if one does not take this notion to one's heart then understanding why some individuals choose the violent path in the name of religion cannot be understood either. (Gregg 2014 b, 30)

### 3. CASE STUDIES

*“So far no one has gone into a crowded public space with a backpack full of explosives and detonated them while shouting, 'No god is great!' “*

*-Jane Caro (Caro et al. 2013)*

From this section one will find the five attacks to be analysed. The table 3 highlights the basic information of the attacks. The relevant material has been collected to this section in order to provide answers for this thesis. The author aims to put emphasis to the factors that shed a light to the motives behind the attacks and whether those were religiously influenced or not as well as whether the radicalization process had religion as a key contributor.

Table 3. Attack chart

Attack	Number of analysed perpetrators	Number of casualties	References
Madrid 11.3.2004	5	191	(Hamilos 2007 a; Atran and Sageman 2009, 31,41,108; History n.d.)
London 7.7.2005	4	52	(Silber 2012, 107,112)
Norway 22.7.2011	1	77	(Spaaij 2012, 1)
Paris 13.11.2015	9	130	(BBC 2016 a; Camilli n.d.)
Nice 14.7.2016	1	86	(BBC 2016 b)

### **3.1. Madrid attacks, 11.3.2004**

When 911 days had passed from 9/11 attacks that shook the whole world, another horrible terrorist attack happened. On 11th of March 2004 between 7:37 and 7:41 AM local time in Madrid 10 bombs got detonated via mobile phones in different parts of four commuter trains. In total there were 13 bombs placed however 3 of them failed to explode. The bombs contained some 10 kilos of dynamite and around 650 grams of ironmongery each. (Reinares 2010) Those attacks killed 191 people and injured almost 2000. At the end 16 people were convicted of either carrying out the attack or being part of terrorist cell. (History n.d. ; Hamilos and Tran 2007) This thesis focuses to analyse the three main suspects Jamal Zougam, Othman el-Gnaoui and Emilio Suarez Trashorras as according to Hamilos (2007 a) others were given lesser charges. Additionally two other men who committed suicides while police was surrounding their house are being analysed as they can be according to Atran and Sageman (2009) seen to be the leaders of the two groups that came together to plan the attacks. These men are Jamal Ahmidan alias "The Chinaman" and Serhane Fakheth alias "The Tunisian". (Atran and Sageman 2009, 31,41,108) According to Atran and Sageman (2009, 52) there were three groups that converged in order to do the attacks. First one could be characterized as Jamal Ahmidan's group where Othman el-Gnaoui was a part of. Second could be characterized as Serhane Fakheth's group where Zamal Jougam was a part of. Third group could be characterized as explosives group where Emilio Suarez Trashorras was a part of. (Atran and Sageman 2009, 34,41, 52)

Police found a van and a car from which another had traces of explosives inside, detonators, cassettes with recordings of Koranic verses and other had tapes praising the aggressive message of jihad. (Reinares 2010) They had plans to commit more attacks on targets like Jewish school, British educational centers and national public institutions. (Reinares 2010) According to Reinares (2010) one needs to look back to first months of 2002 in order to fully understand what the Madrid bombings were about. In February 2002 representatives of Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group and comparable Tunisian group held a meeting in Istanbul. The meeting triggered the idea to spread the jihad to the countries where the group members were residing. Zougam and Fakheth had close friends from these groups. Additional sparks to start the actions in Spain gave the idea of revenge for the imprisonment of some of the members and shut down of the al-Qaeda cell led by Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas or like he is known as, Abu Dahdah, man involved in 9/11 attacks. (Reinares 2010; Counter Extremism Project n.d. a) The reasons did not end there as the invasion of Iraq from which the two jihadist documents, "Jihad in Iraq: Hopes

and Dangers” and ”A Message to the Spanish People” connected to the attacks told about worked as an inspiration for the attacks. (Reinares 2010) However when these documents were made public the plan to do the attacks was already set to do like the al-Qaeda linked website told to do. To commit several attacks so that the elections that are held in three days after the attack day would end up to a victory for the Socialist Party and that way getting troops out of Iraq. For that part they succeeded. (Reinares 2010; Hamilos 2007 b) These attacks were not directly linked to al-Qaeda nor were those done by self-constituted self-governing cells but rather by a blending of few different groups. (Atran and Sageman 2009, 38 ; Reinares 2010)

### **3.1.1. Jamal Zougam**

Zougam had relationship with the earlier al-Qaeda cell in Spain and already in the year 2000 French authorities warned Spain for Zougam’s jihadist movements. Spain acted and searched his house finding contact informations of Casablanca bombing terrorists of 2003, contacts of terrorist of 9/11 attack Abu Dahdah’s and jihadist trainer at Afghanistan camp Amer Azizi’s contacts. Additionally some jihadist materials, interview of Osama bin Laden and video of his friends, the Benyaich brothers fighting as mojahedin was found. (Reinares 2010; Counter Extremism Project n.d. b ; Bowcott 2004) Zougam also had a criminal record. (Reinares 2016) Zougam’s path toward radicalization triggered through his Morroccoan ties. He frequently travelled there to see his father and met local fundamental Islamists who introduced him to Salafi Islam. Extremist imam Mohammed Fizazi had a substantial role in Zougam’s path toward extremism. In Morocco Zougam also became friends with Benyaich brothers who all had direct links to jihadists and al-Qaeda. (Silber 2012, 187) In 1997 Zougam started attending Tablighi Jamaat congregation and it is argued that Zougam got increasingly involved in extremism like become part of the Abu Dahdah’s al-Qaeda cell because of his close friendship with other terrorists like Salaheddin Benyaich alias Abu Mughen as since 1998 they both attended jihadists meetings in Madrid regularly. As Zougam affiliated himself as Salafist he attendet during years 2002-2003 to various religious events that shared his ideas about Salafist-Jihadism. (Reinares 2016) Zougam was told to be religious by his own brother and a coworker that even added Zougam going so far that only spending time with the strange people who only liked to talk about religion. (Reinares 2016)

### **3.1.2. Emilio Suarez Trashorras**

Trashorras was a Christian without any political interests before he was sentenced to jail in 2001 where he converted into radical Islam and was therefore recruited into al-Qaeda linked group

called Takfir wa al-Hijra. (Cuthbertson 2004, 15) Trashorras suffers from schizophrenia. (Goodman 2006)

### **3.1.3. Othman el-Gnaoui**

Othman was a close friend with Jamal Ahmidan and he had been linked to an al-Qaeda cell earlier. (Atran and Sageman 2009,52 ; Counter Extremism Projectc n.d. a) Othman was imprisoned in 1990s. (Reinares 2009)

### **3.1.4. Serhane Fakheth**

Long before his radicalization Fakheth showed signs of intensive interest towards religious matters and was mostly friendly to people of "his own". There were guests at his house for long periods of time listening how he praised Takfir wal Hijra and read writings of Osama Bin Laden. There he also showed videos where Muslims were being killed in various places of the world. Fakheth's radicalization point could be said to be his trip to Mecca for pilgrimage as when he returned he had a clear mission in his head, to make right the wrongs done to Muslims and he was no longer interested in anything else than religious issues. Zougam and Fakheth were part of the extremist jihadist group called Al Harakat Salafiyah which police was well aware of already in 2002. In their meetings they enjoyed listening jihadist music, listening jihadist verses and they also watched videos that constituted of violence towards Muslism. Fakheth wrote a fax where he explains that the attacks were done by al-Qaeda. (Atran and Sageman 2009, 35,36,39,108)

### **3.1.5. Jamal Ahmidan**

Ahmidan had a criminal record and he was also a criminal group leader. Both Ahmidan and Fakheth did crimes but justified those with the concept of "fa'i" which means doing crimes for the greater advantage of the Muslims. He was wanted for a murder in Morocco. Ahmidan preachified about being the chosen one by God to be a hero and kill infidels especially Jews and he identified his life struggles with the oppression of Muslims all around the world. Ahmidan was in prison while he got addicted to heroin but decided to get clean with the help of the people at the local mosque from where he found religion. Ahmidan told that Allah chose him to help his people thus he was invincible and had no fear of dying. Ahmidan went to prison again, where he can be seen to have radicalized. He was said to prepare for Jihad there and having Koran with him all the time. He prepared to revenge for infidels. A video was found where Ahmidan is with two other men telling reasons behind the attacks. He states that the attacks were done because Spain is working together



with enemies, the allies of USA and USA itself. Ahmidan adds there that your wish might be life but ours is death. (Atran and Sageman 2009, 40-45,107)

### **3.1.6. Discussion**

In case of motive for Madrid attacks, one could argue it to be the idea to spread jihad. Perhaps one might argue about the goal not being purely religious as subrevolutionary attack traits can be found from this attack. Then again having the new targets representing purely religious goals with religious motives and credit given to the religiously motivated organization, one might question, what was the actual goal of the attacks that took place. Evidently, maximizing casualties can be seen to be one of the highly valued goals. It seems they had this idea of a holy war and how Muslims are struggling and decided to “help” them. Thus, one might argue the indirect goal to have been getting troops out of Iraq and direct goal just been fighting the holy war of jihad. According to the evidences four out of five perpetrators were religiously radicalized. For the fifth, el-Gnaoui, there is no data available. However, he was a friend of one of the leaders of the attacks and imprisoned. Thus, in his life there are two traits that could be seen according to the evidences of this thesis, contributing the radicalization process. Additional boosts to the radicalization of the perpetrators gave the survival guilt of the imprisonment of al-Qaeda cell members. What it comes to the other two types of goals, economic and social, there seems to not to be enough evidence to prove those being present in the attacks.

### **3.2. London attacks, 7.7.2005**

On the morning of 7th of July four suicide bombers exploded their bombs in London’s public transport systems. Three of the suicide bombs exploded within 50 seconds from each other in London subways at 8:50 am local time. Some hour later in a bus a fourth suicide bomb exploded. While some 700 people got injured, these bombings killed 52 people and the four bombers. There were also three other men who were given sentences for conspiracy in relation to these attacks however this thesis does not analyse them as they were not the active core of these attacks. (Silber 2012, 107, 112) The active core can be said to be the four bombers, Hasib Hussain, Mohammed Siddique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer and Germaine Lindsay or Abdullah Shaheed Jamal as he changed his name when converting to Islam. (Silber 2012, 113; Gillan et al. 2005) These people formed a mostly autonomous group in order to do the attacks. (Silber 2012, 113)

The South Asian community in the area where the bombers were from was according to Silber (2012, 107) dominated by Kashmiri descents and thus radicalization of Muslims in that area in order to support Kashmiri fighters and joining jihad was common. Many saw it as heroic and somewhat romantic matter but first and foremost as an Islamic obligation. These four bombers also admired the Madrid train bombers. (Pape and Feldman 2010, 68) All four bombers were highly affected by the local book store Iqra. In Iqra there were religious classes arranged and there they were able to have political talks about Iraq, Kashmir and Chechnya. There they could access internet and produce jihad DVDs' that told about crimes of West towards Muslims. This book store is said to be a focal point of radical Islam for the whole community. (Silber 2012, 110)

### **3.2.1. Mohammed Siddique Khan**

Khan had a criminal record. (Independent 2015) In mid 1990s Khan's interest towards Wahhabi fundamentalisms sparked and grew even larger as his friends converted too. (Silber 2012,109, 110) His radicalization point can thus be drawn into time before 9/11 when Khan's extremist and jihadi network grew bigger. (Silber 2012, 117) He started traveling to Afghanistan and Pakistan and did three trips between the years 2001-2004. Some of the trips were to training camps as an example to Mujahedeen camps and other trips were for other reasons such as delivering funds raised for jihadi groups like Kashmiri fighters. Khan's own uncle was the one who arranged the opportunity to get to training camps thus he could be said to have influenced the radicalization of Khan. Khan was himself also a recruiter of young men to fight to Afghanistan. (Silber 2012, 117, 99, 118) Khan was praying regularly, attended mosque usually every Friday and spent great amount of time in Iqra. (Silber 2012, 110) Some said that Khan was way too extreme with his ideas of religion trying to bring Islam into every possible conversation and stated that Khan had been brainwashed. (BBC 2011 a) Khan recorded a suicide video stating the main reasons behind his actions. Main reason was that people have elected to power people who do harm for Muslims all over the world and as this is clearly a war, he is the soldier in it. Khan stated that what he is doing is for Islam. (Silber 2012, 111,119) The Home Office (2006, 19) states that his video showed clear signs of religious motivations. Next Khan's close friend since childhood is being analysed. (Silber 2012, 113)

### **3.2.2. Shehzad Tanweer**

Tanweer got religious in the age of 15 and started growing a beard but after 9/11 he really changed. (Silber 2012, 114; Independent 2015) Tanweer prayed five times a day, visited mosques regularly and spent time in Iqra. (Alvarez 2005; Silber 2012, 110) Tanweer travelled to Pakistan with Khan and reportedly also visited Afghanistan. (Silber 2012, 117; Alvarez 2005) In Pakistan they met with al-Qaeda operatives. (Home Office 2006, 20) He had a criminal record. (Independent 2015) Tanweer also did a suicide video where he states that actions like this will continue till troops are out of Afghanistan and Iraq and there is no financial nor military help send to USA and Israel. (Silber 2012, 111)

### **3.2.3. Hasib Hussain**

One could argue that a minor socioeconomic exclusion of his could have worked as a trigger towards radicalization. (D'Apollonia 2012, 175) However he clearly got radicalized after his pilgrimage from Medina to Mecca in 2002. Hussain started wearing religious clothing and told his teacher his future goal is to become a cleric. He was openly supporting al-Qaeda and especially 9/11 attackers. Many times he just studied religious texts and prayed till early hours. (Home Office 2006, 15) Hussain also visited Iqra often and he as well had a criminal record. (Silber 2012, 110; Independent 2015)

### **3.2.4. Germaine Lindsay**

Lindsay converted into Islam straight after his mom did it in 2000. After that he started acting differently. (Home Office 2006, 18) Lindsay's teacher told how Lindsay wanted to attend army just so he could kill his own soldiers and how he also dreamt of fighting in Afghanistan. (Independent 2015) Lindsay was supporting al-Qaeda openly, started wearing religious clothing and he started learning Arabic-language and memorizing verses from Quran. Lindsay's radicalization could have been triggered by Abdallah al Faisal, an extremist preacher now imprisoned. Additionally Lindsay experienced something that has been characterized as traumatizing for him, as his mother left him to leave alone in to UK while she went to USA in 2002. (Home Office 2006, 18) Lindsay visited Iqra book store for his Arabic-language lessons. (Silber 2012, 113) Lindsay's wife Samantha Lewthwaite reportedly joined a terrorist group and fled UK after the attack. She is now one of the most wanted woman because of her linkages to many terrorist attacks. (Independent 2015)

### **3.2.5. Discussion**

Motives for these attacks could be said to be admiration of other terrorists as well as the notion of the war against Islam. As of goals could be said that they wanted to maximize casualties and one might argue they wanted to take as many “wrongdoers” with them as possible. There are no signs of social nor economic goals however again slight argument for the possible subrevolutionary goal trait could be made. However, when going through the evidences one could argue that the religious aspect is highly dominating. For all of the perpetrators religion can be seen to have played the key role in their radicalization. One could argue that the area they were from provided additional boost towards radicalization as there going jihad was looked up to.

### **3.3. Norway attacks, 22.7.2011**

22th of July Anders Behring Breivik or Fjotolf Hansen as he changed his name committed two terrorist attacks in Norway. (Spaaij 2012, 1 ;BBC 2017) One of them was a car bomb that he detonated right at the heart of executive government quarter in Oslo and the other attack happened in the tiny island of Utøya where he started shooting people while wearing a police uniform. There was a summer camp for Norwegian Labour Party’s youth held during that day. The first attack took lives of eight and the second lives of 69 people. (Spaaij 2012, 1) Breivik planned no escape route nor did wish to die in the name of his attacks. (Spaaij 2012, 66)

#### **3.3.1. Anders Behring Breivik**

By doing these attacks Breivik wanted to put his, some 1500 pages long writing on the center of the stage. His writing “2083 – A European Declaration of Independence” is an anti-Marxist, anti-multiculturalist and most importantly anti-Islamic manifesto. The mark 2083 in the name suggest the third and last phase, year 2083 in his writing when all Muslims have been deported from Europe. (de Silva 2016, 129; Berwick 2011, 4,1352) Breivik claims that he is one of many who has the courage to destroy cultural Marxism thus making him the biggest hero Europe has seen since 1950 in case of cultural conservatism and for the European-Christendom, whole Europe and its people. (Elliott 2017, 135,136) Breivik sees himself as a modern-day crusader, a true Christian whose duty is to fight against the evil, multiculturalism and Islamization of Europe. He wanted to

get portrayed as a Christian martyr for his attacks that were against Islam. (Gibson 2011; Berwick 2011, 1403; Elliott 2017, 151) Breivik's ideology behind the attacks was highly influenced by counter-jihadism as he saw it as the only possible solution in order to save Europe from Muslim immigrants. Breivik saw that he needed to attack towards those who he saw as being accountable for Norway's political path towards multiculturalism, the decision makers and possible future decision makers. (Spaaij 2012, 59,2; Wikan 2012, 296)

Breivik did not have a normal relationship to either of his parents. Since his parents were divorced, his father was far away and his mom had troubles trying to parent all the way from when he was less than three years old. Seems like Breivik's mother directed all the negative emotions and sexual fantasies he felt towards Breivik thus leaving him needing protection from his own mother. As he did not receive protection from her mother his personality changed into this withdrawn and passive child who was afraid and was rarely able to indicate emotions such as happiness. Breivik had hard time connecting with others and at school he started causing trouble. Breivik also started doing illegal activity, tagging. (Turrettini 2015) When one takes account Breivik's difficult past one can see a clear link to why he was drawn into the neomedievalism and counter-jihad world. (Elliott 2017, 151) After a troubled childhood and frustrated teenage years he felt like society had bullied him into corner and for this reason the simplicity and secret imaginary societies to which he made references to belonging to seem as attracting ideas. (Turrettini 2015; Elliott 2017, 151) Being part of this secret imaginary society of Templar Knighthood he gained a sense of power, purpose and respect. Being part of this meant being on a right side of the cosmic war. In the year 2006 he might have taken his first steps towards radicalization as Breivik started to see his past in the Islamic terms while reading Fjordman's essays. All the peace-loving Norwegians were dhimmi, theft by youngsters became jizya and lies he have heard became taqiyya. (Elliott 2017, 152) Breivik himself claims the radicalization point to have been in the year 1999 when Norway was involved in NATO bombings on Serbia's struggle for self-determination over Albanian Muslims. To him that was just the start and after that tens of new issues have backed up his decision. (Berwick 2011, 1379) Breivik played one year the game World of Warcraft while doing nothing else. (Berwick 2011, 1408)

Breivik saw that even he had done some small sins like premarital sex that would be pardoned because of the huge amount of grace he will gain with his martyrdom attack. (Turrettini 2015) Breivik seeks for a militant version of Christianity where religious leaders call for crusaders once again and Church having the monopoly of religion over Europe with reforming school curriculums

and government policies. (Ravndal 2012; Berwick 2011, 1403) As Stephen Prothero stated, Breivik's attack got justification and motivation from Christianity, especially from the idea of medieval crusaders against Muslims and thus the Christian traditions can be used to create something this dangerous. (Gibson 2011)

### **3.3.2. Discussion**

According to the evidences, behind Breivik's attacks was the motive filled with counter-jihad ideas and the medieval clash between Christianity and Islam. It could be said that he wanted to raise awareness for his own manifesto as an indirect goal or as a first step. It could be said that after having awareness for his work he hoped that the end goal, the process of extermination of cultural Marxism and putting an end to the Muslim invasion of Europe would have started and he would be remembered as a hero who started it. Additionally, he seems to have tried to maximize casualties. Breivik's radicalization point could be said to have been influenced by religion as one might argue that his dislike towards Islam was the first touch of radicalization he had. The harsh childhood of his could have influenced his world views later in life. According to the evidences, as Breivik got radicalized he started to have an idea of Islam against Christianity where Islam was bad and Christianity good. Thus, one might argue that there were no signs of economic goals nor social ones. In his attacks one might see a mixture of political and religious goals. His manifesto is mixture of political and religious aspects. Could be said that even if his attacks were supposed to be a wake-up call for Europe to start the fight against Islam before is too late, he was hoping to get changes to the existing political system. One could even argue that there were enough signs to claim for revolutionary terrorism goal to been present in his ideas.

### **3.4. Paris attacks, 13.11.2015**

On 13<sup>th</sup> of November nine terrorist attacked six different areas in Paris killing 130 people and injuring 352. (BBC 2016 a; CNN 2017; Camilli n.d.) The first attack happened around 9:20 pm and the last happened around 9:53 pm. Attacks were carried out by using bombs and rifles. (CNN 2017) The terrorists were divided into three different groups of which this thesis analyses. Bar and restaurant attackers were Chakib Akrouh, Abdelhamid Abaaoud and Brahim Abdeslam. Bataclan concert hall attackers were Omar Ismail Mostefai, Samy Amimour and Foued Mohamed-Aggad.

Stade de France attackers were Bilal Hadfi, Ahmad al-Mohammed and M al Mahmod. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.1. Abdelhamid Abaaoud**

Abaaoud was from the area infamous of its large numbers of extremists, Brussels, Molenbeek. (The New York Times 2016) Abaaoud did an armed robbery and was sentenced to prison in 2010 where he got radicalized into fundamentalist Sunni Islam. (The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center 2015, 2-3; Kerley 2018, 298; Graham 2015) In the prison he met Brahim Abdeslam. (Kerley 2018, 296) Abaaoud went to fight in the lines of ISIS to Syria in 2013 through the jihad network Zerkani. (Varvelli 2016; BBC 2016 a) Abaaoud soon became the leader of the branch of ISIS in Syria and he was portrayed all over ISIS propaganda. (The New York Times 2016) He recruited his 13-year old brother who was called “the youngest jihadi in the world” to the ISIS lines in 2014. (Kerley 2018, 296; Graham 2015) Back home in 2015 while Abaaoud was in Syria he got sentenced to prison for 20 years because of belonging to a terrorist group. (Dallison 2016) The same year there was an air strike done to ISIS camp by the French military in hope for killing Abaaoud. (Graham 2015) When he was sent back home by ISIS and he was able to slip through the authorities he said that he can only thank Allah for giving him this chance to travel to Europe and do terror in this war of the West and Islam. (The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center 2015,6-7) In the video he made while in Syria he encourages people to go forth towards jihad and towards the path of Allah because there is nothing better than the martyrdom in the name of Allah. In the video he tells how everyone else are against Sunni Muslims who only want the victory of Allah and thus he tells people to hurry up and join jihad before is too late. He tells how good it feels to see the blood of infidels and in another video he is driving a van that drags along the road the bodies of killed infidels. (Memri TV 2014; Kerley 2018, 296) Abaaoud died in a gun battle with the police. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.2. Chakib Akrouh**

Akrouh was from the Molenbeek area as well. (The New York Times 2016) Abdelhamid Abaaoud and Akrouh were best friends and Akrouh lived near Brahim Abdeslam. (The New York Times 2016; Bacchi 2016) The jihadist network Zerkani, recruited Akrouh to Syria in 2013 and 2015 to join ISIS. (Varvelli 2016; Dallison 2016; Bacchi 2016) During his last visit to Syria he was sentenced in absentia to prison for five years for belonging to a terrorist group and recruiting people to join ISIS lines in Syria thus making local authorities aware of his radical acts. After the

attacks police found his hiding place and he detonated his suicide vest killing himself. (Bacchi 2016)

### **3.4.3. Brahim Abdeslam**

Abdeslam was from the same infamous part of Brussels, Molenbeek. (BBC 2016 a) He was in prison during 2010 where he met Abdelhamid Abaaoud. (Kerley 2018, 296) In 2015 Abdeslam tried to go to Syria but the Turkish authorities deported him back to Brussels warning them also that he has been radicalized and there is a possibility he wanted to join ISIS lines. (BBC 2016 a; Irish et al. 2015) Thus he was known to authorities from this incident, but they also knew Abdeslam was planning something and he also owned an infamous bar. (Paravicini and Cerulus 2016; Von Der Burchard 2015) Abdeslam had started acting more religiously according to his own brother. (BBC 2015 a) He was also seen at his own bar watching ISIS videos and he also appears in one ISIS propaganda video. (Ahmed 2018, 424; Browne and Webb 2016) Abdeslam died when he detonated his suicide bomb. (BBC 2016 a)

### **3.4.4. Omar Ismail Mostefai**

Mostefai was doing illegal activities when he was younger however was never sentenced to prison. (BBC 2016 a) In the year 2010 Mostefai was identified to be a possible Islamic radical and he was added to the so called “S” file that meant he has been radicalized and is a possible threat to the national security. (BBC 2016 a; Bronstein et al. 2015; Irish et al 2015) Mostefai was still able to travel to Syria, Turkey and possibly Algeria after his details have been added to the “S” file. The authorities in Turkey warned French authorities of Mostefai twice. (BBC 2016 a) Once in 2014 and then in 2015 claiming there is a possible connection between Mostefai and ISIS. (Irish et al. 2015) He is seen in ISIS video telling that he is on Allah’s mission to kill infidels. (The Irish Times 2016) Mostefai was part of the French Salafist group. (BBC 2015 b) He attended mosque especially on Fridays and it is noted that he might have got radicalized by one of the mosque’s visiting imam. (Chrisafis 2015; Bronstein et al. 2015) This mosque he went is known for their radical imams. (Pendlebury 2015) Mostefai detonated his suicide vest and killed himself. (BBC 2016 a)

### **3.4.5. Samy Amimour**

In 2012 he undergoes a radical change in behaviour as he obtains strict version of Islam and starts wearing religious clothing and praying a lot. Amimour also demanded his mother to start wearing



a veil. Amimour admired Osama bin Laden. He tried to go to Yemen but authorities stopped him and he was added to the list of terrorist conspirators. Amimour was however able to go to Turkey and Syria, to ISIS area and French authorities issued an international warrant on him. Amimour's family says he was radicalized more by the humiliation the French police made him go through when they handcuffed him and took away in front of the family. Amimour's dad tried to get his son back home from ISIS lines and went to Syria to convince him back but without a luck. (Burgis 2015) Amimour is seen on ISIS video urging people to kill infidels before it is too late. He is also beheading someone with a smile on his face. (Browne and Webb 2016) Amimour blew himself up. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.6. Foued Mohamed-Aggad**

The infamous jihadist recruiter Mourad Fares has been named to be behind Aggad's radicalization. Aggad left together with his older brother to Syria in the year 2013. (BBC 2016 a) Before this he only had history of minor criminal activity. (BBC 2015 c) When Aggad went to Syria he was added to the security list in France and Interpol made an arrest warrant on him. (Willsher 2015; BBC 2015 c) He added to his facebook page that he was in the city of Deir Ez-Zor in Syria working for ISIS in the front line waiting for martyrdom. Aggad many times added new pictures with Koranic verses while working for ISIS. Aggad once wrote that doesn't it feel bad to be like the infidels because if one tries to integrate to non-Muslim countries then one becomes infidel too. Aggad encouraged people to do terror wherever they are. Aggad added that the faith is calling everyone for Jihad in the name of Allah. (Memri 2015) Aggad killed himself in the attack. (BBC 2015 c)

#### **3.4.7. Bilal Hadfi**

Hadfi was radicalized in the year 2014 by imam. (BBC 2016 a; Farmer and Telegraph Staff 2016) He stated how the Charlie Hebdo attacks were deserved as they made fun of his religion, how Boko Haram is good and started getting more and more religious. (Finnigan et al. 2015) Hadfi was afraid that his mother will go to hell because she lives in the land of infidels and thus tried to get her to get back to Islam. (Roberts 2015) Soon after the Charlie Hebdo attacks Hadfi went to Syria to fight to the ISIS lines which authorities were aware of thus there was an international arrest warrant made on him. (BBC 2016 a; The Guardian 2016; De la Baume and Paravicini 2015) Hadfi had stated that he encourages people to take action against the "infidel dogs" of the West and he

beheads a man on ISIS video. (DeKeseredy and Dragiewicz 2018; The Irish Times 2016) Hadfi detonated his vest in the attack. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.8. “Ahmad al-Mohammed”**

Came to Europe posing as a Syrian refugee holding a fake passport only few months before he committed the attack. (BBC 2016 a) Al-Mohammed aka Ali al-Iraqi is seen on ISIS video telling that as long as infidels bomb the land of Muslims they can only dream of safety. (Browne and Webb 2016) He detonated his vest in the attack. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.9. “M al-Mahmod”**

Al-Mahmod came to Europe together with al-Mohammed posing as a Syrian refugee. (BBC 2016 a) Al-Mahmod aka Ukashah al-Iraqi is seen on ISIS video stating that Allah has granted them the right to fight the ones who are in this coalition against them. (Browne and Webb 2016) He detonated his vest in the attack. (BBC 2016 a)

#### **3.4.10. Discussion**

The motive for the attacks done in Paris was according to the evidences perpetrators faith. They wanted to serve Allah. Goal for them then seemed to be to kill as many infidels as possible. For five out of nine perpetrators religion was tied to their radicalization. For the rest of them, there was not enough information provided about their radicalization process. For Amimour the process can be said to have been religious but there is not available data on how it started thus it is not counted as religiously motivated radicalization in this thesis. For Abdeslam there were two possible contributing traits of radicalization in his life, imprisonment and friendship with other perpetrator but there is no data about the process. According to the evidences one might conclude there to not be any signs of economic nor social goal traits. One could argue there to have been a very slight political goal trait in the attacks.

### **3.5. Nice attack, 14.7.2016**

Truck was driven into the crowded des Anglais promenade on Bastille Day around 22:30 after firework display had happened there, killing 86 and injuring hundreds. (BBC 2016 b)

#### **3.5.1. Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel**

Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel was marked in authorities' records because of violent behavior and mental problems. (BBC 2016 c) He is seen to have radicalized rather quickly and he did not attend mosque before April. (BBC 2016 c; Chazan et al. 2016) Lahouaiej-Bouhlel was interested of radical Islamist movements. His friends told that he was showing ISIS videos where beheadings took place and he commented it being normal to him already. (BBC 2016 c) Police found pictures of dead bodies, ISIS flag, Charlie Hebdo cover and pictures of jihadist and Osama bin Laden from Lahouaiej-Bouhlel's computer. His computer also revealed that he made searches for Koranic verses and jihadist propaganda chants almost every day starting from 1st of July. Lahouaiej-Bouhlel said there were religious reasons behind him growing a beard. (BBC 2016 c) He visited Tunisia eight months prior the attack. (Taylor 2016) Lahouaiej-Bouhlel was unemployed recent months prior the attack and he still was able to send £ 84000 to his family just days before the attack. It is not known where he got the money thus it might have come from a terrorist group. (Chazan et al. 2016) The European Union terrorism situation and trend report of 2017 states that terrorism justified by religious text in Nice's attack and in many others in Europe proves the threat jihadist, loners or groups pose to Europe. (Europol 2017)

#### **3.5.2. Discussion**

The motive of Nice attack could according to the evidences be admiration of other religiously motivated terrorists. Goal could be said to be to maximize casualties. Bouhlel's rather rapid radicalization process was religious however it is not known how it all started thus it is not taken as a religious radicalization in this thesis. There are no signs of political, economic nor social goal traits in the evidences of his attack.

Next the evidences of these five attacks introduced above are being analysed more deeply. These evidences will be compared to each other, links to the earlier studies made about the issue are being made and attack results are being summarised around the hypothesis and a research question.

## 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

*“If God lived on earth, people would break his windows.”*

*-Jewish Proverb (Proverbs n.d.)*

In this section the author makes analysis with the help of the information provided in the case studies section and in the theoretical background. First there is a case by case brief analysis provided and afterwards a more holistic analysis is presented.

In case of Madrid bombings, one could say in the light of the provided evidence that the levels of radicalization and religious extremism varied across the people in the group however religion influenced these attacks greatly. One of the perpetrators got radicalized through imam, two through prison and one through pilgrimage to Mecca. One could see the radicalization paths of continuity, compliance and conversion, introduced in the theoretical background being present in the paths of Madrid attackers. Many of them had criminal records and used religion to justify even the smallest illegal activities. The targets of the attacks were also chosen to clearly maximize casualties as it was chosen to be public transportation vehicle during rush hour thus, as mentioned in the theoretical background, characterizing one prominent part of religious attacks. The new targets the group was planning then again showed signs of religious cleansing as a motivator when particular groups of society and culture are being targeted. Also, as mentioned in the theoretical background part, religion could be seen to be a worsening factor of negative feelings and ideas. Ahmidan’s life path seems to prove just that when he struggled in his life and religion provided cause for his struggles and a way to make it all “better”.

London attackers showed same signs as Madrid bombers in their goal to maximise casualties by choosing that type of places and timing. They spent time in isolated places where only like-minded people used to go like the book store Iqra from where they all got sparks to their radicalization towards violence. With the help of friends and family some of them got sucked deeper to the extremist world. One of them got radicalized through pilgrimage to Mecca, one through friends,

one by extremist preacher and one because of 9/11. The process of radicalization through 9/11 could be marked as religious, because the attacks made on September 11 were according to Benjamin and Simon (2002) made on religious terms. Radicalization paths of compliance and conversion introduced in the theoretical background were evident in the paths of London attackers.

In the attacks that happened in Norway, Breivik used tactical targets when he attacked the heart of the government area as well as the camp of the possible future leaders because he can be seen to have wanted to raise awareness for his own anti-Islamic manifesto. He had troubled childhood, troubled teenager years thus he might have felt like being nobody and as said in the theoretical background part, this kind of young alienated men are vulnerable to different kind of manipulation. By becoming part of his imaginary extremist group he can be seen to have gained sense of power and respect and most importantly a purpose for his life. He wanted to be seen as a Christian martyr and he hopes for militant version of Christianity to take monopoly over Europe. Breivik himself tells his radicalization point to have been political grievances of past but one could argue that hate towards Islam gave the first touches to radicalization for him. One could see that the radicalization path of continuity, introduced in the theoretical background was evident in his path.

Wanting victory for Allah by eliminating others who do not match with their religious norms and ideas could be said to be one of the goals of Paris attackers, making the goal anti-modern as represented in the theoretical background. They used symbolic targets so that they could maximize casualties in the mission that by their words, Allah chose for them, making God their partner in their war. All nine terrorists were part of the ISIS one way or another and they all seemed to be in a cosmic war against the evil West where trying to integrate would mean becoming evil infidel, going as far as dehumanizing the evil people of West. Close friendship ties could be seen to have motivated some of them to join to the extremist groups. One of them got radicalized through prison, two of them through jihadist network and two through imam. Getting radicalized through jihadist network is counted as being religious radicalization, as according to de Bie (2016, 14) these networks put Jihadi-Salafist ideology at the centre of attention for their acts. Jihadi-Salafist ideology can be said to also focus on getting their religious goals through violent means. (de Bie 2016, 13) The radicalization paths of compliance and conversion introduced in the theoretical background were visible here.

As the theoretical background introduces, political grievances are at times accompanied by mental issues. This could be taken as one radicalization reason in Nice attack. In this attack the

radicalization path of conversion, introduced in the theoretical background could be said to be evident. Bouhleb could have chosen the national celebration event to be the target place in order to easily maximise casualties and to send a clear statement against the West. Internet materials such as Koranic verses and jihadist materials could be said to have played a role in his radicalization process and being used to justify the terror.

As the evidence in the case studies section shows and appendix 1 illustrates, out of the 20 terrorists analysed in this thesis 15 of them had links to extremist's groups, 17 had been doing criminal activities, 2 of them had known mental issues and 18 were evidently religious (only being part of ISIS is not taken as sign of being religious in this thesis). The number of perpetrators with earlier criminal activities was significant as only one, out of the ones author was able to gather data, could be said to have moved from clean recorded to a terrorist. Many had been known to be part of jihadist activities years before the attack. Most of the attackers can be seen to have admired other terrorists with similar goals such as the Madrid bombers analysed in this thesis, Osama bin Laden, the ISIS group, 9/11 attackers, the Boko Haram group and friends of theirs that were part of the terrorist cells. Many were also in closed circles with only these kinds of people thus isolation represented in the theoretical background worked there.

Based on the evidences one could state that for most of the perpetrators personal or political grievances gave additional boosts towards religious violence. The goal of religious cleansing, a goal of destroying some particular culture, norms and ideas that the terrorists did not agree with was reason behind many of the attacks analysed in this thesis. As introduced in the theoretical background, religiously based terrorism could get its motivation as a reaction towards certain ideas that are not matching with the terrorist's own ideas of the world. This was evident in most of the cases of this thesis as the perpetrators many times seemed to find reason and answer to their feelings from religiously based rejection of the modern world. Some terrorist used symbolic targets, some tactical ones. Terrorist of these attacks were fighting a cosmic war against the evil thus it made it easier for them to try to maximise casualties which was common to all of the attacks. Many selected the targets based on the timing. Attack happened during rush hour for two of the attacks, during national holiday for one, during an event or in public meeting places for two, in order to maximise the casualties.

Most of these terrorists thought it is their religious duty to do these attacks. For example, in Norway attacks Breivik acknowledged the attack to be his Christian duty. In Paris attacks, Abaaoud

claimed the best thing in the world is martyrdom in the name of Allah and Aggad encouraged people to join because Jihad in the name of Allah is what their faith is about. In London attacks, Khan swore doing it for Islam and in Madrid attacks Ahmidan swore revenge for infidels. Many saw God being on their side in their war which as mentioned in the theoretical background, is the most powerful ally to have. For example, in Paris attacks al-Mahmod and Abaaud declared how they got permission from Allah to kill infidels and do terror. In Madrid attacks Ahmidan claimed that he is the chosen one by Allah and thus felt invincible and was not afraid to die in the name of that cause.

As mentioned in the theoretical background, religious terrorism can be helped with manipulative tactics. In the theoretical background part it is mentioned that young alienated men are in threat to get radicalized for example by internet materials and in all of these five attacks graphic content from the internet could be seen as giving additional boosts to the radicalization. The appendix 1 shows comparison chart of the perpetrators. The ages of terrorists varied from 18 to 32 thus not providing any significant similarities, not even within the groups. Marital status of the attackers also had it all, married with or without kids, divorced, single and in relationship thus that also did not provide great similarities. Out of 20 terrorists only two were born in Europe to European born parents which provides a significant difference. Half of them were second generation immigrants. These in total 12 attackers, the European born attackers with European born parents and second-generation immigrants analysed in this thesis can be said to represent the so called homegrown terrorism. Rest of the attackers can be said to have born outside Europe and most of them also moved to Europe quite late. The educational levels varied greatly from having university degree to dropping out of school at early stages. Occupational information or socioeconomic levels varied as well from living on benefits to having own businesses. Based on these evidences, one could argue that minor socioeconomic exclusion could have been an additional triggering factor for the actions of couple of the perpetrators. Religious orientation was one factor that had large differences. Only one perpetrator was Christian till the end and others excluding two of whom there is no data of their religiousness, were at the time of the attack Muslims. The biggest similarity amongst all was the religious aspect. Based on the evidences represented in the case studies section, one could state that in all of the attacks religion was the dominating factor behind the violence however political traits occurred in few of them. According to the theoretical background these could still be fully considered as religious terrorist attacks even with having political traits in them as political and economic issues are contributing to the mobilization of religious terrorism. (Sedgwick 2004, 795; Schmid 2011, 274) The majority of the perpetrators had religion as a



dominating factor behind their radicalization even though in majority of the cases not only one contributing factor is evident. Radicalization through imam, preacher or pilgrimage to Mecca, can be seen to be straight representations of religion and thus representing a religious radicalization in the cases of this thesis. (Merriam-Webster n.d.; Cambridge Dictionary n.d.; CNN Library 2017) In the cases where radicalization is marked to have sparked through prison, religion was behind the radicalization in all of those cases. When friends contributed to the radicalization, they also joined or converted to these religious groups thus provided additional support for the perpetrators, however religion was still the main reason behind the radicalization.

As mentioned in the theoretical background, if the hypothesis of this thesis seems to have according to the evidences being proven, as it now does, securitizing religion under these circumstances could be taken into consideration. One could argue that religion has experienced a securitizing move, as there has not yet been enough acceptance of it as a threat. However, it under the evidences provided could be said to pose a national threat but as also mentioned in the theoretical background, religion does bring some positive aspects to nations, making securitization of religion very challenging. The challenging questions then arises based on the evidences provided in this thesis. What else to securitize if not religion in these cases, what else to blame if not religion in these cases?

As mentioned in the theoretical background, there can be seen to have an idea of wrong and right religion, bad and good, even one can argue that there is no such thing, only religion as such. One could say that trying to create a separate religion, bad religion, is like trying to ignore the problem. One perhaps creates this kind of religion because religion is seen as a holy thing to not to be harmed or seen as a bad thing. In the theoretical background part this is stated to be a problem. One should be able to discuss the problems religion causes and try to fix those just the same way any other issue would be handled. Theoretical background introduces few matters that have different rules because of religion. One should not add terrorism into that list as well.

## CONCLUSION

*“Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful without having to believe that there are fairies at the bottom of it too?”*

*-Douglas Adams (Goodreads n.d. b.)*

The main aim of this thesis was to analyse how much, if at all, has religion influenced the five most lethal terrorist attacks in the Europe during the 21st century. Hypothesis of this thesis is that religion was highly influencing factor behind the attacks all the way from getting radicalized. One supportive research question was formed. The question was, whether religion triggered the process of radicalization. Majority of the results supported the hypothesis strongly and religion can, according to this thesis, be seen as the main contributing factor behind the attacks and in radicalization processes. It is good to mention here that this thesis is not aiming to declare that all the religious people are terrorists.

No matter of the perpetrators educational level, age, marital status, socioeconomic status, where he was born or whether he had kids. The only thing that seemed to motivate their life and martyrdom for some, was their religious faith. Majority of them also had criminal past. The results of this thesis are important because there exists a lot of debate about the possible relationship between terrorism and religion. These results can be used to add value to the earlier study made about the earlier most lethal terrorist attacks being religious as this thesis indeed proves that correct also in case of these five attacks. The one thing that was most common between the attackers was the religious aspect as 18 out of 20 analysed terrorists were evidently religious. Additionally, what was common between the actual attacks was the aim of maximising casualties which is a usual trait of religious attacks and at the same time many times making them most lethal ones. Two of the attacks happened during rush hour in public transportation vehicles, one happened during national holiday celebrations and two in public meeting places, heart of the government area and during events. The four possible goals of terrorism were considered in the analysis of these five

attacks. As a result, the motivation for these five attacks analysed seemed to be according to evidences purely religious. However, one could see in majority of them an overlap of religious and political goals. This could be however seen as a normal situation in case of religious attacks. Economic and social goal traits seemed not evident.

To answer to the research question, radicalization process of 14 out of 20 perpetrators was triggered by religion. For the rest of the perpetrators there was not enough data of their radicalization path in order to add them into that list. Four of the perpetrators got radicalized through imam or preacher, three through prison, two through jihadist network, two through Mecca, one through friends, one got sparks from 9/11 and one out of the hate towards Islam. As a conclusion could be said that the topic is very controversial however according to the evidences provided in this thesis one could state that, the motivation, justification, the organization and whole worldview for these five attacks came from religion. Thus, fitting well into Juergensmeyer's definition of religious terrorism mentioned in this thesis. The perpetrators could be also said to have had clearly differing morals and values thus fitting well into Hoffman's ideas of religious terrorism represented in this thesis. This thesis however points out that religion does bring positive aspects to life as easily as negative ones thus making it such an unpredictable tool. The author leaves a proposal about the securitization of religion as it can be seen, according to the results of this thesis, to pose a national threat. The assigned length of this thesis was rather limited thus leaving an interest for the author to continue this kind of a research to cover all the terrorist attacks in the European soil during the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the future.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Comparison chart.

Name	Age at the time of the attack	Marital status	Born in	Educational level	Occupation	Mental issues (Reference found in case studies)	Criminal activity (Reference found in case studies)	Religions (Reference found in case studies)	Previous links to extremist activities (Reference found in case studies)	Radicalization through (Reference found in case studies)	References
Zouggan	30	Married	Born in Morocco. Came to Spain in 1989	Ill-educated	Ran a shop	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Extremist imam	(Reinnes 2016; Pargter 2008, 125)
Tashborras	30	Married	Spain	No data	Miner	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Prison	(Cuthbertson 2004, 15; Sturcke and agencies 2007)
el-Ganaoui	29	No data	Born in Morocco.	No data	Mason	No data	Yes	No data	Yes	No data	(Counter Extremism Project n.d. a)
Fakhet	35	Married	Born in Tunisia. Came to Spain in 1994.	Studied at the university but never graduated	Real estate agent	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pilgrimage to Mecca	(Silber 2012, 191, 192)
Amrardan	34	Married, 1 children	Born in Morocco. Came to Spain in 1993.	Dropped out of high school	Criminal gang	No data	Yes	Yes	No data	Prison	(Silber 2012, 192; History Commons n.d.; Atran and Sageman 2009, 42)
Khan	30	Married, 1 children	Born in UK to Pakistani parents.	University degree	Fired in 2004, before worked as learning mentor.	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Friends	(BBC 2011 a)
Tunweer	22	Girlfriend	Born in UK to Pakistani parents.	Sport Science degree	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	9/11	(BBC 2006; BBC 2011 b; Laville and Asham 2005)
Hussain	18	No data	Born in UK to Pakistani parents.	Finished business course	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	No data	Pilgrimage to Mecca	(BBC 2011 c)
Ladaby	20	Married, 2 children	Born in Jamaica. Lived in UK since he was 1	Left school	Lived on benefit	No data	No	Yes	No data	Extremist preacher	(BBC 2011 d)
Brewk	32	No data	Norway	Enrolled into University after the attacks	Unemployed	No data	Yes	Yes	No data	Hate towards Islam	(Pidd 2012; Connah 2015)
Absood	27	No data	Born in Belgium to Moroccan parents.	Thrown away from college	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Prison	(Graham 2015; Connah 2015)
Abdesham	31	Divorced	Born in Belgium to Moroccan parents.	Diploma as an electrician	Ran a business	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	(Telegraph reporter 2015; CBS news n.d.)
Akrabi	25	No data	Born in Belgium to Belgian-Moroccan parents.	No data	No data	No data	Yes	No data	Yes	Jihadist network	(BBC 2016 a)
Mosetai	29	Married, 1 children	Born in France to Algerian parents.	No data	Temporary jobs	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Imam	(Christie 2015)
Ammour	28	Married, expecting child	Born in France to French-Algerian parents.	Baccalureate	Bus driver	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	(Bangs 2015; Newton 2015)
Aggad	23	Married, 1 children	Born in France to Moroccan parents.	No data	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Jihadist recruiter	(BBC 2015 c; Walker 2015)
Hadfi	20	No data	Born in France to Moroccan parents.	College	Electrician	No data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Imam	(Farmer and Telegraph staff 2016; The Guardian 2016)
al-Mohammed	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	No data	
al-Mahmoud	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	Yes	Yes	No data	
Boukhl	31	Married, 3 children	Tunisia. Came to France in 2005.	No data	Unemployed	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	No data	(BBC 2016 c; Moreme 2016; Chazan et al. 2016)