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In recent years the focus of terrorism research has shifted onto the terrorists themselves, and onto militant Islamists in the West in particular. We owe to these studies much knowledge and insight into the process in which average young males can be transformed into individuals willing to kill innocent people. Nevertheless, from a more analytical point of view, there is a lack of a theoretical framework linking these different pieces of knowledge to each other –not an overarching general theory but what Merton would have called a middle-range theory[1] to shed light on the strange phenomenon of 'homegrown' terrorism in the West–. The thesis of this working paper is that the concepts of exile and/or diaspora radicalism can be helpful in this context.

In the first section I explain what the term 'diaspora' means and why radicalisation is one way of coping with the diaspora situation. The two following sections look more closely at this idea by showing under which circumstances radicalisation is likely and by developing a typology of the different kinds of radical diasporas. In the final section, the process of religious radicalisation is analysed in greater depth, with a special focus on the Muslims in the West.

(1) The Concept of Diaspora

Roughly speaking, the concept of diaspora refers to groups of people who live in a foreign country but maintain a close relationship with their country of origin.[2]

The classic cases of diaspora communities are ethnic or religious minorities like the Armenians, the Greeks of Asia Minor and, especially, the Jews who had been forcibly expelled from their homeland and dispersed all over the world while retaining a nostalgic vision of their native country (the slaves deported from Africa to America also belong in this category). Over time the term has been extended to cover processes of migration whose origin does not lie in expulsion from the home country by force.[3] The Jews themselves sometimes preferred to stay in the Jewish Diaspora or to migrate from one diaspora to another instead of returning to their homeland. Today there is a general tendency to include all migratory movements in this concept, even those that are more or less voluntary. Robin Cohen lists in his typology of diasporas the cases of a 'merchant

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[1] Merton (1967).

[2] Safran (1991); Clifford (1994); Cohen (1999); Krings (2003); Mayer (2005).

[3] Mayer (2005), p. 31ff.

diaspora' or an 'imperial diaspora', which emerged as a consequence of processes of a country's political or economic expansion and its domination over other countries.[4] What is important in our context is that processes of transnational labour migration, which have become the main type of migration in the last few decades, can also lead to the emergence of diasporas. In this respect, we have Maghrebi, Turkish and Pakistani diaspora communities in Western Europe today.

Yet the concept should not be abused. Not every migratory movement or migrant colony can be called a diaspora.[5] If, for example, pensioners from northern Germany decide to spend the rest of their lives in the pleasant southern German region of Bavaria, they might form a group but they do not form a diaspora. The term implies manifest cultural tensions and an imagined return to the homeland in the future. For the Corsicans who live –in large numbers– in Marseilles, the situation is already quite different: after all, they do not speak the same language as their host community.[6] Also, the concept of 'diaspora' does not apply to people who move around on a continual basis and who have no precise idea of a homeland to return to, such as traditional 'gypsy' communities. The typical labour migrant who leaves his country for economic reasons and returns to it after he has stopped working does not fall into this category either.

Generally, the concept of exile is more appropriate where a person's sojourn in a foreign country is involuntary and limited in time.[7] Only if the sojourn becomes permanent, if it becomes the centre of the migrant's life, can we speak of a diaspora status (the most visible expression of this development is that he will induce his wife and children to follow him). The formation of a diaspora community may be a transitory phenomenon: the more the migrants and their offspring are integrated into the host society, the more they regard themselves as citizens of the host country and the less they will miss their homeland. But diaspora groups can also become permanent institutions in a host country. They can develop a cultural and ritual life of their own that separates them clearly from the host society. For purposes of distinction, Figure 1 provides a schematic list of the main traits of exile, diaspora and immigration, respectively.

[4] Cohen (1997), chs. 3 & 4.
[5] Krings (2003), p. 137.
[6] Safran (1991), p. 83. This article provides an extensive discussion of the criteria for delimitating the concept, along with many examples.
[7] Schiffauer (2004), p. 348.

Figure 1. Forms and stages of migration

Forms and stages of migration / Comparative dimensions	Exile	Diaspora	Immigration (social integration)
Migrant	Individual	Group, social collective	Single acts that can become a mass movement
Orientation, identification	Home country	Double identification with home country and host country	Host country
Predominance of push or pull factors	Push factors: escape from punishment or an unsatisfactory economic situation	Push and pull factors: home country becomes more attractive while migrants feel rejected by host country	Pull factors: attraction of host country and integration into it
Generation	Limited to one generation	Diaspora status begins with second generation and can extend onto later generations	Process transcends generations, begins in home country and ends with integration into host country
Attitude, sensitivities	Living abroad considered a burden; mourning for lost home country; longing for return	Ambivalent feelings: hope and fear, mourning and utopian plans; deep existential insecurity	Satisfaction; 'starting a new life'; break with the past

Figure 1 shows that the terms 'diaspora' and 'exile' have both experienced a considerable broadening of their meaning in recent times. It is important to note that the table presents only a rough outline of the differences between the three concepts. In fact, there are intermediate stages and hybrid cases that blur the boundaries between them. The 'normal' career of migrant groups runs along the following lines: the first generation conceives its stay abroad as a kind of exile; the following generations show typical traits of a diaspora community, which then gradually dissolves as its members are increasingly integrated into the host society. However, this development is by no means inevitable. The diaspora status of an immigrant group may prolong itself or even become permanent, either because the group itself wants to preserve its original identity (Armenians, Jews) or because the host country makes integration so difficult that it is no longer an attractive option for the immigrants. This latter phenomenon is characteristic of many European countries, in contrast to 'classic' immigration countries like the Americas and Australia.

To fully understand the complexity of the diaspora situation, it is helpful to look at the classic definition given by Robin Cohen. The eight most important characteristics proposed by this definition can be summarised as follows:[8]

[8] Cohen (1997), p. 26; see also Krings (2003), p. 147.

(1) Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions.
(2) Alternatively, expansion from the homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions.
(3) A collective memory and myth about the homeland.
(4) An idealisation of the putative ancestral home and collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration and even creation.
(5) The development of a return movement.
(6) A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long period of time and based on a sense of distinctiveness.
(7) A troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance.
(8) A sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement.

The basic trait of diaspora communities, according to Cohen's definition, is that their members not only belong to one country but to two or even more countries at the same time. On the one hand they are attracted to their old, distant home country, which is represented by the migrants' common ethnic or religious origin and an idealised memory of the past. On the other hand, the diaspora members have to cope with the conditions and expectations awaiting them in the host country. Often the first generation makes a compromise between the conflicting loyalties and the demands of both systems: it adapts to the requirements of the host society in the professional and economic realms while remaining firmly embedded in the cultural and religious traditions of their home country. For the migrants' descendants, these delimitations become obsolete. They see themselves confronted with two 'worlds': one that finds its idealised expression in the discourse of their parents and grandparents, and one with which they have to cope in their daily contacts with comrades, fellow students and teachers.[9]

We see from numerous studies of diaspora situations that this double relationship, which does not permit the formation of an unambiguous identity in the traditional sense, causes multiple tensions and frictions. Almost every problem that diaspora members encounter in daily life has two aspects. If there is 'one side', there is always also 'another side' from which the same questions need to be considered: adaptation or resistance, legalism or subversion, loss and hope, alienation and affirmation of the self, suffering and utopian ideas, social disintegration vs. Solidarity and secularisation vs. religious renewal.[10]
The feeling of existential insecurity is further deepened as labour migrants have to learn that they are not accepted on equal terms by members of the host society but are more or less confined to the role of claimants and petitioners. The asymmetric relationship between the official organs of the host country on the one hand and the migrants on the other is reflected in the prejudice and the discriminatory practices faced by the latter.

[9] Schiffauer (2004), p. 353ff.; Schiffauer (1999); Cesari (1994), p. 112.
[10] Clifford (1994), p. 312.

Migrants are often considered inferior and underdeveloped. They have to struggle to gain the respect of their new co-citizens and to be accepted among them.[11]

From a sociological point of view, the conditions with which the migrants as individuals and as a collective have to cope are best described as a 'challenge situation'. Similar to its more dramatic elder brother, the 'crisis', a 'challenge situation' has three features: (1) the 'normal' or 'natural' development of things is interrupted –a break occurs that requires a new beginning–; (2) actors are confronted with several ways of dealing with the new situation –options that, as the actors perceive, will have different consequences for their entire life–; and (3) in order to be able to choose between the different options, the actors need a minimal pool of resources and the liberty to make their own decisions.[12]

In the diaspora situation, these three conditions all apply. A migrant who leaves his home country effectively breaks with the past. Even if in many cases migrants pretend to be following the traditional patterns of their culture and religion in the new country, the environment and the overall situation have changed. It makes a difference whether paternal authority, including the right to beat one's wife and children, is exercised in a traditional patriarchalist context or in a modern democratic society. At the same time, the diaspora situation opens up to the individual various possibilities of managing the problems and chances inherent in it. The ratio of social control and individual freedom is no longer the same as in the home country.[13] In a traditional society –and many migrants come from traditional societies– it is difficult for a young person to escape the mechanisms of social control and to choose his or her own way and career. Also, in the diaspora the ethnic or religious community watches jealously over the steps that every single member of the collective takes. The family in particular discourages its younger members from making too many concessions to the host society or, in other words, to betray their traditions. But its power is limited, as is the power of the entire ethnic or religious group formed by the migrants in the West. Among Turkish women living in Germany we can observe that a considerable number of them grasped the chances that opened up to them in a liberal democratic society: they chose a career that led them far away from their traditional milieu.[14]

It should be clear by now that on a microsocial level, the structural and personal challenges of migration, exile and diaspora do not lead to a single answer or a single way

[11] Hettlage (1993), p. 90; Schiffauer (1999), p. 17.
[12] The Challenge-Response Theory is actually seldom applied in the social sciences. Originally developed by the historian Arnold Toynbee, it was only used in the 'crisis theory' approach of the political sciences (Toynbee, 1949; Binder, 1971; and Rokkan, 1971).
[13] In this context, migration to the big cities plays a crucial role. In the home country, it is often the first step before plans to emigrate to another country emerge (Scheffler, 1985, p. 193).
[14] A good example is Necla Kelek, the author of a well-known book in which she denounces the practice, still current among the Turks in Germany, of marrying daughters to cousins in Turkey whom they have never seen before (Kelek, 2006).

of handling them; rather, they prompt various different responses. Depending on their predispositions, socialisation and environment, some individuals might conceive these challenges as a burden, others as a chance. If some migrants (and their offspring) escape into a presumably safe past, others look for protection among their compatriots, try to adapt to the host society as best they can or even assume a mediating role between their native society and the host society. Research in the 1990s has tended to stress the new opportunities that a diaspora situation offers to energetic individuals –individuals who do not miss the loosening bonds of their community but feel strong enough to live 'in between'–. These studies have emphasised the creative impulses one can derive from cultural hybridity and a position on the margins of society.[15] And there certainly are migrants and other diaspora members who deal with their situation in this creative way. But their example can by no means be generalised. Many others respond to similar situations in a more pragmatic, less spectacular way, while still others, especially among the less talented and energetic, will above all feel deprived, insecure and humiliated because of their diaspora status. They harbour no optimism, no hopes for their personal future, but frustration, resignation and sometimes resentment and rage.

From a survey of those studies that neither glorify nor denigrate diaspora situations, it appears that there are three principal forms of reaction on the part of individual actors.[16] The first is assimilation: the migrant makes an effort to approximate to the host society as far as possible, with the eventual goal of becoming part of it. The second and most frequent reaction is an intermediate solution or compromise, in which the individual tries to reconcile the norms and cultural parameters of the cultural setting he comes from with that of the host society. Evidently this is a highly selective and subjective process that may result in quite different syntheses between the two systems. Finally, the third (and, in our context, most interesting) solution can be labelled 'neo-traditionalism', 'neo-dogmatism' or fundamentalism. It consists in the rejection of the host society, its culture and its way of life, instead of which the native country and culture are idealised. Quite frequently, people only discover the value of their native culture, nation or religion when they are living abroad, in exile or in the diaspora. This discovery may take the shape of a fundamental conversion that makes their life meaningful and provides orientation for the future.

What is important about these three reactions is that none can be labelled deviant or abnormal. All three occur regularly in situations of exile or diaspora, whether ethnic, national or religious. All three attract their share of individuals, though not in the same number and not the same kind of individuals. But it is evident that in a sense they constitute equivalent options for diaspora members seeking to solve their problems. Thus the question we need to ask is: what makes the third option, radicalisation, attractive to certain people?

[15] Gilroy (1999); Hall (1999). For a critical position on this optimistic view, see Schiffauer (2004), p. 348ff.

[16] Cesari (2004), p. 69ff.; Tietze (2001), p. 9ff.; Roy (2003), p. 2; Schiffauer (2004), p. 356ff.

(2) The Radical Option

'Radical' and 'radicalisation' are derived from the Latin word *radix*, 'roots'. A radical does not make compromises but tries to resolve problems once for all by tackling them at their roots. In this process, the term 'radical' can denote either the goals pursued or the means employed.[17] A person with radical goals questions the status quo of the socio-political order with a view to replacing it with another –either a revolutionary or an extremely reactionary one–. A radical will often act in the name of an absolute truth, be it an ideology or a religion, which does not admit concessions or restrictions. Thus, radicals are usually unwilling to differentiate, listen to counter-arguments or consider the social context in which they propagate their message. From their reductionist point of view, the world is divided into two camps: those who share their convictions and those who do not –their ideological friends and followers on the one side, and their enemies on the other–. If someone in the radical camp looks for ways beyond this Manichean logic or tries to transcend the boundaries it prescribes, this person will arouse suspicion and risk being considered a traitor.

Beside this unconditional pursuit of certain goals, which is usually motivated by religious or ideological convictions, there is another kind of radicalism, which relates to the means employed in conflict situations. A radical individual or group in this second sense resorts to informal, illegal and, eventually, violent methods in order to achieve his goals or to make them widely known. While a person or group that pursues absolute goals will as a rule use radical means to attain them, the reverse is not necessarily true: when a group uses illegal means or violence it does not always do so in order to destroy the existing order. In many cases –the US Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s is a good example– underprivileged sectors of the population resort to violence merely to bring a legitimate purpose to public attention, usually because they did not succeed in doing so by peaceful means. This type of radical action, which is justified to a certain degree, relativises the notion of radicalism as a fanatical, stubborn attitude and lends it additional connotations of 'being consistent', 'unwavering' and of working toward a goal 'with a vengeance'.

Radicalism comprises the possibility of violent action but should not be equated with violence. It is first of all a psychological syndrome and construct, an attitude. Psychology demonstrated as early as the 1930s that a person can be radical in his attitude and general outlook without resorting to or condoning violent action.[18] There is no deterministic, causal relation between the psychological syndrome and its physical expression. It all depends on the concrete situation, especially as perceived by the relevant actors. If the situation gives rise to certain mobilising stimuli –for instance, if the situation is considered threatening by a group of actors, or if goods or values considered sacred by the group have been violated– a radical disposition can translate into action, including

[17] Bendel (2004).
[18] LaPiere (1934/35).

violence; if not, that same disposition will remain latent and violence will remain a potential option.

Moreover, violence is only one way of expressing radical sentiments and ideas. In an exile or diaspora situation in particular, very few individuals are prepared to join an armed cell or group. The number of individuals willing to support an armed fight, in contrast, is much larger. Their support may take various forms: paying a 'revolutionary tax', delivering weapons to the fighters, providing moral and physical sustenance, propagandising for their cause, offering them 'safe houses' and sanctuaries from prosecution and so on.

There are several reasons why subgroups within the diaspora might turn radical –the radicalisation of an entire diaspora community is a rare exception–, and their radicalism can assume different forms. It can derive from an ongoing armed conflict in the home country that has been dragged over into the new country. Alternatively, it can emerge as a new movement in a previously peaceful colony of migrants. Its goals can lie outside the host society –mostly in the country of origin– or within it.

With regard to this last option a challenging question arises: why do members of a diaspora develop radical feelings against their host country? Or, with a slightly different focus: why can the diaspora situation as such create resentment and hostility against the country in which the migrants reside? The answer suggested in this paper runs along the following lines:[19] radicalisation is one possible answer –the most extreme answer– to the psychic dilemma faced by most diaspora members, namely, to the development of a double identity and to the lack of recognition and acceptance by the host society. If the double-identity aspect dominates, an actor may undergo a fundamental psychic reorientation, in the course of which he may develop a fixation on radical *goals*. If the main focus is on defence against discrimination and a lack of acceptance, the actor will tend to stress radical *means*, with the ultimate goal of full recognition.

It has already been mentioned that a diaspora situation can elicit quite different responses from the radical ones sketched here. Some actors will regard the new situation as a chance and will profit from their double cultural affiliation.[20] The internal conflicts and tensions produced by cultural hybridity can stimulate actors to transcend ethnic and religious divisions. Also, it should be remembered that self-conception in terms of religious or national membership is not a 'natural' tendency of human beings; rather, it is a result of the absolute and exclusive categories in which monotheistic religions and modern nation states encourage their members to think. Many diaspora members reject this 'either/or' thinking and try to reconcile and combine the different cultures, world-views and traditions they encounter in their daily lives. Others, however, cannot escape the dualism

[19] Waldmann (2009), p. 38.
[20] Worbs & Heckmann (2004), p. 194, speak of a 'patchwork identity' in this context.

inherent in any diaspora situation; they will experience this dualism as a burden and a continuous strain. They would prefer to have a clear notion of who they are, where they stand and what they are supposed to do. For these individuals, radicalism is a solution to their identity problems, albeit an exaggerated and extreme solution. Radicals respond to the condition of structural openness to which they are exposed with adherence to absolute truth and doctrine. Where an individual who adapts smoothly to the diaspora situation will combine the different pieces of identity and perpetually 'reinvent' himself, a radical does the exact opposite: he establishes a counterweight to his situation and attaches himself to an invariable truth –to something of 'eternal' value–.

This may explain why second- and third-generation immigrants are particularly receptive to radical impulses. Of course, they are not the only ones: foreign students and young first-generation migrants who live in a Western country, separated from their family, are also susceptible to intense experiences of the culture clash and to radical reactions. But the generations that were already born in the host country are, by their structural position, especially prone to identity conflicts connected with the diaspora situation. It is this phenomenon that has recently alarmed the Western public and media under the label of 'homegrown terrorism'. Unlike the migrants themselves, these young people have no direct emotional relationship and no natural familiarity with their home country. On occasional visits they experience feelings of estrangement from the home country and its population. On the other hand, they do not feel integrated into the host society either, which prevents them from fully identifying with it. Caught in an odd balance between two cultures and societies, they form part of both yet belong to neither.

This is the more consequential as they are in a phase of their lives in which, according to Erik Erikson's well-known theory of identity formation, they need to clarify their identity and find their place in life.[21] In addition, many young Muslims who live in the West feel guilty because they profit from the material advantages of a society whose way of life they condemn while their brothers and sisters in faith continue to suffer from social backwardness and economic deprivation. If their direct social environment does not offer an answer to these problems, if no one offers them an interesting task or career, they are apt to start looking for an answer on their own. Joining a radical cell and adopting its radical ideology can be a tempting option in this situation.

This is one way of becoming a radical –through identity problems and the existential decisions to which they lead–. Based on our earlier distinction, we can differentiate between this goals-oriented trajectory and a means-oriented one. The latter is caused not by the conviction that one needs to defend an absolute truth, but by the resentment and anger one feels because of the discriminatory treatment of diaspora members on the part of the host society. The standard grievance in this vein is that Western societies do not grant diaspora members full citizenship, thus betraying their own principle of equal

[21] Erikson (1991), p. 228ff.; Noack (2005), p. 179ff.

treatment. The difference between the two kinds of radicalism lies primarily in their consequences: a radical goal-orientation questions the host society, its social and political order as such, while the use of radical means and methods only aims at changing certain aspects of that society. In fact, at an implicit level the claim that migrants should be treated fairly and fully integrated even confirms and legitimises the existing social and institutional order.

Now that we have explored different types of radicalisation in the diaspora and the trajectories that lead up to them, we will conclude this section by looking at some factors that reduce the fascination exercised by the radical option.

- One important factor is whether the diaspora is economically inferior or superior to the country and society hosting it. The Lebanese who are dispersed over the entire Western world and Africa, for instance, have generally attained wealth and influence as diaspora members. Thus, they usually harbour no resentment against the countries in which they live, much less an inclination to attack them. The situation of Jewish people in the West, although they were at one time persecuted and marginalised, is quite similar today.[22]
- The cultural gap between the newcomers and the established society is of great significance as well. According to experts on this question, the greater the mutual cultural distance, the greater is the migrants' difficulty in reconciling the norms and values of both cultures and the higher the probability that migrants will face discriminatory practices and prejudice. Both aspects contribute to radicalisation.[23]
- A third factor of a certain weight is whether migration takes place as an individual act or as a collective movement. Single migrants are much more exposed to discriminatory practices and stereotyping than persons embedded in a family or some kind of collective. This is probably the main reason why students and intellectuals from Arab countries who spend time in a Western country for reasons of higher education are especially prone to radicalisation processes.

(3) Forms of Radicalism: A Typology

Today, when people hear or speak of dogmatism and radicalisation, what they usually have in mind is religious fanaticism and extremism. But religious radicalisation has only recently attracted public interest. In the previous decades, the debate on radicalisation focused on ethnocentrism and nationalism.

In North Africa and the Near and Middle East, the current wave of religious fundamentalism was preceded by a wave of militant nationalism that largely emerged

[22] On the difference between voluntary segregation and forced exclusion of a group, see Krings (2003), p. 149.
[23] Safran (1991), p. 88; Clifford (1994), p. 307.

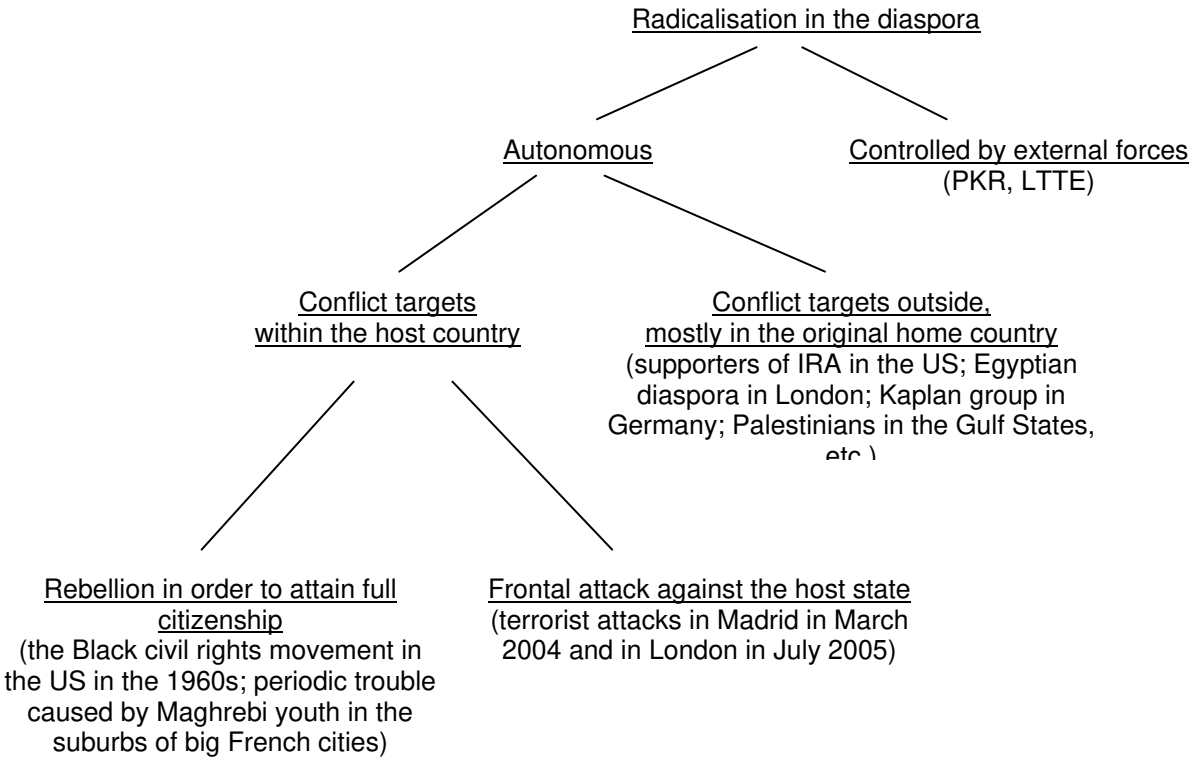
out of diaspora communities.[24] For instance, one of the main supporters of the Algerian war of liberation in the late 1950s was the Berber community in France. Similarly, the Palestinian Al Fatah organisation was founded and financed for many years by Palestinian emigrants living in the Gulf states. In Lebanon the economic and political rise of the Shiites, which preceded the founding of Hezbollah, was made possible by the capital and investments of Shiites who had migrated to West Africa. And the list could be continued.

The close connection between the identity problems of individuals placed between different cultures and the emergence of nationalism has been analysed astutely by Benedict Anderson.[25] In an article with the significant title 'Exodus', Anderson argues that due to the enormous progress in transport and communication, people have become much more mobile than ever before. The result of all these contacts between cultures and societies, however, has not been a general cosmopolitan attitude but the quest and search for uniqueness, for what is genuinely one's own. 'Exile is the nursery of nationalism', Anderson concludes: 'one might be inclined to view the rise of nationalist movements and their variable culmination in nation-states as a project for coming home from exile'. Even more succinctly put, 'Nationalism's purities (and thus also cleanings) are set to emerge from exactly this hybridity'. Anderson explains that the nationalist movements that transformed the map of Europe in 1919, after World War I, were mostly headed by leaders who spoke two languages: by 'Germans' who were not really German, 'Italians' from the margins of Italy and 'Spaniards' who were not real Iberians. This pattern, he says, repeats itself in the young nations of Africa and Asia.

We will now present a typology of the different kinds of diaspora. Of course, typologies raise the question of the criteria used to construct them. The differentiation between nationalist and religious radicalisation might be regarded as one of the more obvious criteria. But apart from the fact that these categories partly overlap, there are a considerable number of cases (the Palestinians, for instance) in which the diaspora discourse has changed its ideological orientation over time. Thus, the typology proposed here is based on three different criteria: (1) the distinction between diaspora militancy controlled by external forces (which is of limited interest in our context) and autonomous militancy; (2) in the case of autonomous militancy, the question of whether the targets of this militancy lie abroad (mostly in the native country) or in the host country; and (3) if the host country itself is the object of aggression, the question of whether this aggression is directed against inferior treatment within the host society (rebellion) or against that society as a whole (frontal attack).

[24] Scheffler (1985), p. 192ff. Anthony Smith was among the first to emphasise that nationalism in less developed countries emerged from their elites' stays in West European countries (Smith, 1971).
[25] Anderson (1994).

Figure 2. Forms of radicalisation in the diaspora



Typical examples of diasporas exposed to external influence include the migrant colonies in the West that are controlled by the Kurdish PKK and the Sri Lankan Tamil Tigers (LTTE), respectively. Both terrorist organisations have succeeded in building up a vast network of extortion and manipulation that forces members of the diaspora colony to contribute to their struggle for national liberation in the home country. The 'contribution' can take the form of financial subsidies, weapons purchases for the fighters or the offer of refuge from prosecution.[26]

The case of 'autonomous radicalisation' with a conflict target outside the host country is probably the most common one (Figure 2 cites only a few of a large number of similar cases). Roughly speaking, an ethnic or religious rebellion rarely persists without support from some external diaspora.[27] Also, most Islamist reform and resistance movements originally started on a nationalist platform. They only expanded onto a transnational plane when their leaders came to the conclusion that there was no chance of realising their ideas for reform on a national level alone. European countries, especially France and the UK, have traditionally been very generous in granting asylum to individuals who were persecuted for political or religious reasons in their home countries. Their liberal

[26] Angoustures & Pascal (1999), p. 406ff. & 410ff.; Radtke (2005); on the influence of the GIA on the Algerian migrants in France, se Lia & Kjok (2001).
[27] On the Kaplan group, Schiffauer (2000); on support for the IRA in the US, see Clark (1977).

asylum policy changed only after 11 September 2001, when it became clear that Muslim diaspora leaders had abused their rights and privileges by spreading hate against the government of the host society as well, not just against those of their home countries.[28]

In this context, it should be noted that 'autonomous' does not mean that radicalisation is exclusively produced in the exile or diaspora community itself. There may be external inspiration and assistance. However, the main, motivational push comes from the migrants and their offspring. While the diaspora members may back the resistance movement in their home country unconditionally, they sometimes end up taking a critical attitude towards it. Chances for close cooperation between home-country and host-country radicals are best when both groups emerge at the same time and for the same reasons. By contrast, it can be quite difficult for a radical discourse to spread in a diaspora community whose relations with the government of its host country have previously been good and harmonious, even when the radicals are explicitly fighting that government.[29]

Lastly, Figure 2 indicates that radicalism directed against the host country itself can have two different aims and orientations. If the migrants recognise the basic social and political order of the host country, their protest and other forms of radical action usually aim at obtaining full citizenship. Alternatively, they may attack the host country, its order and its institutions frontally and try to destroy them. These two forms correspond to the two types of reaction against the diaspora situation described in the preceding section. The periodical riots in the suburbs of the larger French cities are examples of the first type; the terrorist attacks of June 2005 in London are examples of the second.

Researchers on France and its migration problems agree that the riots that occur with a certain regularity in the *banlieues* of Paris and other French cities have no religious background. The motives behind them are purely secular. The Maghrebis of the second, third and fourth immigrant generations who form the hard core of the rebels protest violently to make their voice heard in a national context. What they strive for is not the destruction of the French system but their own social, cultural and political integration into it.[30] These young people speak French to each other and they feel and consider themselves French citizens. They rebel against their social and economic marginalisation, for which they hold the French state responsible. They ask for additional measures to give them better chances in the educational system and to help them enter the labour market. But they would never dream of expressing the hope, as Sheikh Omar Bakri did with respect to the Queen and the British government, that one day the President of the French Republic might convert to Islam or that the black flag of the Caliphate might fly over the Elysée Palace.[31]

[28] Thomas (2005).
[29] Angoustures & Pascal (1999), p. 427ff.
[30] Roy (2004), p. 50 & 143; Khosrokhavar (1996); Cesari speaks of 'combat pour la citoyenneté' (1994, p. 117).
[31] Thomas (2005), p. 104.

The situation in Britain differs considerably from that in France. Radicals within the British Muslim diaspora consider their religious community not only as a space for protection and mutual support, but as the base from which to mount a militant attack against British society and the British state.[32] They do not refer to themselves as 'British Muslims' but as 'Muslims in Great Britain'. In daily life they mostly speak the Urdu that they spoke in Pakistan; the only use they have for the English language is as a medium for their militant messages, with which they want to reach as large a public as possible. Their charismatic leaders, some of whom come from the Near East, enjoy asylum status but have no scruples about calling for the elimination of the immoral and decadent Western system, including that of Great Britain, which they want to replace with a worldwide Caliphate.[33]

There are several factors that can help explain the different forms and paths of the radicalisation processes in France and the UK. Most importantly, the protesters in France argue from a secular point of view, while those in Britain pursue an explicitly Muslim project. This draws our attention to the role of religion in diasporas.

(4) Religion and Religious Radicalisation in the Diaspora

A religion distinct from the host society's is not a necessary feature of diaspora communities. Nonetheless, whenever a group's diaspora status coincides with a particular, distinctive religion, that religion acquires a crucial importance for the migrants' relations with their host society. The Islamic enclaves in Western Europe are by no means the only examples of this development. When Germans emigrated to Latin America in the 19th century, the Protestants among them came to regard their confession as the decisive borderline separating them from the Creoles.[34] Inversely, the Irish Catholics typically formed colonies of their own in the predominantly Protestant US. The importance of religion is best illustrated by the Jews, who to the present day adhere to their religious cult and habits even in countries where they are fairly well integrated (such as the US), thus maintaining a fine but sharp line between themselves and the host society.

The special attention paid to religious matters can probably be explained by the fact that in difficult times and situations (such as a diaspora experience) religion and its representatives generally assume functions beyond the mere regulation of people's attitudes towards death and the other world. In the diaspora, clerics help the desperate and the poor who have difficulties coping with the new situation; on the other hand, they

[32] Thomas (2005), p. 65ff. & 100ff.; on the situation of Muslims in the UK and on that country's migration politics in general, see Lewis (1994), Rex (2003) and Peach (2005).
[33] Huband (2006).
[34] Blancpain (1974), p. 602ff.

remind those who succeed in the new society not to forget the less fortunate.[35] In other words, they fulfil social as well as religious functions and guarantee a minimal degree of cohesion and solidarity within a community torn by internal tensions and centrifugal forces. Within these communities religion exercises a kind of subtle social control: towards the outside world it becomes their central identity marker.

The additional functions performed by religion in the diaspora influence the way religion is perceived and practiced by diaspora members. This has been amply demonstrated by studies of the role of Islam among Turks living in Germany. Most of these studies agree that the Turks abroad are much more conscious of their religion, its orders, prohibitions and ritual prescriptions than they were in their home country.[36] In a society that is highly secularised or predominantly of another faith, rituals and religious norms provoke curiosity and sometimes criticism. Muslim children have to explain to their schoolmates why they follow certain cults and religious obligations, and they ask the same questions of their parents at home. As a consequence of being questioned constantly about their faith, Muslims abroad reflect more intensely than they would at home about the meaning of the Koran and the rules it lays down. They discuss these issues with other migrants so as to be able to defend and justify their adherence against the critical stance of the host society.

A higher degree of religious consciousness does not automatically lead to religious radicalisation and still less to an inclination to violence. What we have said about migration in general also applies to its religious aspect: it is essentially a challenge, for individuals as well as for entire families, and as a challenge it permits various responses. Radicalisation –the adoption of a fundamentalist, orthodox religious attitude– is just one of these possible responses. As a rule, only a minority of diaspora members will take a radical position, while most members will choose 'softer' solutions that permit them to reconcile, at least to a certain degree, the principles of their faith with the demands of the social, economic and political environment to which they are continually exposed.[37]

Although the radical option is favoured by a small minority only, an intransigent, dogmatic religious position often has a considerable impact, both in the diaspora and on the evolution of that religion in general. Historically speaking, emigration and diaspora have often been the starting point for movements of religious reform and renewal. Once again, the classic example is provided by the Jewish people who, when they left Egypt under the charismatic leadership of Moses, made a pact with Yahweh for guidance and protection. According to the Egyptologist Jan Assmann that was the historical moment in

[35] Obligations of mutual help form part of the ethics of brotherliness common to all three abrahamic religions (Kippenberg, 2008, p. 32ff.).
[36] Frese (2002); Mihciyazgan (2004).
[37] The different reactions have been empirically proved with regard to the Muslims living in France (Cesari, 2004, p. 69ff.; and Tietze, 2001, p. 85ff.). For the situation in Germany, see Worbs & Heckmann (2004), p. 183ff.

which monotheism was 'invented': 'From internal circumstances, by gradual evolution, humanity would never have developed monotheism. Monotheism is a matter of emigration, delimitation, conversion, revolution, a radical turning and innovation which is combined with a no less radical denial, rejection and turning away from the old'.[38] It is no accident that Assmann uses the word 'radical' twice in this short passage to emphasise the fundamental change that the pact with Yahweh meant for the Jewish people. The Babylonian exile, too, triggered immense efforts in the Jewish community of interpreting this collective disaster from a religious point of view. It contributed to the emergence of a prophetic theology of opposition that located the origins of the catastrophe in the sinful behaviour of the Jewish people.[39]

As far as Islam is concerned two examples suffice to demonstrate the stimulating effect of exile or diaspora experiences on religiosity. One is Sayyed Qutb, one of the founders and heads of dogmatic Salafism in its modern form. Qutb was already a convinced Muslim and an adult when he left his home country, Egypt, to spend several years as a scholar in the US. His biography shows that by the time he returned from his stay abroad his sceptical view of the West had turned into open criticism of its immoral and decadent way of life. At the same time, Qutb had adopted an extreme, fundamentalist version of Islamism.[40] The other example are the Imams who stayed in London in the 1990s after having been expelled from their home countries in the Near East. Though they were granted asylum, this did not raise their tolerance of the way of life they encountered in their host country, the Uk; on the contrary, it hardened their dogmatism and their critical attitude toward the West.[41]

This brings us to the radical Islamist scene of today. Most experts distinguish two different branches of militant Islamism: on the one hand, groups that have a territorial base and concrete political goals, as for example in Lebanon, Palestine, Chechnya and Algeria; on the other, radical cells and networks engaged in a global jihad.[42] There may be in-between cases like that of Morocco, whose radical sectors want to transform their own country into a fortress of orthodox Islamism and at the same time plan to reconquer Spain, the ancient 'al Andalus', for their faith. But on the whole, the two branches of radicals not only pursue different aims but also recruit their followers from different segments of the population. While the first branch attracts militants who live in the zone or region for which the radicals fight, the cells that pretend to fight the West in general and to be in the process of establishing a worldwide Caliphate (the vision of al-Qaeda inspired by Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri) draw mostly on young Muslims living in the West.

[38] Albertz (1992), p. 73ff.; Assmann (2003), p. 162.
[39] Albertz (1992), p. 383ff.
[40] Wright (2007), p. 12ff.
[41] Thomas (2005), p. 65ff.
[42] Roy (2003), p. 1-2; Roy (2004), chs. 1, 6 & 7; Waldmann, Sirseloudi & Malthaner (2006).

According to Olivier Roy's description of the members of groups and cells that have emerged in the West, most of these militants have not received a religious education, nor are they familiar with either the Koran or Islam in general. They do not have strong ties with their native community anymore and have mostly broken with the ethnic-religious diaspora community and their family there. Largely westernised, they make the decision to adopt a fundamentalist version of Islam on a purely individual level, similar to the converts who decide to abandon their Christian confession and to become Muslims.

To understand the decision-making process these young people go through, it might be useful to compare them with people who in a comparable exile or diaspora situation become fanatic nationalists. These latter opt for their country of origin in a situation in which they are confronted with two national cultures and identities. They glorify that country, identify with it and become estranged from the host society on a spiritual plane. A young man who becomes a religious fanatic, in contrast, takes a stance above any particular society or culture. Placed between two countries and societies in his case becomes the starting point from which he moves to a higher, more general level of adherence and identification. Superficially, these two processes resemble each other: in both, a situation of ambivalence and existential insecurity is replaced by a firm hold and a clear orientation. But this parallel is misleading. To detach oneself from every concrete culture, territory or society for the sake of a religion is qualitatively different from choosing between two (or more) countries, cultures and traditions.

The most striking trait of a radical religious attitude, which at the same time distinguishes the global jihadists from their more rooted 'brothers' in South-Lebanon or Gaza militant groups, is the abstract quality of their principles, aims and claims.[43] The supporters of global Islamism preach a faith disconnected from cultural and regional specificities, a faith of abstract principles and norms that can be applied to any society. Their enemies (the US, the West in general, all infidels), the plans they pursue, their supposed followers and supporters are all situated in a nebulous sphere and addressed in a very general language that makes it difficult to identify anything tangible and concrete.

It is probably because of this very impersonal and abstract orientation –which is sometimes regarded as a general characteristic of monotheism–[44] that these radicals are able, or even feel obliged, to kill innocent civilians in their terrorist attacks, even though these civilians belong to the society in which the radicals themselves have grown up and been socialised. Enclosed in their little cells, communicating exclusively with one another, the radicals gradually lose contact with reality and end up seeing their world only through the black-and-white glasses of their doctrine.

[43] Waldmann (2009), p. 63.
[44] Assmann (2005).

This is not a new phenomenon. Fifty years ago an American sociologist of Russian origins, Vladimir Nahirny, coined the term 'ideological group' for militant cells with an abstract and totalising worldview –cells, that is, like those of the present-day global jihad–. Nahirny based his concept on the empirical example of 19th century Russian anarchists, especially on those of Narodnaja Volja, but the traits he elaborates are easily applicable to the global jihadists:[45]

- '*First*, an ideological orientation which is total – involving a response to the whole person as nothing but a belief-possessed being. It is total because it is all-inclusive and requires that the individuals empty themselves of all personal interests… that they sever all personal ties… and indeed stand outside all normal social ramifications.
- '*Second*, ideological orientation is dichotomous. This dichotomy… conceives of the social universe in terms of black and white, helplessly divided into two irreconcilable parts — one of it to be collectively saved, another collectively destroyed.
- '*Third*, ideological orientation precludes seeing a human being as a composite of personal ascribed qualities and performances. In other words, ideologists… conceive of themselves as nothing but the carriers of belief,… the most important criterion is commitment.
- '*Finally*, ideological orientation precludes a direct affective disposition toward human beings… At the same time, it is not an affectively neutral orientation. In fact, ideologists channel all personal passions and emotions onto the collective cause they cherish. Human beings share in this displaced and collective affectivity to the extent to which they are vessels of this cause.'

In the case analysed by Nahirny, these impersonal vessels of affectivity and belief were the peasants. He cites a member of the anarchist movement as saying: 'Not the *concrete* and real peasant attracted all our attention, was liked by us, made us ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of improving his life — we wished well to and loved the *abstract* peasant.' The same, I would argue, holds true for the radicalised young Muslims in today's diaspora communities, who see their brothers in faith suffer in some part of the world and decide to join the global jihad to revenge them.

At the end of his article, Nahirny raises the question of what kind of person is attracted to ideological groups, and from which social milieu their members and followers are recruited. His answer is that the utopian ideals of ideological groups resonate particularly with young people who are placed outside normal social relationships and feel alienated and uprooted –people who belong nowhere–. 'The category of individuals best fitted to join ideological formations would have to be looked for among those who have no personal responsibilities, who have severed for one reason or another all personal

[45] Nahirny (1961/62).

attachments and primordial ties and who are not bound, as adults are, by specific obligations to corporate groups and associations'.[46]

Social isolation, no social responsibility, no obligations: these traits lead us back to the differentiation between nationally and globally oriented jihadists. Those militant Islamists who defend a certain territory or claim it for their ethnic-religious group are by no means socially isolated. Mostly, they are embedded into a radical community that supports them and backs their armed attacks, but at the same time prevents them from acting arbitrarily. Excessively brutal acts, and acts that provoke harsh repressive measures without visible or symbolic successes to balance these drawbacks, can cost the terrorists the sympathy of the population on whose supportive attitude they depend. Thus, the terrorists' leaders have to take into account the consequences of their violent acts for the social groups they try to defend and claim to represent. These groups form the social base of their fight, but they also set certain limits on it.[47]

Those jihadists, on the other hand, who are not bound to a territory and its population but follow their abstract religious ideas and principles do not have restraints of this sort. They do not feel accountable to anybody; the only responsibility they accept is to their fundamentalist project itself, which discourages them from making concessions of any kind. They discuss their plans exclusively with comrades who share their intransigent attitude and dichotomic worldview. This is one of the reasons why the network of the global jihadists is particularly dangerous.

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[46] Nahirny (1961/62), p. 405.
[47] Waldmann (2005).

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