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Counterterrorism in the West and the Challenges it presents to Human Rights

By

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Counterterrorism in the West and the Challenges it presents to Human Rights

Nour Asmat Rayes

ABSTRACT

Violent extremism has been a security concern for countries worldwide, especially following the attacks on September 11th, 2001. Since then, the face of counterextremism has changed, and human rights principals have been traded in for security. This thesis aims to pursue a better understanding of how breaching human rights in the battle against violent extremism will backfire by increasing the number of violent extremist fighters, and thus increasing the number of violent extremist attacks. During this crucial time in which violent extremism is spreading and gaining strength, it is important for governments to understand the impact of the quality of their counterextremism policies, and the importance of maintaining their ideologies and respect for human rights. It is in times of crises that states should most respect international law.

Keywords: Extremism, Counterextremism, Causes, Governments, Human rights, Crises, States, September 11th, US, International Law, Fighters.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction **Page**

Introduction....1
Terrorist or Violent Extremist?....2
International Threat....8
A Moral Dilemma....9
Argument....12
Limitations....13
Significance....13
Coverage....14
A Different Approach....16
Understanding "the enemy"....16
Causation Theories....18
The State....22
The emergence of Al Qaida and the Islamic State....24
Al Qaida....24
The Islamic State....26
Countering and Preventing "terror"....28
Preventive Violent Extremism....28
Countering Violent Extremism....30
A look into Human Rights Policies....31
A Moral Dilemma....32
Overview of Approach....34
Research Question....35
Research Design....35
Case Studies....38
Limitations....40
Background and Beliefs....41
Conclusion....43
Introduction....44

Causes of Violent Extremism 45
Human Rights 47
Precedents and outcomes 48
Result of respecting Human Rights 49
Foreign Fighters 50
Motives of a Fighter 51
Top 5 countries with Foreign Fighters 52
CVE Methods and their effectiveness 59
The United States 62
France 63
Great Britain 66
The Dilemma 68
Introduction 70
Results and Analysis 70
Are France's CVE Methods working? 71
Are the UK's CVE Methods working? 73
Are the US's CVE Methods working? 74
The Future of CVE and PVE 75
Soft Measures 76
The Government 77
Conclusion 78
References 81

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 1.0 Violent Extremist Attacks in the United Kingdom 6

Table 1.1 Violent Extremist Attacks in France…….....6

Table 1.2 Violent Extremist Attacks in the United States.....7

Table 2.1 The Causes of Violent Extremism.....20

Table 4.0 Practices Coding Averages in Tunisia.....53

Table 4.1 Practices Coding Averages in Saudi Arabia.....54

Table 4.2 Practices Coding Averages in Russia.....56

Table 4.3 Practices Coding Averages in Turkey.....56

Table 4.4 Practices Coding Averages in Jordan.....57

Table 4.5 Practices Coding Averages in Syria and Iraq.....58

Table 4.6 Practices Coding Averages in Cyprus.....59

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

Figure 1.0 Never-Ending Cycle.....12

Figure 5.0 Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in France 72

Figure 5.1 Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in the UK.....73

Figure 5.2 Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in the US.....75

LIST OF GRAPHS

Page

Graph 4.0 Tunisia.....53

Graph 4.1 Saudi Arabia.....54

Graph 4.2 Russia.....55

Graph 4.3 Turkey.....56

Graph 4.4 Jordan.....57

Graph 4.5 Cyprus.....59

ACRONYNYMS

VE	Violent Extremism
PVE	Preventive Violent Extremism
CVE	Counter Violent Extremism
M Ext.	Muslim Extremist
JI Ext.	Jihadi Inspired Extremist
AQ	Al Qaida
AQAP	Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula
AQI	Al Qaida in Iraq
IS	Islamic State
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
AAI	Ansar Al Islam
AMZ	Abu Musab Al Zarqawi
US	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
EU	European Union
UN	United Nations
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
GTI	Global Terrorism Index
9/11	Attacks on September 11th, 2001
IRA	Irish Republic Army
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
CIRI	Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights data

Chapter 1
Introduction

Introduction

Violent Extremism(VE) is a global phenomenon that has become the focus of research studies and government officials worldwide. Although over 80% of the terrorist attacks have occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Nigeria, it has evidently become an international threat (Lindborg, 2016). The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, executed by the violent extremist group 'Al-Qaida', was an attack on the world's hegemon, demonstrating to the rest of the world how perilous a determined violent extremist organization can be. In response to 9/11, then President George Bush launched a "Global War on Terror", finding several allies to fight this war alongside the US (Schmid, 2014). By strengthening their antiterrorism laws and criminal penalties, states were hoping to intimidate violent extremist groups. Nevertheless, this has not been the case. Extremist groups are growing and expanding their attacks, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent civilians along the way. According to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), around 32,600 people died in the year 2015 alone, falling victim of terrorist attacks (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). Over the past few years, the number of casualties has increased, with a devastating increase of 80% from the year 2013 till 2015 (Global Terrorism Database, 2016).

Terrorist or Violent Extremist?

Since the 1900's, terrorism has been a top priority to officials worldwide. But since that time, the terms, definitions, weapons, faces, drives and strategies of terrorism have changed. Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of this global phenomenon has been finding a global consensus on its definition. How can one decide how to counter this challenge without a clear definition of who the enemy is? The terms radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism (sometimes even Islamic terrorism or Radical Islam) are often associated with violent attacks killing innocent noncombatants in the name of religion. Still, there is no clear consensus on what the terms mean and their differences. Clearly defining this phenomenon would help determine how it should be responded to. Even the United Nations (UN) has had a difficulty finding an international definition for the term terrorism and instead describes actions that could be labelled as acts of terrorism (United Nations Action to Counter Terrorism, n.d.).

President Barack Obama was among the first to use the term 'violent extremism' rather than 'Radical Islam', arguing that not all Muslims are terrorists and not all terrorists are Muslim (Beinart, 2015). Though this statement is true, many critics focusing on the fight against Islam, due to attacks on 9/11, argue that the term 'violent extremism' is "politically correct" (since it includes extremist groups other than Islamists, such as white nationals) but fails to understand the real threat of the challenges faced. Nevertheless, defining the enemy as 'radical Islamists' portrays a fight against the religion, in specific a fight between the West and Islam. This can make Muslims in general feel discriminated against and alienated. This thesis will argue that such a small word can have a big negative impact on Muslims feeling discriminated against. For that

reason, this thesis will focus on the "politically correct" connotation of terrorism, while arguing that violent extremist groups, such as Al Qaida and their affiliates, do not represent Islam or any religion. The term 'extremism' will be used throughout this study as a shorthand to 'violent extremism'.

In addition, the Obama administration replaced Bush's 'war on terror' with the term 'Counter Violent Extremism' (CVE). The statement "war on terror" overemphasizes the use of force and the focus on hard power, which this thesis will argue against, while countering violent extremism has an implication of combining both hard and soft power. This statement does not discriminate a certain religion and does not display a strict focus on hard power, and thus will be used throughout this thesis. Another term that will be widely used in this paper as a response to the global unrest is "Preventive Violent Extremism" (PVE), also coined by the Obama administration. This term focuses on soft power and minimizing the recruitment process of extremist groups.

The term "terrorism" still also does not have a specific global definition or profile (Mirahmadi, 2016). As this thesis understands that terrorism is not only a source of religion, but of other factors as well such as economic factors, and thus the term terrorism is defined as per the GTD (Global Terrorism Database, 2016):

"The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation"

In this sense, intentional acts of violence enforced by non-state actors in the name of religion, politics, economics and/or social goals are considered an act of terrorism.

Moreover, in addition to not coinciding with the definition of violent extremism, states exercise their sovereignty further by deciding which violent extremist groups are enlisted in their 'terrorist list'. For example, though both the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) have registered 'Al-Qaida', the latter does not have 'Hezbollah' in their list, despite being pressured by their American allies (Oudtraat & Marret, 2010). Violent extremist organizations seem to be on the rise posing global unrest. The Middle East alone has birthed several VE organizations, such as the Islamic State (IS) and Jubhat Al-Nusra (Chin, Gharaibeh, Woodham, & Deeb, 2016).

According to the GTD, the deadliest extremist organization in the world is Boko Haram, having claimed 6,644 lives in the year 2014 alone, followed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), who claimed 6,073 lives, Taliban, Al-Shabaab and Fulani militants (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). However, the deadliest extremist group in a battle remains ISIL, killing over 20,000 people in 2014. The most active in the West, among these five, is ISIL.

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as Daesh, Islamic state and IS, is an extremist group that has attacked in countries such as Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Turkey and elsewhere. It branched out of Al Qaida in Iraq into an independent violent extremist organization. Though both seek the same end, imposing Islamic law, they differ in some ideologies and perspectives. Both armed non-state actors have access to weapons, finances and supporters who are willing to sacrifice their own lives in the so-called name of 'Islam'. Furthermore, their access to communication networks, such as the internet, and transportation mechanisms has reinforced them and facilitated their recruitment processes (Salamey, The Deline of Nations-States after the Arab Spring: The Rise of

Communitocracy, 2017). Recruiters can now reach individuals worldwide with one TV interview and/or video recordings. The youth joining this movement feel the responsibility of restoring the Muslim-*Ummah*[1] (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent extremism, 2016). Although the unity of the Ummah is desired among Muslims, not all Islamists are violent in achieving this goal. Their call for *jihad*[2] is supported by religious rulings, otherwise known as *fatwas*, which are taught and preached by charismatic leaders, known as the *Ulema.*

This study is interested in understanding the impact that policies and CVE methods, breaching human rights, have on extremists' activities. Being that the US faced the deadliest VE attack in the world (9/11), and it has coined the everyday terms we use to describe this global phenomenon, this study will include a closer look into the US's policies, and that of its European allies, otherwise referred to as the West, due to their similar foreign policy approaches, with a few references to Middle Eastern cases, such as Syria and Iraq. This thesis is written from a Western perspective of policies. Given that these countries are the focus of this study, Al-Qaida and IS have proven to be the deadliest VE organizations in these regions (among the 5 deadliest VE organizations mentioned above) and thus will be the focus of this paper. In addition, Jihadi inspired extremists and Muslim extremists[3] will also be referred to when calculating the number of violent extremist attacks in each country, since they all have the same goal of restoring the Muslim *Ummah*, and are fighting in the name of Islam. The years under study will be 2001-2015, given that the 9/11 incident in 2001 was one that changed the

[1] The Muslim-Ummah signifies a united Muslim community
[2] Jihad means holy war
[3] This thesis prefers to refer to such group as "Islamist" extremists, however, the term "Muslim" extremists will be used as it is the legitimate name of the group used

face of counterextremism policies. The data in the below tables was extracted from the GTD (Global Terrorism Database, 2016) and portrays the attacks perpetrated by the VE groups in the countries under study in the West, between the years 2001 and 2015[4].

Table 1.0 – Violent Extremist Attacks in the United Kingdom

Year	Number of Attacks	Type of Attacks	Groups
2005	4	Bombings/Explosions	Secret Organization of al-Qaida in Europe
2007	1	Armed Assault	Al-Qaida in Iraq
2010	2	Assassination/ Bombing	Jihadi-inspired extremists/ Al- Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
2013	1	Armed Assault	Muslim extremists
2015	1	Unarmed and Armed Assaults	Muslim extremists/ Jihadi-inspired extremists

Table 1.1 – Violent Extremist Attacks in France

Year	Number of Attacks	Type of Attacks	Group Names
2001	1	Bombing/Explosion	AQ
2012	5	Armed Assaults/ Explosions/ Barricade incident	Muslim extremists/ Jihadi Inspired extremists

[4] Countries in Europe, such as Germany, have been victims to several terrorist attacks in the year 2016

2013	1	Armed Assault	Muslim extremists
2014	1	Armed Assault	Jihadi-inspired extremists
2015	16	Hostage Taking/ Armed Assaults/ Bombings	AQAP/ Jihadi Inspired Extremists/ ISIL

Table 1.2 – Violent Extremist Attacks in the United States

Year	**Number of Attacks**	**Group Names**	**Attack Types**
2001	4	Jihadi-inspired extremists/ Muslim Extremists	Hijacking
2002	2	Jihadi-inspired extremists	Hijacking/ Bombing
2003	1	AQAP	Facility/Infrastructure Attack
2006	1	Jihadi-inspired extremists	Unarmed Assault
2009	2	Jihadi-inspired extremists	Armed Assault/ Bombing
2010	5	Jihadi-inspired extremists/ Muslim Extremists	Facility/Infrastructure Attack
2012	1	Jihadi-inspired extremists	Facility/Infrastructure Attack
2013	4	Jihadi-inspired extremists	Bombing/Assaults/ Hijacking
2014	5	Jihadi-inspired extremists/ Muslim Extremists	Armed Assault
2015	6	Jihadi-inspired extremists/ Muslim Extremists	Armed Assault/ Bombings

In addition to the above-mentioned attacks, the tables do not include outbreaks carried out by unknown attackers, which could be lone wolfs perpetrating an attack in the name of a VE group. Lone wolfs constitutes 70% of the attacks in the West from 2006 until 2014 (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Lone-wolfs[5] follow the ideologies and preaching of international VE organizations which inspire them to pursue attacks. Furthermore, although there have been other VE organizations, such as the Animal Liberation Front AND THE Irish Republic Army (IRA), that have been more active in the West, the IS and AQ alone have claimed 95% of the lives of people murdered in extremist attacks in the US alone, killing 2,997 out of 3,128 people killed by violent extremism (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). In addition, the above tables show a significant increase in the attacks over the past decade. IS is most vigorous in Iraq and Syria through suicide bombings and massacres of citizens (Global Terrorism Index, 2015).

International Threat

The attacks carried out by violent extremists are of concern due to the nature of those attacks. As shown in Tables 1.0, 1.1 and 1.2, ISIL, AQ, Muslim extremists and Jihadi inspired extremists sacrifice the blood of innocent civilians. To start with, such outbreaks are of more concern than other attacks since the assailants usually don't need an escape plan or to cover up their tracks. In addition, extremist attacks are hard to predict and understand, which makes them harder to tackle. Furthermore, what most makes them an international threat is that they target civilians; women, children and anyone unfortunate enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. With the recent occurrences of attacks, government officials and scholars are trying to identify patterns

[5] Have no assistance or support from the organization

and understand the behaviors of extremist groups. Some argue that regime type affects extremism; For example, some would say that VE attacks are more occurrent under democracies, claiming that political liberty and freedom of expression conduce violence, while others disagree, arguing that less attacks occur under democracies because of feeling less constrained by the government (Piazza, 2007). Other scholars study the interplay of factors leading to violent extremism, such as religious, political, and socio-psychological factors (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent extremism, 2016). The one thing agreed upon in the research is that youth constitutes most of the people joining radical groups (Chin, Gharaibeh, Woodham, & Deeb, 2016). What causes a young individual with their whole future ahead to take such an extreme life changing decision? One of the few patterns found in young violent extremists is frustration and resentment towards society (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent extremism, 2016). In response to this new epidemic, states are retaliating spontaneously with mechanisms that sometimes breach the core principles of human rights. This thesis will argue that some of these mechanisms enforced by governments to battle extremism tend to further alienate young individuals, leading to an increase in frustration, the feeling of exclusion and thus the search for security and belonging elsewhere. Nevertheless, this thesis recognizes that governments are not rational actors and sometimes take immediate action in response to situations involving the security concerns.

A Moral Dilemma

The research question that this thesis will explore is ‘How can we assess success of Counter Extremism Methods given that some of these strategies may breach human rights principles?’ In order to address this research question, this thesis will analyze (1)

the motivations behind an extremist individual and group, (2) the counter extremism methods employed in the different countries under study, (3) the basic human rights principles found in the Geneva Convention and International Humanitarian Law, and (4) the increase/ decrease of violent attacks following the implementation of those counter extremism methods. Given that such assessments can only be evaluated over a long period of time, this thesis will study 15 years of extremist activities and developments.

The growing concern for global security has sparked the debate on effective methods to counter extremism. From military methods to more interactive ones, different scholars and government representatives believe in the use of different CVE approaches. For example, while the US seeks to counter all forms of ideological extremism, the UK mainly focuses on strengthening the justice system to prevent people from joining extremist groups (Naviwala, 2014). Nevertheless, following the attacks on 9/11, several governments worldwide, such as the US, have clearly preferred the use of military measures to counter extremism (Heydemann, Countering Violent Extremism as a Field of Practice, 2014). However, much of these counter extremism methods being used by governments breach the core principles of human rights, questioning the long-term success and efficiency of these methods. After all, how can it be identified who the extremist party is, when both sides are breaking human rights principles in extreme ways? In this context, a qualitative study will be conducted to evaluate counter extremism policies against human rights benchmarks. This study will take into consideration the debates found in the literature on this subject matter, while analyzing the influence that human rights principles have on people in general. For example, the GTD correlates actions and policies that show insensitivity towards human rights with

an increase in extremism (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). Furthermore, when studying counter extremism policies, the psychological effects associated with these methods will be considered and discussed. This constant fear of insecurity and anxiety by those who do not feel protected by their government can cause them to seek other forms of protection and security. However, if a government under attack doesn't retaliate with immediate actions, some of which breach human rights principles and are more cost efficient than those that don't, it risks losing its' legitimacy and being victims of future attacks. It is this moral dilemma that governments and policy makers are being faced with during the rise of this global unrest. Yet, this thesis contends that governments can tackle the root causes of violent extremism with human rights sensitive methods, which have proven to be a more sustainable approach. Although enemy-centric methods are sometimes necessary, generate faster results and reassure a scared public, the quality of the counter extremism methods used should not be taken lightly. With the rise in violent extremism, there is a need to balance human rights and security, although the axis has been tipping more towards security and away from human rights principles. It becomes a never-ending cycle (See Figure 1.0).

CVE methods include a variety of activities targeted at reducing violent extremism. Airport screening, military interventions, education programs, assassinations, NGO efforts and sanctions are amongst the several CVE policies being implemented worldwide (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). As to distinguish those that violate human rights principles to those that don't, this thesis will divide the CVE methods into 'soft' and 'hard' methods

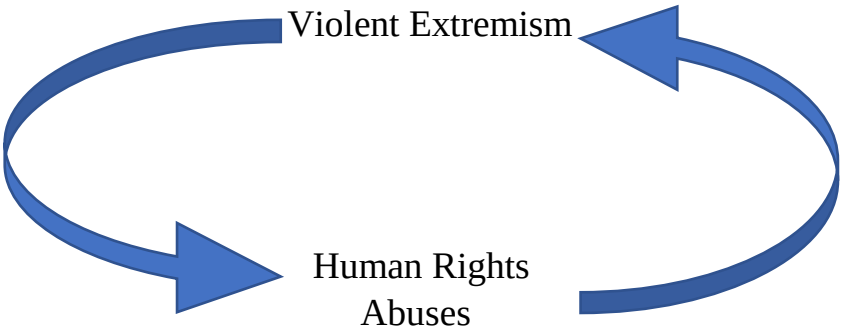


Figure 1.0 Never-Ending Cycle

Argument

This thesis will argue that while security attacks are sometimes necessary (states are not rational actors and will retaliate if their people and position is threatened) but it's important to note that the conditions that breed such violent extremist organizations in the first place will remain and with certain measures being implemented, will even worsen. For such reasons, even if AQ is defeated in the fight against terror, this fight is far from over until the underlying conditions are tackled. It's important to focus resources on the actual cause behind the problem, and not the outcomes of that problem. The single focus on killing instead of allocating resources to fixing social problems have made violent extremist groups more revengeful and have eased their recruitment processes. Human rights violations have been identified as a 'push' factor for violent extremist groups, along with high levels of social marginalization (The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency, 2011). For that, this thesis maintains that governments of today should focus on decreasing the kind of actions that fuel grievances, rather than enabling violent extremism to flourish.

"Violent extremist groups often seek to provoke overreaction by states with the expectations that repressive responses will add to the justification for their violence and galvanize recruitment."
– Nancy Lindbory, USIP President (Lindborg, 2016)

Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the time frame and resources available to gather data. Although there is an abundant number of secondary sources available in this subject matter, gathering primary sources is problematic due to the sensitive nature of this topic. Furthermore, the time frame allocated to finalize this study is not nearly enough as understand the relationship between counter extremism methods and violent extremism. Such understandings take years of studies.

Significance

As violent extremism is a heated topic of concern to governments worldwide, it is important to understand the effective methods in tackling extremists and achieving longer lasting peace. This thesis will contribute to better understanding the importance of the quality of methods used to fight extremism. Governments have spent millions of dollars in an attempt to understand, control and end extremism, yet research has shown that extremism is far from over. In fact, many extremist groups have actually grown in strength and numbers over the past couple of years. The US alone has spent a significant amount of money on defense strategies against extremism. In 2005 alone, Homeland security had a budget of $32 billion, an increase of 255% from the year 2000 (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). Some might wonder where we would be today had this amount gone to state reinforcement and nation building. Extremism should be tackled in a quick and efficient way, instead of

approaching it with methods that are thought to be effective but actually prove otherwise in the long run. Counter extremism approaches should exhibit long term results, and not just portray calmness before the storm. In addition, this thesis can further assist governments with the evaluation of successful counter extremism methods, in contrast with methods that are contradicting and ineffective in the long term. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that as every extremist attack is different, response methods should be different as well and adjusted on a case by case basis. With new developments every day, it is important to point out that CVE strategies should be constantly updated to the new findings of research and understandings to be more targeting towards the actual problem of extremism and not the result of that problem. This study can further provide a deeper understanding of how CVE methods may be focusing on the wrong technique.

Coverage

This thesis will consider human rights principles in an attempt to analyze the impact they have on the actions of violent extremists. To do so, this study will first begin with an examination of the literature on violent extremism causes and the CVE methods being employed by the West. In addition, by identifying the human rights policies under the Geneva convention, this study will be able to relate which CVE methods breach those human rights principles, and the impact they have. By considering a wide variety of studies, this thesis will be able to compare and analyze different perspectives on CVE methods and principles. The following chapter will describe the research methodology used throughout this study, while discussing the methods used to gather information. The study will look at different cases and rationalize why those cases were chosen and

how they will be examined. Later, Chapter 4 will analyze the research question and discuss the arguments of this study while the final chapter, Chapter 5, will analyze findings, recommendations and will conclude the thesis.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

A Different Approach

Trying to understand what policies work best in the fight against VE can be quite tricky. It is important to first understand the reasons behind the growth of VE, where and how did extremist groups under discussion begin, what role human rights play in the spread or halt of VE, and what association human rights policies have to counter extremism methods. To understand these points well, this literature review section will first begin with a discussion and understanding of the causation theories of violent extremism, then, we will take a deeper look into violent extremist groups under study, followed by a brief introduction of what human rights policies are, shedding light on those articles under question in the fight against violent extremism as well as discussing the methods of counter violent extremism used, and ending with an assessment of how breaching human rights policies while implementing counter violent extremist actions can impact the overall desired outcome.

Understanding "the enemy"

What causes an individual to leave everything behind and join a violent extremist group? Though the majority of people joining radical non-state actors are young men (Chin, Gharaibeh, Woodham, & Deeb, 2016), the reasons behind their commitment to such groups vary from one individual to another. This makes it harder to identify and confront the 'root causes' of violent extremism in a quick and efficient manner. In many cases,

scholars argue that it is a combination of several factors that lead an individual to pack a bag and join what is viewed as a 'Brotherhood of Islam'. The one common factor binding these individuals together is most notably "Islam and violence" (Allan, Glazzard, Jesperson, Reddy-Tumu, & Winterbotham, 2015). When did violent extremism begin? What causes violent extremism?

One of the fathers on the subject of extremism is writer Walter Lacquer. In his book 'A History of Terrorism', Lacquer discussed several main features of *terrorism* including "Terrorism is a response to injustice; if there were political and social justice, there would be no terrorism" and "the only means of reducing the likelihood of terrorism is a reduction of the grievances, stresses and frustration underlying it" (Lacquer, 2012). Lacquer discusses one of the earliest known *terroristic* movements, the Sicarii[6], also known as Sicarii terrorism. Though they preferred to use a *sica*[7] over suicide bombs, the expectations among the Sicarii back then and violent extremist groups of today are similar in nature; to take control of the state. Lacquer goes on to discuss the West, and how it is no stranger to VE attacks. He discusses the anarchist propaganda which occurred in countries like France, America, Germany and Spain, resulting in the deaths of several political figures such as French President Sadi Carnot and US President William McKinley (Lacquer, 2012). Though they were mostly lone-wolves, they tend to be amongst the most dangerous attackers since they are easily inspired by preachers, without needing to meet them in person. Furthermore, they're harder to track. Between 2006 and 2014, 70% of the violent extremist attacks in the West were carried out by

[6] Sicarii is a Jewish group who carried out several cold-blooded attacks where large crowds were often found in Jerusalem (Lacquer, 2012)
[7] The Sicarii's favorite weapon, which was a small knife

lone-wolfs (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Understanding the reasons that individuals decide to take such paths and become violent attackers has been quite challenging for scholars, although several have attempted to do so.

Causation Theories

In his article "Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research", author Randy Borum discusses the process from radicalized to violent extremists. Today, extremist groups have widened their recruitment process and are growing stronger despite efforts by governments and international organizations to intimidate them. The Islamic State and other violent extremist groups have different conditional situations, but all seem to have the same end goal, to control the government and impose the Sharia law. The causes of violent extremism have been studied by several scholars worldwide, trying to understand what turns a radicalized individual into a violent extremist. This process consists of several phases and is not just an overnight decision, in which only a few radicalized persons surpass all the levels and become violent actors (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research, 2011). Borum states that the understanding of the different levels in this process is extremely crucial when implementing prevention and counter extremism measures. Since only a relatively small number of people actually progress to the last stage, in which they become violent, different prevention methods per level can be used. An individual who reaches the action phase or the Jihadization phase, as the NYPD calls it, is hard to confront due to the level of commitment to the group and acceptance of his role (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research,

2011). Grievances has been identified as a push factor of violent extremism, in which individuals feel unfairly treated and seek revenge against those who imposed this unfairness, as can be seen in the case of foreign fighters joining the Islamic State in Syria. The state's job is to successfully integrate migrants into the society. Once they fail to do so, migrants feel unfairly treated by the state and face a sense of identity crisis, which has been identified as another push factor of violent extremism. Authors Harriet Allan, Andrew Glazzard, Sasha Jesperson, Sneha Reddy-Tumu, and Emily Winterbotham have also discussed blocked political participation, which leads to the feeling of resentment and thus the seeking of vengeance against the source of that discrimination (Allan, Glazzard, Jesperson, Reddy-Tumu, & Winterbotham, 2015). Here again, the state is the one providing unfair treatment to its people and not allowing migrants to participate politically. Furthermore, some scholars identify identity struggles and opportunities as motivational factors to join an extremist group (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research, 2011). Many of the individuals seeking to join an extremist organization, especially the young ones, joined as a need of belonging, following the feeling of not being accepted in their host communities (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research, 2011). Identifying with a group can reduce this feeling of uncertainty and exclusion (Hogg, Adelman, & Blagg, 2010). This again goes back to the state; inclusion is the state's responsibility and thus the feeling of not being accepted originates from the state itself. Frustration against a state who is not providing its citizens with basic needs, be it jobs, food or political integration, can cause severe repercussions. Thus, preventive mechanisms should focus on restructuring the state's ability to control the symptoms of

its inadequacy (such as poverty and lack of health care) and provide its citizens with the basic needs.

One factor that was not a common factor for young men joining violent extremist groups is a strong religious background; In fact, many of those joining turned to Islam as a need for meaning and commitment rather than being raised in a radicalized religious environment (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research, 2011). For example, Borum's article discusses that a study done on the members of Al-Qaida found that less than 1 in 4 members came from religious backgrounds (Borum, Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research, 2011). The causes of violent extremism discussed by scholars can be found in table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 The Causes of Violent Extremism

Factors	Examples
Individual socio-psychological factors	Grievances, frustration, sense of injustice and the feeling of exclusion
Social factors	Discrimination, limited employment opportunity and social mobility, exclusion from society and a feeling of displacement
Political factors	Feeling of victimhood against the West and military intervention
Ideological/religious factors	The belief that Islam is under attack and a need to protect the Muslim Ummah
Culture and Identity Crises	Cultural marginalization
Trauma and other trigger mechanisms	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Group Dynamics	Charismatic leader

Radicalizers/Groomers	Hate preachers that target the vulnerable ones
Social Media	Provides connectivity

The above information was taken from Magnus Ranstrop's article (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent Extremism, 2016)

Though it has been argued that violent extremism is the result of several variables provided in the above table, this paper will focus on what makes these individuals human, and not what makes them extremists. For that, this study will revise the surroundings of an individual that could lead one to opt for extreme alternatives. For example, could a policy that breaches human rights (such as not allowing one to vote) or discriminating gestures by the community (such as bullying someone for his different Muslim name) lead to a crisis of identity? In its' most basic sense, one in such positions might feel like they don't belong and thus look for belonging elsewhere. Once they find that sense of belonging among those who have been through the same, those with collective beliefs and interests, and those who protect each other, they will understandably feel more at ease while filling the missing puzzle of their identity. Furthermore, once given a reputation amidst that community, such as being called a leader and being held responsible for saving Islam, that individual will feel important and with purpose. This can be seen in the surge of young European Muslims leaving their home to join the fight against the West. More than 3,000 ISIS fighters come from Western Europe, including French, Austrians and Germans (Franz, 2015). Furthermore, the metropolitan police commissioner in London states that 5 British citizens join ISIS weekly (Franz, 2015). It has been estimated that around 20,000-30,000 fighters joining

ISIS are foreign fighters (Dawson & Amarasingam, 2017). Being Muslim in a Christian community surrounded by Western citizens might cause someone to be the victim of discrimination and alienation. The failed integration policies by the Western governments have resulted in severe consequences of identity crisis and the feeling of not-belonging. One fighter in Jubhat Al-Nusra blamed the Western system for leaving, saying:

> *"We emigrated because we don't want to live in the system anymore. And the system is the Western governments. Their democracy. They control what you think and say; what you care for. And they tell you what is good and bad, from the media that you read and watch to the things you learn at school from young because the school curriculum is from them. But we have our own way of life, which is called Islam. It is a complete way of life. It is a religion but also a governance. It has laws and ways in which you do everything from how you go to the toilet, drink water, and brush your teeth to how you worship Allah and how you run a business. It lets you see the world for what it is and keeps you away from harmful things in society"*
>
> (Dawson & Amarasingam, 2017)

By feeling that they are being forced to follow a certain 'system' and by feeling alienated from society, foreign fighters might experience one of the 'pull' factors of joining a violent extremist organization, which in this case is defense of an identity group (Borum & Robert Fein, The Psychology of Foreign Fighters, 2017).

The State

State protectionism not only takes the form of integrating all citizens into the community of a state, but also includes providing the people with job opportunities and welfare benefits such as education and religious services (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). When such basic needs are missing from a state, individuals may look elsewhere for this sense of security and risk

falling into the hands of the wrong group. The motivations to fight come with the promise of receiving something in return. That return ranges from (1) loyalty, or identifying with a group, (2) self-help, or a simple desire to survive and have a purpose, (3) economic incentives (though sometimes of a small gain, it can lure many young individuals who are unemployed and are feeling rejected by the employment sector) and/or (4) coercion, including psychological manipulation by charismatic leaders (Borum & Robert Fein, The Psychology of Foreign Fighters, 2017). Finding bonds with a non-state community group that not only has similar religious and cultural views, but also provides a sense of security by offering benefits that the state doesn't even offer might enhance the relationship of the individual with the extremist organization, and also build hostility towards the state which is failing them. This can best be seen in the case of Syria, which experienced a trade imbalance during President Bashar Al Assad's rule, leaving many local sectors, such as agriculture, damaged and in need of an alternative source of security (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). Furthermore, the country's elites, such as Rami Makhlouf[8], owned leading companies in Syria which caused hostility by the locals who were barely getting by (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). This sense of uneven distribution, caused by factors such as globalization and privatization, can lead to hostility towards the state and the search for security among community groups who substitute for the responsibilities of the state.

[8] Bashar Al Assad's cousin and a wealthy Syrian Business man who owned a majority of the Syrian economy

The states inability to integrate immigrants into their community and provide their citizens with basic security needs have resulted in an unexpected backlash. Failed states have led to the increase of violent extremist organizations and have aided their recruitment process. It's important to note that the youth joining extremist organizations, such as Al-Qaida and ISIS, are many times victims themselves and have reacted by joining armed non-state actors. This sheds light on the importance of preventive violent extremism to help these victims cope with their situations before it's too late. This paper will thus focus on the state as an influential player in the spread of this global phenomena and in its development. In specific, this thesis will be focusing on the preventive and counter violent extremism mechanisms being implemented by states, with a thorough look into those breaching human rights.

The emergence of Al Qaida and the Islamic State

Now that the causation theories have been discussed, we will take a deeper look at the violent extremist actors themselves. Who are IS and Al Qaida? What motivates them? Where do they come from? After all, if policy makers and government officials wish to significantly tackle this global phenomenon, they would need to understand a detailed description of their origins, motivations and ideologies. Muslim extremists and Jihadi inspired extremists, also referred to in this thesis, are violent extremist actors with the same motives and views as the VE groups discussed below.

Al Qaida

In her book "Al Qaida: From Global Network to Local Franchise", author Christina Hellmich takes a deeper look into the organization's origins, life and future. Al Qaida (AQ), previously referred to as the "bin Laden network", is a violent extremist

organization which was started in 1988 by Abdullah Azzam (who is at times not acknowledged as one of the founders since he was killed only one year after its creation) and the internationally known Osama bin Laden, as a response to the civil war in Afghanistan between the government supported by the Soviets, and the opposition (Hellmich, 2011). Many scholars disagree on the purpose behind the creation of such an organization; while some state that their goal was to fight the Soviets, a non-Muslim invader in hopes of defending Islam, others claim that it was created for the purposes of destroying the West (Hellmich, 2011). Whichever their goal, they managed to reach many Muslim supporters, specifically from the Arab region, joining the *jihad* [9], and they focused on the spread of Islam. One of the first attacks perpetrated by AQ was in Yemen, 1992, which targeted American groups heading to Somalia for humanitarian aid (Hellmich, 2011). In 1996, bin Laden developed ties with the new Taliban group and established training camps in Afghanistan (Hellmich, 2011). The next few years, AQ gained strength, resources, popularity and media attention. On September 11, 2001, it executed the most thought out and deadly extremist attack; the attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon in the United States, which claimed the lives of 2,997 people, is what AQ became known for and feared for (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Understandably, scholar Ahmed Rachid names AQ "the most dangerous international security threat to both the Western and Islamic worlds" (Hellmich, 2011). Nevertheless, some have argued that AQ's authority has declined following the 2001 "war on terror" declared by then US President George W. Bush (Hellmich, 2011). This concept will be further revised throughout this paper. However, although arguably not as active as

[9] Holy War

before, AQ bred one of the most dangerous violent extremist groups in the world, the Islamic State.

The Islamic State

In his article "The Islamic State: From al-Qaida Affiliate to Caliphate", author Ahmed S. Hachim richly depicts the origins, goals and tactics of IS. Back in the year 2003, Abu Musab Al Zarqawi[10] (AMZ) of Jordanian origin, moved to Iraq, after the US invasion of Afghanistan, where he became close with Kurdish Sunni group Ansar Al Islam (AAI) and gathered a number of followers who believed in implementing the Sharia law (Hachim, 2014). The following year, AMZ and his followers joined Osama bin Laden's organization, Al Qaida in Iraq (AQI) (Hachim, 2014). As briefly mentioned above, the goals of AQI included to affirm and spread *tawhid* [11], free Muslim land from apostates by war and implement the Sharia law (Hachim, 2014). Their main mission was to fight the American occupiers in Iraq. Though supporting the goals of AQI, AMZ had his own brutal tactics of achieving those goals. Displaying captives' beheadings, slaughtering the Shia and targeting civilians are among the few tactics that earned Al Zarqawi the title of "Sheikh of the slaughterers", though his actions were also viewed as unnecessary by Al-Qaida leader Ayman Al Zawahiri (Hachim, 2014). Following his killing in 2006, AMZ was replaced by Abu Hamza Al-Muhajir, who soon announced the creation of a new organization, known as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), which was led by Abu Omar Al Baghdadi. The new ISI, however, didn't have the resources needed to accomplish their goals and began to fail in the year 2008 (Hachim, 2014). Between 2010 and 2013, ISI

[10] A Jordanian Jihadist who moved to Afghanistan and ran an Islamic militant camp there when he found he couldn't fight the Jordanian monarchy

[11] The belief that there is only one God

reemerged under the leadership of Abu Baker Al Baghdadi and gained man power, resources and military capacity. This new face of ISI became known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), reaching out into Syria which had weakened following its decline into a civil war (Hachim, 2014). Like Al Qaida, ISIS's goal was to establish an Islamic state, but differed in its strategies used. Their strategy revolved around two main approaches: "*Idarat Al Tawwahush:* Akhtar marhala satamur biha al-umma" [12] and *"Khouta istrategiyah li taziz al-mawqif al-siyasi lil dawlah al-islamiyah fi al-Irak"*[13]. The first strategy focused on consistent fierce attacks in Muslim countries to weaken the regime in power, take control themselves and establish a new caliphate (Hachim, 2014). The latter focused on re-strengthening ISI in Iraq and the following years, ISIS claimed responsibility for several attacks undertaken in Baghdad, Hilla and Mosul. In 2014, ISIS became known as the Islamic State (IS).

Today, IS has claimed several attacks in the West, Iraq and Syria. After September 11, states armed up and joined Bush's "war on terror", developing several counter and preventive violent extremism laws. However, sovereign states have their own sovereign policies, leading some states to be targeted more than others. For example, once a deeper look is taken into the recent attacks of IS in the year 2015, it is found that all their attacks in the West were in France (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). What are France's counter violent extremism laws and policies? Why is France being attacked more than Spain, per say, by IS? The following section will take a brief look into the CVE and PVE policies being used to battle violent extremism organizations.

[12] "The Management of Savagery"
[13] "Strategic Plan to Improve the Political Position of the Islamic State in Iraq"

Countering and Preventing "terror"

The terms Countering Violent extremism (CVE) and Preventing Violent extremism (PVE) were coined by President Barack Obama's administration to replace the policies and practices of former President George Bush's "Global War on terror" (Beinart, 2015).

Preventive Violent Extremism

Preventive violent extremism includes programs of poverty alleviation, education, and nation-state building (Heydemann, Countering Violent Extremism as a Field of Practice, 2014). PVE methods are used as a response to the underlying factors behind extremist, arguing that we simply cannot kill our way out of terrorism. As long as the factors that caused violent extremism in the first place remain, the threat of rising VE will remain alongside it. While hard power might calm a worried nations people in the short run, PVE focuses on achieving long term results of deterring extremist acts. Several international organizations, such as the UN and USAID, together with governments, have focused on PVE methods. USAID has linked push factors, such as the violations of human rights, as causes behind the rise of violent extremism emerging from outside the individual (Heydemann, Countering Violent Extremism as a Field of Practice, 2014).

There are different approaches of PVE. One of the approaches of PVE is the development approach, which tackles socioeconomic drivers through programs addressing factors such as unmet expectations and social links, political drivers in an attempt of building confidence between the people and the state and cultural drivers which entails respecting different religious norms (The Development response, 2011). Another approach of PVE is the communitarian approach, which focuses on what the

people of a country can do, including neighborhoods, counties, municipalities and towns. This approach zooms in on identity communities (such as a diaspora and marginalized communities), virtual communities (via the internet) and the size of the community (Community-Level Indicators of Radicalization: A Data and Methods Task Force, 2010). It also focuses on civil society actors who play an important role contributing to reform and good governance (Holmer, 2013). USIP has several programs applied on the community level, such as security and justice dialogues. Such dialogues are crucial in transitional economies, to facilitate integration and interaction between state and non-state actors (Holmer, 2013). Furthermore, PVE methods include working with the community to identify people at risk of joining violent extremist organizations, identifying the ideologies supporting violent extremism and establishing youth initiatives (Stevens, 2011). In the community, the role of women in preventing violent extremism has often been undermined. Women can play a very important role of prevention through their traditional roles of mothers, caregivers and nurturers (Chowdhury, Barakat, & Shetret, 2013). Even in societies where they are not empowered, women have an emotive advantage over the community and their children which can be used as a preventive mechanism (Chowdhury, Barakat, & Shetret, 2013).When not addressed appropriately, women can play the role of a supporter of martyrdom and inspire her children to join violent extremist organizations. Gender issues should be taking into consideration when applying PVE mechanisms. For instance, young girls should be given non-discriminatory access to an education, keeping in mind the impact that these young girls will have as caregivers one day. Here, the civil society plays an important role in ensuring the implementation of programs by international organizations that are against gender based discriminations and discuss the

importance of education (Chowdhury, Barakat, & Shetret, 2013). A third approach of PVE methods is educational mechanisms. Examples include France's Imam training program which teaches the Quran "in a manner consistent with the values of the laïcité", and the British public universities offering Quran teachings (Stevens, 2011). Many of the times, the government employing such programs have sponsored the Imams themselves. The importance of an education should not be undermined, since it can build resilience to violent extremism, being that the young are usually brainwashed easier, especially when lacking an education. The educational systems, including the teachers and policies, should be well rounded to implement a zero-tolerance environment for violent extremism.

"Young people learn to hate – we must teach them peace… This is a generational challenge, to which we must all rise – together, I am convinced we can, starting with education."
- UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova
(Investing in education and young people to counter violent extremism, n.d.)

Countering Violent Extremism

The US Army defines counter terrorism as "Operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism" (Rineheart, Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency, 2010). This definition in itself, just as everything else associated with violent extremism, is quite vague and does little to help readers understand what falls under CVE. Scholar Jason Rineheart explains that counter extremism strategies vary depending on the violent extremist group, government implementing the policy and overall context (Rineheart, Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency, 2010). For example, given the impact Al Qaida has had on the US, the latter has developed the objective of disrupting, dismantling and defeating Al Qaida,

through an "enemy-centric approach" (Rineheart, Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency, 2010). This form of 'hard power' is developed by the military armed forces of the state. Such approaches include drone strikes (which can kill bystanders and civilians), arbitrary detention, war and other methods which contradict the *criminal justice model*[14] used by democracies (Rineheart, Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency, 2010). The "enemy-centric" approach not only opposes the very values that West stands for, but also breaches human rights laws, which as discussed above has been viewed as a cause of violent extremism. But to what extent can human rights policies be incorporated into national security laws in the fight of an international threat?

A look into Human Rights Policies

In 1948, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly established the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights to try and promote "dignity, liberty, equality and brotherhood", as Rene Cassin once said, to everyone without discrimination (Ishay, 2004). The declaration consists of 30 articles to affirm the dignity and equality of all persons nationwide, including: No torture (Article 5), protection of one's human rights by the law (Article 8), no arbitrary arrest or detainment (Article 9), the right to a fair trial (Article 10), everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty (Article 11) the right to privacy (Article 12), freedom of movement (Article 13), freedom of thought and expression (Articles 18 and 19 respectively) and the right to maintaining your human rights declared in this declaration (Article 30) (United Nations, 2017). Nevertheless,

[14] The criminal justice model is defined by Rineheart as one which "champions the rule of law and democratic values" of a state, but also "puts restrictions on the government"

human rights policies have stirred quite the controversy, especially with the rise of violent extremism. How is the line drawn between maintaining security or human rights? How are these two principles interrelated? Can the breaching of human rights lead to a higher level of violent extremism, and in turn, a higher security threat nationwide? What is the role of the state in defending human rights and protecting one's citizens? Scholar Micheline Ishay best describes this controversy in her article "What are Human Rights? Six Historical Controversies", stating "we find ourselves pondering the role of the state – as both the guardian of basic rights and as the behemoth against which one's rights need to be defended" (Ishay, 2004). All of these concepts will be further revised throughout this thesis.

A Moral Dilemma

When a state is under attack, their first instinct is to retaliate with an attack themselves. However, this reaction can sometimes backfire.

There are several studies done about extreme violence, counter extremist and prevention methods. This thesis will be referring to the scholars who view the need to maintain human rights values in the "fight" against violent extremism, as those that breach human rights principles can be seen as a "ticking time bomb scenario" (Albow, 2013).

One author that discusses the failures of counter extremism is Brynjar Lia, in his article "Jihadism in the Arab World after 2011: Explaining Its Expansion" (Lia, 2016). He goes even further as to explain that the forceful CVE methods used actually aided extremist groups in recruiting members. He further discusses the increase in violence in the Arab region, following the Arab spring, as well as the increase in extremist affiliation. He

adds that extremism cannot be fought purely with military efforts and state coercion. On the contrary, he argues that such measures actually make the situation worse in the long run (Lia, 2016).

Other authors that have discussed the failure of CVE methods are Rachel Albow and Matt Qvortrup in their articles “Tortured Sympathies: Victorian Literature and the Ticking Time-Bomb Scenario” and “Counting the Cost of Counterterrorism” respectively. They both found that the CVE methods being used, when extreme in nature, actually increase radicalization rather than tame it. Author Matt Qvortrup best explains it by saying “It was taken as a given that a military response and occasional restriction of civil liberties would lead to a reduction in the threat of both domestic and international terrorism” (Qvortrup, 2016).

The next chapter will discuss the research methods in which this thesis intends to coincide with the above scholars’ theories on countering violent extremism.

Chapter 3
Research Methodology

Overview of Approach

This thesis, which is entitled “Counterterrorism Methods and the Challenges it presents to Human Rights”, is a qualitative study that attempts to understand the impact that counter violent extremism policies breaching human rights principles have on reducing, increasing or not affecting violent extremism. This research study aims to prove that CVE methods which breach human rights principles don’t lead to a decline in violent extremism, although they claim to do just that. It is assumed that those methods actually lead to an increase in violent extremism and recruitment for such organizations, rather than a decrease. However, given the time frame and resources available for this thesis, this study will not aim at understanding the impact of each CVE policy on VE, but rather study whether or not the attacks carried out by extremists have reduced since the implementation of CVE and PVE policies. For such analysis, the sensitive nature of this subject and accessibility to data dictates the main use of qualitative research to verify my observations. A brief quantitative section of violent extremism activities from the year 2001 until the year 2015 will be added in order to depict that violent extremism activities have in fact not declined following the implementation of CVE methods. In order to approach the research question under study, this paper will first discuss an overview of the definition of violent extremism and the attacks following September 11, as to understand the difference in counterextremism methods (violating human rights practices) used to tackle unalike extremist situations. Furthermore, this thesis will

compare and contrast different counterextremism methods used and their effectiveness in ending or reducing VE attacks. As a conclusion, the final part of the paper will conclude that 'hard' counterextremism methods do not lead to a decline in violent extremism and thus are ineffective in countering extremism.

It is important to point out that countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism vary in policies and approaches from one state to another. Some states are more prone to maintaining their basic beliefs of the rule of law and democracy; others are more focused on ensuring direct security to their civilians through any means necessary.

Research Question

The research question that will be addressed in this paper is: Have global counter extremism efforts and resources breaching human rights principles been effective in reducing violent extremism? Thus, the main objective of this paper is to study the impact of counter extremism efforts on a society, and to better understand whether or not these methods have been successful in battling violent extremism. A look into international human rights principles will be taken in order to address the research question under study, and to better understand how CVE methods violate human rights, and the impact of those violations on VE. The research question under study is an open-ended exploratory research question, which calls for further investigation and detailed research to be undertaken.

Research Design

Following 9/11, governments have put up their guard and prepared to battle violent extremist organizations with whatever means possible. Many of the CVE and PVE

methods being employed breach human rights principles, which as discussed in the previous chapter, has proven to increase violent extremism. How can an approach that uses one of the causes of violent extremism in the first-place lead to a decline in violent extremism? The theory of this paper is that counter extremism methods have not been successful in reducing violent extremism and stopping the growth of global extremist organizations. To prove this theory, this thesis will study the violent extremist attacks that have occurred following 9/11 and the CVE policies in the areas under study (to be discussed below). Furthermore, this thesis will go on to portray that despite the efforts, resources and personnel dedicated to establishing counter extremism mechanisms, their aim to reduce and end violent extremism has not been effective.

The main purpose of this study is to examine and understand whether or not counterextremism methods have been effective in reducing violence, and why some methods have been more successful than others. The results of this study can be used in further research, as to fully understand the process of violent extremism. This paper thus highlights the importance of the quality of the CVE methods used, as to avoid the rise and expansion of violent extremism.

The data used for this study will be mainly qualitative data extracted from scholars who have previously studied the causation theories of violent extremism, the violent extremist organizations under analysis, the human rights policies relevant and the CVE methods used. This thesis will pursue an ethnographic research, as to develop an in-depth analysis of violent extremism and the processes used to fight it, with a focus on the particular beliefs and practices of Muslim affiliated violent extremist groups, such as AQ, IS, Jihadi inspired extremists and Muslim extremists. To follow through with this type of research, this thesis will collect extensive narrative data over a specific time

frame as to observe and analyze the patterns of violent extremist organizations, and the patterns between CVE laws and violent extremism.

The effectiveness and quality of CVE methods has stirred significant debate among scholars who believe that CVE methods should take any necessary measures to defeat violent extremism, and those who believe in the importance of the quality of CVE methods. As already discussed in the previous chapters, this thesis will follow the latter perspective, emphasizing on the importance of respecting human rights principles when battling violent extremism. Furthermore, a few references to quantitative data will be used to show the rhythm of violent extremist attacks following the implementation of CVE methods, in the countries under study. This quantitative data will be extracted from the Global Terrorism Database, which provides a detailed summary of the violent extremist attacks' trends occurring globally. The attacks perpetrated by *unknown* groups were not included in the study, although some could have been executed by Muslim affiliated VE groups.

In addition, a comparative analysis of different government policies and approaches of CVE will be used, as to further understand which approaches have been effective and which of those have not. For this, this thesis will be using a triangulation of sources, studying counter extremism methods at different points in time, focusing on the events following 9/11 and in different case countries. Because of the large number of extremist organizations and attacks, the focus group of this study is on the Islamic State (including ISIL and ISIS), Al Qaida (including AQ in Iraq, AQ in the Arabian Peninsula and the secret organization of AQ in Europe), Jihadi inspired extremists and Muslim extremists. The results will be analyzed by linking effective CVE methods to a decrease in violence and non-effective methods to a continuation of VE attacks, or to an increase in the

attacks. For this section of the paper, references to quantitative facts provided by the GTD will be used to show a constant, increase or decrease in extremist activities. The comparison group used as a research design will be the counter violent extremist policies in country (A) and the counter violent extremist policies in country (B), linking those policies to an increase or a decrease in violent extremist activities in the respective country under study.

The dependent variable in this study is the extremist attacks, which was collected from the GTD. The independent variable is the human rights practices in CVE methods, which was collected from CIRI Human rights data. The data extracted from CIRI is the human rights practices in the countries with the highest number of violent extremist fighters, from the year 1981 (when available; i.e. one of the countries only has information available from the year 1992), since people develop into an extremist, are don't just become one over-night (and thus, it wouldn't be reasonable to only extract the information from the year 2001). Furthermore, according to studies, most VE fighters are young men, which would fall into the age group under study. CIRI codes human rights practices in countries from 0-2, 0 representing high violations of human rights and 2 representing the absence of human rights violations. The results of this study show that the countries with the highest number of VE fighters have low codes, representing high violations of human rights practices.

Case Studies

The information that is accessible to this thesis requires the selection of a few case studies similar to one another. As to associate different CVE methods, this thesis will be referring to different governmental strategies of CVE methods. This study is interested

in understanding the impact that policies and counter-extremist methods, breaching human rights, have on violent extremist activities. Though the countries under study have some strategies which are respectful to human rights practices, this paper will be focusing on those that are not human rights sensitive. Being that the United States faced the deadliest extremist attack in the world (9/11), and it has coined the everyday terms used to describe this global phenomenon, one of the sample cases used for this study will be North America. Europe will also be included in this study, given their similar foreign policy approaches to the United States, focusing on France and the United Kingdom since they have experienced the most number of VE extremist attacks in Western Europe. Although very similar, they also have their different approaches when encountering violent extremism. For example, while the US seeks to counter all forms of ideological extremism, the UK mainly focuses on strengthening the justice system to prevent people from joining extremist groups (Naviwala, 2014). The US and its European allies are referred to as 'the West' in this study, as a shorthand. AQ and IS have proven to be the deadliest organizations in these regions. Furthermore, as already expressed above, the years under study will be 2001-2015, given that the 9/11 incident in 2001 is when my independent variable changed drastically.

While the samples cases used in this study cannot be generalized to represent all extremist organizations, attacks or individuals associated with these organizations, it can help in finding an association between counter extremism methods and violence. As explained above, the main purpose of this study is to examine and understand whether or not CVE methods have been effective in reducing violence, and why some methods have been more successful than others. The results of this study can be used in further

research, as to fully understand the process of violent extremism, and the impact of CVE approaches.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this thesis is the timeframe specified to finalize this study. As to conclude whether or not a certain CVE policy has had a specific outcome on the violent extremists' activities, this would need to be monitored over a number of years, to fully understand the trends of violent extremist organizations, and the impact that those CVE strategies have on those trends. Furthermore, trying to understand the recruitment patterns of such organizations, following the implementation of a CVE law, cannot possibly be done in the short time frame given to finalize this thesis. It is for this reason that the study will only include attacks up to the year 2015 (from 2001). The argument of 'hard' power used in many CVE methods claim to tackle the unstable situation in a faster and more efficient way than those using 'soft' power; thus, if a CVE policy has not been able to reduce violent extremist attacks in 14 years (From 2001-2015), I would say it has not been successful in tackling this global phenomenon at all, let alone in a *fast* way.

Another limitation of this study is the lack of accessibility to data and the possible inaccuracy of that data. Given the sensitivity of this topic, this thesis will not partake in interviews or surveys, and will only be referring to available scholarly sources. The data itself is also hard to accurately understand. It is difficult to evaluate the success of CVE programs and to measure the process of violent extremism. It is practically impossible to understand which programs might work for one individual and be completely ineffective

for another, and why. In addition, it cannot possibly be assumed that the rehabilitation programs work the same for each individual involved.

This study is very indicative rather than affirmative, although it shows that whoever is drafting PVE policies doesn't need to be human rights abusive in order to be effective.

Background and Beliefs

Though over 80% of the extremist attacks have occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Nigeria, it has become a global threat (Lindborg, 2016). The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, executed by the VE group AQ, was an attack on the world's hegemon, demonstrating to the rest of the world how perilous a determined violent extremist organization can be. In response to 9/11, then President George Bush launched a "Global War on Terror", finding several allies to fight this war alongside the US (Schmid, 2014). By strengthening their anti-extremism laws and criminal penalties, states were hoping to intimidate violent extremist groups. Nevertheless, this has not been the case. Extremist groups are growing and expanding their attacks, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent civilians along the way. According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), around 32,600 people died in the year 2015 alone, falling victim of extremist attacks (Global Terrorism Index, 2016).

The debate on how to best approach violent extremism has been long standing between scholars, practitioners and representatives. Some scholars argue that regime type affects violent extremism; while some argue that violent extremist attacks occur more under democracies than dictatorships, claiming that political liberty and freedom of expression conduce extremist attacks, others disagree, arguing that less extremist attacks occur under democracies because people feel less constrained and in need of acting out

(Piazza, 2007). In addition, other scholars study the interplay of factors leading to violent extremism, such as religious, political, and socio-psychological factors (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent extremism, 2016). The patterns found in violent extremists, and the patterns to be focused on in this paper, are frustration and resentment against the government and society, though other factors, such as the social media, have a huge impact on extremists (Ranstorp, The Root Causes of Violent extremism, 2016). While research may disagree on several aspects regarding extremists, the one thing that is agreed upon is that youth constitutes the majority of people joining radical groups (Chin, Gharaibeh, Woodham, & Deeb, 2016).

States not only disagree on their CVE and PVE policies, but also on their definition of violent extremism. For example, the Syrian counterterrorism court defines terrorism as:

> *"every act that aims at creating a state of panic among the people, destabilizing public security and damaging the basic infrastructure of the country by using weapons, ammunition, explosives, flammable materials, toxic products, epidemiological or bacteriological factors or any method fulfilling the same purposes."*
> (Syria: Counterterrorism Court Used to Stifle Dissent, 2013)

This does not define whether an extremist is a state or non-state actor and can define several non-extremist acts as causing a state of panic. This definition has allowed the Syrian counter-terrorism court to prosecute human rights activists for releasing an article or statement that could cause a panic among the people.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) of the United States, on the other hand, has the following definition:

> *"The term ''terrorism'' means any activity that— (A) involves an act that— (i) is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; and (ii) is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State*

or other subdivision of the United States; and (B) appears to be intended— (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping"

Even within the same country, different security departments have different definitions of terrorism. For example, while the DHS uses the above definition of terrorism, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) also within the US, uses the following definition:

"The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives"

Conclusion

The following chapter will discuss the different qualitative studies in the subject of VE. Furthermore, once concluding that violations of human rights lead to violent extremism, chapter 4 will look at the foreign fighters themselves and their countries of origin. By using CIRI, the following chapter will also look at the human rights policies in the countries of origins of the fighters themselves. As discussed above, chapter 4 will not provide an all-inclusive view of all the CVE methods used in the West, but only a few references to the countries which have been most subject to violent extremism over the past couple of years.

Chapter 4
Analysis

Introduction

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, the face of counter violent extremism has changed, and governments worldwide increased the budget they had allocated to fight this global phenomenon. For example, homeland security in the US increased its budget from $9 billion to $35 billion in the 5 years following September 11 (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). However, despite this large amount spent to battle extremism, it has yet to be defeated. Perhaps the quality of the policies being used should be calculated more by government officials.

In this chapter, the data gathered from different scholars and their interpretations will be revised in relation to the research objectives of this thesis paper. Different viewpoints and perspectives on the subject of counter violent extremism and preventive violent extremism will be revised and further analyzed in order to understand their effectiveness in reducing violent extremism, specifically when human rights policies have been violated. Furthermore, a more detailed look into the fighters themselves will be taken, in order to understand their motives and the human rights policies in their countries of origin. The objective is to determine the effectiveness of CVE methods which violate basic international human rights principals. This section of the study will highlight the importance of the quality of the CVE methods used, and the impacts those methods have

(or don't have) on reducing violent extremism. The conduct of this study entails taking a closer look into the fighters joining violent extremist groups and the methods being used to defeat these groups following 9/11. It is assumed that CVE methods that violate human rights don't fulfill their objective of reducing violent extremism. That is, either by causing an increase in violent extremist attacks themselves, or by creating more violent extremist fighters and thus aiding in the recruitment process, it is important to understand the outcomes of the methods used. The particular goal of this study is to be able to answer the research question: Have global counter extremism efforts and resources breaching human rights principles been effective in reducing violent extremism?

Causes of Violent Extremism

In order to understand how to best tackle violent extremism, it is important for government officials to fully comprehend what caused it in the first place. While it might be an effective short-term approach to fight this phenomenon with hard methods, long-term solutions depend more on undertaking the root causes of this problem. Though it has been argued that violent extremism is the result of several variables, including social, political and identity factors, this paper will focus on the state (and the human rights practices of the state) and "collective grievances" against to the state. Could a small repressing policy by the government (such as not allowing certain citizens to partake in voting; i.e. restricting political participation) or isolating a certain community (such as the Muslim community) lead to a crisis of identity? In its' most basic sense, one caught in such situations might feel like they don't belong and thus look for belonging elsewhere, as a result of failed integration policies by the state. Once they

find that sense of belonging among those who have been through the same, those with collective beliefs and interests, and those who "protect" each other, they will feel more at ease while filling the missing puzzle of their identity. Furthermore, once given a reputation amidst that community, such as being called a leader and being held responsible for saving Islam, that individual will feel important and with purpose. This can be seen in the surge of young European Muslims leaving their home to join the fight against the West. More than 3,000 ISIS fighters come from Western Europe, including France, Austria and Germany (Franz, 2015). Also, the metropolitan police commissioner in London has stated that 5 British citizens join ISIS weekly (Franz, 2015). It has been estimated that around 20,000-30,000 fighters joining ISIS are foreign fighters (Dawson & Amarasingam, 2017). Being Muslim in a Christian community surrounded by Western citizens might cause someone to be the victim of human rights discrimination and alienation. The failed integration policies by the Western governments have resulted in severe consequences of identity crisis and the feeling of not-belonging. One fighter in Jubhat Al-Nusra blamed the Western system for leaving, saying:

> *"We emigrated because we don't want to live in the system anymore. And the system is the Western governments. Their democracy. They control what you think and say; what you care for. And they tell you what is good and bad, from the media that you read and watch to the things you learn at school from young because the school curriculum is from them. But we have our own way of life, which is called Islam. It is a complete way of life. It is a religion but also a governance. It has laws and ways in which you do everything from how you go to the toilet, drink water, and brush your teeth to how you worship Allah and how you run a business. It lets you see the world for what it is and keeps you away from harmful things in society"*
>
> (Dawson & Amarasingam, 2017)

By feeling that they are being forced to follow a certain 'system' and by feeling alienated from society, foreign fighters might experience one of the 'pull' factors of

joining a violent extremist organization, which in this case is defense of an identity group (Borum & Robert Fein, The Psychology of Foreign Fighters, 2017).

Human Rights

"The war on terrorism" undermines our security more than any terrorist bombing"
Paul Hoffman (Hoffman, 2004)

Human rights principals and frameworks are a guide for governments when implementing policies. They protect and provide for citizens on an international context. Nevertheless, as sovereign actors, different states have different policies. This can be seen in the foreign policies of countries worldwide, among them, the counter violent extremism and preventive violent extremism policies. While countries are sacrificing so much in this fight against extremism, they need to decide if it is worth abandoning the international structure of human rights law, which has been in the works for the past several decades. This section will argue that human rights violations lead to an increase in extremism, and thus, countering violent extremism with policies that violate human rights will not result in effective outcomes.

"True victory is one that leads to true peace, a peace founded on legitimacy and eventual reconciliation. Obtaining such an outcome requires that the counterinsurgent forces practice rectitude"
Anthony James Joes (Joes, 2004)

The "war on terrorism" waged following 9/11 is operating on its own rules, disregarding international norms. The violations of the human rights in the violent extremism policies come in the form drone attacks, torture, arbitrary arrest and controlling freedom of speech and religion. It is the state's responsibility to follow human rights principals, and when the state fails to do so, violent extremist groups find it easier to recruit among

those who's human rights have been violated (Hoffman, 2004). Identifying with a violent extremist group is the result of several incidents. While the motivations of fighters vary from one individual to another (to be discussed later on in this chapter), human rights principals play a crucial role in that final life-changing decision an individual takes of becoming a violent extremist or not.

Precedents and outcomes

Violations of human rights can backfire through the public of a country itself. This can be seen in the rebellions and protests going on worldwide. However, many countries (as will be seen below in this chapter) don't respect the right of their people to protest and the right of association. This can result in frustration which eventually is lashed out through other means such as violent extremism.

In the fight against extremism, one violation of human rights can be seen in the way prisoners are treated. Either through arbitrary detainment, torture or not providing them with a fair trial, governments need to consider how such actions could backfire on them. One example can be seen with the French forces who used torture methods against violent extremists in Algeria, which led to a constitutional crisis in France, disorders within the French military, and the ruining of the careers of several officers within that army (Joes, 2004). In addition, governments need to consider the results of actually giving prisoners their human rights. Such actions, on the contrary to those discussed above, could lead to increased intelligence from the prisoners, less frustration from the enemy and increased support from the international community and the people (Joes, 2004).

Result of respecting Human Rights

Human rights violations lead to an increased feeling of frustration, grievances and isolation, to say the least, all of which lead to an increase in violent extremism (Danieli, 2005). Human rights practices include, but are not limited to, freedom of speech and religion, freedom of assembly and association, the right to political participation and no torture or political imprisonment practiced by the government. Disrespecting these principals can lead to violent extremism. For example, Walsh & Piazza find in their study that raising respect for physical integrity rights from 0 to 1 can decrease the expected number of violent extremist outbreaks by 17-40% (Walsh & Piazza, 2010). Furthermore, Abrahams concludes in his study that respect for freedom of expression, assembly and personal autonomy can lead to a decrease in violent extremism (Abrahms, 2007), while Krueger finds that restrictions on political participation leads to an increased number of foreign fighters (Krueger, 2006). Therefore, it is possible that some violations of human rights have more of an impact on an individual (and thus lead to more violent extremism) than other violations, but further detailed studies are required to reach such a conclusion.

It has been proven that countries repressing human rights, such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of association and assembly and other rights, are encouraging extremism and feeding violent extremist organizations (Danieli, 2005) through creating foreign fighters. This can further be seen in the section below, which expresses that the 5 top countries exporting foreign fighters actually do have repressing human rights practices.

Foreign Fighters

Nearly all violent extremist organizations have an international focus, seeking funds, support and fighters from around the world (Abrahms, 2007). The strength of a violent extremist group is in the supply of fighters. Of course, the supply of funds, weapons and intelligence is also of key importance, but without fighters, there wouldn't be a group to begin with. Therefore, when fighting the battle against extremism, it is only *winnable* through cutting the supply of fighters. This thesis argues that the higher the violations of human rights practices by governments, the higher the supply of fighters willing to join violent extremist groups, and thus, the higher the number of violent extremist attacks. In this sense, this supply and demand relationship will only last as long as there are citizens willing to become a violent extremist. This can only be outdone by 'winning the people over'. This concept was best expressed by UK Prime minister Gordon Brown:

> *"We cannot win this [war on terror] militarily or by policing or intelligence alone. We need to engage people so that we can win the battle of hearts and minds"*
>
> (Branigan, 2007)

This implies that the motivations of fighters are more personal than economical and/or political[15]. In fact, studies show that contrary to what is believed, most foreign fighters come from economically developed countries with low income disparity and highly developed political foundations (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). By winning the hearts and minds of the people, the government indirectly deprives violent extremist groups from the supply of fighters.

[15] Of course, some foreign fighters have economic or political motivations, as will be discussed in the following section

Motives of a Fighter

Foreign fighters travel from several countries around the world to join ISIS in their fight for Islam. The motivations to fight come with the promise of receiving something in return. That return ranges from (1) loyalty, or identifying with a group, (2) self-help, or a simple desire to survive and have a purpose, (3) economic incentives (though sometimes of a small gain, it can lure many young individuals who are unemployed and are feeling rejected by the employment sector) and/or (4) coercion, including psychological manipulation by charismatic leaders (Borum & Robert Fein, The Psychology of Foreign Fighters, 2017). Finding bonds with a non-state community group that not only has similar religious and cultural views, but also provides a sense of security by offering benefits (that the state doesn't offer) might enhance the relationship of the individual with the extremist organization and build hostility towards the state which is failing to provide them with their basic rights. This can best be seen in the case of Syria, which experienced a trade imbalance during President Bashar Al Assad's rule, leaving many local sectors, such as agriculture, damaged and in need of an alternative source of security (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). Furthermore, the country's elites, such as Rami Makhlouf[16], owned leading companies in Syria which caused hostility by the locals who were barely getting by (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). This sense of uneven distribution, caused by factors such as globalization and privatization, can lead to hostility towards the state and the search for security among community groups who substitute for the responsibilities of the state,

[16] Bashar Al Assad's cousin and a wealthy Syrian Business man who owned a majority of the Syrian economy

leading citizens to turn to violent extremism. After all, without fighters, violent extremist groups, such as ISIS and Al-Qaida, would be nothing but an idea.

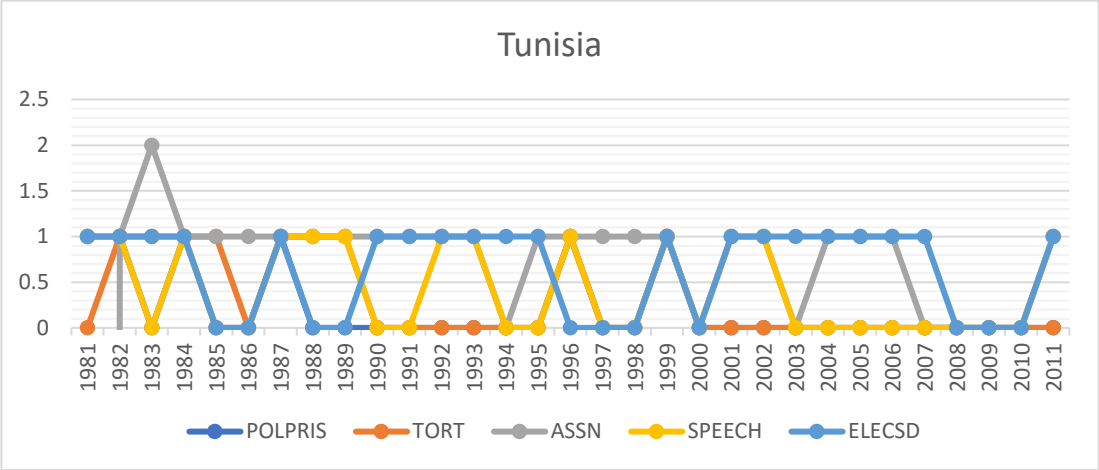
Top 5 countries with Foreign Fighters

The largest number of foreign fighters joining ISIS come from Tunisia (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). By the year 2015, 6000 foreign fighters had come from Tunisia, 2500 fighters from Saudi Arabia, 2400 from Russia, 2100 from Turkey and 2000 from Jordan (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). Having discussed the impact of human rights policies on violent extremism in the previous section, this part of the thesis will look into the human rights practices of the top 5 countries with the highest flow of foreign fighters joining ISIS. When looking at their human rights practices, these countries also are quite similar in their coding ranks by CIRI. The below charts show five human rights practices, in these 5 countries, from the years 1981 – 2011. The five sample human rights practices, are a countries' use of torture (TORT), freedom of assembly and association (ASS), political participation (ELECSD), freedom of speech (SPEECH) and political imprisonment (PLPRIS). The below graphs show that these five governments generally (1) frequently practice torture, (2) restrict freedom of speech, (3) don't respect political participation (i.e. fair trials, elections, etc..), (4) have severe restrictions on assembly and association, and (5) frequently take part in political imprisonment (Cingranelli & Richards, 2010). These are all violations of human rights. As previously discussed in the methodology section, the practices included in Graphs 1.0-1.4 below are from the year 1981 (when available) since becoming a violent extremist takes time, and thus, the conversion into a violent extremist cannot be calculated solely from the year 2001. Furthermore, a study of foreign fighters from the year 1981 has been included since it

has been proven that most fighters are young individuals (Cingranelli & Richards, 2010).

The data used in the below graphs (Graph 4.0 – Graph 4.4) and tables (Table 4.0 - Table 4.4) has been extracted from the CIRI human Rights Dataset (Cingranelli & Richards, 2010).

Graph 4.0 – Tunisia



The above graph shows that since 1981 until 2011, Tunisia's 5 governmental practices have alternated between 1 and 0 (except for the year 1983, when the government was virtually unrestricted in regard to association with other political parties or groups). The averages of the 30 years of practices in Tunisia can be seen in the table below.

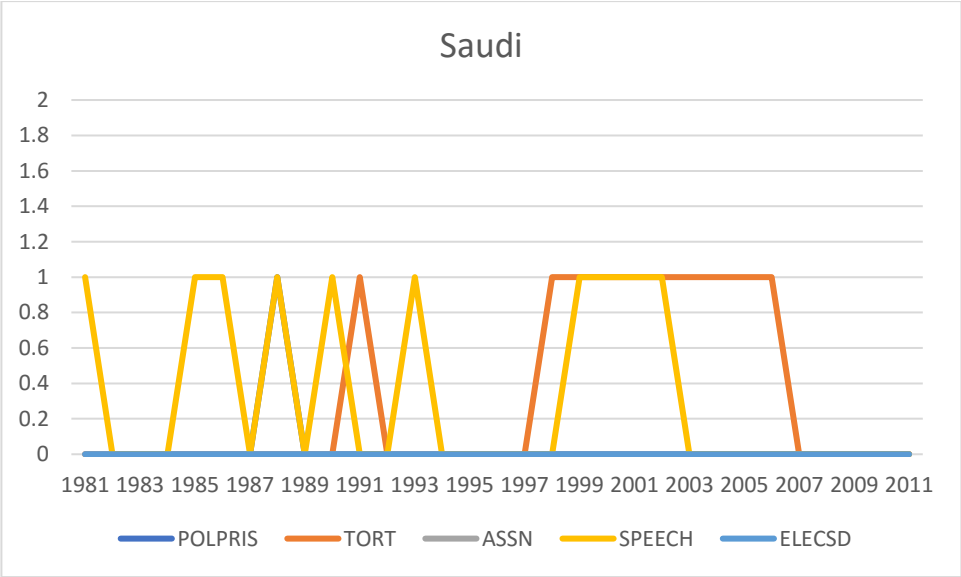
Table 4.0 - Practices Coding Averages in Tunisia

POLPRIS	***TORT***	***ASSN***	***SPEECH***	***ELECSD***
0.193548	0.290323	-31.4516	0.419355	0.645161

According to the averages of the human rights practices in Tunisia, it can be concluded

that political imprisonment, torture is frequently practiced, associations[17] are restricted, the government owns all aspects of communications (limiting freedom of speech) and political participation is limited[18].

Graph 4.1 – Saudi Arabia



For the years included in the above graph, Saudi's political imprisonment, political participation and freedom of assembly practices remained at a steady 0. The remaining 2 practices alternated between 0 and 1 over the years. The averages of the 30 years of practices in Saudi can be seen in the table below.

Table 4.1 - Practices Coding Averages in Saudi Arabia

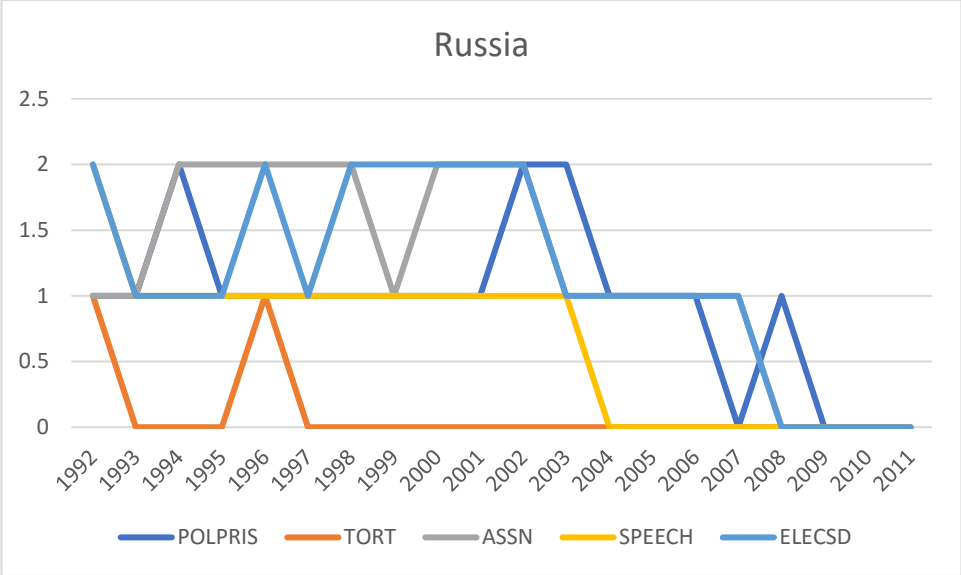
POLPRIS	***TORT***	***ASSN***	***SPEECH***	***ELECSD***
-32.1935	0.322581	0	0.322581	0

[17] Freedom of associations in Tunisia is coded negative since in the year 1981, it received a ranking of -999

[18] All averages are rounded up to the nearest full unit. In Tunisia's case, only ELECSD is ranked 1, the remaining are assumed to be 0

In Saudi's table, a negative also appears, but this time in political imprisonment, due to its coding of -999 in the year 1981. The human rights practices are quite violated in the government of Saudi Arabia, as we can see that political imprisonment, torture is frequently practiced, there is severe restriction on assembly and association[19], the government owns all aspects of communications (limiting freedom of speech) and political participation is not respected.

Graph 4.2 – Russia



Among the 5 countries with the highest number of foreign fighters, Russia has the highest rating in some practices, such as political participation. Nevertheless, the sudden drops in the ratings not only cause a sense of instability in the human rights practices implemented by the government, but also bring Russia's averages down to 0 and 1 (See Table 4.2)

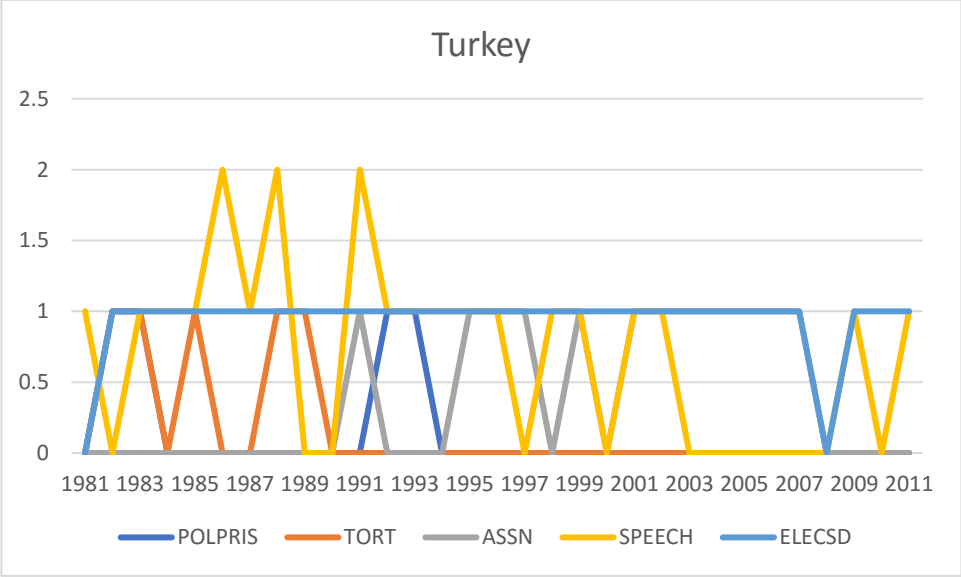
[19] Assembly and Political imprisonment remained at a steady 0 throughout the years

Table 4.2 - Practices Coding Averages in Russia

POLPRIS	*TORT*	*ASSN*	*SPEECH*	*ELECSD*
0.95	0.1	1.2	0.65	1.15

In Russia's case, we see two practices averaged at 1, although they remain violated. It can be assumed that political imprisonment and torture are frequently practiced, associations are limited, political participation is limited, and the government restricts freedom of speech.

Graph 4.3 – Turkey



Turkey's human rights practices' ratings are visibly low, with a peak in freedom of speech in the years 1986, 1988 and 1991. The below table provides an average of the human rights practices of governments.

Table 4.3 - Practices Coding Averages in Turkey

POLPRIS	*TORT*	*ASSN*	*SPEECH*	*ELECSD*
0.129032258	0.161290323	0.387096774	0.709677419	0.935483871

In Turkey's human rights practices, two principals are rounded up to a coding of 1. With this, it can be assumed that political imprisonment, torture is frequently practiced, associations are restricted, while freedom of speech and political participation are somewhat restricted.

Graph 4.4 – Jordan

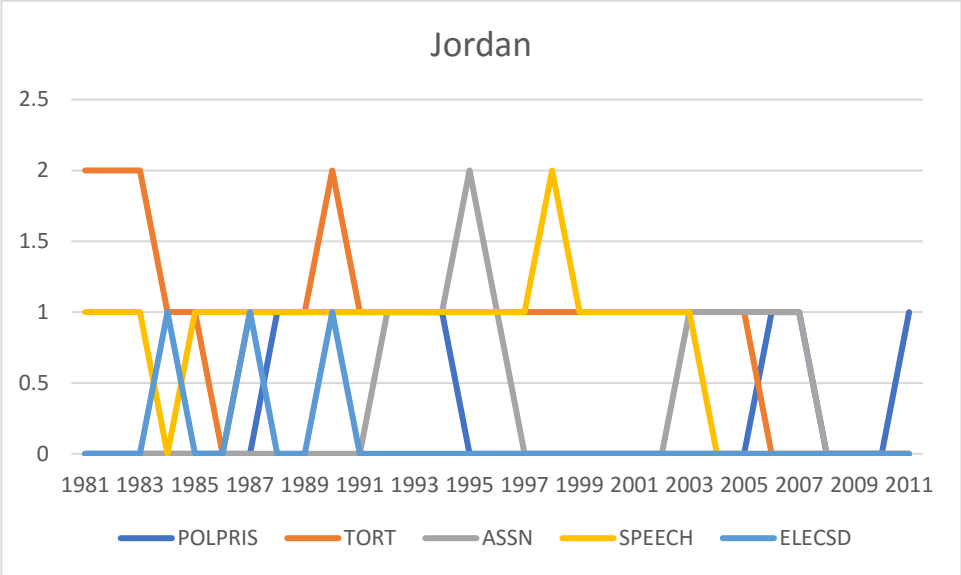


Table 4.4 - Practices Coding Averages in Jordan

POLPRIS	***TORT***	***ASSN***	***SPEECH***	***ELECSD***
0.322580645	0.903225806	0.35483871	0.741935484	0.096774194

Jordan's case is similar to Turkey's, in which 2 practices are rounded up to 1. Here, it can be determined that political imprisonment is practiced frequently, associations are severely limited or denied, torture is practiced occasionally, freedom of speech is somewhat restricted and political participation is not respected.

All of these 5 countries are similar in their human rights practices, mostly ranking quite low and violating human rights principals.

Three out of these five countries are Middle Eastern. Two other Middle Eastern countries which are the homes to 2 major violent extremist organizations are Syria and Iraq. As can be seen in table 4.5 below, the coding of the human rights practices in the governments of Syria and Iraq and extremely low, even before their wars had begun.

Table 4.5 – Practices Coding Averages in Syria and Iraq

Country	***POLPRIS***	***TORT***	***ASSN***	***SPEECH***	***ELECSD***
Syria	0.032	0.064	0.032	0	0.129
Iraq	-4.129	-4.258	-4.096	-4.225	-3.870

The only Middle Eastern country with *no* foreign fighters is Cyprus (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). The codes for its' human rights practices can be seen in Graph 4.5 and Table 4.6 below.

Graph 4.5 - Cyprus

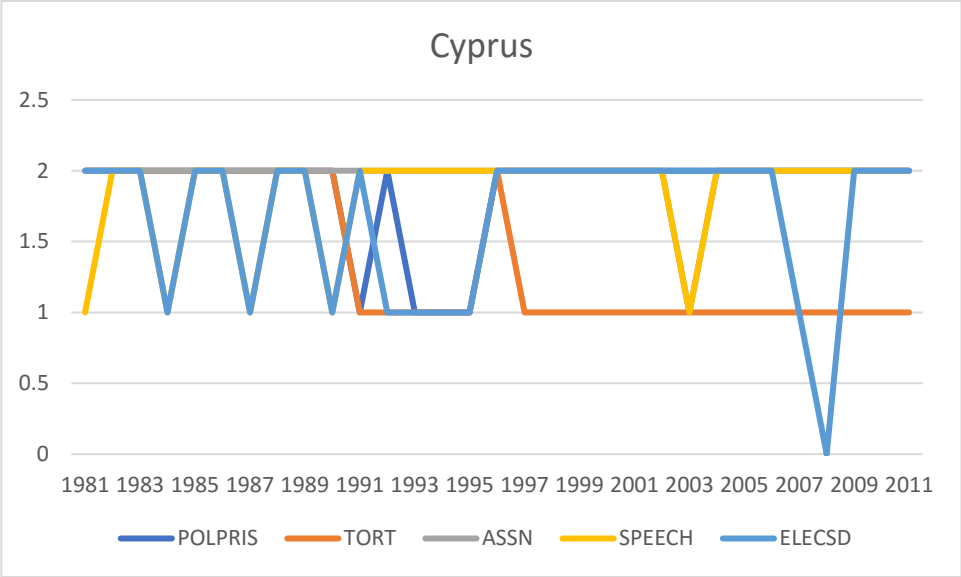


Table 4.6 - Practices Coding Averages in Cyprus

POLPRIS	TORT	ASSN	SPEECH	ELECSD
1.870967742	1.35483871	1.967741935	1.838709677	1.677419355

Unlike the above 4 Middle Eastern countries, there is a visible difference in the graph of Cyprus, in which its' practices are ranked in the upper section of the graph, between 1 and 2 (except for a sudden drop in political participation in the year 2008). In Cyprus's averages, all the policies have a ranking above 1.5, except for torture, although it is still ranked better than the above countries (which are all averaged 0 for torture).

CVE Methods and their effectiveness

Different countries have used different approaches to violent extremism. Some of the methods used to monitor and fight violent extremism are UN resolutions, military retaliations, metal detectors in airports, increasing the severity of punishments and many

more (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). Some, such as military retaliations, have proven to be costly but ineffective in the long-run; although in the short-run, it has actually proven to increase violent extremism (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). In their study on the effectiveness of CVE strategies, Lum, Kennedy and Sherley show how the US invasion of Iraq in the year 2005 led to an increase in violent extremist suicide bombings (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). They also show how other methods, such as increasing the protection of embassies, has not had an effect on extremism (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006). However, some methods, such as adding metal detectors in airports, appeared to have a "substitution effect", in which while attacks in airports were reduced, other attacks, such as suicide bombings, notably increased (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research, 2006).

The methods used while countering violent extremism took a drastic shift following 9/11. After the attacks on the world's hegemon, several of its allies lined up and joined the war on terror.

"Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists"

Previous US President George W. Bush (Bush: 'You Are Either With Us, Or With the Terrorists' - 2001-09-21 , 2009)

However, the world is still witnessing cases of violent extremist attacks, despite countless efforts and resources being dedicated to battling this phenomenon. Furthermore, an increased number of individuals are becoming violent extremists, giving violent extremist groups more man power. A study done by Soufan group shows that in June 2014, 12,000 foreign fighters went to Syria and Iraq from 81 countries (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). In December 2015, the number of foreign fighters increased to 27,000 - 30,000 fighters coming from 86 different countries[20] (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). This drastic increase illustrates that the CVE methods being used need to be reevaluated. It can further be argued that instead of decreasing violent extremism, they are simply worsening matters. In Western Europe in specific, the movement of foreign troops more than doubled in just one year and a few months (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). This calls into question the approach being used by Western Europe and its efficiency. The below section will look into a few CVE policies used in three major Western European countries.

[20] US Intelligence has projected that the fighters are coming from 100 different countries (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015)

The United States

The face of counter extremism can be divided into two periods; pre- 9/11, a time when many people didn't even know who Al-Qaida was, and post-9/11, a time when a "war on terror" was launched by then US President George Bush (Schmid, 2014). Alongside this war comes defense before civil liberty, stability before freedom and security before rights.

The counter extremism strategies used in the US vary widely, however, many of them being used are severely violating international agreed upon human rights principals. One example is Guantanamo Bay, which holds captives for an indefinite period, in a "human rights free zone" without charging them, tortures them and sometimes prosecutes them (US: Surveillance Practices Violate Rights. US Records under review at UN, 2014). This violates several articles in the UN universal declaration of human rights, including no torture, the right to a fair trial, no arbitrary arrest or detainment, and everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Other methods such as drones (which could violate the right to life), prosecuting children as adults, arbitrary detainment and immigration detention are amongst the approaches used by the US to counter violent extremism (US: Surveillance Practices Violate Rights. US Records under review at UN, 2014). Following 9/11, America launched attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq to show punishment, in which they have lost many of their own fighters and many innocents along the way (Cronin, 2012). They also launched drone strikes targeting the leaders of violent extremist groups. From the year 2008-2010, the US launched 205 drone strikes. (Cronin, 2012). Their actions caused a stir among the Muslim community who felt unfairly targeted and discriminated against (Cronin, 2012).

Though some of the funds used by the US were dedicated to soft preventive methods, 94% was allocated to military defense (Cronin, 2012). The success of these efforts is hard to measure, thought the short-term success in the US are quite visible, since no attack like that of 9/11 has taken place again in the US. However, the long-term effects of these methods are being questioned. The failures can be seen in the increase of homegrown extremists and the rise of foreign fighters (Cronin, 2012), who's supply (as discussed above) are the strength of a violent extremist group. It can also be argued that the increased attempts of attacks are a result of the ineffectiveness of the methods used (Cronin, 2012). For whatever reason, the US and its Western allies have found themselves in a constant fight against violent extremism.

France

One of US's allies in Western Europe is France. In the year 2015 alone, France was the victim of 9 attacks by violent extremist groups, 8 of which were carried by ISIL and 1 by Al-Qaida (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). This does not include the attacks persecuted by lone-wolfs, which constitutes 70% of the attacks in the West from 2006 until 2014 (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). In addition, France had contributed 1,700 foreign fighters by the year 2015, which was the highest number of ISIS foreign fighters coming from Western Europe (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). With more and more French citizens falling victims to such attacks, the French government has 'loosened' certain laws revolving around articles such as freedom of movement, freedom of speech and the right to private life (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq,

2015). While the former interior minister defended such methods, claiming that unauthorized house raids led to the arrest of 517 suspects (Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, 2015). It is still unclear on the long-term effects of such singled-out CVE policies. Furthermore, it has been discussed above that the top 5 foreign countries breeding fighters have violated such human rights policies, therefore, it can be concluded that "loosening" such articles might aid in the recruitment process of violent extremist groups.

Counterextremism policies in France fall under its' criminal justice system, with a few features differing in the case of violent extremism (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008). For example, a criminal detained for any crime not related to violent extremism can be held for 24 hours, extendable to a maximum of 48 hours (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008). However, one associated with violent extremism can be detained for a total of 96 hours (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008), which violates several articles under the UN declaration, including no arbitrary arrest or detainment (Article 9), the right to a fair trial (Article 10), everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty (Article 11). Under law 96-647, implemented in July 22, 1996, authorities have the right to detain and prosecute a suspect who is a "criminal associated in relation to a terrorist undertaking", without having entire proof, as preventive measures (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008).

"France has carried out abusive and discriminatory raids and house arrests against Muslims under its sweeping new state of emergency law. The measures have created economic hardship, stigmatized those targeted, and have traumatized children"
Human Rights Watch (Paulussen, 2016)

France claims that its' "flexible" approach has caused violent extremist groups to look the other way. However, this "flexible" approach sometimes violates international human rights policies (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008). The case of Christian Genczarski is given as an example:

"The experience of Sébastien Bono during his defense of Christian Ganczarski is only slightly extreme: only one of his 24 requests for investigative steps was accepted (an inquiry commission to Saudi Arabia). Ganczarski is a German national alleged to be a significant al Qaeda figure. He was arrested in France in June 2003 after being expelled from Saudi Arabia in what his lawyer called a "disguised extradition." He faces charges before the Paris Court of Assize for involvement in a 2002 suicide attack on a synagogue in Tunisia that left 21 people dead. Among the 23 motions denied was a request by Ganczarski's lawyer for an actual copy, and not just a transcript, of the tape of a conversation on the morning of the synagogue bombing between Ganczarski and Nizar Naouar, the suicide bomber who carried out the attack."
Source: (Preemting Justice. Counterterrorism laws and Procedures in France, 2008)

This approach clearly violates several articles in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, include Article 10, the right to a fair trial.

Another method used by France as a preventive mechanism is unauthorized mass surveillance, which has not yet been proven to reduce violent extremism, but does violate more than one article in the UN 1948 Declaration of Human rights, such as the right to privacy and sometimes even the right to freedom of expression. In mass surveillance and other preventive programs used, such as the Imam program[21], France has been known to single-out Muslims (Stevens, 2011). Such failed integration policies

[21] A program in which the government selects the Imams and teaches them the Quran "in a manner consistent with the values of the laïcité" (Stevens, 2011)

by the state can result in frustration and "home-grown" extremism. Furthermore, this approach could also lead to alienating the civilians among the Muslim community who have been providing the government with intelligence regarding possible violent extremist actors (Walsh & Piazza, 2010).

The states inability to integrate immigrants into their community and provide their citizens with basic security and human rights needs have resulted in an unexpected backlash. Studies show that the more homogenous a country, the harder it is for Muslims to integrate (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). As a matter of fact, it has been believed that groups, such as ISIS, recruit members from these countries, giving them a sense of belonging (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). It's important to note that the youth joining extremist organizations, such as Al-Qaida and ISIS, are many times victims themselves and have reacted by joining armed non-state actors. This sheds light on the importance of a strong state able to provide to and protect their citizens.

Great Britain

America's *true friend*[22], the United Kingdom, followed in their footsteps, especially once they were being targeted themselves. In the year 2005, London, a cosmopolitan city, was subject to 4 violent extremist attacks by Al-Qaida (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). In the following years, several lone-wolfs attacks were carried out in London, injuring and sometimes killing a significant number of people. After 9/11, London's CVE methods focused on targeting Muslims in general, rather than acknowledging that not all violent extremist actors are Muslim. Similar to France's preventive approach, the

[22] Bush once said "America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause" **Invalid source specified.**

government of London appointed “non-traditional Islamist Muslim leaders” to preach against violent extremism (Schmid, 2014). This caused young Muslims to feel rejected and discriminated against (Schmid, 2014). Here again, the government has failed to integrate them into the society, causing a sense of frustration against the British government (Schmid, 2014). As a result, several Muslims were recruited by the organizations they turned to, some even “prepared to bring the armed struggle into the UK” (Schmid, 2014).

Just last year, the UN found the UK guilty of enacting several reforms leading to discrimination and inequality, including but not limited to: restricting the employment of asylum seekers, certain minority groups and religions, providing an insufficient daily wage for them (leading to increased poverty) and discriminating against them in welfare services such as health care (Leszkiewicz, The UN declares the UK’s austerity policies in breach of international human rights obligations, 2016). In these cases, the UK is failing to provide basic protectionist functions.

State protectionism not only takes the form of integrating all its citizens into the community and protecting their human rights, but also includes providing the people with job opportunities and welfare benefits such as education and religious services (Salamey, The Decline of Nation-States after the Arab Spring: The rise of Communitocracy, 2017). When such basic rights are missing from a state, individuals may look elsewhere for this sense of security and risk falling into the hands of the wrong group.

The Dilemma

The debate on whether countries should stick to their human rights principals during the fight against violent extremism is ongoing. However, as was seen in this chapter, when security is at stake, even in the most dedicated democracies, the axis tips away from human rights. While some argue that respecting human rights policies lead to an increase in violent extremism, others argue the contrary; that respecting human rights wins the peoples' hearts and thus leads to less violent extremism (Walsh & Piazza, 2010).

The governments involved should be very smart in the way it approaches violent extremism, since most of the approaches they are currently using are being used as a recruitment method by violent extremist organizations. For example, Cronin finds that violent extremist groups thrive on polarization, since it causes state repression and drives regimes apart (Cronin, 2012). It is in difficult times that governments usually lose a sense of who they are and what they stand for, and this can cause more panic than calm.

Around the world, violent extremist attacks are leading governments to repress human rights. As discussed in Chapter 1, the balance between human rights and violent extremism is a challenging one, in which human rights violations lead to violent extremism, which leads to counter extremism actions violating human rights, which leads to more violent extremism and so on. In their study, Walsh and Piazza found that violent extremism caused two physical integrity principals to deteriorate (Walsh & Piazza, 2010). This is causing more civilians to turn extremist and develop grievances towards the state, which leads to an increase in violent extremist attacks. Although the attacks don't happen right after a repressing human rights policy is implemented, it is

expected in the long term since grievances are gathered over time and so is planning a violent extremist attack.

It is possible that some violations of human rights have more of an impact than others (Ex. Torture might have more of an impact on someone that freedom of movement or other) but this requires further research to understand the extent to one policy has more of an impact than others. The following chapter will discuss the future of countering violent extremism in association with human rights practices.

Chapter 5
Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine whether counter extremism methods being used by governments in the West have been effective or not, with a focus on those that have violated human rights principals. To accomplish that, it was necessary to reach other conclusions, such understanding the flow of foreign fighters and their motives. Furthermore, it was necessary to take a look at the counter extremism policies implemented and understanding how they violate human rights. This was done through revising several scholarly works of authors who have well studied violent extremism. This chapter reports the findings, future recommendations and conclusion.

Results and Analysis

When the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in the US occurred in 2001, very few people imagined that non-state violent extremist groups would withstand the fight against states with man power, funds and weapons. Nevertheless, 17 years later and counter violent extremism continues to be a subject of debate. Clearly, violent extremism will not simply vanish; perhaps it might never be fully overcome. Policy makers and governments should thus learn how to best manage violent extremism and limit the supply of extremist fighters. This can only be done through human rights sensitive means. Counter violent extremism policies that have violated human rights might have been effective in calming down a worried public, but were arguably not effective in battling violent extremism. This can be seen in the number of violent

extremist attacks executed by Muslim affiliated violent extremist groups over the past couple of years, despite the countless efforts and funds spent to defeat them.

Are France's CVE Methods working?

The French government has employed various CVE and PVE methods in the attempt of reducing and ideally ending violent extremist attacks in France. The lack of clarity in their counter CVE laws are of concern to human rights activists, since they could lead to the unlawful criminalization of an individual (Paulussen, 2016). Their broad policies have been accused of violating several human rights standards, such as freedom of speech (by blocking certain internet site) and freedom of movement (by restricting movement in and out of the country to foreigners), amongst other violations (Paulussen, 2016). These methods used have not had the intended results and France is still witnessing violent extremist attacks. In addition, France has the highest number of foreign fighters coming from Western Europe (Benmelech & Klor, 2016). As can be seen in the below timeline, France's problems with violent extremism are far from over, despite their CVE and PVE policies.

The data used in the below figures 5.0, 5.1 and 5.2 was extracted from the GTD, although it does not include the unknown attacks which could have been carried out by lone wolfs in the name of a violent extremist group (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). In order to fit all the information into the timelines, Jihadist inspired extremists (JI Ext.), Muslim extremists (M Ext.) and Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) were abbreviated. Furthermore, *assault* was used as a shorthand for armed and unarmed assault, *hostage* as a shorthand for hostage kidnapping and barricade incidents, and *infrastructure* as a shorthand for facility and infrastructure attacks.

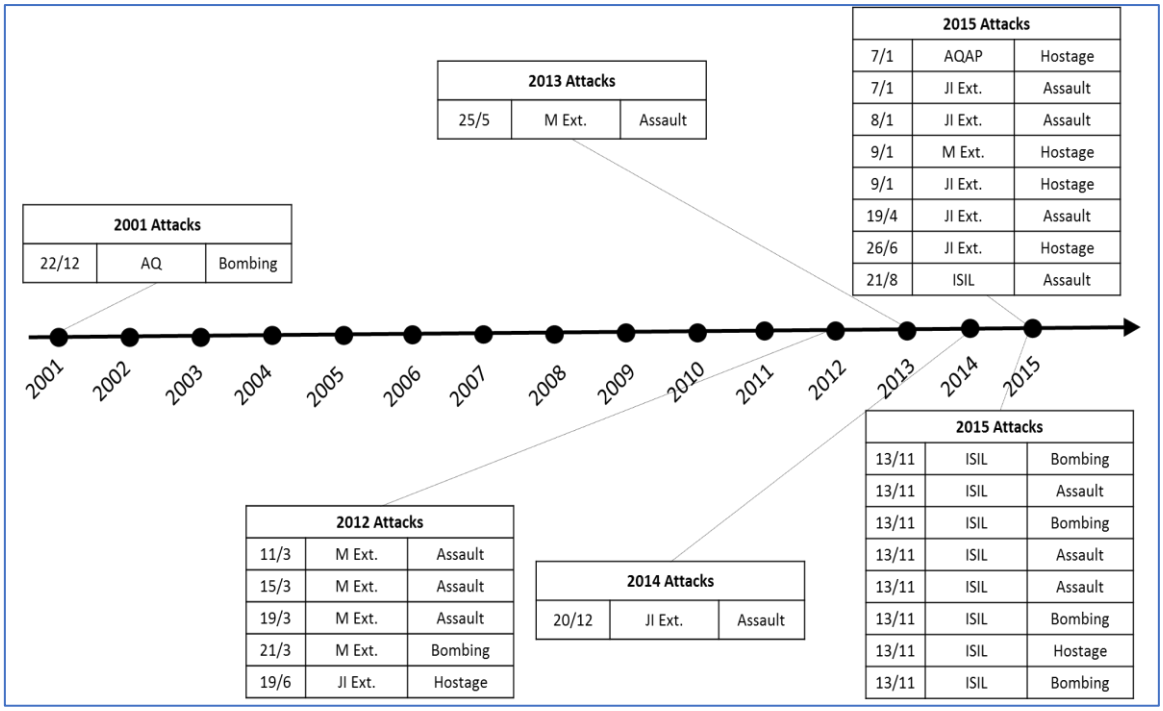


Figure 5.0 – Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in France

As can be seen in the above timeline, France didn't encounter any violent extremist attacks by Muslim affiliated violent extremist groups, from the year 2002 – 2011. However, in just 4 years (2012-2015), France experience 23 violent extremist attacks, 12 of which were assaults, 6 were hostage taking incidents and 5 were explosions (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). Furthermore, according to the GTD, in the year 2016, France experienced 7 assaults and 1 barricade incident by Jihadist inspired extremists (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). This sudden increase in violent extremist attacks from the year 2012 and onward are proof that CVE and PVE methods have not been successful in ending violent extremism.

Are the UK's CVE Methods working?

Much like France, the UK has been accused of violating human rights practices when countering violent extremism. The unauthorized house arrests and removal of the UK citizenship have grabbed the attention of human rights organizations who are accusing the UK of several violations mentioned above (Paulussen, 2016). Furthermore, the methods being used by the UK have also been accused of being discriminating towards minorities, refugees, asylum seekers and certain religious groups (Leszkiewicz, The UN declares the UK's austerity policies in breach of international human rights obligations, 2016). The result has been ongoing attacks carried out by extremists.

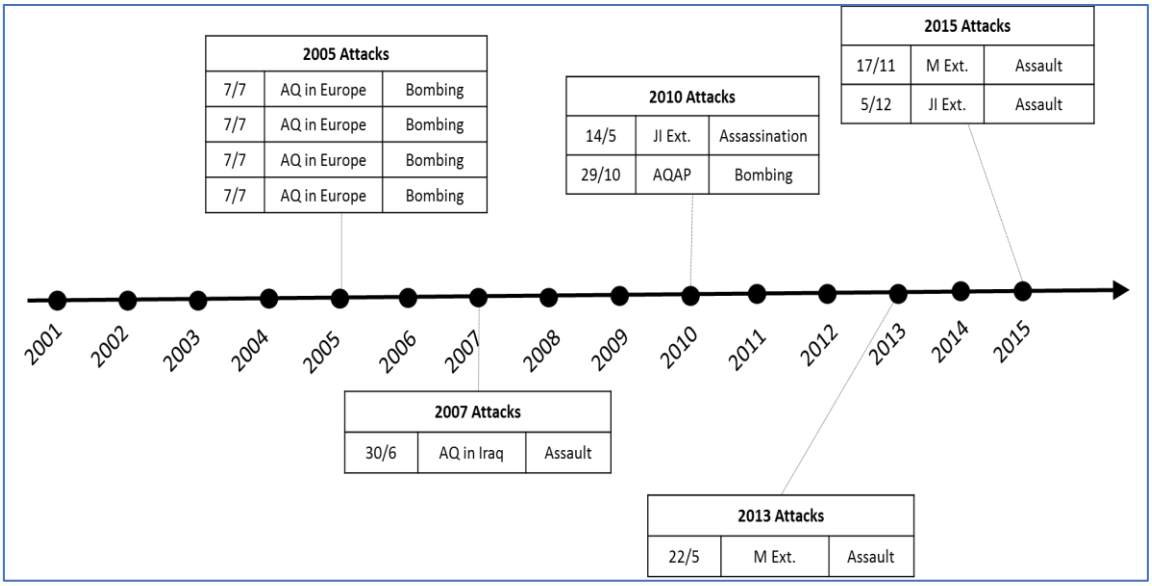


Figure 5.1- Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in the UK

As can be seen in figure 5.1, the UK has experienced 10 attacks in 10 years (2005-2015) carried out by Muslim affiliated violent extremist groups. Furthermore, according to the GTD, the UK experience 2 assaults and one kidnapping incident in the year 2016 by Jihadi inspired extremists and Muslim extremists. Although the UK has experienced less violent extremist attacks than France, latter is twice the size of England and has a larger population. In addition, it's important to note that most of the violent extremist attacks in

the UK are not carried out by Muslim groups, but by Irish affiliated groups (i.e. Irish extremists, the IRA and the INLA) (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). According to the GTD, 24 attacks were carried out by Irish affiliated violent extremist groups from the year 2001-2016 (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). This sheds light on the fact that not all violent extremists are Muslim, and thus the preventive violent extremist methods should not focus solely on one religious group, but rather on an entire population.

Are the US's CVE Methods working?

It all began when 4 hijackings occurred in the US on September 11th, 2001. These violent extremist episodes changed the face of counter extremism. The anger those attacks caused resulted in country invasions, arbitrary detainment of suspects and the overall "war on terror". The US's main approach has been establishing fear in their enemies by partnering with other nations in this war. Furthermore, their preventive approach has focused on suspicion of the overall Muslim community, which has led to anger and failed integration. The methods used by the US have not been fully successful. One hijacking led to a bombing, which led to an assault, which led an infrastructure attack and so on (See Figure 5.2). Arguably, the methods being used are causing grievances and anger, leading to an increased supply in fighters and attacks. The US stands for democracy, and democracy stands for people's rights. It is now more than ever, in times of panic, that the US should fight for what they stand for.

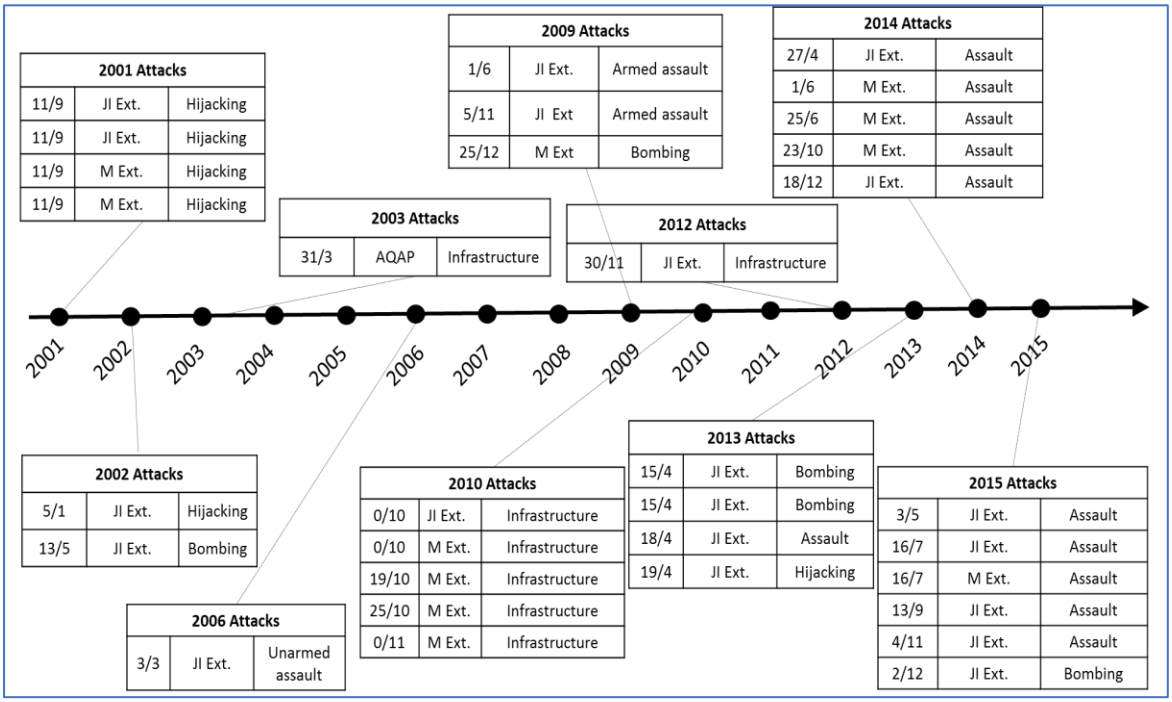


Figure 5.2 – Timeline of Violent Extremist Attacks in the US

The US's timeline displays constant assaults, explosions, hijackings and facility attacks carried out by Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, Muslim extremists and Jihadi inspired extremists over the years. In addition, according to the GTD, the US experience 9 attacks by Jihadi inspired extremists in 2016 (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). Despite the persistent efforts of the US and the billions of dollars spent to battle violent extremism, it is still ongoing and of great concern.

The Future of CVE and PVE

The findings of this thesis lead to suggestions on how governments should approach countering violent extremism. As can be seen in the above timelines, violent extremism is far from over and defeated; on the contrary, it is gaining supporters and empathizers. The ongoing violent extremist attacks are a result of the quality of the CVE and PVE methods used. Nevertheless, it is time to understand that violent extremism will not

simply end, it might not end at all. The only way to reduce violent extremist attacks is by respecting international human rights laws (Paulussen, 2016). Respecting human rights leads to less grievances, less anger and less motive for fighters to become violent extremists. Therefore, it can be concluded that respecting human rights practices leads to a decrease in violent extremism.

This section will look at the future of counter violent extremism and preventive violent extremism, and how governments can best use their resources to confront violent extremism and reduce their supporters.

Soft Measures

'Soft' measures are those that involve the engagement of the community in the hopes of preventing violent extremism, through indirect means such as interreligious and intercultural dialogue, capacity building and economic development (Paulussen, 2016; Rineheart, Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency, 2010). It is important to involve the whole community; most PVE strategies have focused on profiling a religious group, which could infuriate communal conflicts and lead to an increase in grievances and instability. The focus of most governments has been on 'hard' repressive enemy-focused models. However, these measures are reacting to the symptoms of violent extremism, and not the root causes. As long as the root causes are not cured, an ongoing battle will continue between countries and non-state violent extremists. Though hard measures feel more appropriate when there is an urgent need to reassure security, soft measures focus on the long-term goal of maintaining that security. Furthermore, countries prefer the use of hard methods over soft ones since the latter puts restrictions on the government's actions in aims of maintaining their democratic values (Rineheart, Counterterrorism and

Counterinsurgency, 2010). Still, a sole focus on soft methods will not provide a magical solution to violent extremism, but it will reduce the number of fighters along the way, and thus reducing the strength of the violent extremist group. This goes back to what UK Prime minister Gordon Brown said about winning the hearts and minds of the people (Branigan, 2007).

Nevertheless, it would be naïve to conclude that simply a focus on soft methods will defeat violent extremism. While I acknowledge the urgent need of states to restore security, it is advised to focus most of the funds and efforts on soft methods. For example, in the case of the United States, instead of dedicating 94% of funds to military defense (Cronin, 2012), it would be advised to allocate perhaps 20-30% on military defense, and the remaining on soft measures. Further research is needed to understand the most effective combination of an all-encompassing approach.

The Government

The state plays the most crucial role in the battle against violent extremism. Governments cannot be extreme themselves when fighting VE. The human rights standards of every country should be unshaken by violent extremism and governments should be strong enough to ensure that the identity they have been building since the beginning of time is not taken away by a current battle. From a heartfelt perspective, the state should consider strengthening their Muslim community, involving them and fighting discrimination against them. This develops accepting attitudes among the community. Furthermore, the state should focus more resources on integrating policies, to reduce divisions and hostility among the community members, as well as employ sensitive fair measures, to reduce grievances and anger. For example, correcting a

violent extremist rather than sentencing them to death can go a long way. From a logical perspective, the state should control drones in populated areas as to reduce fatalities and anger from a grieving community. Furthermore, the state should better calculate the results of unnecessary wars. For example, the US invasion of Afghanistan resulted in the longest war the US has been involved in. This has not only claimed the lives of thousands of civilians along the way, but it was also resulted in the deaths and injuries of thousands of American soldiers. The loss of these lives could have arguably been avoided by using better CVE methods. Although not all CVE and PVE policies implemented have violated human rights, further monitoring practices are needed in order to calculate the exact impact each policy has on violent extremism.

Conclusion

The evidence and discussions presented in this thesis support the hypothesis that counter violent extremist methods violating human rights principals do not lead to a decrease in violent extremism. Any policy violating human rights leads to grievances and anger, which leads to the increase in the supply of fighters and thus an increase in violent extremist attacks. These findings have an important implication of how violent extremism should be studied and how counter violent extremism should be approached. Much of this work drew attention to the relationship between human rights violations and violent extremism, a relationship that is existent and robust. In other studies, not much attention has been focused on the human rights practices of a government and how they impact violent extremism. This thesis suggests that human rights should be taken more seriously by governments, policy makers and the overall community. CVE and PVE strategies violating human rights should be seen as a driving factor of violent

extremism, not as a containing factor. Future research could take this hypothesis and elaborate further on it by understanding the impact of every human rights policy on violent extremists as individuals and how each human rights violation impacts the actions of violent extremists as groups. Additionally, further research could also help understand if repressing human rights violations actually lead to the establishment of violent extremist groups, or just the creation of fighters. Do human rights violations lead to an increase in violent extremism? This thesis suggests that they do, and that ongoing human rights violations when countering violent extremism will not result in a decrease in violent extremist attacks. The hypothesis of this thesis can be further strengthened with additional research as to fully understand the impact of each human right violations on the activities of violent extremists.

The timelines above are a brief representation that CVE and PVE methods being used today are counter-productive. They also represent how real violent extremism has become, and the urgent need to effectively confront it. In Western Europe, other countries not included in this study, such as Spain and Germany, have also been victims of persistent violent extremist attacks, despite their efforts to reduce them. Governments can't keep responding to attacks with the same methods they have been using so far. Violent extremist attacks cause anger and fear, and responses under such emotions are usually not calculated well. Although such responses are understandable, it is time to better recognize violent extremism in terms of grievances. Perhaps by understanding what makes a violent extremist human rather than what makes him/her a *terrorist* will also help governments in understanding how best to control violent extremism. In addition, it is time for governments and policy representatives to question the intent of

violent extremist attackers. Is it purely to instill fear among the community? Is it for respect or revenge? Is it really a fight for Islam? Or is it in hopes of a repressing response by the government attacked? The latter will inevitably lead to an increase in the supply of fighters, which in turn will make the violent extremist group stronger. It is time for governments to fully calculate the results of their responses, and how their methods can lead to an increase in violent extremism through creating more fear, violence, division, and fighters. Mostly, the uncalculated responses towards violent extremism are what is threatening the stability of the country, rather than violent extremism itself. The more the strategies are controlled by human rights requirements, the more they become objective and not politically or religiously driven. National strategies can be both effective and human rights sensitive.

"the more brutal your methods, the more bitter you will make your opponents, with the natural result of hardening the resistance you are trying to over-come."
Basil Lidell Hart (Joes, 2004)

To conclude, it is time to reach a world in which our human rights standards are so stable that nothing can undermine them or make us question them. Human rights shouldn't be traded in for security while freedom shouldn't be traded in for stability, there should be a leeway balancing both. This thesis has concluded that long term security is not accomplished by violating human rights and thus it is time for states to recalculate the effectiveness of their counter extremism and preventive extremism methods.

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