Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism

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Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism
Case studies in France and Belgium

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Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism: Case studies in France and Belgium

A Research Thesis Presented to
The Graduate Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences
Master’s Program in International Studies

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirement for the Degree
Masters of Arts in International Studies

By
Magdalena Martinez
December 2016
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Acknowledgement

I would like to express a heartfelt gratitude to my thesis advisor, Professor Olivier Bercault for his continuous encouragement and reinforcement. I could not have been granted a better mentor. I am beyond grateful for his expertise and knowledge throughout this procedure. His leadership and supervision taught me that perseverance and dedication pay off. I would also like to thank the entire Graduate staff for providing preparation and direction aimed at my growing success in International Studies. Besides my professors, I would like to thank my family for their life-long unconditional love and inspiration. I am especially thankful for the support from my parents, Claudia and Noe Garcia, for they have always been my greatest encouragement. They taught me that “Positivity is Key” to success, and that if I hold positivism in life, I would reach the greatest outcomes. I will unendingly be in debt to my parents for giving me the life I have.
Abstract

France and Belgium are two of the top countries in Europe with an increasing number of root fighters. Over the last two years, both countries have been primary targets of terrorism. This thesis investigates the repeated pattern of events and analyzes from a birds-eye view the cycle leading to the rise of terrorism in France and Belgium. This research disputes that anxiety causes discrimination and lack of integration in France and Belgium, which contributes an identity crisis. In essence, these factors trigger radicalization and lead to terrorism. Analyzing the patterns of terrorist activity and the path of radicalization is essential to preclude individuals from joining terrorist organizations. This research aims to recognize key elements of understanding the correlation between radicalism, identity, and sense of belonging.

Key words: Radicalism, Identity, sense of belonging, repeated patterns, discrimination, integration, recruitment, terrorism, terrorist attacks, vulnerability, public anxiety, secularism
I. Introduction

As terrorist attacks against civil society in Western Europe have been occurring more frequently than beforehand, the threat of terrorism has become a top concern in nations such as France and Belgium. It is important to move beyond the surface of the problem when highlighting or analyzing terrorist attacks, as determining the root cause and other contributing factors are necessary. The rise of terrorism is eminent, and educating society is necessary to prevent such atrocities from occurring in the future. It is commonly heard, “History has a manner of repeating itself!” , but after actually identifying similar patterns related to historical results, do individuals, or society as a whole actually help prevented and stop the recurrence from making history yet again?

Keywords

Since the term “terrorism” was coined in 1793 during the French Revolution and its reign of terror, it has held on many different controversial definitions over time. However, for this thesis, however, the term “terrorism” will be identified as; an organized, unlawful attack, inflicting terror on a civil society for ideological or political profit.

It is important to know the difference between a “foreign” vs. “root” fighter to fully understand my thesis research. The term “Foreign fighter” is a person who leaves their country of origin to attack another country on behalf of a group’s ideology (e.g. a Syrian or Iraqi-born citizen participating and organizing attacks within Europe). A “root fighter” on the other hand, is a home-produced, European-born citizen who undergoes training to take part in terrorist attacks within their home country.
History of European Terrorism

My thesis will concentrate primarily on the terrorist attacks that have occurred in Europe over the last two decades. During this time frame, the Armed Islamic State otherwise known as GIA organized two major attempts. The GIA is a terrorist group formed by Algerian extremists during the 1992 election year in Algeria. During this time Islamic Salvation Front declared self-victory and terminated the election. The creation of the group was a result of a cause and the coup against the new Algerian government. The Armed Islamic group wanted to replenish the administration with their position of Islamic principles and ideals. The group proposed to bring the Sharia Law into total nation domination which lead to a divided nation creating a political war. The GIA did not want any foreign intervention in Algerian and aimed to fall as much external involvement in Algeria as possible. Their targets were primarily foreigners which gained international attention.

The GIA later on recruited, trained, and sent foreign fighters to attack France. In 1994, the GIA hijacked a plane leaving from the Orly Paris airport, leaving 7 dead and 25 critically wounded. The following year, the GIA organized several bombings within the city of Paris between the months of July to October leaving 8 dead, and over one hundred wounded.

Over the years, terrorist groups started recruiting members from countries they wanted to attack. These terrorist attacks derived from various motives and continued to occur in Europe throughout the late 1900s until present day. Root fighters began to play a critical role for terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda.
Al Qaeda was created in 1988 by three men named, Usama Bin Laden, Muhammad Atef, and Abu Ubaidah al Banshiri. The group formulated in defense of the Soviet Union invasion in Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan war from 1979-1989. Al Qaeda was also supported by anti-communist such as the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other allies to the ongoing Cold War (1947-1991). After the war however, Al Qaeda became extremely radicalized and began a Holy war against the western nations. Their mission was the opposition of any foreign invasion within the Muslim world.

Using root fighters, Al Qaeda managed to target Madrid in 2004 killing one hundred and ninety-two civilians. The attack was conspired by twenty-eight individuals, nine of them being Spaniard civilians and the residuum from the North of Africa. In the following year, Al Qaeda attacked London, killing fifty-two people. The assault was organized by root fighters, three British born citizens.

I will highlight the recent attacks that occurred in France and Belgium beginning with the attack in 2012 in the south of France. On March 2012 in Toulouse and Montauban, France was attacked by a young man by the name of Merah Mohammad. He was born and raised in Toulouse, France and came from an Algerian descent. Growing up Merah made reckless choices that caught up to him quickly. He became part of the juvenile system, radar for violence, assault, theft, and other various crimes. As a juvenile, Merah was convicted on fourteen different occasions. Once he had become an adult, his actions became more vehement. By the age of nineteen, he was condemned to prison for half a year to a robbery. Merah claimed that he converted to Islam during his time in Prison.
Merah identified himself with an unnamed group linked to Al-Qaeda based established in France. Merah made a trip to Algeria in the beginning of 2010 to join the Al-Qaeda jihadist. Upon return, Mira approached his fifteen-yr-old neighbor and made him watch Al-Qaeda-related videos. Towards midyear, he took a trip to the middle east and visited, Syria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan respectively to train in an Al Qaeda facility. He later returned to France at the end of 2011 resulting from sickness.

Merah began his killing spree on March 11th killing one soldier in Toulouse. Following this attack, he then killed two soldiers in Montauban on March 15th. Another four days later Mira attacked a Jewish school killing a and three students. Merah's motive claimed to have been related to French foreign intervention in Pakistan. Merah’s reason for attacking the Jewish school was to “avenge the Palestinian children.”

Three years following the attacks by Merah Mohammed, Al-Qaeda attacked Charlie Hebdo, a satirical French publication located in Paris, France (11th arrondissement) on January 7, 2015. The attack was conducted by two brothers, Saïd (age 34) and Chérif Kouachi (age 32) who were from Algeria. The Kouachi brothers were born and brought up in Paris. Both of their parents died at an early age leaving them behind to became part of the orphanage system. The brothers were involved in illegal activities linked to drugs. As time had passed the brothers became radicalized which ultimately lead to the slaughter of twelve people. The motive of the onslaught was to send a clear message to Charlie Hebdo for portraying a satirical cartoon of the Prophet Mohammad on the cover of the magazine, which the brothers perceived as offensive.

Chérif was the first one to become involved in radicalism when he met his mentor, Farid Benyettou. Chérif initially intended to train in Damascus, Syria to fight in the then ongoing U.S
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v. Iraq war on the side of Al-Qaeda. Chérif was however, arrested on the way to the airport due to his relation of recruiting Islamic individuals to be trained. In 2010 the Kouachi brothers were in suspicions of plotting an escape plan for the attacker, Smaïn Aït Ali Belkacem, who was held in prison for the Paris attacks on 1995 as aforementioned.

A new group identified by the name of ISIS (The Islamic State or Iraq and Syria) is also recognized by the aliases such as: ISIL (The Islamic State or Iraq and Levant), IS(The Islamic State), or Daesh. They are a radicalized Islamic terrorist group, but on a whole other level of extremism compared to other terrorist organizations. The group roots began in 2004 when the founder of ISIS, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, formed a group affiliated with Al Qaeda. Zarqawi formed his group with the help of Bin Laden and named the organization (AQI) Al-Qaeda in Iraq.

Abu Musab declared a full-on war against the Shiite community in Iraq with the ideology to have a Sunni majority population and an Anti-western invasion. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was also linked to the Madrid bombing in 2004. AQI used tactics such as beheading to cause fear and terror to the public. AQI became an extremely violent organization and by 2006, they renamed themselves the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). On May 9, 2013, the group later renamed themselves to what we know today as ISIS. ISIS began to expand and take control of parts of Iraq and Syria. ISIS stated that their mission is to dictate and govern the entire Muslim population worldwide.

Following the attack on Charlie Hebdo, Paris was attacked again by ISIS. Paris suffered six attacks throughout the region leaving a total of 130 civilians dead and approximately 400 wounded. Twelve ISIS members partook in these attacks: 10 killed, 2 taken into custody. All of the twelve men were European-born citizens who travelled to Syria to train with ISIS. Salah
Abdeslam was one of the two men to escape but was later captured in Brussels where he was found hiding.

Shortly after Salah Abdeslam was arrested, ISIS planted an attack in Brussels. This attack occurred on March 22, 2016 at the Brussels Airport. One of the attackers was the 12th man that had yet to be captured from the November Paris attacks, Mohamed Abrini. The Brussels airport terminal was bombed twice, and the Brussels metro was attacked roughly one hour later. This attack killed 31 people and injured more than 300 civilians. There was a community in Brussels that fostered many of the Paris attackers. The attackers from Paris and Brussels were all European nationals. These individuals are not immigrants, they are people who were born and raised in Western Europe.

Prior to the Brussels Airport attack, ISIS had attacked Brussels in the past. On May 24, 2015, ISIS had attacked the Jewish Museum of Belgium. An ISIS member walked in the museum and began firing at tourists and visitors present. In total, four people died and many others wounded. Mehdi Nemmouche, a European-born citizen was in connection with the shooting. Mehdi was considered a root fighter, as he went to Syria to train with ISIS right before the attack in Brussels.

**Personal Experience**

On July 14, 2016, ISIS attacked France again on Bastille Day, a French national holiday. At the time of the attack I was living in Paris, interning at Zerane Artisque Confluence, a non-profit organization, meanwhile also collecting research for my thesis. Bastille Day is a big national festivity celebrating France’s day of Independence. Many of my acquaintances gathered
that night to watch the fireworks show near the Eiffel Tower. However, that night I had an unexpected feeling of apprehension, worried an attack might occur near such a public area, therefore I stayed home. The next morning, I woke up to the horrific news of the terrorist attack in Nice, France.

In Nice, several people had gathered to watch the Bastille Day fireworks celebration along the shoreline, Promenade de Anglais, one of the most famous sites. Abruptly, after the show ended at 22:30 a massive lorry truck began to drive right through the large crowd of people. The truck driver was Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhel, a 31-year-old, French resident with Tunisian background. He identified himself with the Islamic State, however he was discreet and did not grasp the French counterterrorism radar.

Bouhel drove the truck for an estimated 2 kilometers meanwhile, bulldozing through people. Forces were able to shoot and kill Bouhel before he could cause further damage. Amongst the multitude of populaces, were many families and young children. A total of 85 people were killed in a terrible death and more than 300 were in critical condition and injured. The Nice terrorist attack was absolutely devastating. The Nice attack caused severe damage not only to those who were primary victims, but additionally to others who will now have anxiety to attend any public gatherings in neighboring areas. The Nice attack targeted a Bastille Day, a French symbol and undoubtedly the most famous national holiday in France. This specific terrorist attack stood as a new form and level of terrorism.
Thesis Question

All of these events and attacks lead me to my thesis question: What causes French-born nationals of foreign descent or European born citizens to participate in terrorist organizations and create violence in Europe? Following my thesis question I have created two sub-themes.

The first theme is in relation to radicalization: What are the historical aspects of violence based radicalism Islam in Europe? How do people become radicalized and what contributes to radicalism? My second theme relates to the recruitment process: does the ghettoization of Muslims in Europe, or sense of belonging link to recruitment? Is there a connection to the terrorist attacks of Paris and Brussels?

I divided this research into two case studies and will primarily focus my research in the two countries of France and Belgium. In recent, France and Belgium have been two of the countries in Europe who have suffered the most from the terrorist attacks. ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, has been the group to take responsibility for the recent attacks perpetrated in France and Belgium.

Method Approach

My research design was constructed by a mixed methodology approach, applying both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In essence, using both research methods in my thesis enhances and makes a stronger case by analyzing and combining both strategies. My research method will be a consecutive process utilizing a chronological approach.
My research design consists of two phases in sequence. In the first phase of my methodology, I conducted a quantitative examination. My objective is to gather secondary inquiries from various and different studies already completed examining the background of terrorist participants. Afterward, in my second phase, I conducted a qualitative investigation by random selection surveying in Paris and decoding my data.

Importance of Study

I aim to find a deeper cause for such events. We must evaluate the cycle of events in order to uncover a deeper cause for such heinous actions. Terrorist groups target civilians who take part of an act to cause fear and terror to those targeted. History partakes a huge role in investigating the rise of terrorism in Europe. I propose to investigate what motivates root fighters to participate in terrorist acts.
II. Literature Review

A. Religion as a Factor

It is common that terrorist organizations are linked to a certain religion (e.g. ISIS practices radical Islam rituals). Many these terrorist organizations have claimed to attack in the name of Islam. An example of this is the Charlie Hebdo attack that took place in Paris, France earlier this year as the attack was in part because the newspaper had drawn comical pictures of the Prophet Mohammad that were seen as offensive. There are several studies that evaluate the acts of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, ISIL, and ISIS, that link them with religion and explain that the main reason these participants are accordingly involved and committed to their cause is due to the promised afterlife guaranteed to them for fighting in the name of Islam. (Khan 2008; Ranstorp 1996).

Although terrorist organizations associate themselves to a religion, it is not a major reason as to why root fighters take part in these terrorist groups. Recent findings show that “religious guidance” is important to analyze and examine throughout young Muslims in Europe. The local religious guidance may be a cause of origin for radical religious and political views (Berger 2016).

Religion is being used as weapon and defense mechanism for terrorist groups (Lequesne 2016). However, religion is just one of the many factors that lead to the rise of extremism and radicalization in Europe. In my research, I seek to find other potential factors that contribute to individual’s willingness of participating in terrorist organizations. My thesis will not be based solely on religion as I believe there are more dynamics and elements than religion that serve as motivation in these terrorist organizations. I believe we cannot rule out other factors that contribute to the cause of terrorist attacks and that religion is not the only problem.
There are some ISIS recruits that actually have little knowledge of the Islamic religion. It is important to acknowledge this fact. Even though the Kouachi brothers (the men responsible for the attack on Charlie Hebdo) retaliated against the newspaper publisher for mocking the prophet Mohammad, they did not come from an regularly-practiced religious background. The Kouachi brothers searched like many others for a sense of belonging in which they found in the radical Islamic group. They did not fully feel integrated within the society which led to them turning frustrations into retaliation and violence in order to prove a point. Once the brothers joined the Al-Qaeda branch of Yemen, they became radicalized and practiced ideologies of Sunni Islam. In France, however the Kouachi brothers felt unliberated to practice their religion. Many other people feel restrained from their spiritual practices due to restricting laws.

B. Secularism in Europe

Secularism in Europe is a pressing issue that has been existent since 1905 when the French government authorized a law on the separation of Church and State—linking to the increasing number of members participating in terrorist groups. France and Belgium are well recognized for being the most secular countries within Europe, ensuring the separation between religion and the state. The classification of secularism within France and Belgium has developed and changed its definition of national secularism over time. Secularism today, is not what it used to be a decade ago.

Scholars believe secularism is linked to radicalism in Europe and forces others away to search for a sense of belonging in society. Scholars have researched the linkage between secularism and the lack of integration. In the case of France, society feels that the nation is not accepting the assimilation of the Islam community within the French society. Muslims actively practicing Islam are being seen as a threat to civilization due to past terrorist attacks, which lead
to the French communal validating the power measures implemented by the government and political figures.

Secularism exists worldwide, but each nation addresses it in a different manner depending on their country’s view. For example, in the United States, the First Amendment grants freedom of expression and religion. It precludes the government from implementing any restraints on a religious practice. The secularization in one country may be completely different in another country, even if they are neighbors. Another example is Belgium, where religion is actually recognized by the nation-state, not one denomination but seven different religions.

France mainly argues secularism is not to target any specific religion as a whole, it is regarded by outsiders that Islam is mainly being targeted. For example, the law passed in 2011 prohibits the act of prayer in public in France. Because of this law, it forces some to search for a new identity or sense of belonging. The combination of rejection, secularism, segregation, and being marginalized by the population contribute to finding a new identity. In my research, I seek to find the connection and influences leading to the recruitment process of terrorist organizations.

Andre (2015) highlighted the life and pathway that led to the events of Mohamed Merah, a young man who assaulted the Jewish school in France. One of his key findings was that France’s heavily hand on secularism played a vital role in his belief of radicalization ideology. Andre strongly agrees that secularism should be clearly defined. In France, they proceeded to implement secular actions to further separate religion from the state. An identity crisis may have very well been what pushed terrorists such as Mohamed Merah, to become radicalized.

C. Integration

Researchers have done studies looking for a link between the lack of integration leading and radicalization. It is a fact that most of the recent terrorist attackers in Europe have been
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Muslim. Therefore, questions surface on whether or not the Muslim population is safe and socially accommodated within the community. One who is not Muslim and has not walked a mile in their shoes cannot fully understand how they feel on a regular day basis. The possible lack of assimilation could potentially be the cause leading to radicalized individuals (Archick, Kristin, et al. 2011). Europe has put forward efforts in integrating foreigners within the European Union, but the road to a successful and positive incorporation is still on the road to be achieved. Historical events (e.g. recent terrorist attacks) have a consequence in today’s problem of integration.

Maxwelll (2014) proposes that faith and belief are not the dictating influence and element molding young Muslim’s mindsets. Rather, the setback of integration leads to the problem associated with the identity crisis. Therefore, concentrating solely on the sector of religion is not the best way to categorize the Muslim population residing in Europe. The lack of integration has been an ongoing issue in France and other nations. With the recent terrorist attacks, it seems as if the problem has only become a bigger issue.

D. Radicalization

Recent studies throughout Europe point out that the rise in terrorist organization’s recruits could be a potential result of Muslims not feeling assimilated into the host country. Those who feel unwanted in their own community tend to recover a sense of belonging and identity elsewhere (Zięba 2015). For example, after feeling excluded from one’s own community residence caused by discrimination, some populaces seek a new individuality and a group to belong to. Some of these groups are terrorist organization who then radicalize these vulnerable
and insecure individuals. Zięba finds in her research that an individual’s own country may be the one aiding home-based terrorists or root fighters.

Radicalization has been meditated upon the problem of lack of integration within the public community. Young individuals who do not feel incorporated within the community have lost their sense of belonging and have evolved into finding new ways to where one best fits, and terrorist organizations find those men who recruit those beings who are vulnerable (Franz 2015).

On another note, some scholars believe the host country is substantial to be blamed for the radicalization of the Muslim youth. Since the attacks, search and seizures have increased and Muslims are being targeted more than ever. Several are depriving the Muslim population and categorizing all Muslims in a particular group owed to the recent terrorist attacks (Najimdeen 2015).

Najimdeen finds that most radicalized youths come from a transcontinental upbringing and connect his findings with European states not wanting to assimilate foreigners within their own country. He furthers explains that civilization and humanity produce radicalization by the perceptive they hold against newcomers coming from non-western nations.

**E. Foreign Fighters versus Root Fighters**

Some studies intend to distinguish the problem and the issue of foreign fighters. For instance, (Paulussen 2014) dissects the case study of Europe’s foreign fighters becoming an uprising problem for Europe. However, Paulussen neglected to mention the problem of root fighters. Paulussen highlights the ongoing war in Syria and the deployment of foreign fighters arising from many European nations. He also touches on the fighting with the terrorist groups in outside countries. However, he seeks to ascertain the problem we must face is the prosecution and punishment of those who have gone abroad to participate in terrorist acts.
The definition root versus foreign fighter must be acknowledged and furthermore studied more in depth. In another study (Uhlmann 2008) recognizes the increasing problem of home-grown terrorist (root fighters) within European nations. Uhlmann highlights two studies researched by the Dutch (2007) and British (2008) examining related background factors jihadist are recruiting in their members.

I consider it is important to distinguish the differences between the two terms. It is important to differentiate between both forms of fighters and not confuse one another. After researching and reviewing different scholarly articles, I have found that content regarding the classification between foreign fighters and root (home-grown) fighters is lacking.

**F. Recruitment Process**

Recruitment and radicalism are both interconnected in some manner. The question of who and why individuals become recruited by terrorists is a popular matter for those in the counterterrorism sector. Many try to determine the underpinning causes as to why individuals undergo the recruitment process for terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda or ISIS.

To find out how the recruitment method is done today, we must explore more in detail the historical background and the journey of the recruiting procedure. It is also important to determine what traits and motives terrorist organizations are seeking for in a member. Studies have shown the internet has been a huge source of the recruitment process. (Morrison 2011; Franz 2015; McCabe 2016). Franz further explains that online recruitment has been a big resource for terrorist organizations in order to localize participants willing to become a member. Although initial contact may not be directed through huge social media sites, it plays a huge role in publicizing and promotion. Operating members usually blog about their experiences and newcomers look up to them for guidance.
McCabe expresses that groups such as ISIS make it clear from the beginning of the recruitment process that one must be mentally willing to die for their determination. ISIS is very straight-forward and direct in their guidelines. Therefore, members know what types of heinous crimes are committed and should not be forgiven for not knowing something.

Young European citizens who feel they are not fully part of the European culture are becoming attracted to these online ‘secret’ recruitment websites. Essentially, these terrorist groups are using captivating forms of engagement that attracts vulnerable individuals. Morrison’s concerns are that social media acts as a key role in marketing for terrorist groups. Public spaces such public transport, mosques, and local hangouts are where direct contact may occur as well. He highlights a great point that touches on how fast the virtual world and terrorism are growing parallel with one another. With the rise of terrorism and the recent advancements of technology, regulations need to be implemented to prevent potential threats established by terrorist recruiters (Goodman 2016).
III. Methodology and Research Design

Introduction:

This section will help identify how my research was conducted and analyzed to help fully grasp the structure of my research design. The recent attack(s) on France and Brussels will be used as the main case studies throughout my thesis. The primary research was conducted myself first-hand in Paris, France. The secondary research are analyses of scholarly articles around the terrorist attacks in France and Belgium. In total, it took four and half months to complete the research.

Mixed Methodology and Sequential Approach

My thesis was constructed using a mixed method approach, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research. I believe that using a mixed methodology in my thesis creates a stronger case by analyzing both quantitative and qualitative research, reducing any biasness. This is broken out into two sequences. In the first phase of my methodology, I conducted a quantitative examination pulling data and statistics from the web and various publications. For the second phase I conducted qualitative research by interviewing people in neighborhoods close to where the attacks took place in Paris, France.

Phase 1: Quantitative Research

To elaborate, the secondary research I used as sources were linked to the various terrorist attacks and factors that I believe to be interconnected. These sources mainly came from scholarly articles and various research studies that have completed recently. Main topics included: background of terrorist participants, recruitment process of terrorist groups, isolation and integration within a community, etc.
Demographics found were: occupation, education, gender, nationality, marital status, religion, race, sex, income, age, and ethnicity. After pulling the statistics, I inserted the data onto a coded sheet and filed the information by the appropriate demographic classification. I then analyzed and interpreted the data seeking for any conclusions or connections I could make.

**Phase 2: Qualitative Research**

As aforementioned, the second phase consisted of qualitative research conducted by myself. My goal of gathering this qualitative research was to determine if there was any further correlation or findings that have not yet been published. Although there is a vast wealth of information on the web regarding terrorism and the recent attacks, I felt the need to dig deeper to see if there we any more insights that could assist in my thesis. To do this, I visited Mosques, under-resourced areas, and local hangouts around the attacks. The intent of this portion of my research was to grasp and get a good understanding of how the people in these areas were affected by the terrorist attacks.

To capture their responses, I created a survey and divided it into three parts: (1) basic demographic questions which allowed me identify the circumstantial situation of the interviewee, (2) questions relating to the idea of radicalization within the society to understand their experiences and ideas on how it should be dissolved, and (3) questions relating to the root of terrorism. After the respondent completed the survey I spent time with those were willing afterwards, and talked about other key areas to grasp their opinions more. I had a translator with me for those who did not speak English fluently. The survey was also printed out in both English and French. The answers to my survey was essential to my study in order to get a sense of how the recent terrorist attacks affected the general public.
The respondents I surveyed were both male and females over the age of eighteen via random selection to and an availability sample approach, meaning anyone who was available to take the survey then and there. The areas I surveyed were mainly 1-20 arrondissments in Paris and the town of Saint-Denis, close to the attacks. Participants were able to select which language they desired to take the survey in. Interview questions created for the survey as listed below and the accompany page.

**Part I Demographics**

1) **What is your age?**
   - 18-24
   - 25-34
   - 35-44
   - 45 or older

3) **What is your primary language?**
   - French
   - English
   - Arabic
   - Other

4) **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**
   - High school or equivalent
   - Some college
   - Bachelor’s degree
   - Master’s degree
   - Doctoral degree
   - Professional degree (MD, JD)

6) **Employment Status?**
   - Employed
   - Student
   - Retired
   - Unemployed

7) **How would you describe yourself?**
   - French
   - African
   - Muslim
   - Jewish
   - Other
8) What is your religion?
   Roman Catholic
   Protestant
   Islam
   Other

Part II Discrimination
1) Do you think the situation of discrimination in France is worrying?
   Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neutral
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

3) Who do you think is the most integral party to solve the problem of discrimination?
   - Government
   - General Public
   - Ethnic Groups
   - Social Workers
   - Other

4) What do you think is the most effective way to solve the problem of discrimination?
   - Education
   - Regulation by law
   - Setting up more social organizations
   - Other

Part III Terrorist Attacks

1) Which of the following represents your views on terrorism most closely?
   - A big problem
   - A little bit worried
   - Who cares
   - Other

2) Have terrorism attacks affected your community?
   - Yes
   - No

3) Have terrorist attacks prompted you to make important decision that you would not have made otherwise? (i.e move, join organizations, etc.)
   - Yes
   - No
IV. Body of Context

Repeated patterns of events

“The study of terrorism is important because terrorism poses a serious physical threat to the security of citizens and to the Open Society. Indirectly, the induction of fear can have further deleterious effects increasing polarization along ethnic, religious and national lines, promoting conflict among different segments of society” (Doosje, 2016, p. 79). If we paid close attention to detail and the wrongdoing of society, history would not reiterate. Obliviousness and rejection will lead down the same path of missteps made in history.

History is commonly taken for granted and not utilized as a form of a moral lesson to be learned from inaccuracies of our antecedents. Compare history and the path of the Jews during the anti-Semitism era, you will catch a similar pattern except with anti-Muslim patterns. Paying close attention to what motivates individuals to become part of the repetition will be most beneficial for Western European nations to cure the problem.

Anxiety has built up in Paris and Brussels towards the Muslim community resulting from the terrorist attacks, which triggered a wide divided gap between the minorities and majority groups. This causes lack of consolidation in the Muslim community, as some are being wrongly accused and discriminated for the faults of other’s actions. It creates certain individuals to feel as if they are the “other” and push them to discover a new identity. I am unsure where exactly the pattern began. However, I will assess in the order of:

1. Discrimination/Integration

Whether it is against religion, race, or ethnicity—discrimination exists worldwide. Conversely, I was determined to focus on cultural and religious discrimination in Western Europe as the advanced progressiveness of discrimination has evolved into an important topic for the European Union.

The disputes related to ethnic discrimination unfold in the hands of political leaders and society itself. “The political use of the anti-Muslim emotions in order to gain public support is in fact hiding a more profound social divide. From G. W. Bush, who used the term ‘crusade’ to justify the military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, to Francois Hollande, who declared war on DAESH (the Islamic State), without it even existing as a state, we see how the typical encoding-decoding operation is activated” (Pop, 2016, p. 37). The media and public leaders take on an important role in determining what way discrimination is perceived. It can be easily misconstrued.

In a New York Times article, Dremeaux (2016) gathered testimonies from women in France, Belgium, and other European Countries who first-hand have experienced discrimination or injustices made after the terrorist attacks. Some of the women even felt a change from society soon after the terrorist attack by Mohammed in 2012. “This reminds me of my first days in high school after French law banned the hijab in schools. My teacher forced me to take off my head scarf in front of all the other pupils. I was humiliated, I would cry every night in my bed. Today, I felt my heart broken again. I just looked at this woman taking off her clothes and asked myself, when will it end?” Hajer Zennou, 27, Lyon, France. Designer. This woman was referring to a female who was surrounded by police officers on a beach in Nice. (New York Times, 2016).
No one should be disrespected to such a level of discrimination based on appearance. It is unwarranted to label a human being by their traditional dress in public. Search and seizure for unquestionable reasons should not be countenanced. Human rights are being breached by those who go beyond their limits of inspecting possible harm. There should be a more innovative approach in handling certain situations as well as restrictions on certain searchable procedures. It is imperative to shield the public from future terrorist attacks, but it is also important not to overstep boundaries by authoritative power.

Search and seizure have become extremely unfair as it has come to targeting victims based on religious belief or ethnic origin. For example, in France, the French police was authorized by the government and allowed to invade a local restaurant, Pepper Grill, in Paris. The restaurant was owned by a Muslim family and raided during broad daylight; meanwhile, people were holding a pleasant lunch. Afterward, they did not encounter anything suspicious and closed the search. The footage was subsequently posted online and went viral. It is even sadder when children have to experience these types of things in their place of worship, places of dining, and especially their homes.

“Jean-Francois Amadieu, a Sorbonne professor who runs the Observatoire des Discriminations, a think tank that studies discrimination in the workplace, found that of two French job applicants with identical credentials, the one whose name sounded Moroccan was six times less likely to get an interview than the one whose name sounded Franco-French” (Giry, 2006, p. 94). This was an example where discrimination puts a network over the Muslim society and prevents them from further succeeding. Discrimination in employment, occupation or in educational aspect can deeply isolate these people. This problem is affecting the economic status and passing to higher unemployment for the Muslim population. “The chances of finding
employment in the service sector are rather thin: discrimination is particularly widespread in the retail and hospitality industries, which involve contact with people. It is estimated that 60 percent of inmates in French prisons are Muslim. Residential discrimination is also high, with most of the Muslim population concentrated in low-income housing around the major cities, the banlieus” (Murshed, 2011, p. 269).

We must evaluate the stereotypical assertion that all terrorists are Muslims, vice versa. Terrorists are not restrained to just radicalized Islamist. “More importantly, as is the case with most of the religious fanatics, the violent fundamentalist groups are a minority even in their own cultures, they do not represent the majority opinion. So naturally the stereotypical identification of all Muslims with the aggressive and murderous extremists is ideologically biased” (Pop, 2016, p. 38).

Since my research focus conducted primarily on the religion of Islam, an important realization should be pointed, “as with Christianity, so with Islam: no one is a Muslim-in-general. Muslim migrants into Europe from Turkey, Algeria or Pakistan carry with them diverse histories, languages, cultures, regional identities and patterns of religious leadership” (Lewis, 2005, p. 344). Merely because one practices Islam it does not mean they are a terrorist or affiliated with them by any means. These terrorist groups have tainted the public figure of Islam by fighting for their own particular ‘practice’ of Islam. “It is widely believed that Islam is an intolerant and violent religion, with its sacred texts replete with inflammatory statements about its foes. Increasingly, even in liberal circles, Islam is thought of, and depicted, as a religion that endorses violence against its enemies”. (Mushed, 2011, 262). However, that is simply not the case as radicalized extremists represent only a small percentage of the actual religion.
The problem of discrimination should not only be bequeathed in the hands of the government, but also in the people and local communities. From recent events in the public, it seemed to have public anxiety causing such discriminations against individuals whom they set fit as a terrorist. A lack of integration from one’s host country can lead to a person feeling lost and kept apart. “The vast majority of Europe's 15-20 million Muslim population have nothing to do with radical Islamism and are struggling to fit in. A nation that prides itself on its egalitarianism and universal democratic culture, France is struggling to live up to its principles and fully integrate its Muslims into all sectors of national life” (Giry, 2006, p. 87).

2. Vulnerability, Sense of belonging

“Many Muslims in Europe, for example, live in almost exclusively Muslim neighborhoods, and a disproportionately large number are poor, unemployed, or in prison. European societal tension riots erupted in France in 2005 and again in 2007; most observers agree that a lack of economic opportunity and upward social mobility were key factors behind the unrest, rather than religion” (Archick, Kristin, et al, 2011, p. 572). Muslims become vulnerable due to exclusionary discrimination and other factors such as unemployment, impoverishment, and minimal opportunity. Nevertheless, everyone is susceptible to vulnerability, it impartially depends on the course of the person’s path of animation.

Muslims are more probable to be victims of hate crimes due to preconception bystanders. Mistreatment of Muslims has unquestionably increased and has taken a toll on Muslim population, making them feel unwanted in society. Many of those who immigrated to Europe seek for a fresh beginning and better opportunities. These entities are leaving their home countries for political, economic, or safety reasons. Their idea of Europe being egalitarianism soon disappoints them once being pulled apart from discernment. Once you anguish somebody
for an elongated period their uncertainties build up and contribute to a feeling of helplessness.

Information is massively distributed throughout various media outlets such as TV news channels, radio, social etc. The methods and examples used to broadcast information hold a liability. Media distribution should not have a biased approach, but that is not always the case. Several media outlets hold biases against a certain race or political group (e.g. categorizes all Muslims as terrorists, which is certainly not reliable). In the case of France and Charlie Hebdo, “Many Muslims viewed the publication of cartoons of the prophet Mohammed in European newspapers in 2005-2006 as deeply offensive, while many native Europeans asserted the primacy of the right to freedom of expression, regardless of whether the cartoons were insensitive to Islamic values or beliefs; the cartoons sparked protests by Muslims in several European cities” (Archick, Kristin, et al, 2011, p.572).

Another major problem is the location in which Mosques are placed and located (e.g in the city of Nantes, France kept the Mosque distant from the center of the city). “The example of Nantes has shown that the location of the place of worship, far away from the residences of practicing Muslims and from the center of the city and its power center, may initiate a dynamic of marginalization and radicalization” (Belbah, 2009, p. 62). When placed separately or marginalized in your country of residence, individuals since they do not want to be accepted in that country. If their place of worship is hidden or positioned in a separate country from the rest of civilization, members of those Mosques feel unwanted. Therefore, it leaves the individuals to question themselves and seek to ascertain where they best “fit” or feel a sense of belonging.

After an estrangement from the majority population, one is at extraordinary risks and susceptible to weak insecurities within themselves and search for a new place to find acceptance.
Terrorist organizations find it convenient to seek out venerable and exposed potential trainees because they make easier targets. Terrorist groups to exploit the desired case of belonging to their group by brainwashing these individuals and advertising with reaffirming words such as “belong” and “need”.

3. Identity

It is important to consider the repercussion of historical events. History is a fundamental study as it bears upon the issues in today’s society. Ethnicity, culture, and history are essential in molding character and individuality. In an example, France’s history with the Muslim population began with the colonization of Africa. “In 1830, France captured Algeria, its first colony with large Muslim populations. World War I resulted in the first large-scale migration of Muslim colonial subjects who came to serve in the Metropolitan army and replace French workers in factories. Post-World War II labour shortages brought another wave of migrants from the colonies. By 1975, over 1 million of Muslim immigrants from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey were living in metropolitan France” (Połońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 570).

When France colonized Algeria, they wanted to transition Algeria into French traditions and culture onto the population. Although France inhabited and colonized Algeria, they refused to give citizenship to Algerians, unless they surrendered and disowned their Muslim identity. The French government did not want to acknowledge Algerian Muslim’s traditions and civilization. France did not allow full integration between the French and Muslim nationalities during the period of settlement. Assimilation between both countries was unsuccessful due to the nonexistence, the desire of the concept of merging two nations from France’s end. Instead, France preferred a total nation acquisition without keeping any Algerian customs. The ramification of French imposition led to Muslim insecurities and made them feel susceptible.
After feeling excluded Muslims felt lost and in searched for a new identity. Muslims acquired low self-esteem, felt the need to conform to westerners. Consequently, Muslims during the colonization era suffered from an identity crisis. Tensions between the French and Muslims have had a long history of repercussions as seen from historical examples in Algeria. Algeria did not want to be a part of France and fought for their independence. The war for Algerian independence began on November 1954. The battlement between the French and Algerians lasted for 8 years.

Meanwhile, during the war human rights were violated. For example, torture was a tactic used by French military to infuse fear in the Algerian population. “By torturing individuals, French soldiers were sending a message to the families, villages, clans and political communities to which they belonged. By humiliating individuals, assaulting them and forcing them to give in and betray, the military was affirming its present omnipotence and desire for future power” (Branche, 2007, p.557). Today, torture is used in war primarily to gather intelligence or information from the opposing side. However, in this case, the French military used torture as a tactic to instill fear and obedience from the Algerians.

After years of battle, Algeria gained independence from France on March 18, 1962. “At the end of the war, one million Europeans left Algeria and returned to France. It is said that today in France 4–5 million people are still directly affected by the war in Algeria. In addition, in France there are today between 4–5 million North Africans, among them some 1.5 million Algerians. All this explains the passion and drama that still characterize the Franco-Algerian relationship” (Babicz, 2013, p. 206). After the decolonization of Algeria in 1962, many Muslims migrated to France to search employment opportunities. At the time European countries accepted migrant workers for cheap labor. Nonetheless, in those days, they were not labeled as “Muslims”
instead they were classed as ‘Migrant workers’. Throughout time their status, morphed by society, identified them with Islam and changed their identity label to “Muslims”. It is important to highlight the French perception towards Muslims and how it developed over time. History should be explored and assessed as a lesson learned, Muslims and French relationships are not something that just happened over nightfall; it is a continuation of various events.

A person identifies oneself with the culture born and raised in. The setback is being pressured to leave behind one's roots in order to coexist in the country of residency due to lack of acceptance. “A number of second- and third-generation migrants, who were born and brought up in the country, have self-reportedly developed resentment towards mainstream French society. The perception of constituting a second-class citizenry and discrimination experienced from ‘housing to entry into nightclubs ‘has led many in this group [not to] think it possible to consider oneself both Muslim and French” (Murshed, 2011, p. 269). If a person prefers to self-identify as both French and Muslim, they should have the full capacity to exercise both characters without having to choose to identify with one nationality more than the other. The problem is individuals having the need to feel as if they have to balance both identities in order to fit into society.

If the drawback of discrimination continues to cultivate, there is an endangerment of exposures to people being affected by perception. Some will choose the incorrect passageway and begin to recognize themselves, during a stage of helplessness, with the wrong group such as terrorist organizations. “When minority members experience discrimination from the majority group, they may protect their minority identity by disengaging from the national identity, which is dominated by the majority. Disengagement is evident from lower levels of national identification, as well as more negative evaluations of the threatening majority group” (Fleischmann, 2016, p. 450). The Muslim identity crisis in France is nothing new or recently
studied. If anything, we should ascertain that the situation and discourse are not getting better anything fact getting worse. Awareness needs to bring to the attention.

The difficulty is that several French-Muslims assume one must decide to leave Muslim cultural behind and become fully French in order to be part of the French society. That is unquestionably not the case, though, you do not need to abandon who you are in order to integrate into society. “Muslim terrorism and radicalization have been viewed either as a type of criminal deviant behaviour arising from low individual opportunity costs of abandoning the productive labour market, or alternatively ascribed to the civilizational clash that Muslims will inevitably initiate. Group identity and low self-esteem has, in this approach, been relatively neglected, and where present, the possible multiplicity of individual identity (Muslim and other) has been ignored” (Murshed, 2015, p.274).

The reality remains, unification can be met from various different backgrounds and cultures. The value of assimilation, in the United States diversity, is accepted for what is supplementary regarded as melting pot of different polishes. Yet, in France, that may not be the story. One should not have to indifference their religion, language, or practices in order to fit properly into society. There should be an emphasis on a stronger national unified identity with incorporated cultural different backgrounds instead of resistance to change.

When marginal individuals feel disregarded from the greater population, those who feel as the “other” unite and build a bond on the similarity of exclusion. “A study conducted among suspected members of al-Qaida in French prisons found that while they generally did not come from devout families, they later turned to Islam as a source of self-identification and self-respect, previously denied them by French society: ‘to become someone who is feared, if not respected,
one has to be openly Muslim” (Murshed, 2011, p.269). Those in search of a new identity and a place of belonging could run into the wrong company or become seized as easy targets.

4. Recruitment process

"The central argument is that sources of political violence are rooted not in a special culture or religion but in the perceived absence of representation and denial of voice, both at the level of domestic and international system. Hence, the recruitment ability of militant Islamist movements cannot be explained solely by reference to religion or a particular interpretation of religion" (Kosebalaban, 2014, p. 22). Religion is not invariably the main cause of extremism, radicalization, and terrorist activism. Many make the error of assuming religion is the main root cause of the creation of radicalized terrorists. Other factors have to be brought into account such as political, economic, and social. Terrorist groups such as ISIS abide by their own perception of Islam, only they also employ other influences besides religion to recruit members.

Many are concerned and question how young, talented individuals suddenly become invested and dedicated to such a violent extremist organization. A big adding factor is people who seek a new identity and a place of belonging. Some of them are the ones who construct a communication connection with the wrong crowd. Terrorist groups such as ISIS view vulnerability as a major key in recruitment. “The group attracts followers yearning for not only religious righteousness but also adventure, personal power, and a sense of self and community. And, of course, some people just want to kill and ISIS welcomes them, too. The group’s brutal violence attracts attention, demonstrates dominance, and draws people to the action” (Cronin, 2015).

ISIS, for example, searches for weak individuals whom they see fit the position of an ISIS participant. They evaluate and scout for prospective members through various recruitment
efforts. In an example, a recruiter will seek for an unemployed person or an excluded member of society. After making the connection with new recruits, recruiters make them feel extremely needed and empathizes with a frustration they have assumable towards political, societal, or economic motives. Extremity manipulation is exercised throughout the procedure.

Another sector of population ISIS targets besides the unemployed has educated individuals as they examine a greater potential for intelligence. ISIS has recruiters search for highly educated entities to join their group because they desire the best to join their organization just as corporate company recruiters seeking talent for their business. “Perpetrators of extreme acts of violence are not always uneducated and poor, as is the case in the Middle East, or even with the London bombers or the murderer of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands. In fact, education can act as an indicator of reliability. Individual utility functions associated with terrorism or radical acts are altruistic and based on the social positioning of the group and not the individual; these individuals are motivated” (Murshed, 2011, p.266).

Before the rise of telecommunication and technology terrorist groups in the 80s and 90s used local hangouts, religious sites, and public events search for members. After analyzation, they handpicked their targets. Then, they would make initial contact for an introduction into their governing body. Terrorist groups such as ISIS use strategic communications for recruiting across seas and internationally. "The radical terror groups such as ISIS been able to recruit militants from more than eighty countries from Indonesia to Morocco, from Australia to Spain. Most of its recruits are urban, young and educated" (Kosebalaban, 2014, p. 19). Unlike terrorist groups in the past, ISIS has an advantage because we exist in a world where digital communication is progressively expanding and technology is becoming easily accessible.
The internet their biggest usage because it is used as a quick interactive digital database with various recruitment opportunities. One of the ways ISIS recruits its members is through a strong social media platform using sources such as Twitter etc. “Likewise, the social media posts of ISIS-friendly users exhibit a level of coordination in terms of narrative consistency, with the ISIS media unit producing dedicated content in high definition. Brutal images of atrocities project an impression of power and control; other posts showcase an idyllic life in the utopian caliphate, positioned as the defender of Muslims against injustice and oppression” (Aistrope, 2016, p.133)

Social media one of the most vital recruiting methods, plus also a big advertisement for a terrorist organization. Social media is a huge communication platform hub connecting recruiters and potential members. A use of an advertisement example would be active members blogging about their experiences and receiving positive feedback from their supporters. “In particular, attention has been drawn to the potency of ISIS engagement on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, where well-calibrated narratives highlighting Muslim persecution abroad, religious duty and the prospect of adventure have been surprisingly effective. In this context, Western governments have emphasized the importance of online programs aimed at undermining ISIS recruitment, including state-run accounts on Twitter responding directly to users affiliated with ISIS” (Aistrope, 2016 p.121).

Once a terrorist blog about their experience and triumphs over the internet other aspiring terrorists idolize them. The offenders are applauded and placed on a peddle stool for the accomplishments of terrorist operations. Social media have also increased the opportunity for root fighters. With the technology advances, there is no prerequisite to meet in person and recruiter, gain the opportunity to outreach in other countries. Therefore, one can visualize the
parallel between the rise of technology and increase of root fighters. ISIS can easily produce a support base in other countries without meeting face to face and only utilizing the internet. “Much of the success of ISIS on Twitter is the result of posts from between 500 and 2000 accounts, and sophisticated Twitterbot capabilities that automatically retweet ISIS content so that it trends on social media” (Asitrope, 2016, p. 133). With ISIS constantly in the news headlines, they become popular and famous from heinous acts.

Terrorist groups search for individuals who they view as a vulnerable target becoming easily influenced and converted. These targets consist of unemployed folks to scholarly professionals. Money luring also plays an important part in the recruitment procedure. Recruiters approach potential members and promise them newer, better things. Recruiters ensure potential candidates a wealthier life and the many “perks” that add up with joining their organization. Terrorist persuades them and appeals to them by paying travel, accommodation, and food expenses throughout the recruitment procedure. Most of the ones who are desperate for employment and income are easily tempted by the promised money they will receive after their tasks. Though, you are worth more if you are an elite professional with specializations such as computer science.

Not only does ISIS entice prospective members with money, but also by advertises sex to the male population. “ISIS operates in urban settings and offers recruits immediate opportunities to fight. It advertises by distributing exhilarating podcasts produced by individual fighters on the frontlines. The group also procures sexual partners for its male recruits; some of these women volunteer for this role, but most of them are coerced or even enslaved” (Cronin, 2015). It is agonizing to image the sickening violations done to the enslaved women captured for this purpose. Women trafficking is real and does exist within ISIS. These men are taking women and
even young girls to turn them into sex slaves. During recruitment, men are taught sex slavery is normal and that is a most nauseating fact. ISIS also uses women fighters as an advantage to mislead, lead outside forces. ISIS has begun to increase the recruitment number of women. It is uncommon to identify a woman with terrorist attacks as the perpetrator, and that is why women are being demanded.

“In short, ISIS offers short-term, primitive gratification. It does not radicalize people in ways that can be countered by appeals to logic. Teenagers are attracted to the group without even understanding what it is, and older fighters just want to be associated with ISIS’ success” (Cronin, 2015). ISIS brands its members to acknowledge the holy war and reinstate the fight for global totalitarianism of Islam. Once part of the organization, they become more radicalized. Terrorist attacks are inevitable and will extend to occur unless stopped. However, understanding why member feels the need to join is essential.

5. Radicalization

“Radicalization is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice” (Dogan, 2015, p.70). One important theory to clarify is that the common perception that all terrorists are mentally incapacitated and ill. That assumption is plainly not the case for the most part. It is too indispensable to understand and not confuse radicalization or extremism with mental incapacities. “Most terrorists are not mentally ill. Rather, terrorism is a result of a radicalization process is steps that can happen to ‘normal’ people” (Doosje, 2016, p.81).

The development timeline of radicalization varies from individuals with dissimilar backgrounds. Radicalization usually depends on what and on how much a person has been
disclosed through their lifetime. “Radicalization is about “who you know”. Group bonding, peer pressure and indoctrination are necessary to encourage the view that violence is a legitimate response to perceived injustice” (Coppock, 2014, p. 248).

Radicalization can ensue, before recruitment, or after recruitment. Dissimilar terrorists become radicalized for their own personal reasons or influence. The solution to finding what causes radicalization is finding out what contributes to the process of extremism. The internet is one of the foundations found during the process of radicalization. With technology advances, everyone has access to everything on the net. An individual can self-radicalized simply through reading and admiring leaders of terrorist groups or even making contact with recruiters who will address them; accordingly, as they see fit.

In a larger perspective of radicalization, seen from a larger view we must take a look at outside resource and the macro view of the entire process and the collective atmosphere contributions to radicalization. The most common factor of radicalization is the lack of integration in the society survived. “At the meso level, the radicalization process is likely to depend on the social environment (friends, family, and other groups). An important driving factor at this meso level is fraternal relative deprivation, the feeling of injustice that people experience when they identify with their group and perceive that their group has been treated worse than another group” (Doosje ,2016, p. 81). A great example would be the Muslim population in France and Belgium feeling excluded and lack of integration, or social injustices created by education, the economy or housing.

The lack of incorporation and pubic discrimination are strong factors contributing to the rise of radicalization at a micro level view. “The aggression of radical groups towards Muslim countries that co-operated with Western governments attracts ignorant minds who suffered
greatly from Western colonialization. Using their hatred against the West, they spread their radical ideas among the non-extremist segments of the Muslim population. The attitude in the Western countries whereby all Muslims are labelled as terrorists, is not only offensive and insulting to the majority of Muslim believers, but also is a great opportunity for the radical Islamic groups to justify their terrorist activities” (Dogan, 2015, p. 76)

Radicalization occurs in a set of segments. In order to comprehend the reasons for extremism and radicalization of terrorist, we have to bust down the process of a full radicalized individual. It begins with oneself, and if the individual is weakened by vulnerability or a sensation of belonging. After initial interest and contact with a terrorist organization, the process of radicalization rapidly speeds up.

Once introduced into the terrorist assemblage, leaders begin to mold the minds of the newcomers. “Radical groups such as ISIS are well-equipped to foster or restore feelings of significance by providing recruits with a sense of belonging, respect, heroism, status and the notion to fight for a holy cause” (Doosje, 2016, p. 81). ISIS alike other terrorist organizations search for what particular stimuli motivates the individual. Once that particular stimuli is uncovered ISIS uses those factors to generate a greater plausible cause to completely radicalize the person.

Recruiters utilize the weakness of each member and develop that flaw to create extremism ideologies within a person to then radicalize them. “In assessing the dimension of ‘engagement with a group, cause or ideology’ the practitioner’s attention is directed towards a list of possible ‘psychological hooks’ that may increase an individual’s ‘vulnerability’ to such engagement. These include, among other things: feelings of grievance and injustice, feeling under threat, a need for identity, meaning and belonging, a desire for status, a desire for
excitement and adventure, a need to dominate and control others, susceptibility to indoctrination, a desire for political or moral change, opportunistic involvement, family or friends’ involvement in extremism, being at a transitional time of life, being influenced or controlled by a group and, lastly, the catch-all category of ‘relevant mental health issues’ (Coppock, 2014, p. 251). Many times new members have a helper and advisor guiding them through the process of radicalization. This leader ensures the process is on the correct path of radicalization.

Terrorist groups have the mentality of playing the victim card of self-preservation for justification on their actions and behaviors. ISIS creates a validation to pursue their ideologies through extreme acts, for the reason that they believe that is how attention would be drawn best. They implement beyond hatred towards the opposite position, such as the hatred ISIS presents towards the West. ISIS distinguishes western nations as the enemy for destruction. In their rendering, there is no resolution to the problem aside from completely overtake. During radicalization, ISIS makes certain their members no longer have identification with anyone or anything connected to Western Nations. If you are not fully minded like ISIS, subsequently you are absolutely at wrong. ISIS installs loyalty into their members and strict guidelines that must be observed. If their rules are not obeyed ultimately they will be ostracized or worse off. ISIS’s mission is to hold the entire world under their moralities and principles. ISIS radicalizes members not only by expanding religion, merely through political ideologies as well.

Once incorporated within the organization, radicalization increases drastically and is full of. Terrorist groups know how psychologically formulate minds in order to justify violent acts or sacrifice life such as suicide bombing. “An important strategy mentioned earlier to prepare for the use of violence (with the possibility of dying in action), is to have individuals write or
videotape a testament. The idea is that once people have made this step, it makes it harder for them to withdraw” (Doosje, 2016, p.82).

6. Terrorist attacks

In recent, in January 2015 with the events of Charlie Hebdo to the end of 2016 terrorist attacks have been happening more frequently than they did in the past. These attacks are contributing to the cycle and repeated patterns of events that instill fear in society. The Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack is a great example and analysis concerning recurrent patterns. “The Charlie Hebdo attacks were not, as the official narrative would have it, a perversion of Islam, but a perversion of anti-imperialism: fostered by decades of repression of genuine movements against empire and racism, and of the instrumentalization of political Islam as an imperial asset in the Cold War, and encouraged by the failure of the Left in Europe and the USA to engage with the experiences of racialized populations. The roots of jihadism are political, not religious; its basic context is Empire, not Sharia” (Kundnani, 2015, p.27)

As remarked earlier, the Charlie Hebdo attack began on January 7, 2015. The attackers rushed into Charlie Hebdo headquarters located in Paris, France with assault weapons and opened fire. “Totally, 12 people were shot dead in the attack. The majority of the victims were cartoonists, employees of the magazine, known for making fun of politicians, religions and famous personalities. It became the deadliest assault on human life to have been committed on the French soil in the preceding two decades” (Polońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 569). The two perpetrators of the attack were two brothers, Cherif and Said Kouachi. The Kouachi brothers initiated the attack on behalf the terrorist organization, Al-Qaeda, but a subset based in Yemen.

The attack was initiated in retaliation of discrimination and betrayal experienced through the publication. Before the attack, Charlie Hebdo had previously published offensive images of
the Prophet Mohammed and made offensive to Islam. Al-Qaeda felt that Charlie Hebdo had their fair warning before the eruption. “Earlier in December 2012, French Muslim communities sued Charlie Hebdo over the publication of similar images. The magazine later received numerous threats from radical Muslims which led the French police to allocate security officers to protect the magazine’s journalists and their right to free expression” (Połońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 569).

After the attack, the two brothers managed to flee and escape the scene. However, France announced a state of emergency and searched nationwide for the Kouachi brothers. Law enforcement was on a full force manhunt for Said and Cherif and we're not going to quit until they had been found. Eventually, the police found the brothers just two days later on January 9. After chasing after them for a few hours, open fire exchanged between law enforcement and the Kouachi brothers just outside a company building in Dammartin-en-Goële.

Meanwhile, linked to the Kouachi brother’s standoff with the police, two Islamic members, took hostages at a local market store, Kosher Supermarket, in the eastern region of Paris. The two perpetrators, was a female, Hayat Boumeddiene, and male, Amedy Coulibaly. This attack took place on a busy Jewish holiday, Sabbath. This attack was aimed mainly towards the Jewish community, as many Jewish shopped at that Kosher Supermarket. During the captivity, Amedy Coulibaly accomplished to kill four people before being gunshot by the law enforcement. Amedy and Chérif were actually friends and communicated with one another before the attacks unfolded.

The attack on Charlie Hebdo and the Kosher Market caused nationwide fear in France. However, we must take into account the events it worsened the state of affairs for the Muslims community creating stereotypes and increasing discrimination. “In its coverage of Charlie Hebdo
attacks, the broadcaster associated being Muslim with being a terrorist. The Kouachis statement ‘We avenged the Prophet Muhammad!’ captured by the amateur video, used and re-used in all news bulletins after the shootings reinforced the stereotype that terrorists are Muslim. All suspects were quickly identified as Muslims and quickly linked to jihadist cause through their allegiance to terrorist groupings and military training” (Połońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p.567). The Kouachi brothers stood as an illustration and a fragment of the system of repeated patterns of consequences. Later, in Chapter V of my thesis, I will use the Kouachi brothers as a prime case study example to exemplify how the cycle repeats itself.

Following the Charlie Hebdo and Kosher attack, Paris suffered an even greater attack. I recall sitting in class, as my phone began to beep with CNN news twitter updates with the terrible events unfolding in Paris, France. “On November 13, 2015, shortly after 9:00 PM, three teams of Islamic State attackers acting in unison cried out the terrorist assault in Paris,” ultimately killing 130 people and wounding 352 others” (Beydoun, 2016, p. 1275). The attacks began at (1) 21:20 outside of the soccer stadium, Stade de France soccer located in Saint Denis, a city just north of Paris. President Hollande was among those watching the soccer game, France versus Germany, when a suicide bomber killed one person. At (2) 21:25 the restaurants, Le Carillon and Le Petit Cambodge, were under attack by on foot shooters and killed 15 people within minutes. At (3) 21:30 another suicide bomber at the stadium, Stade de France, attempted but failed to kill anyone. Two minutes later, at (4) 21:32 Café Bonne Biere was under attack by gunmen who killed 5 people. The fourth restaurant, La Belle Equipe, was attacked at (5) 21:36 and nineteen people died as shots were fired. At the last restaurant, Comptoir Voltaire several was wounded but no one died after a suicide bomber blew himself up at (6) 21:40.
Meanwhile, at the same time, the biggest attack of the entire night came at the Bataclan Concert Hall. Three men shot fired during a concert of Eagles of Death and at (7) 21:40 and held hostages’ captive for two hours until they blasted their suicide bomb and killed a total of eighty-nine individuals at Bataclan ending with a police rescue raid 00:20. A total of 130 people died and hundreds of civilians injured in the Paris November attacks.

After Charlie Hebdo and November attacks in 2015, France was a country in remorse and feared of potential future terrorist attacks. Soon after the Charlie Hebdo massacre France passed a state of emergency and the French Patriot Act. “In addition to warrantless searches, the “French Patriot Act” enables law enforcement to carry forward protracted monitoring of Muslim targets and institutions and make house arrests based merely on the suspicion of associating with a terror network. Unsurprisingly, the measure has been disproportionately enforced on France’s Muslim population, linking Muslim identity to presumed suspicion of radicalization” (Beydoun, 2016, p. 1313).

The French Patriot Act was initially created in order to protect France from future casualties. However, some will argue law enforcement has taken the Patriot act out of hand and abused its power caused by the anxiety left from the attacks in 2015. Salah Abdeslam ‘brother of Ibrahim’ (age 26) and Mohamed Abrini were the only survivors of the 9 perpetrators on the night of the 13th. The seven men who died that night were: Abdelhamid Abaaoud ‘leader’ (age 28), Bilal Hadfi (age 20), Ahmad al-Mahmod, Chakib Akrouh (age 25), Ibrahim Abdeslam ‘brother of Salah’ (age 31), Omar Ismail Mostefai (age 29), Samy Amimour (age 28), and Foued Mohamed-Aggad (age 23).

In connection to the November Paris attacks five men decided to attack Brussels on March 22, 2016. Coincidentally, Sala Abdeslam was arrested only four days prior to the
Belgium attacks. The first attempt occurred at 07:58 at the Zaventem Brussels Airport. The two attackers Ibrahim el Barkraoui and Najim Laachraoui died instantly as they completed the suicide bombs. They managed to kill eleven people and wound many others. The third suicide airport bomber, Mohamed Abrini, did not succeed in detonating his bomb and left the explosive device inside a garbage in the airport. The Maalbeek metro station was targeted about one hour later the airport explosions. At 09:11, two men by the name of Khalid el Barakoui and Osama Krayem set of explosions killing 20 people.

A common factor that should be adopted into account is another set of brothers were part of the atrocities that occurred in Belgium, Khalid el-Bakraoui and Brahim el-Bakraoui. In Charlie Hebdo it Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, and in the Paris November Salah and Ibrahim Abdeslam. This is a very significant detail to remember for future references.

These and other horrific terrorist attacks have harmful repercussions and caused damage to those who experienced it and to those connect to the attacks. The general French and Belgium population have concerns and anxiety of future imaginable terrorist outbreaks.

7. Population anxiety

The public anxiety also correlates with the advance of Muslim discrimination. Terrorist groups such as ISIS damage Muslim perception and how Muslims are viewed in the society based on their activities. “Movies, serials and news coverage followed in the Western media that ‘portrayed Muslims as uncivilized, anti-modern, anti-democratic, and terrorists, fundamentalists, radicals, militants, barbaric, and anti-western’. Individual violent incident or any extremist movement in Islamic countries became quickly attributed to Islam” (Połońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 570). The public anxiety also correlates with the rise of Muslim discrimination.

Terrorist groups such as ISIS damage Muslim perception and how Muslims are viewed in
the society based on their actions. “The persistent bias in the Western media with regard to the Arab world was quickly accepted as a fact in the Middle East and led many Muslims to perceive the media as an enemy and conspirator against them. Research has shown that terrorism is regularly connected to Islam and as a result, Muslims and Arabs now represent a negative ‘Other’ (Połońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 570).

The discrimination gap continues to increase due to the terrorist attacks. In hypothetical scenarios, people will not take the metro if there is a Muslim onboard, just because they distress that certain person may be harmful or a terrorist. “This categorization of safe and risky kinds of people under conditions of high anxiety can lead to suspicion and distrust, encouraging ‘a constant scanning of all with whom we come into contact to see whether or not they pose a threat to our security’. Once attributed a risky identity, ‘othered’ groups can act as ‘a punch-bag, a repository for blame” (Mythen & Walklate, 2008, p. 229).

In the example of France and Belgium, it is comprehensible for high public anxiety after the terrorist attacks. Those who experienced the attacks first or second hand, tend to have advanced anxiety. Yet, ultimately that is what the terrorist wants, their goal is to install fear and seize the social order. Terrorist strategy is to cause anxiety to attain their political goals by sending a crucial message to the public. Threats continue to ensue, and the European society is becoming dreadful of what is to transpire next.

Not only is there national anxiety within France and Belgium, but also global anxiety. People from other nations also tend to stay away from visiting France and Belgium since the terrorist attacks because they feel it is unsafe to visit. “The creation of generalized anxiety is a strategic terrorist objective, directed through the targeting of quotidian areas of civilian use.
Owing to uncertainty about the nature and location of forthcoming attacks, it is difficult to perform dependable risk assessments and to identify safe spaces. The unpredictable nature of terrorist attacks makes it impossible for security agencies and governments to guarantee public security” (Mythen & Walklate, 2008, p. 225).

In certain events, the media and political leaders integrate more anxiety amongst society by starting a war on terror. It is reasonable to strategies and protects the state from terrorism by increasing counterterrorism intelligence. However, the fight on terror should not be bleakly instigated. “Politicized collective identity can account for the conflictual interaction between ‘fear’ and ‘hatred’, which largely underpins the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in Western Europe. ‘Fear’ is the anxiety felt by the majority; it is both the cause and the effect of fear-creating messages publicized by attention-seeking politicians” (Murshed, 2011, p. 275).

Nation leaders are highly depended during a time of crisis. In a time of confusion, people are uncertain and seek for direction from their influential leaders. “Anxiety makes people want to reduce uncertainty and find experts who can lower their level of discomfort, and we expect that citizens will seek out political actors with policy solutions rather than actors who simply refer to terrorism as problematic” (Albertson, 2016, p. 683).
V. Investigation process

Introduction

Data collected from CNN, Pew Research Center, and National Government identify the total Muslim population per country and takes into account the number of Jihadists traveling to Syria as foreign fighters. The chart shown below titled, ‘Where Syria’s Foreign Fighters Come From’ provided by Statista shows that in 2014, France and Belgium rank in the top six countries in Europe with the most number of Jihadis in Syria. France was ranked second highest with 700+ estimated Jihadis, while Belgium was ranked sixth with approximately 250. It is important to highlight the number of foreign fighters in France and Belgium prior to when the attacks took place in 2015 and 2016.

https://www.statista.com/chart/2658/where-syrrias-foreign-fighters-come-from/

“As recorded in the TSG Foreign Fighters report: by June 2014, approximately 2,500
individuals from western European countries had traveled to Syria to join the civil war. By December 2015, 18 months later, this number had more than doubled. Estimates indicate that more than 5,000 fighters from member states of the European Union alone have made the trip to Syria” (Barrett, 2015, p.12). ISIS increased their recruiting efforts and have had success in targeting people from key western European countries such as France, Germany, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. ISIS is currently at war with countries including the United States, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, as well as their allies. Because of this, ISIS is recruiting members as reinforcements in order to protect and counter attack if need be. ISIS searches for and utilizes foreign fighters to their advantage, as individuals who will fight against their home nations and act on behalf of ISIS. “Official estimates from French authorities indicate around 1,800 individuals had left France to join the fighting as of October 2015. Another 760 fighters from the United Kingdom and 760 from Germany had gone to Syria as of November 2015, along with 470 from Belgium as of October 2015. Based on these estimates, almost 3,700 of the 5,000+ European Union foreign fighter contingent come from just four countries” (Barrett, 2015, p.12).

**Belgium Case Study**

As Belgium is a small country, the number of Foreign fighters sent to Syria per capita is high compared to the rest of the European nations. Not only is Syria is receiving several foreign fighters from Belgium—the same people are who fled to Syria are returning to Belgium and partaking in violent acts. Belgium is seen as one of ISIS’s major terrorist hubs among other terrorist groups.

Belgium has been making headlines due to terrorist attacks and terrorist-related activities. An uprising terrorist organization, Sharia4Belgium, is a group that was formed in 2010 to increase
radical coverage upon the Belgium population. Sharia4Belgium encourages Belgium citizens to travel to Syria in order to fight in the Syrian war to regain the caliphate. This organization aims to overthrow the Belgian government and replace congress with Sharia Law. Sharia4Belgium was not a serious threat to the Belgium parliament until the organization already had full effective power over individuals. Belgium only recognized the group as a terrorist organization after the existence of 5 years, on February 2015. Sharia4Belgium pursued to fix injustices they felt by the Belgium parliament and the majority of the population. The organization has gained major attention both domestic and internationally. Because of groups like this, the rise of foreign fighters increase. Sharia4Belgium served as an advertised campaign for terrorists. The organization targets vulnerable individuals who are unemployed or in search of a sense of belonging.

As aforementioned, groups such as Sharia4Belgium feel as if the system is unjust. Segregation is increasing and it will continue to enlarge if actions are not taken. “Evidence from comparative surveys of the second generation in the three countries shows that social mobility is most restricted and segregation levels are highest in Belgium; there is most significant upward mobility and least segregation for the second generation in Sweden; and Dutch cities are in between with moderate levels of segregation and social mobility” (Fleischmann, 2016, p. 449). In Belgium, discrimination and racism exclude Muslims from the larger society. Muslim communities are being marginalized and undervalued.

Muslims are not provided the same opportunities as the rest of the population (e.g being able to fully practice their religion of Islam when wanted). “In order to receive state funding for religious services to which they are legally entitled as a consequence of this recognition, Muslim communities were required to set up a nationally representative Islamic council as a partner for
the Belgian state. Because of the delayed implementation of the recognition of Islam, Islamic organizational structures are less fully developed in Belgium than they are in the Netherlands” (Fleischmann, 2016, p. 449). Although vulnerable individuals seek to find a sense of belonging in terrorist organizations, vulnerability may not always be the case as to why they join.

Secondary Research

The chart shown below, ‘Registered Cases of Racism and Xenophobia in Belgium from 2006 to 2015’, provided by the Federal Police Belgium presents the number cases of racism throughout Belgium.

The number of racism and xenophobia cases were extremely high in 2006 equating to a total of 1,359. The reason behind this could be that Europe suffered two massive terrorist attacks just prior to 2006. In 2004, the Madrid terrorist attack occurred killing 191, and injuring more
than 2,000. In 2005, the London terrorist attack occurred, killing 56 and injuring more than 700. Al-Qaeda, claimed responsibility for both of these attacks. After these two terrorist attacks, many European states dealt with public anxiety and feared forthcoming attacks by Al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups. Therefore, it is not surprising that there were a high number of xenophobia cases in Belgium in 2006. The number of cases then continue to drop and suddenly increased again in 2011 and 2012. This could be the cause of the attack near Belgium in France on March 2012, the by Merah Mohammed, killing 6 total, and the terrorist attack in Belgium by Mehdi Nemmouche resulting in 4 deaths.

These attacks show that it is crucial to examine the pattern of events and repercussion of terrorist attacks and the effect it has on racism and discrimination. Although not all the attacks occurred in Belgium, the neighboring countries did and it still caused anxiety which lead to discrimination among the Muslim population.

**France Case Study**

*The Kouachi Brothers*

The attackers of Charlie Hebdo, Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, were part of the system and the pattern of effects caused by discrimination, public anxiety, and sense of belonging. Their actions are not to be justified, but to be viewed as an example for the repetition of consequences that lead to the horrific attacks.

The brothers gradually became radicalized. The radicalization did not appear instantly; rather it was a gradual procedure. Different factors contributed to the extreme ideology that ended their life. The Kouachi brothers were acquitted in the 10th arrondissement in Paris.
However, when Saïd was 12 and Chérif 10 their parents died and were posted in the French orphan system and raised in Rennes, France. The boys actually found their mother dead in their apartment, coming home from school one day. The cause of death has been suspected as a suicidal medication overdose.

The two brothers were each other’s support system and constantly had a close bonded relationship throughout their life. In 1994 the brothers were sent to the orphanage, Centre des Monédières, in the little town of Corrèze, south central of France. The director of the institution, Patrick Fournier described the brothers every bit a normal young boy. He did not suspect any malicious suspicion from either of the teens. Both of the boys loved sports and were involved in extracurricular activities such as football outside of school. The oldest, Saïd, was the quieter of the two and remained on a low profile.

Saïd leaned more on the studious side, in compared to his younger brother, Chérif, who loved sports more. Chérif was more of an extrovert than his elder brother as described by acquaintances who knew both the young men. The brother remained in close connection, simply were interested in different hobbies at the same time. The brothers left the orphanage in 2000 once they reached legal age, they went back to the city of Paris.

At the time, the brothers had many friends just like them. They were either unemployed or had low-income jobs. “Exploration of the brothers’ private lives in the broadcaster’s efforts to build their terrorist profile also evolved around their Muslim connection. The younger brother, Cherif, was described as a person with ‘criminal record’, arrested for ‘conspiracy to prepare acts of terrorism’ back in 2005. French news reports ‘from that time’, wrote France 24 (2015), ‘described Kouachi, a pizza deliveryman, as being a one-time pot smoker who “even had a
girlfriend before marriage” (Polońska-Kimunguyi, 2016, p. 576).

The Kouachi brothers lived in the 19th arrondissement district in Paris. The 19th arrondissement is known to be home to a large minority population who immigrated to France. Upon arriving in Paris, their situation was barely manageable. They both experienced a hard time trying to survive with a low wage job. The young men were soon lured to an extremist group of acquaintances. During this time Cherif became really good friends with Farid Benyettou who eventually became his mentor. He held a group meeting discussing the possibilities jihadist offered. During this time the Iraq war had just begun 2004 and western nations posed a threat to Benyettou and his aspiring followers. Many of the followers eventually left for Iraq to fight for the Al-Qaeda against U.S military forces.

One of the local meeting points was in the Buttes-Chaumont public park. Cherif met with more jihadist to physically train and plot terrorist activity at the park regularly meanwhile, besides working as a delivery pizza man for El Primo Pizza. During one of these meetings in 2008 Cherif was captured and sentenced to 3 years’ jail before being able to travel to Syria. During his time in prison, he met Cherif was eventually liberated and reunited with his older brother after his release. Saïd Kouachi had already had traveled to Yemen to train with Al-Qaeda in 2011.

The Kouachi brothers were part of a larger problem. What started out as a local hangout park hangout turned into a bigger problem for France. These young men unified in search to become part of the greater group. Just like the Kouachi brothers, there are much more individuals with a similar story lost in the pattern of events, again not justifying any of their beliefs or activities. Terrorist group like Al-Qaeda utilized young individuals to attend to as
internal weapons.

Their mission was to find vulnerable young minds such as the Kouachi brother and their acquaintances from low-income areas and lure them with money and a place of belonging. A leader such as Benyettou used Islam as a root cause for a war against the westward. Benyettou used the Iraq war to create excuses of injustices made by the U.S to send foreign fighters to Iraq.

**Terrorist attack connection**

A key highlight taken into account is the connection between Merah Mohammah (Toulhouse), Saïd & Chérif Kouachi (Charlie Hebdo), and Amedy Coulibaly (Kosher Supermarket). All four perpetrators were born in France in the 1980s and come from a North African descent. Merah Mohammah (1988; Algeria), Saïd Kouachi (1980; Algeria) Chérif Kouachi (1982; Algeria), and Amedy Coulibaly (1982; Mali).

They all grew up in a town near or around Paris, France and at one stage in their life became influenced and radicalized. Chérif and Amedy were actually allies. They met in the Buttes-Chaumont park network, and were both involved in the diagramming of the bombing of U.S Embassy in Paris and were arrested. Each individual traveled outside of France to gain training on terrorism activity.

However, during the attacks both Merah and Amedy targeted the Jewish community. Lastly, all four died being during an outbreak with French police. However, in that respect is a missing key link to as to why these four individuals turned to radicalization and committed these terrorist events.
Primary Research

In the case of France, I was awarded the opportunity to conduct my primary research in Paris, through a sample selection survey as explained in my methodology chapter. I managed to survey fifteen individuals total in Saint-Denis, France. The reason I chose to visit and survey the population of Saint Denis endured to the high multicultural population that resides in that respect.

Saint Denis stood targeted after the November 2016 terrorist attacks in Paris and remained on high alert; meanwhile, police searched for information regarding the suspects. Saint Denis is very close to the most popular city in France, Paris. Yet, residents do not feel as part of their own society. The town holds a reputation of growing radicalistic people.

Saint Denis is sought as a very precarious and unsafe place near Paris. Another region to highlight is the 11th arrondissement for the peculiar reason of the area of interest. The magazine publication of Charlie Hebdo’s headquarters is located in the 11th district. As well as most of the Paris November terrorist attacks occurred within or around the 11th as seen on the map below collected from BBC.
When collecting my research in Saint-Denis, I myself, was able to experience the environment first hand. I experienced as if I was in a whole new realm of France. The cultural environment was very dissimilar than the culture in Paris. The area was definitely less maintained. There were more people hanging out in hubs around the vicinity. I noticed a huge
minority population. Even when approaching people and called for them to take the survey, some did not even know French. Many of the women I asked to take the survey declined because they could not read the language. I could tell there was a huge population of immigrating people. As I walked the streets, I heard a mix of both French and Arabic being spoken.

Of fifteen individuals surveyed twelve were men. I remained denied most of the time by the women I approached. The men were more willing and open to taking the surveys than the adult females were. In my findings, I found many surveyors identifying themselves as French and Muslim and I received a higher figure than expected. As seen in Figure 1.1 below, of the fifteen surveyed, 33.33% circled both French and Muslim.

![Figure 1.1](image.png)

In Part II of my research survey, I asked enquired issues regarding discrimination. In the following inquiry, I questioned, “Do you think the situation of discrimination in France is worrying?” and 66.7% of them answered strongly agree as seen in Figure 2.1. It is inevitable to avoid the problem of discrimination when in fact more than the sampled population feels it is a
hug problem. Acknowledging the problem of discrimination within their community is crucially important to understand from their perspective.

When questioned, “Who do you think is the most integral part to solve the problem of discrimination?” 75% answered that awareness should indeed come from educated the greater public as noted in Figure 2.2 below. The outcome of this question took me by surprise, as I predicted a higher number in the answer “Regulation by law” instead of “Education”. It is substantial to note many people value the education system and believe educating the public about the problem of discrimination is important. The power of education begins with the pedagogue and the message sent. A great manner to bring the consciousness of the problem of discrimination can begin with public institutions educating young minds, to prevent history from repeating itself.
The recent terrorist attacks have made the people in France worried about their future. In the third segment of my survey, I questioned Have terrorist attacks prompted you to make important decisions that you would not have made otherwise? (I.e. Move, join organizations, etc.) The response I received was nearly half (47%) of those surveyed felt their life decision has been affected in regards to terrorist attack as seen in Figure 3.1 found below.

![Figure 3.1](image-url)

- **NO** 53%
- **YES** 47%
**VI. Conclusion**

The overarching purpose of my thesis is to prove that there is a cycle as to why terrorism still occurs today—terrorist attacks lead to an increase in discrimination, which leads to individuals searching for a sense of belonging, which leads to the extreme of sometimes finding belonging in terrorist organizations. I believe that raising awareness about this cycle and informing people will reduce the number of recruits for terrorist organizations as well as the number of terrorist attacks that occur.

**Impact/Importance**

In my thesis, I highlight the attacks that occurred in France and Belgium and aim to analyze and offer the potential contributing factors that led to the attacks. By observing and studying what went awry in the lives of those who committed the terrorist attacks in Western Europe, we can see that there is an apparent pattern and cycle with potential contributing factors. The discrimination of Muslims in this particular case makes them feel as outsiders without a sense of belonging, even in the country that they were born in. In my primary research I did by conducting interviews, one of the key things that stood out to me was the amount of anxiety the respondents felt due to the recent terrorist attacks. This anxiety, is what causes people to discriminate against Muslims even if they do not mean to. As the majority of the terrorist attacks have been committed by Muslims, there is a portion of the public that because of this anxiety, begin to categorize that all Muslims are terrorists. This discrimination and exclusion of Muslims makes them susceptible to joining terrorist organizations in the first place as it is one of the only places left where they feel wanted.
**Conclusion**

Many researchers, and even those in counterterrorist organizations are constantly focusing their efforts on finding these terrorist organizations rather than focusing their efforts on raising awareness about the root cause—discrimination and exclusion of people, specifically Muslims. Over the last two years’ terrorist attacks have been occurring more frequently and will continue to increase if there is nothing put in place to prevent it. We cannot change the past, but we can seek to bring awareness hereafter. We must take responsibility and not be blind to the fact that discriminating Muslims is one of the leading causes of terrorism. In order to reduce these attacks, we must focus on the root causes and raise awareness about the pressing issue of discrimination. It is wrong to associate all Muslims with terrorists and until we fully accept them into our society and make them feel a sense of belonging, the attacks will only continue to occur.
VI. References


33(2), 201. doi:10.1080/10371397.2013.816243


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Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

by Magdalena Martinez

November 23, 2016

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

APPROVED:

____________________________________   __________
Advisor  Date

____________________________________   __________
Academic Director  Date

____________________________________   __________
Dean of Arts and Sciences  Date
Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS) Program
THESIS OR APPLIED PROJECT ADVISER AGREEMENT

Student Name: ____________________________________________________________

Preliminary Title:
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Available: Thesis □ Applied Project □

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Please note that the thesis due date is November 23, 2016
Note: Any requests for extension must be approved in writing by the Graduate Director or Department Chair by November 3, 2016. Such requests are only granted in exceptional circumstances.

I agree to complete the thesis or applied project proposed above according to the specifications required by my thesis adviser and in conformance with guidelines outlined in the MAIS Guide to the Thesis or Applied Project by the date specified above. I understand the timely completion of my thesis or applied project is necessary to fulfill the requirements of the course, MAIS 614, listed in the University Catalog and the MAIS Student Handbook.

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I agree to supervise, and evaluate the proposed thesis or applied project of the above student in the manner set forth in the MAIS Guide to the Thesis or Applied Project to help achieve the requirements of the course, MAIS 614, listed in the University Catalog and the MAIS Student Handbook. I also agree to meet with this student regularly during the writing period, and be present during the review and evaluation. I understand I will receive a stipend for serving as a primary adviser. The receipt of this stipend is contingent upon submitting a grade for the student and a completed signature page, as well as serving as a second reader on another thesis.

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Date: ______________________________

Academic Director Signature: _____________________________________________

Date: ______________________________