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Special Issue on

The Intersection of Theory, Identity, and Security in PCVE (Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism)

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Contents

Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	ʿ
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	ʾ
ض	ḍ		ي	y

Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
◌َ	a		◌َا، ◌َى	an
◌ُ	u		◌ُّو	un
◌ِ	i		◌ِّي	in
◌َا، ◌َٰ، ◌َى،	ā		◌َوْ	aw
◌ُو	ū		◌َيْ	ay
◌ِي	ī		◌ُّوّ	uww, ū (in final position)
			◌ِّيّ	iyy, ī (in final position)

Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: http://rotas.iium.edu.my

Theorising Violent Extremisms: Anthropological and Psychoanalytic Perspectives

Mark Woodward[*]
Rohani Mohamed[**]

Abstract: Muslim Violent Extremism (MVE) and Far-Right Extremism (FRE) are two sides of the same coin. Despite profound ideological differences they share sociological and psychological features. This article relies on anthropological, linguistic, psychological and psychoanalytic theory to explain the ways in which, despite irreconcilable semantics, they share a common syntactic structure. It is based on ethnographic research in Indonesia, Nigeria and the United Kingdom and the analysis of extremist texts. Muslim VE and FRE movements are what Wallace (1956) described as revitalisation movements bent on destroying the existing social order and replacing it with a utopia based on the vision of a charismatic leader. Both exhibit characteristics described by Freud (1922), including narcissistic leaders who Nietzsche (1883) described as the *ubermench* (superman). Together they form what Levi Strauss (1955) described as a transformation group.

Keywords: Muslim Violent Extremists (MVE), Far-Right Extremism (FRE), revitalisation movement, anthropology, psychoanalysis.

Abstrak: Ekstremis Ganas Muslim dan Ekstremis Paling Kanan adalah dua masalah yang agak serupa. Walaupun terdapat perbezaan ideologi mendalam, mereka mempunyai ciri-ciri sosiologi dan psikologi yang sama. Artikel ini berdasarkan teori anthropologi, linguistik, psikologi dan psikoanalysis untuk menerangkan walaupun kedua-dua gerakan ini tidak mempunyai semantik

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[*] Professor, Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University. Email: MARK.WOODWARD@asu.edu.
[**]CEO and Founder, Alertist, Singapore. Email: miss.hani.mohamed@gmail.com

yang selaras, mereka berkongsi struktur sintaksis yang sama. Ia berdasarkan penyelidikan etnografi di Indonesia, Nigeria dan United Kingdom dan analisis teks ekstremis. Ekstremis Ganas Muslim dan Ekstremis Paling Kanan diterangkan Wallace (1956) sebagai gerakan revitalisasi yang bertujuan untuk memusnahkan sistem sosial yang ada dan membina utopia berdasarkan visi pemimpin berkarisma. Kedua-duanya mempamerkan ciri-ciri digambarkan Freud (1922) termasuk pemimpin narsisistik yang digambarkan Nietzche (1883) sebagai *ubermench* (superman). Mereka membentuk sesuatu yang Levi Strauss (1955) gambarkan sebagai kelompok transformasi. Hakikat bahawa seseeorang boleh mengalihkan kesetiaan di antara dua jenis ektremisme dan bagaimana kedua-dua gerakan Ekstremis Ganas Muslim dan Ekstremis Paling Kanan menggunakan pandemik COVID-19 dengan cara yang sama mendukung tafsiran ini.

Kata kunci: Ekstremis Ganas Muslim, Ekstremis Paling Kanan, gerakan revitalisasi, anthropologi, psikoanalisis.

Introduction

Muslim Violent Extremist (MVE) and Far-Right Extremist (FRE) movements are often described as "two sides of the same coin" (Ebner 2017). This paper argues that despite mutually exclusive semantic features, both share salient syntactic structures. It develops a theoretical framework for understanding relationships between them and the visceral hatred each has for the other (Berger 2017) that moves beyond exiting models by rooting the analysis of extremism in social science and psychoanalytic theory.

Theoretical Perspectives

Studies of VE movements are empirically rich but under theorised. There is also a dearth of theoretical analyses of relationships between Muslim and Far-Right extremisms (Borum 2011). Our framework is trans-disciplinary and comparative. It builds on the linguistic distinction between syntax and semantics, Freud's (1922, 1930) analysis of groups and leadership, Durkheim's (1897) notion of alienation, Weber's (1922) concept of charisma, Levi Strauss's (1969a) structural analysis of mythology and studies of nativistic and revitalisation movements (Linton and Hallowell 1943, Wallace 1956) augmented by insights from studies of the anthropology (Tambiah 1998) and psychology (Bernard, Ottenberg, & Redl 1965) of violence. The central theses of

this paper are: First, that FRE and MVE are Revitalisation Movements. The second is that Levi Strauss's concept of transformation groups is the key to understanding relationships between them and the seemingly anomalous fact that some FREs have become Muslims and conversely that some Muslim extremists have become Christians.

Syntax and Semantics

Semantics and Syntax are two of the fundamental aspects of language (Chomsky 1998).   Semantics is concerned with meaning and representation. Syntax referrers to the algebraic structure of sentences. The distinction is, however, used heuristically across the social sciences to distinguish between culturally specific meaning systems and structural principles that obtain across cultures (Williams 2015). Both types of analysis are essential for understanding extremism and the forms it takes in cultural and religious contexts.

The Semantics of Extremism

The semantics of Far-Right and Muslim extremism make incompatible truth claims. They are, however, locked in a co-dependent relationship responding to and feeding on each other. Both are semantic systems that reference larger meaningful orders that they interpret in ways that make violence virtuous. At a deeper level, they share logical principles establishing them as what Lévi-Strauss (1955) describes as a transformation group.

Muslim Violent Extremism

Most, but by no means all, MVE ideologies are rooted in the Wahhabi variant of Salafism (Woodward et al 2013). Salafism is a revivalist current in Sunni Islam rooted in the teachings of the 14th century Hanbalite jurist *ibn Taymiyyah to which* Wahhabism adds those of the 18th century Arabian jurist Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhab. Salafis seek to establish what they believe to be the Islam of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions as social/political realities. Salafism requires literal readings of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, an anthropomorphic interpretation of the core Islamic doctrine of *tawhid* (the unity Allah) and stricter enforcement of criminal provisions of *Shari'ah* than is customary in other Muslim societies (Cook 2001). Salafis condemn Sufism (Islamic mysticism) and popular Muslim piety as *bidah* (religious innovation) and/or *shirk* (polytheism) (Umar & Woodward 2019).

The assertion that Salafism, and Islam more generally, are inherently violent is a common theme in Far-Right polemics (Spencer 2018). It is, of course, not correct. Salafis differ substantially concerning strategies for obtaining their goals. Quietist flees from what they consider to be a hopelessly defiled world. More extreme Salafis struggle against it. Still others seek to transform it. Saudi state Wahhabism teaches that governments that "maintain the prayers" must be obeyed (De Long-Bas 2004). Domesticated Salafis, including the Indonesian Muhammadiyah movement, the Nigerian Izala and Salafi oriented mosques in northeast London, reject violence in favour teaching and preaching (Woodward et al 2010). Others Salafis live in pious isolation. In Indonesia, some have settled in remote rural areas. In urban areas in Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria and the United Kingdom there are Salafis who live in social isolation avoiding nonessential interaction with people outside their communities. There is a related distinction between movements including ISIS and Boko Haram that seek to establish a Caliphate through violent means (Hellmich 2008) and others like Hizbut Tahrir seeking this goal through non-violent means (Iqbal 2016).

Takfir, declaring professed Muslims to be *kafir* (unbelievers), is one of the defining characteristics of Wahhabism. It is an extreme form of religious chauvinism that excludes other Sunnis, Shia, Ahmadiyah and others from the Muslim *ummah* (community). There is a critical distinction between ordinary *kafir* and *kafir harbi*. Ordinary *kafir* have heard, but reject, the Islamic message. Technically speaking the term cannot be used for Christians and Jews who are people of the book (*'Ahl al-Kitāb*) who have received revelation (Vajda 2102). Salafis often claim that contemporary Christians and Jews are *kafir* because they have departed from the teachings originally revealed to them just as other self-professed Muslims are *kafir* because they have departed from the original teachings of Islam. *Kafir harbi* are enemies of Islam against whom violence is permissible (Malik 2017). Salafi-Jihadis justify violence by declaring all of their opponents to be *kafir harbi*.

Historically, Wahhabism has been associated with violent conquest and purification by force (Algar 2002; Habib 1978). Contemporary Salafi-Jihadism emerged from interaction of elements of the Muslim Brotherhood inspired by Sayyid Qutub who advocated armed struggle against "apostate" regimes and the Saudi *al-Sahwa al-Islamiyya* (Islamic awakening) movement according to which the Saudi state has departed

from the true Salafi path (Lecroix 2011). This variant of Wahhabism is the religious foundation for violent extremist groups including Al Qaeda, ISIS the West African Boko Haram and the Southeast Asian Jemaah Islamiyah (Maher 2016; Solahudin 2011; Woodward & Umar 2019). Some Saudi clerics openly acknowledge this relationship. Sheikh Adel al-Kalbani, former Grand Imam of Masjid al-Haram, stated that: "We follow the same thought [as ISIS] but apply it in a refined way.   They draw their ideas from what is written in our own books, from our own principles. We do not criticise the thought on which it (ISIS) is based" (Middle East Eye 2016).

While details vary considerably and are often bitterly contested, Salafi-Jihadi ideologies are based on shared existential postulates (Hasan 2007; Hellmich 2008; Mc Auley 2005; Wiktorowicz 2006):

- Islam is threatened by kafir harbi invaders including Crusaders and Zionists.
- Apostate rulers of Muslim countries and their supporters are equally threatening.
- Violent jihad is a personal obligation for all Muslims.
- Non-combatants are legitimate targets because they directly or indirectly support the invaders.

Far-Right Extremism (FRE)

European, North American and Australian FRE pose terrorist threats that are as great as Salafi-Wahhabi extremism (Jones 2018). FRE is more complex than Muslim Violent Extremism because it does not have a single religious reference point. It is a loose amalgamation of racist, white supremacist, neo-Nazi, anti-immigrant and ethno-nationalist groups and ideologies (Muddle 2019). FRE ideologies are populist, xenophobic and authoritarian (Harrison & Bruter 2011). The exception is the Christian Identity movement whose religious reference point is idiosyncratic Biblical exegesis according to which the only true Christians are those of Northern European descent and that others, including non-white Christians, are sub-human "mud people" (Barkun 1994). There are also significant differences between European and American FRE ideologies. Many American variants, including the Klu Klux Klan, are overtly racist and anti-Catholic (Chalmers 1987). European variants including the English Defense League, the French

National Rally and the Serbian Nationalist party are ethno-nationalism and virulently anti-Muslim. Islamophobia is more prevalent in Europe than in the United States because of the larger percentage of Muslim immigrants. In the United States, anti-immigrant sentiments focus primarily on Latin Americans, who, because they are Christians cannot be targeted on the basis of religion alone except by Protestant Christian extremists including the Klu Klux Klan who consider Roman Catholics to be apostates.

Far-Right Extremists are divided about Jews. Neo-Nazis in Europe and the United States are virulently anti-Semitic, some to the extent that they reject Christianity because of its Judaic origins (Lee 2015). Others are Christian Zionists. This is an apocalyptic version of Christianity according to which Jesus will return only when a Greater Israel is established and Biblical Jewish rituals are conducted in a restored temple in Jerusalem. Christian Zionists strongly support Israel but strongly oppose Judaism as a religion. For them, the reestablishment of "Biblical Israel" is not an end unto itself, but only a necessary condition for the second coming of Christ (Adrovandi 2104).

Great Replacement theory is an overarching theme uniting divergent Far-Right ideologies and movements (Cosentino 2020, Hutchinson 2019). It posits that Euro-American "white civilization" is at risk of being overwhelmed by invasions, floods, tsunami, storms, etc. of immigrants variously described as rapists, drug dealers and vermin (Polakow-Suransky & Wildman 2019; Schwartzburg 2019). Replacement Theory originated in France in the 1970s and has recently been popularised in works by the French white nationalist Renaud Camus (2018) whose works circulate widely on social media. It inspired the 2019 Far-Right terrorist attacks in Christchurch New Zealand and El Paso Texas in the United States. The New Zealand terrorist discussed it extensively in his manifesto. The El Paso terrorist acknowledged his debt to his New Zealand compatriot in his own manifesto (Crusisus 2019).

European and American versions of Great Replacement theory differ primarily with respect to the immigrant populations they fear and detest. In the United States Latin Americans are the targets of choice. European Replacement theories combine anti-immigrant sentiments with the idea that there is an eternal war between Christianity and Islam that continues the struggle between the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires,

the Crusades and later conflicts between the Hapsburgs and Ottomans in Southeastern Europe. The New Zealand terrorist was, for example, particularly concerned with driving Turkish "invaders" from Europe and destroying mosques in European Turkey. Variants of this ideology were spread throughout Europe by Christian volunteers who fought on the Serbian side in the Balkan wars of the 1990s in much the same way that Salafi-Jihadism was spread in Muslim countries by veterans of the Afghanistan wars (Bangstasd 2014; McCants 2015). In the United States, anti-immigrant sentiment is often combined with racism and calls for "race war" targeting African Americans. These sentiments are combined in the racist apocalyptic novel *The Turner Diaries* that has been described as the "White Nationalist Bible". It is for FRE what Sayyid Qutub's *Milestones* is for Muslim VE.

Far-Right Extremist ideologies are based on shared existential postulates:

- White civilisation is threatened by invaders.
- Political elites are equally threatening because they support invaders.
- Violent resistance is necessary.
- Non-combatants are legitimate targets because they support the invaders.

Structural Patterns in Violent Extremist Ideologies

FRE and Muslim VE ideologies share logical structures and processual logics mandating violence. The two sets of existential postulates collapse onto a pair of binary oppositions: in group/outsiders and purity/danger characteristic of what Levi Struss (1955, p. 431) describes as the language of mythology. The purity/danger opposition is central to Douglas's (1966) analysis of boundary maintenance symbolism. The interaction of these distinctions yields a four-celled classification system:

Own Group Pure is self-referential. It is where social groups locate themselves. For Muslim VE, it is "pure" Islam. For FRE it is European White Civilisation. Own Group Danger are those who support invaders and religious others including "heretics" and "apostates". FRE and Muslim VE often place their country's political elites in this category. Pure Others are those who remain in their own countries or are contained

within internal boundaries. For globally focused Muslim VE and FRE there are no pure others. Dangerous "Others" are invaders or domestic enemy others who threaten the pure own group.

Own Group Purity	**Own Group Danger**
Pure Others	**Dangerous Others**

In Douglas's terms, they are "dirt" and are referred to by a wide variety of hate speech terms with dehumanising and demonising connotations. "Dirt" must be kept form impinging on the boundaries of pure space and expunged, contained or destroyed when it does. The likelihood of inter-group conflict and terrorist attacks grows when the Other is seen as an existential threat to own group survival.

The processual logic leading from classification to violence is as follows.

1. The Other is inherently evil.
2. The Other cannot or will not change.
3. This evil poses an existential threat.
4. Therefore, it must be contained, expelled or destroyed.
5. Destruction/expulsion/containment of dangerous others is virtuous.

A structurally similar model leads from classification to quietism.

1. The Other in inherently evil.
2. The Other cannot or will not change.

3.   This evil poses an existential threat.

4.   Therefore, we must flee from evil.

5.   Pious isolation is virtuous.

Conflicts stemming this logic are what Juergensmeyer (2003) calls "cosmic war." They are zero-sum games in which compromise is impossible. Azar (1990) observes that ideologies and propaganda that include hate speech leading people to attribute the "worst possible motives" to others. This logic produces a climate of fear in which people who would not engage in physical violence condone it and participate in hate speech, conventional and social media rumour mongering, vandalism of culturally and religiously important sites and other forms of symbolic violence. When dangerous others cannot be destroyed or expelled, they must be contained, becoming what Simmel (1921) describes as "strangers," groups who are defined as elements of society but not of the dominant culture. Containing others with in bounded spaces can be formal or informal ghettoization. The Bantustan (homelands) of apartheid era South Africa and Indian Reservations in the United States are examples of physical containment. The boundaries can also be social and ritual as in the case with Hindu *Dalit* (untouchables) in India and was during Jim Crow times in the American South when black Americans were socially as well as physically segregated and in Israel where Palestinian Muslims have been pushed into smaller and smaller territories. In every case containment produces a social system defined on the basis of intractable hostility with sporadic outbreaks of low-level violence.

The Syntax of Violent Extremism

Insights from Freud's (1921) *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* concerning the psycho-dynamics of group formation and leadership are valuable for understanding extremist groups, why otherwise reasonable people are attracted to them and believe firmly in the irrational claims they make about outsiders. Adorno's (1951) Freudian analysis of fascist propaganda provides additional insight into the formation and maintenance of extremist movements. One need not subscribe to Freud's general theory concerning the primacy of sexuality and early childhood experiences as drivers for the development of personality and culture to appreciate the importance of these insights and apply them in contexts he did not anticipate. Wallace's (1956)

analysis of revitalisation movements is a case in point. It is based on ethnographic research conducted in small scale societies in colonial conditions. He observed they are also applicable to the analysis of some radical and revolutionary movements in more complex societies (Wallace 1990). He also acknowledges the influence of Freud (1921) and Weber (1922) in his discussion of leadership in these movements.

The Psycho-social Construction of Extremist Identities

Adorno (1951) showed that Freud's analysis of leadership and group formation is useful in the analysis of fascism and other modes of authoritarianism. It is equally useful for understanding contemporary Islamist and Far-Right Extremism. In his analysis of what was at the time called group psychology, Freud stressed the importance *libido* or the "pleasure principle," narcissism and the contrast between beloved in-group and despised out-group. His analyses anticipated later developments in cultural anthropology and the psychology of violence. Many of its shortcomings derive from his limited knowledge of cultures other than those of Western Europe. It is, none the less insightful, especially when augmented with findings from more recent research.

The questions Freud raised about leadership and social solidarity remain fundamental issues in the social sciences. Freud addressed them from the perspective of interacting egos. He was particularly concerned with what he termed sociologically "unnatural" groups not defined on the basis of ethnicity, kinship or class. He includes religions and armies in this category to which we add social movements, political parties and extremist groups.

Groups

Freud (1922) sought to determine the psychological basis for hierarchical and horizontal social solidarity. He defined a group as:

> "A number of individuals who have substituted one and the same object for their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego" (Freud 1922, p. 80).

He considered identification, a process that blurs the boundary between self and other, to be the basic source of group solidarity. It is a narcissistic process of "devouring" that makes the beloved object part of oneself. It

transforms *libido* into hierarchical leader/follower bonds and establishes egalitarian bonds between followers.

> "In many forms of love choice, the object serves as a substitute for some unattainable ego ideal of our own. We love it on account of the type of perfection which we have striven to reach for own our ego and which we should now like to produce in a roundabout way as a means of satisfying our narcissism" (Freud 1922, p. 74).

These narcissistic tendencies also contribute to group solidarity.

> "... intolerance vanishes, temporarily or permanently as the result of the formation of a group, or in a group. So long as group formation is present or so far as it extends individuals behave as though they were uniform, tolerate other people's peculiarities, put themselves on an equal level with them and have no feeling of aversion towards them. Such a limitation of narcissism can, according to our theoretical views, only be produced by one factor, a libidinal tie with other people" (Freud 1922, p. 56).

Here, Freud anticipated what Turner (1969) calls "communitas" and what Swann and his colleagues (2012) refer to as "identity fusion". Communitas is a mode of social solidarity Turner (1969, pp. 360-361) described as being marked by the abrogation of role differentiation. Freud (1922, p. 56) described this condition as "the brotherhood of the horde," writing that: "No one must put himself forward, everyone must be the same and have the same." Freud overestimated the extent of communitas in social groups. Turner shows that while it is a universal component of rites of passage, it is rarely successfully institutionalized. Extremist leaders use appeals to this concept to build cohesion. For example, the Indonesian Islamist movement, Negara Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic State) requires recruits to relinquish ties with relatives and friends unwilling to join the group. In-group relations are defined by hatred of outsiders and devotion to leaders in ways that Freud suggests. There is a sense of unity and equality transcending differences other than those defining the group. Grimland, Apter and Kerkhof (2006) describe similar tendencies among Palestinian youth training for martyrdom operations.

Identification is what Swann (2012) refers to as identity fusion, a psychological process through which personal and collective identities

are merged. They define it as "a visceral sense of "oneness" with a social group that motivates personally costly, pro-group behaviors." It enhances collective solidarity and motivates pro-group action. Our ethnographic studies in Indonesia and the United Kingdom point to similar conclusions. In both cases young people with extremist orientations abandon normal complex personal and social identities and define themselves exclusive as Muslim. In the UK, there is a sharp contrast between young people who define themselves as British Muslims, ethno-British (Bengali, Punjabi, Arab etc.) and others who reject ethnic identities and think of themselves as "just Muslim". Just Muslim is often synonymous with Salafi. Wilson (2002) notes similar tendencies in the American neo-Nazi terrorist group The Base.

Leadership

Freud stressed identification with leaders as the critical component of group formation. Swann emphasises core group values. These are complimentary perspectives. Both are operative in extremist groups. Wahhabi-Salafi extremists stress loyalty to both *jihadist* ideologies and leaders such as Osama bin Laden, ISIS Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Abu Bakr Ba'asyir of the Indonesian Jemaah Islamiyah. The Nigerian Boko Haram alternates between loyalty to leaders and ideologies. Oaths of allegiance bind followers directly to local leaders and symbolically to more distant ones. Far-Right extremists are more inclined to locate solidarity in values and ideologies such as the "Great Replacement" theory rather than in devotion to charismatic leaders. Adolf Hitler. Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik and others are admired, but are not seen as leaders requiring obedience (Berntzen & Sandberg 2014). This ideological focus may be the consequence of the Far-Right focus on country specific ethno-nationalism that hinders the emergence of trans-national charismatic leaders.

Extremist movements are rooted in charismatic leadership and/or ideologies with similar appeals. Weber's (1921) analysis of charisma is based on the assumption that leaders present themselves as being endowed with supernatural or religious powers. Freud's analysis is cast in more general terms that allows for consideration of relationships between secular and religious cases. He also draws on Nietzsche's (1883) concept of the secular *Ubermench* or Superman, the ultimate narcissist who demands love, but gives none in return. Similarly, Wallace, who

builds on Freud's analysis of leadership, does not distinguish between religious and secular leaders arguing that both have visions of new social formations that resonate with broadly based anxiety, alienation and discontent. Religious and secular extremist leaders share features with Freud's "loving" and "authoritarian" primal fathers.

> "The individual gives up his one ego ideal and substitutes it for the group ideal as embodied in the leader".

> "Here at the beginning of the history of mankind was the Superman who Nietzsche only expected from the future. Even today the members of the group stand in need of the illusion that they are equally loved by their leader but the leader himself need love no one else, he may be of a masterly nature, absolutely narcissistic, but self-confident and independent" (1922, pp. 102-103).

The individual narcissism of followers is merged with the overpowering narcissism of the leader resulting in a powerful form of collective narcissism. Adorno (1951, p. 127) notes that this union is achieved most thoroughly when leaders and followers share symbolically salient characteristics. The ideal extremist leader is the "great little man" who rises from but is above the common people. Muslim and Far-Right extremist leaders both fit this pattern. None, including bin Laden, al-Baghdadi and Breivik were intellectual giants and were unknown prior to their emergence as terrorists. The New Zealand terrorist stated this point explicitly in his manifesto *From Where Great Leaders Arise*.

> "The men and women needed by a society in crisis are created by a greater societal group thought, they arise from their environment, from their folk, springing forth from the people as if they were waiting for the moment. They are not so much born as made to be what is needed of them by the greater group thought occurring around them. These leaders will be paragon examples of your people, virtuous, incorruptible, speaking truth to power and a truth that resonates with your very soul. When you see them; when you hear them; you will know them as they are you and yours." (2019, p.23)

This declaration reverses the causal arrow in Freud's equation. Here the collective ego/identity/consciousness of the extremist group is projected onto a leader who has yet to emerge. The statement "resonates with your soul" and the terrorist's concluding statement are, however, clear

examples of the leader/follower relationship Freud described. Reversing the directionality of the transformative process does not alter the nature of the emergent identity relationship.

Freud stressed the importance of an actual leader, but allowed for the possibility that a symbolic mandatory can take her/his place. Expanding on this idea, it is reasonable to suggest that a political party, movement or ideology may be the focus of identification. In the case of contemporary extremisms, this accounts for what are commonly known as "lone wolves," those Reicher, Haslam and Bavel (2019a) term "engaged followers" who perpetrate acts of violence as "leaderless resistance" independent of external command and control systems. What they (2019b) refer to as "toxic identity leadership," examples of which include Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Anders Breivik, become the focus of identity fusion even though they lack control of or direct contact with their followers. Mediated leader/follower relations have facilitated the growth of extremist movements since Adolf Hitler and his propaganda minister Josef Goebbels used radio to broadcast hate speech in the 1930s (Somerville 2012). Social media serves a similar purpose for contemporary extremists.

The Indonesian Muslim VE leader Abu Bakr Ba'asyir and his followers are examples. Many of Ba'asyir's followers adore him, refer to him lovingly as "Ustad Abu", and say that they would obey his every command even though he chastises them for not being "Islamic enough". He combines images of Freud's loving father and threatening authority figure in a single public persona. He swore an oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi and ISIS in 2014, but his loyalty was more symbolic than operational. For his followers, the ISIS Calif was a distant, symbolic leader. Their identification with him was transitive. They embraced al-Baghdadi because Ba'asyir did.

Religious and Ethnic Conflict

Freud suggests that collective narcissism is the root of intergroup conflict. Religions are exceptional cases because doctrines of universal love, conflict with narcissistic hostility. However, he also observed that:

> "…a religion, even if it calls itself a religion of love, must be hard and unloving to those who do not belong to it. Fundamentally indeed, every religion in this way is a religion of love for all those whom it embraces while cruelty

> and intolerance towards those who do not belong to it are natural tendencies" (1922, p. 50)

> "In the undisguised antipathies and aversions which people feel towards strangers with whom they have to do, we may recognize the expression of self-love – of narcissism. This self-love works for the self-assertion of the individual and behaves as though the occurrence of any divergence from his own particular line of development involved a criticism of them and a demand for their alteration" (Freud 1922, p. 55).

Adorno (1951, p. 55) expands on this argument, asserting that recognition of difference and boundaries can lead to rage and violence against the other and persistent refusal to engage in critical self-reflection. In terms of the model described above those classified as dangerous become victims of violence while criticism of the pure own group; its ideology and leaders are impossible.

Freud's unstated conclusion was that inter-group conflict is inevitable. He was overly pessimistic because he did not recognize the existence or significance of identity and group hierarchies that offer the potential for finding common ground. Far-Right and Muslim extremisms are rooted in religion and ethnicity. Both are critical components of hierarchically structured personal and collective identities and can be used as the basis for group formation in the ways that Freud described. Contemporary research has shown that ethnic and religious boundaries are not as rigid as he thought. Ethnic and religious categories are reference systems for organising difference. They are malleable, with symbolic boundaries reflecting shifting power relations (Lehman 1967, Barth 1969). Categorical systems generally take the form of nested hierarchies with ever more inclusive categories at higher nodes. These hierarchies as well as definitions of their constituent elements are situational, being subject to restructuring in variant interactional, social and political contexts (Keyes 1981). These lexical categories do not necessarily correspond with the distribution of cultural and religious traits, beliefs and practices. Rather, there are socially constructed *assumptions* that individuals and communities to whom these labels apply share common characteristics. They range in scale and inclusiveness from personal to global. For example, the term Muslim can refer to an individual, a local community or, in its most inclusive sense, to a global community. The same is true of ethnicity. The term Turk, for example, can be used at

multiple levels of inclusivity including subnational groups, the Turkish nation state to a global community with a shared history and speaking related, but mutually unintelligible, languages (Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kyrgyz and Uyghur) (Mosser & Weithmann 2008). The category Malay is flexible in similar ways in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (Nagata 1974).

The level of inclusivity drawn on for personal or collective identity may either contract or expand, especially at critical historical junctures where there is a pressing need for reformulating social and political structures. Leaders can play vitally important roles in these processes by encouraging and admonishing their followers to expand or contract in-group boundaries. This expands or contracts the pure own group category. Shifts in relationships between the Indonesian Muslim organisations Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah in the late 20th and early 21st century are examples. NU and Muhammadiyah are Indonesia's largest and most influential Muslim organisations. NU is a traditionalist, Sufi oriented movement. Muhammadiyah is a modernist organisation based partly on Salafi teachings. For much of the 20th century they were bitter rivals often exchanging *takfir* – each accusing the other of being outside the Muslim community and in the dangerous other category (Hasbullah 2014). Hostility and mutual recrimination decreased at the end of the 20th century for three reasons:

1. Revered leaders of both groups, particularly former NU chairman and Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid/ Gus Dur (1940-2009) and former Muhammadiyah chairman Syafi'i Maarif (1935-2022) were deeply committed to democracy, human rights, religious pluralism, Indonesian nationalism and inclusive understandings of Islam.
2. Both leaders strongly opposed Wahhabism and other forms of Islamist extremism that were increasingly influential at the time.
3. They redefined relations between the two organizations as "competition in goodness".

The extent of this transformation is apparent in *fatwa* from both organisations, intergroup conversations and ritual practice at neighbourhood levels. Muhammadiyah and NU *fatwa* stress the need for religious tolerance (Ali 2020). In a focus group discussion concerning religious pluralism Rohani Mohamed facilitated in 2018 Maarif and

Wahid's daughter Alissa, the founder of the Gusdurian movement that promotes her father's religious and social agendas, greeted each other as old friends. Both spoke about the dangers of extremism and the "Arabisation" of Indonesian Islam and of the need for interfaith cooperation as well as that between their respective organizations. They acknowledged points of difference and delivered related messages in rhetorical styles characteristic of the two organizations. Allissa Wahid drew on the NU narrative tradition referencing accounts of the pious behaviour of Javanese Sufi saints, the Wali Songo (Nine Saints) as models for social action. Syafi'i Maarif drew on Muhammadiyah tradition, quoting the *Qur'an* and *hadith* to support his positions. At the neighbourhood level there is an increasing number of mosques at which Muhammadiyah and NU Muslims pray together. This would have been unimaginable a generation ago. Salafi extremists are unwilling to join either of these groups for communal prayer. These are examples of the ways in which Muhammadiyah and NU have come to define each other as a common "pure own group" and Salafi extremists as "dangerous others". The type of oppositional relationship Freud described has given way to intergroup cooperation rooted in a higher order religious identity fostered by leaders committed to ameliorating conflict.

Revitalisation and Nativistic Movements

Revitalisation and nativistic movements are sub-cases of the groups Freud described. They emerge at critical junctures when social institutions become unsustainable for economic or political reasons. They seek to reinvigorate socio-cultural systems or in the extreme cases to destroy society as currently formulated and establish utopias based on what are claimed to be native, newly revealed or "pure" religious principles. They are often rooted in visions or dreams of charismatic leaders. Research concerning these movements has been conducted primarily by anthropologists focused on cultural/religious responses to colonialism in small-scale indigenous societies. There are numerous examples, the most well-known are the American Indian Ghost Dance movement of the 1890s (Osterreich 1991) and Melanesian Cargo Cults (Lindstrom 1993). Similar movements emerged in more complex Muslim and Buddhist societies in Southeast Asia. Rebellions in colonial Java predicting the imminent arrival of a Just King (*Ratu Adil*) (Van der Kroef 1959) and the Burmese Saya San rebellion the leader of which proclaimed himself to the King of Burma (Maitrii 2011) are examples.

Studies by the anthropologists Ralph Linton and Alfred Hallowell (1943) and Anthony Wallace (1956) are the most significant attempts to theorize these movements in comparative ways. As Linton and Hallowell noted, the study of these movements is of more than "purely academic interest." Wallace noted that this analytic framework can be profitably employed in the analysis of social movements and revolutions in post-colonial states. He mentioned the Iranian Revolution of 1979 as an example of a state level revitalisation movement (Wallace 1990). The models they developed can illuminate features of Far-Right and Islamist extremist movements and locate their analysis within a broader social science context. This can help to alleviate the problem of "terrorism studies" becoming what Youngman (2020) terms an "echo-chamber" ill-informed by larger theoretical insights and concerns.

Linton and Hallowell described nativistic movements as: "conscious, organized attempt(s) on the part of societies members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture." They developed a classification system based on binary distinctions between magical (religious)/ rational and revivalist/perpetuative movements. The interaction of these variables produces a four-cell classification system:

Revivalist Magical/Religious	**Revivalist Rational**
Perpetuative Magical/Religious	**Perpetuative Rational**

They note that these distinctions are not absolute and indicate that they should be understood as continuous rather than discrete variables. Many nativistic movements include both magical/religious and rational elements. They also note that magical/religious movements are most

likely to develop in stressful conditions. In most cases certain elements of culture are selected for emphasis and accorded great symbolic value. These become what "key symbols" (Ortner 1973) central to identity formation and boundary definition. They must be strenuously defended, by force if necessary. It is, therefore, necessary to include an additional violent/not violent variable to the model.

Salafi extremist movements are revivalist magical/religious. Far-Right extremist movements are more difficult to characterize. Great Replacement Theory movements tend towards rationality but can be perpetuative or revivalist depending on how they plan to respond to "invaders". Those who would only establish restrictive, racist and/or Islamophobic immigration policies are perpetuative. The New Zealand and Texas terrorists are revivalists because they seek to eliminate invaders. Those who call for massive deportations are non-violent revivalist rationalists.

The revitalisation movements Wallace describes are special cases of magical/religious revivalist movements. He defines them as follows:

> "A deliberation, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture. Revitalisation is thus, from a cultural standpoint, a special kind of cultural change phenomena: the persons involved in the process of revitalisation must perceive their culture, or some major areas of it, as a system (whether accurately or not); they must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory; and they must innovate not merely discrete items but a new cultural system, " (Wallace, 1956, p. 265).

Most are violent to some degree because they seek to destroy society and culture as currently constituted. Wallace understood revitalisation movements as macro-level historical processes that are common to societies of all scales. He mentions New Guinea cargo cults and the development of world religions including Christianity and Islam, the French, and Russian and Iranian revolutions as examples.

Wallace was concerned not so much with developing a taxonomy of revitalisation movements, as with discovering generalizations about their processual logic. His model includes five "somewhat overlapping" stages.

1. Steady State – the existing socio-cultural system.
2. Period of Individual Stress – in which individuals and social institutions are increasingly incapable of meeting basic needs because of "climatic, floral and faunal change; military defeat; political subordination; extreme pressure toward acculturation resulting in internal cultural conflict; economic distress; epidemics and so on."
3. Period of Cultural Distortion – in which there are a variety of responses to prolonged stress. These can include cultural conservatism, limited cultural and social change and maladaptive behaviors including substance abuse, crime and violence.
4. Period of Revitalisation – in which charismatic leaders with visions of a new utopian society emerge. They are most commonly religious, but may be secular ideologs. Their visions may be of new social formations, as in the case of Communist revolutions, or the revival of "pure" forms of existing ones as in the case of religious fundamentalisms.
5. New Steady State – a new socio-cultural system.

Stages two and three are marked by increasing alienation, which Durkheim (1897) described as a condition in which society provides little moral guidance or authority. Alienation can be a subjective psychological state, an objective social condition, or a combination of the two (Geyer & Schweitzer 1976). Multiple objective social conditions including poverty, discrimination, political oppression or the perception thereof can lead to psychological states characterized by meaninglessness, despair and perceived powerlessness (Pierre et al. 2013). The decline or absence of traditional authority characteristic of new urban spaces fuelled by migration is often a contributing factor (Ague 1995).

These subjective psychological states, rather than objective social conditions, help to explain the appeal of charismatic leaders including violent extremists. Charismatic leaders, who Wallace refers to as prophets, have characteristics similar to those described by Freud. They are essential players in the revitalisation process because they offer a vision of the new, stage 5, socio-cultural order. The leader/follower relationship is also similar to that Freud described. Contemporary Far-Right and Muslim extremist movements are located in the intersection

of stages 3 and 4. They are at a point where members are engaged in a struggle against the established order (stage 1) and have visions of a new one (stage 5). Revitalisation can be accomplished in a variety of ways including armed rebellion, terrorism and state capture by democratic means. For a time, ISIS came close to realizing stage 5 in the territory it controlled. Ultimately, it suffered the same fate as Nazi Germany, which was a state level revitalisation movement (Griffin 2007).

Extremism and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 virus was, and still is, and equal opportunity killer, striking people without regard to ethnicity, nationality, race or religion. Muslim and Far-right extremists seized on the fear it spread to advance their agendas (Basit 2020). They disseminated propaganda and advocated violent action to speed the onset of the period of stress characteristic of stage two in Wallace's (1956) model of revitalisation movements.

Far-Right extremists in United States blamed the Chinese government or Latin American and/or Chinese immigrants for the onset of the pandemic. In Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand Far-Right groups used the pandemic to promote "accelerationism" (Bhatt 2021), a tactic encouraging violence to hasten the collapse of the existing social order. Muslim extremists, including ISIS, claimed that pandemic was the result of a Zionist plot and/or "divine punishment" for arrogance and unbelief" (Pantucci 2021).

Conclusions – Extremisms as a Transformation Group

The models described in this section and the semantic approach to the analysis of violent extremism outlined earlier in this paper are complimentary. Each offers a measure of insight into the varieties of extremism and their social and psychological features. Relationships between the two forms of extremism can be understood as a transformation group in the sense of the term Levi Straus used it in his studies of kinship (1969b) and mythology (1969a). Levi Strauss was concerned with abstract algebraic relations that structure these and other cultural systems. He argues that these basic modes of thought and symbolic classification are rooted in the unconscious and that they make communication and social interaction possible. Descola describes his structuralist method as follows:

> "...it reveals and orders contrastive features so as to discover the necessary relations organizing certain sectors of social life, such as the set of culinary techniques or of the ways to exchange potential spouses between individuals and groups. In sum, it is a very efficient method to reach the objective which any anthropological analysis should aim at: the detection and ordering of regularities in statements and practices" (Descola, 2016, p.35)

Levi Strauss (1969a, p. 16) also described myths as machines for the suppression of time. Far- Right and Islamic extremist ideologies and narratives are myths offering timeless utopian and/or apocalyptic visions. Both use images of the Crusades to erase time, depicting contemporary conflicts as eternal struggles. Levi Strauss considered modern societies or contemporary political phenomena. His methodological approach is, however, useful for the analysis of contemporary extremist ideologies and social movements if they are understood as mythologies and associated systems of social action. Muslim and Far-Right extremisms form a global transformation group. Stripped of Western and Islamic semantics they are nearly identical.

These structural similarities help to explain the seemingly anomalous phenomena of Far-Right politicians converting to Islam and for Islamic extremists becoming Evangelical Christians. In Germany and the Netherlands there have been cases of leaders of nativistic, anti-Islamic, anti-immigrant political parties converting to Islam. In an extreme case an American neo-Nazi embraced *jihad* and turned on his former compatriots (Graham 2018). Similarly, the American Evangelical Christian magazine *Sight* reported that an Indonesian Muslim terrorist "Came to Christ" and now leads an underground apostate group (Bos 2020).

Given that Muslim VE and FRE are components of a mythic transformation group these conversions are not as anomalous as they appear. Both are revitalisation movements, with utopian myths dedicated to struggle against dangerous impure others. Movement from one such system to another does not entail a basic change in ways of thinking. Rather it is a symbolic inversion, which, as Levi Strauss (1969a) observes, is a common feature of mythological thought. In such transitions the semantics of extremism changes while the syntax remains constant. It is changing sides in a cosmic war, but it is the same cosmic war.

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2. Manuscripts should be double-spaced with a 1-inch (2.5 cm) margins. Use 12-point Times New Roman font.

3. Manuscripts should adhere to the *American Psychological Association* (APA) style, latest edition.

4. The title should be as concise as possible and should appear on a separate sheet together with name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s), and the complete postal address of the institute(s).

5. A short running title of not more than 40 characters should also be included.

6. Headings and sub-headings of different sections should be clearly indicated.

7. References should be alphabetically ordered. Some examples are given below:

Book
In-text citations:
Al-Faruqi & al-Faruqi (1986)

Reference:
Al-Faruqi, I. R., & al-Faruqi, L. L. (1986). *The cultural atlas of Islam*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Chapter in a Book
In-text:
Alias (2009)

Reference:
Alias, A. (2009). Human nature. In N. M. Noor (Ed.), *Human nature from an Islamic perspective: A guide to teaching and learning* (pp.79-117). Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press.

Journal Article
In-text:
Chapra (2002)

Reference:
Chapra, M. U. (2002). Islam and the international debt problem. *Journal of Islamic Studies, 10*, 214-232.

The Qur'ān
In-text:
(i) direct quotation, write as 30:36
(ii) indirect quotation, write as Qur'ān, 30:36

Reference:
The glorious Qur'ān. Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1977). US: American Trust Publications.

Ḥadīth
In-text:
(i) Al-Bukhārī, 88:204 (where 88 is the book number, 204 is the ḥadīth number)
(ii) Ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 1

Reference:
(i) Al-Bukhārī, M. (1981). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
(ii) Ibn Ḥanbal, A. (1982). *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*. Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari.

The Bible
In-text:
Matthew 12:31-32

Reference:
The new Oxford annonated Bible. (2007). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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Research Articles