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Article

Islamist and Nativist Reactionary Radicalisation in Europe

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Abstract
In this article, the term "radicalisation" is discussed as a process that appears to be a defensive and reactionary response of various individuals suffering from social, economic, and political forms of exclusion, subordination, alienation, humiliation, and isolation. To that effect, the article challenges the mainstream understanding of radicalisation. In doing so, the work concentrates on the elaboration of reactionary radicalisation processes of self-identified Muslim youth and self-identified native youth residing in Europe. The main reason behind the selection of these two groups is the assumption that both groups are co-radicalizing each other in the contemporary world that is defined by the ascendance of a civilizational political discourse since the war in the Balkans in the 1990s. Based on the findings of in-depth interviews conducted with youngsters from both groups in Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, the work demonstrates that the main drivers of the radicalisation processes of these two groups cannot be explicated through the reproduction of civilizational, cultural, and religious differences. Instead, the drivers of radicalisation for both groups are very identical as they are both socio-economically, politically, and psychologically deprived of certain elements constrained by the flows of globalization and dominant forms of neo-liberal governance.

Keywords
asabiyya; deprivation; honour; Islamophobia; justice; nativism; populism; radicalisation

Issue
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1. Introduction

In this article, the term "radicalisation" will be discussed from an interdisciplinary perspective as a process that appears to be a defensive and reactionary response of various individuals suffering from the detrimental effects of modernisation and globalisation such as social, economic, and political forms of exclusion, subordination, alienation, and isolation. Following the theoretical interventions from within sociology, politics, anthropology, geography and psychology, the article will challenge the mainstream understanding of radicalisation. In doing so, referring to the three-fold classification of radicalisation by Craig Calhoun, the article will concentrate on the elaboration of reactionary radicalisation processes of Islamic youth and right-wing populist native youth residing in Europe. The work will also rely on the theoretical interventions of Charles Tilly on the three forms of collective mobilization with a particular focus on a defensive form of mobilization, which is likely to be more explanatory for the Islamist and nativist youth mobilisation in contemporary Europe. Last but not least, the article will also benefit from the works of various psychology scholars such as Gordon W. Allport and Henri Tajfel who tend to put the emphasis on socio-economic characteristics to understand the root causes of radicalisation. In parallel with the former perspectives in sociology and politics, this strand of psychology draws attention to socio-economic deprivation and grievance as the main drivers of radicalisation of both youth groups (Maskaliūnaitė, 2015).

This article claims that it is conceivable to perceive the rise of both Islamist and right-wing nativist-populist forms of expressions among some youth groups in Europe as a radical stance against different manifestations of modernisation and globalisation. The term "Islamist" is used in the text to address those youngsters

with Muslim background, who are becoming politically more engaged in identifying themselves with Islam in the age of growing anti-Muslim racism. In this regard, Islamism becomes for these youngsters more than merely a "religion" in the narrow sense of theological belief, private prayer, and ritual worship, and also serves as a reactionary way of life with guidance for political, economic, and social behaviour. To that effect, Islamism of such young individuals is differentiated from the ideology of those participants in violent extremist and terrorist groups (i.e., Al-Qaeda, ISIS). The term "nativist" is used throughout the text to refer to those self-identified native youngsters who are explicitly expressing their feelings of socio-economic, spatial, and nostalgic deprivation caused by ongoing deindustrialisation, unemployment, poverty, and diversity. In this sense, the term does not include those who are engaged in white supremacist extremist groups (i.e., Identitarian Movement, Combat-18, and the Soldiers of Odin). The main premise of the article is that self-identified young Muslims manifest their reactionary radicalisation by revitalizing the 14th-century Khaldunian notion of *asabiyya* based on the instrumentalisation of honour, generating unconventional forms of political participation and resisting intersectional forms of discrimination while self-identified native youngsters are more likely to become nostalgic, nationalist, Islamophobic, and anti-multiculturalist. Such a premise does not of course exclude the probability that both groups might also be influenced by other ideological and societal drivers.

The article will elaborate reactionary radicalism from both theoretical and empirical findings driven from the ongoing research, which is designed to give a more nuanced explanation of radicalisation with a focus on both migrant-origin young people who identify themselves as Muslim (hereafter, "Muslims") and young people who self-identify as natives in certain European cities in which extreme-right is particularly strong (hereafter, "natives"). Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Paris, and Amsterdam were chosen to interview Turkish and Moroccan-origin youths while Aalst, Lyon, Dresden, and Rotterdam were cities selected to interview right-wing native youths. In each city, around 20 interviews were conducted with each group of youngsters in native languages by native researchers working under the supervision of the author, the principal investigator. The total number of interviews conducted in these cities in the first round of the fieldwork in 2020 was 160. The former group of cities was chosen because of the relatively high-number of Muslim-origin residents, while the latter was chosen because of their remoteness to the political centres. By asking a set of open-ended questions inquiring about demographic and socio-economic aspects of everyday life, interaction with members of the neighbourhood, conventional and non-conventional forms of political participation, multiculturalism, diversity, mobility, spatial elements, and globalisation, the purpose of the interviews was to understand the root causes of their reactionary nativist or Islamist radicalisation. Based on the theoretical and empirical findings of the same research, the article provides a comparative account on reactionism in Europe by focusing on the case of radicalised youth, and how radicalising Muslim and native youth groups mutually feed of each other. Since the interview questions specifically focused on demographic, socio-economic, environmental, and local aspects of everyday life without falling into the culturalist trap, it is assumed that the results of this study can be broadly applicable to many different types of young people or situations.

The main reason behind the selection of Muslim youth and native youth residing in Europe is the fact that some segments of both groups are co-radicalising each other in the contemporary world since September 11, 2001 (Obaidi et al., 2018). The term co-radicalisation is mostly used in psychology literature, and it is derived from the observation that intergroup hostility generates intergroup conflict, or increases existing ones, through ideological extremization (Pyszczynski et al., 2008). These intergroup conflicts that are currently experienced at symbolic level through the media have a propensity to perpetuate themselves through cycles of reciprocal threat, violence and/or extremization (Kunst et al., 2016). The work assumes that the main drivers of the radicalisation processes of these two groups cannot be explicated through the reproduction of civilisational, cultural, and religious discourses. Instead, the drivers of radicalisation in both groups are very identical as they are socio-economically, politically, and psychologically deprived of certain elements constrained by the flows of globalization and dominant forms of neo-liberal governance.

2. History of the Term Radicalisation

Though the term "radicalisation" is mostly associated with Islamist and white-supremacist groups nowadays, it has been in circulation for several centuries. Let us take a look at the history of the term now. Defining radicalisation has been problematic within social sciences. Radicalisation implies a direct support or enactment of radical behaviour and therefore begs the question: How does one define radical behaviour? As social sciences have grown ever more interest in understanding and explaining contextual and societal nuances cross-culturally, what appears to be radical or core truth becomes very difficult to answer.

The term "radical" comes from the Latin word of *radix* (root) while the term "radicalisation" literally means the process of "going back to the roots." "Radical" refers to roots of plants, words, or numbers. Early modern thinkers used the term "radical" when they talked about foundations, fundaments, or first principles (Calhoun, 2011). The mainstream definition of "radicalism," such as the one given in the Oxford dictionary, sees it as "the beliefs or actions of people who

advocate thorough or complete political or social reform" (Radicalism, n.d.). The term "radical" was already used in the 18th century, and it is often linked to the Enlightenment and the French and American revolutions of that period. The term became more popular in 19th century only, when it often referred to a political agenda advocating thorough social and political reform. In this sense, radicalism comprised of secularism, pro-democratic components, pluralist, and even equalitarian demands such as egalitarian citizenship and universal suffrage (Bötticher, 2017; Maskaliūnaitė, 2015, p. 13). Afterwards, an association between radicalisation and left-wing violence was maintained in the second half of the 20th century, throughout the 1960s, to designate civil rights activists and rioters of the May 68 uprisings. It is only from the years 2000 and especially 2010 that the word "radicalisation" started to change in its current meaning as a process leading to violent action in general, especially with regards to Islamist terrorism (Khosrokhavar, 2014).

Referring to the work of Huyssen (1995) that is discussing the age of amnesia, some scholars such as Kansteiner (2002, pp. 192–193) and Lowenthal (2015), draw our attention to the fact that collective memory may quickly pass into oblivion without shaping the historical imagination of any individual or social group. Nowadays, for many, "the past that antedates their own lived experiences is dead and gone and therefore irrelevant. They assume the past to be a foreign country disconnected from their own country, the present" (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 592). Thus, in such an internet age, it becomes pertinent for many individuals to forget about the earlier facts, debates, events, and concepts which antedates their own lived experiences. It is highly likely that many individuals have disremembered that there were also radicals before who made the world a better, more democratic, and more pluralist place. It should be because of this forgetfulness, many political opponents of radicals tend to portray them as violent revolutionaries as a first attempt to psychologize political opposition for status-quo maintaining purposes (Sartori, 1984).

This brief historical and conceptual overview is expected to lead us to make two points. First, the historicity of the notion of radicalisation seems to be entangled with concerns of denouncing threats to the status quo and political ideologies that might cause change in any kind. The plasticity of this notion combined with this strong system justification feature might paradoxically inform us more about the characteristics of groups that use this notion and those of their targets. This may lead us to the second point. Seen through these lenses, the post-September 11 use of the term "radicalisation" to designate almost exclusively violent political actions stemming from Jihadist groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda might indicate that the past left-wing utopias have now lost to Islamism being perceived by individuals as the only viable counter-hegemonic utopia in the age of globalization.

3. Social, Economic and Political Root-Causes of Radical Mobilisation

As Gurr (1969) pointed out earlier angry people rebel. Some youngsters become increasingly angry and radicalised as a result of a variety of root causes. No consensus emerged on the root causes of radicalisation. Competing narratives co-existed from its inception between socio-economic and political marginalization and grievances on the one hand and ideological motivations on the other hand. In the aftermath of September 11, the term radicalisation became intertwined with "recruitment" by extremists, who try to persuade these angry individuals to join their war (Coolsaet, 2019). Those who recruit these angry individuals may be both Islamist extremists (e.g., ISIS, Al Qaeda, and Boko Haram) and white-supremacist extremists (e.g., Identitarian Movement, Combat-18, and the Soldiers of Odin; CEP, 2019). In the meantime, some other terms, such as "self-radicalisation," "flash radicalisation," and "instant radicalisation," were also added into the vocabulary of radicalisation since it appeared that one could also develop into a violent extremist through kinship and friendship networks (Coolsaet, 2019). Such a vocabulary can be extended even more. However, one needs to benefit from an interdisciplinary perspective to understand the root causes of radicalisation without causing a confusion with regard to the meanings of the terms such as radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism. This confusion can be resolved by analysing the socio-economic, political, spatial, and psychological drivers of radicalisation. To that effect, some earlier interventions made in the disciplines of sociology, politics, anthropology, geography, and psychology could be beneficial in understanding the root-causes of radicalisation as well as the ways in which radicalising individuals mobilise themselves.

Focusing on the early 19th century social movements, Calhoun (2011) makes a three-fold classification of radicalism: philosophical radicalism, tactical radicalism, and reactionary radicalism. *Philosophical radicalism of theorists* was about penetrating to the roots of society with rational and analytical programs to understand the structural transformation of the public sphere. *Tactical radicalism of activists* was mainly about their search for immediate change that required the use of violence and other extreme actions to achieve it. Finally, *reactionary radicalism of those* suffering from the detrimental effects of modernization was more about their quest for saving what they valued in communities and cultural traditions from eradication by capitalism. These categories are not mutually exclusive. Following this line of thinking, the leaders of the Reformation were radicals as they claimed to take back what was essential to Christianity from the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church. In philosophy, René Descartes was radical in his attempt to analyse knowledge by thinking through its elementary conditions anew. In everyday life, there were also radical individuals

who challenged hierarchical order by judging basic matters for them—guided by their divine inner light, senses, and reason (Calhoun, 2011).

Radicalism cannot be understood as a stable ideological position. Ideas that are radical at some point could be liberal or even conservative for another. Liberals and democrats of the 19th century were the radicals of their age. It is no longer possible to call them as such. The 1968 generation was also radical in the sense that they challenged the patriarchal socio-political order. The radicals of the 1968 generation were different from the radicals of the 19th century. Similarly, the radicals of the present are also very different from the former ones. Departing from the theory of social movements, Calhoun (2011) claims that the defence of tradition by nationalist, nativist, populist, and/or religious groups has also become a radical stance today. He even continues to suggest that this sort of populism and conservatism "has been important to struggles for democracy, for inclusion in the conditions under which workers and small proprietors live" (Calhoun, 2011, p. 250).

Charles Tilly's explanation of collective action is also instrumental for social scientists to better understand the distinctive characteristics of mobilization at present time, and radical mobilisation in this case. He makes distinctions among three different forms of mobilization: *defensive*, *offensive*, and *preparatory*. *Defensive mobilization* is often bottom-up. A threat from outside such as globalism, capitalism, or injustice, induces the members of a group to pool their resources to fight of the enemy. Tilly classifies the radical food riots, tax rebellions, invasions of fields, and draft resistance in contemporary Europe as defensive forms of mobilization. One could also list nativist and Islamist youth mobilizations in the same cluster. *Offensive mobilization* is often top-down. This could be a political alliance between bourgeois and artisans to produce the Great Reform Bill of 1832 that introduced radical changes to electoral system of England and Wales (Tilly, 1977, p. 34). One could also argue that the new political alliances organized by some European right-wing populist parties among various social groups such as working-class groups, precarious groups, women, and LGBTI groups that generate a growing stream of Islamophobic sentiments, may also fall into this category (Kaya, 2019). Eventually, the last category of mobilization according to Tilly (1977) is *preparatory mobilization*, which is also a top-down one. In this kind of mobilization, the group pools resources in anticipation of future opportunities and threats. For instance, labour unions store some money to cushion hardships that may appear in the future in the form of unemployment, or loss of wages during a strike. This is a kind of proactive mobilization planned for future threats. Accordingly, one could argue that PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident), established first in Dresden, can be named as preparatory form of mobilization as they seek to protect the Occident from the Muslim "invasion" (Kaya, 2019).

There is also a strand of research in psychology which relies on socio-economic characteristics to understand the root causes of radicalisation. According to this strand, the main driver of radicalisation is the perception of *grievance*—conflicting identities, injustice, oppression, or socio-economic exclusion, for example—which can make people receptive to extremist ideas. Taarnby (2005) theorized that marginalization, alienation, and discrimination could be possible precursors to radicalisation as they already lack the sense of self-worth that is afforded by social connectedness. Global injustice has become more and more visible in the last three decades through the modern networks of communication. Civil war or deep-rooted conflicts, invasion and occupation by foreign military forces, economic underdevelopment, bad governance and corruption penetrating the state at all levels, rapid modernization, de-industrialization and technological developments such as the rise of internet and social media are all different kinds of factors which have fostered existing socio-economic inequalities (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008). On top of marginalization and economic deprivation, lack of political opportunities is often added to such a list as well as social exclusion, disaffection of a religious/ethnic minority, wrongful foreign policy, etc. (Maskaliūnaitė, 2015, p. 20). Socio-economic grievances felt by various individuals may also feed in the competition of different social groups in a way that leads to the construction of group identification in the form of "in-groups" and "out-groups" (Allport, 1954; Tajfel, 1981).

4. Islamic Radicalisation: The Revival of Honour as a Response to Global Injustice

This section will elaborate the peculiarities of religious radicalisation with an emphasis on the ways in which some self-identified Muslim youngsters react to the perils of modernisation and globalisation. Religious and ethno-cultural resurgence may be interpreted as a symptom of existing structural social, economic, political, and psychological problems such as unemployment, racism, xenophobia, exclusion, assimilation, alienation, and anomie. Scientific data uncover that migrant-origin groups tend to affiliate themselves with politics of identity, ethnicity, religiosity, honour, culture, and sometimes violence in order to tackle such structural constraints (Clifford, 1987; Kaya, 2012).

Since the Gulf War in the early 1990s Islam has become a political instrument for many people in the world to be employed as a self-defence mechanism against different ills such as humiliation, subordination, exclusion, discrimination, injustice, and racism. Religion seems to be winning ground in the absence of a global leftist movement. De Certeau (1984, p. 183) reminds us of the discursive similarities between left and religion: left offering a *different future*, religion offering a *different world*, and both offering solidarity. Though the left and Islam both promise a different world to their adherents,

they radically differ from each other in the sense that the former offers a world that is not yet to come, and the latter offers a world that was already experienced in the past. To put it differently, the left offers a prospective world while Islam offers a retrospective one.

Some segments of the Muslim-origin youth in the West go through a crisis of home. While immigrants who are more integrated do not experience a great loss of significance as a result of discrimination, their less integrated peers suffer from isolation, alienation, and loss of significance (Lyons-Padilla et al., 2015). Lately, many young self-identified Muslims do not feel that they belong to their countries of settlement where they are bound to question whether they are accepted or not by the majority societies (Lyons-Padilla et al., 2015). During such critical junctures, aversion to the context in the country of settlement seems stronger than attraction to Syria, Palestine, Yemen, or the Middle East in general. In this sense, joining an organization or an association might offer a sense of belonging and purpose, and the promise of recognition and status for already marginalized Muslim youth who feel betwixt and between the positions constrained by social-economic, political, and legal arrangements alienating them from their country of settlement. As already discussed by van Gennep (1908) and Turner (1974) in different contexts, this kind of rite of passage might amplify liminal phase of being stateless and homeless as a sort of disaffiliation, after which a combative oath is taken in the form of re-grouping that clears the way for a reconstitution and re-affiliation of community of brotherhood (*ihkwaniyya*), or *umma* in a new re-imagined home called *Sham* (Levant, extending from the Antakya region of Turkey, through Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and round to the Sinai peninsula in Egypt). For instance, such emblematic rituals in Syria foster newly found social bondage and self-identification (Alloul, 2019, p. 228). Under such circumstances, Syria or other Muslim countries under perceived siege, such as Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq, become a highly symbolic counter-space, or "consequential geography" for staging actual politics against a former home in Europe (Alloul, 2019, p. 229).

4.1. Unconventional Forms of Political Participation

Most of our self-identified Muslim interlocutors have often underlined their engagement in street demonstrations organised to show solidarity with their Muslim peers suffering in Palestine, Syria, Afghanistan, and Xinjiang Uyghur region of China. Almost all the Muslim youngsters interviewed, both men and women, have expressed their reluctance to join unconventional forms of political participation such as street demonstrations with only one exception. There were a small minority expressing their support for some street demonstrations organised by some native groups such as Yellow Vests demonstrations in France and Black Lives Matter demonstrations all over Europe. If the street demonstrations are about showing solidarity with the Muslims in the other parts of the world, then there is the strong tendency to actively take part in such demonstrations. The statement made by a 30-year-old-Moroccan male is exemplary in this sense. He said the following when asked what he thinks about taking part in street demonstrations:

> Before, there were more demonstrations, particularly on strictly political issues, linked to international news. When I was younger, I remember taking part in demonstrations for Palestine….We already felt that it was useless, but it allowed us to show our number, to show that there were many of us who were revolted by what was happening in Palestine. It allowed us to shout, to express our anger. (Interview conducted in Paris, 6 September 2020)

Islam is no longer simply a religion, but also a counter hegemonic global political movement, which prompts many Muslims to stand up for justice and against tyranny—whether in Palestine, Syria, Kashmir, Iraq, or Lebanon. They are more likely to set up a link between such perceived tyranny in remote Muslim lands and their countries of settlement that are somehow thought to be responsible for the subordination of their Muslim peers.

Radicalisation of Muslim-origin youngsters is a reaction to the ways in which they perceive to be subordinated by their countries of settlement, because radicalisation might provide them with an opportunity to build an imagined home away from the one that has become indifferent and alienating. Hence, Craig Calhoun's notion of reactionary radicalism fits very well into the ways in which the self-identified young Muslims in our research universe have expressed their discontent against the detrimental effects of globalisation and modernisation (Calhoun, 2011). Radicalisation then becomes a regime of justification and an alternative form of politics generated by some self-identified Muslim youth to protect themselves from day-to-day discrimination. In this sense, self-identified young Muslims generate a defensive form of mobilisation with the members of their communities (Tilly, 1977). They believe that speaking from the margins might be a more efficient strategy to be heard by the ones in the centre who have lost the ability to listen to the peripheral ones. As Young (2004, p. 5) pointed out it is not that "they" do not know how to speak (politics), "but rather that the dominant would not listen."

4.2. Resisting Intersectional Forms of Discrimination

Self-identified Muslim youngsters may use different symbols to hold onto while expressing their discontent against various forms of discrimination in everyday life such as anti-Muslim racism, or different manifestations of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism. Headscarf has increasingly become a symbol of resistance that is being employed by some young female Muslims to demonstrate their resistance and reaction against the increasing

manifestations of Islamophobia in everyday life. Muslim women are often victims of stereotyping, since their religious beliefs are seen as the only defining element of their identity in those European states where Islam is not the religion of the majority of the population. Unfortunately, media contribute to this phenomenon by reporting on Muslim women mainly as victims of so-called "tribal matters," "honour crimes," and "blood feuds" in relation to their clothing.

Self-identified Muslim women's clothing has continuously been linked with fundamentalism as a radical and undemocratic interpretation of Islam, which has in turn been linked with radicalisation and potential terrorism. Political debate and legislative action concerning Muslim women in Europe is mostly concentrated on the issues of the headscarf, and even more the integral veil, instead of focusing on non-discrimination and equal opportunities. The following testimony of a 22-year-old Muslim woman with Turkish origin in Berlin said the following when asked if she is interested in politics in everyday life:

> The discussion [is mostly] about whether the headscarf is being forcefully worn. Well, there are maybe some women who are forced to wear a headscarf. This occurs within a minority, but nobody talks to the majority [of Muslims who wear the headscarf by their own choice]. It is never about what we want. It's only about representing us as a target. If one doesn't talk to us, then one can't know what we want. This is because many Muslims are not interested in politics….Sometimes I get the impression that wearing a headscarf you are only allowed to take the low-skilled jobs, but not the high-skilled ones. That's a paradox. (Interview conducted in Berlin, 30 June 2020)

Our interlocutor addresses at the intersectionality of social divisions of class, gender, religion, and ethnicity (Crenshaw, 1991) in the case of different professions: The headscarf is not a problem if the woman at stake is working as cleaner, or taking care of children in a nursery, but it becomes an impediment in professions which require high skills. Like many other Muslim women, she believes that her individual freedom is restricted under the disguise of individual liberty imposed by the majority society. It is decided for her that she needs to be liberated from the headscarf which keeps her from "doing things." The paradox is that it is not the headscarf that keeps her from doing things, but a dominant regime of representation that is deemed to know better. In such a context, headscarf might become a symbol of resistance for Muslim women to demonstrate their discomfort by appropriating a symbol that is denied and rejected by the members of majority society.

Issues of intersectional discrimination among Muslim women and men have become even more complicated during the height of populism. Supporters of right-wing populist parties in Europe often share the same motivation: to stop foreign infiltration of Europe and resist globalization, which brings with it international mobility, diversity, multiculturalism, trade, and deindustrialization. The perceived infiltrators are mainly those Muslims who are believed to be "stoning their women," "raping European women," "molesting children," and "drug-trafficking". Self-identified young Muslim men are also subject to a set of intersectional discrimination in everyday life. For instance, the sexual assaults committed by immigrant men in Cologne on the 2016 New Year's Eve have fuelled different forms of discrimination that young Muslim men in Europe have been experiencing (Kaya, 2019). In addition to multiple forms of discrimination in the labour market, education, politics, and elsewhere, since then young Muslim men are being perceived by many as potential rapists and terrorists. It is a fact that competition between social groups over scarce resources creates tensions that encourage prejudices among individuals, who have a fundamental need to perceive their own in-group as superior to competing out-groups (Allport, 1954; Tajfel, 1981). A 30-year-old Moroccan male youngster from The Hague said the following when asked about his opinion on multiculturalism and diversity in the Netherlands:

> Multiculturalism is part of the Dutch identity. A lot of people are nowadays nostalgic and they are longing for a time of "how it used to be." But then you have to go far back, migration has always been a part of the Netherlands, it is not a new phenomenon. With every new wave of migrants, you need a few generations before they are truly settled in, look at the difference between us and our parents….The problem is that the Netherlands is polarized, and it is the extremes that dominate the debate. It is always us versus them. (Interview in The Hague, 10 September 2020)

Many self-identified Muslim youngsters that we interviewed have stated that the existing societal and political polarisation appears to be motivated by a broader authoritarian outlook entailing nostalgia for traditional ways of doing things. These youngsters also perceive that many European citizens see Muslims as signifiers of vast social changes that have disrupted more traditional ways of life since the post-war period. In a similar vein, scientific studies also demonstrate that these changes produce some uncertainty and disquiet in the eyes of many Europeans in ways that threaten the established concepts of nation, identity, culture, and tradition, as well as the constitutive social hierarchies for many individuals (Gest et al., 2017). Resorting to the past and becoming nostalgic, in this sense, is a compensatory and reflective code of conduct to mediate the tension between tradition and change in a globalizing world.

4.3. In the Guidance of Honour in Times of Crisis

Individuals are more likely to use the languages that they know best to express their concerns in everyday life

such as poverty, exclusion, unemployment, humiliation, and racism. If they are not into the language of deliberative democracy, they are more likely to use the languages they think they know the best, such as religion, culture, ethnicity, past, and even violence. In an age of insecurity, uncertainty, and anomy, disenfranchised individuals may become more engaged in the protection of their *honour*, which, they believe, is the only thing left. Referring to Khaldun (1969), a 14th century sociologist in North Africa, Ahmed (2003) claims that Muslims tend to reify honour in the collapse of the Khaldunian notion of *asabiyya*, an Arabic word meaning group loyalty, social cohesion, or solidarity. *Asabiyya* is the cement that brings individuals together through a shared language, culture, and code of behaviour. There is a direct negative correlation between *asabiyya* and the resurgence of honour. The collapse of *asabiyya* on a global scale makes Muslims to regenerate *honour*. *Asabiyya* dissolves for the following reasons: massive urbanization, a population explosion, intense demographic changes, large scale migrations, gap between rich and poor, the widespread corruption and mismanagement of rulers, rampant materialism coupled with the low premium on education, the crisis of identity, and ideas and images which challenge traditional values and customs (Ahmed, 2003).

Revitalizing honour serves at least a dual purpose for the diasporic communities. Firstly, it is a way of coming to terms with the present without being seen to criticise the existing status quo. Secondly, it also helps to recuperate a sense of the self not dependent on criteria handed down by others. In-depth interviews with self-identified Muslim youngsters with both Turkish and Moroccan origin have revealed that they all assign Islam a great task guiding them in search of being a better person in the world, which is identified with chaos, insecurity, instability, and polarisation. Islam provides them with a set of values that make it possible for them to find meaning and stability. A 25-year-old Moroccan woman in The Hague, the Netherlands, said the following when she was asked what the role of religion was in her life:

> Religion means everything to me. It makes me who I am and the way I grow every day. I reflect on myself every day: What have I done today that I could have done better? I am patient, I know how to deal with setbacks. I know how to be loving, I take care of the poor and vulnerable. It teaches me how to live in peace, it is leading for every decision I make. It is important to be fair and just. (Interview in The Hague, 20 August 2020)

Islam gives guidance to many Muslim youngsters. This was one of the most recurring tropes that we encountered everywhere when we interviewed Muslims. Islam as a religion restores the *Asabiyya*, social cohesion, in the eyes of our interlocutors, and it offers each of them a set of values that might help them navigate in the everyday life that is full of intersectional forms of discrimination, racism, inequality, and injustice. Values refer to lasting priorities, aspirations, and wishes, and they inspire attitudes and behaviour. Values are useful concepts when we seek to understand consistent patterns of social, political, and cultural preferences (Merino et al., 2021). To that effect, this is a kind of search for certainty in the age of endemic uncertainties brought about by globalization may prompt some young Muslims to revitalise honour and purity. Essentialisation and revival of honour and purity leaves no room for the recognition of difference. The search for certainty operates on an individual level irrespective of being in majority, or in minority. Hence, the temptation not to recognize ethno-cultural and religious differences has become a frequent act among individuals of any kind complaining about the destabilizing effects of globalizing uncertainties.

5. Right-Wing Nativist Radicalisation: The Revival of the Populist Nativism as a Response to Neo-Liberal Governance

On the other side of the same coin, one could also observe similar acts of radicalisation performed by right-wing populist youth on the basis of anti-multiculturalism, Islamophobia, anti-globalism, and Euroscepticism. Right-wing populist parties and movements often exploit the issue of migration, especially the migration of Muslims, and portray it as a threat to the welfare and the social, cultural, and even ethnic features of a nation (Ferrari, 2021). Populist leaders also tend to blame a soft approach to migration for some major problems in society such as unemployment, violence, crime, insecurity, drug trafficking, and human trafficking. This tendency is reinforced by a racist, xenophobic, and demeaning discourse. Public figures like Geert Wilders in the Netherlands have spoken of a "foreign infiltration" of immigrants, especially Muslims, in their countries. Wilders even predicted the coming of *Eurabia*, a mythological future continent that will replace modern Europe (Greenfield, 2013), where children from Norway to Naples will learn to recite the Koran at school, while their mothers stay at home wearing *burqas*.

Right-wing populism is a response to and a rejection of the order imposed by neoliberal elites, an order that fails to use the resources of the democratic nation-state to harness global processes for local needs and desires (Mouffe, 2018). Such populism results from deep-rooted structural disparities and general disadvantage that mainstream political parties have so far actively contributed to in their neoliberal governance. Anthropological approaches mostly understand populism as "the moods and sensibilities of the disenfranchised who face the disjuncture between everyday lives that seem to become extremely anomic and uncontainable and the wider public power projects that are out of their reach and suspected of serving their ongoing disenfranchisement" (Boyer, 2016; Kalb, 2011, p. 14).

As Rodrigues-Pose (2018, pp. 196–198), a geographer, put it:

> Populism as a political force has taken hold in many of the so-called spaces that do not matter, in numbers that are creating a systemic risk. As in developing countries, the rise of populism in the developed world is fuelled by political resentment and has a distinct geography. Populist votes have been heavily concentrated in territories that have suffered long-term declines and reflect an increasing urban/regional divide.

It is not a surprise then to see that right-wing populism has become a recurring phenomenon in remote places such as Dresden, Rotterdam, Lyon, and Aalst, as well as rural and mountainous places that do not matter anymore for the neo-liberal political parties in the centre that are heavily engaged in the flows of globalization such as international trade, migration, foreign direct investment, and urbanization. The feelings of being left behind in those remote places that "no longer matter" in the eyes of the political centre may sometimes lead to what one might call "spatial deprivation."

5.1. Socio-Economic, Spatial and Nostalgic Deprivation in Remote Places

Youth in remote places which "no longer matter" tend to become more appealed to the anti-systemic parties such as right-wing populists because of their growing socio-economic disadvantages. However, socio-economic deprivation is not the only factor explaining populism's appeal. There are also some cultural and memory factors that play an essential role. Many people nowadays experience what Gest et al. (2017) call "nostalgic deprivation," which refers to an existential feeling of loss triggered by the dissolution of established notions of identity, culture, nation, and heritage in the age of globalisation (Godwin & Trischler, 2021). A growing number of people is now longing for job security, stability, belonging, a sense of future, and also solidarity among workers (Muehlebach & Shoshan, 2012, p. 318). Similarly, those who live in the areas left behind may also become dissidents against the neo-liberal political centre (Droste, 2021). Those having witnessed long periods of decline, migration, and brain drain, those that have seen better times and remember them with nostalgia, and those that have been repeatedly told that the future lays elsewhere have used the ballot box as their weapon. Their sons and daughters are not different from their parents. Those who could not go elsewhere for education or work are not left with many options to find a compensatory form of control in everyday life such as ethno-national radicalism, populism, nativism, and sometimes white supremacism if not religion. Different forms of deprivation have been prevalent among the native youngsters who live in socio-economically deprived remote places. A 23-year-old male youngster interviewed in Dresden made the following statement when asked about the current economic state of his family:

> After 2005, my father was unemployed twice within ten years. After the reunification he had to go to the KVP [*Kasernierte Volkspolizei*, Barracked People's Police] for a couple of months. The tavern he used to work for was closed. Then he went to the police. He became a cook for the kitchen of the riot police. The kitchen there was privatized in 2006, and after two years around 2007 and 2008 it was closed. He was unemployed for a year. The municipality did a public-private partnership for a prison kitchen, part of the business was tendered privately. A sub-contractor was in charge of the kitchen….He was working in that kitchen for five years between 2009 and 2014….Instead of a 25-year lasting work contract and pension money, he was unemployed again after four and a half years. (Interview in Dresden, 10 November 2020)

Such feelings of socio-economic, spatial and nostalgic deprivation that one could see in an extract taken from the interview often find channels of communication with the outside world through the fear of Islam, migration and diversity, that is highly promoted by right-wing populist parties and movements in Europe.

5.2. Islamophobia and Anti-Migrant Sentiments

The fear of Islam and migration is prevalent among the radicalising native youngsters that we have interviewed. A 25-year-old native male youngster in Rotterdam said the following when asked about his opinion on the current state of migration in the Netherlands:

> I think we should take care of war victims from Syria, but as soon as it is safe in Syria they should return. I think that is solidarity, you host them in times of war and then they have to go back. But now we are immediately giving these refugees passports and priority on the housing market while there is a huge housing shortage in the Netherlands. I am not a racist but my own people first. Moreover, we do not have the capacity in the Netherlands to receive so many people….The problem is that we have a huge shortage of housing and that refugees also get prioritized for housing. (Interview in Rotterdam, 29 October 2020)

Populism as a reactionary form of radicalisation is not a disease or irrational anomaly, as it is often portrayed, but as the symptom of structural constraints that have been disregarded by mainstream liberal political parties in power in the last three decades. Populism is a systemic problem with deep structural causes. Populist parties' voters are dissatisfied with and distrustful of

mainstream elites, who are perceived as cosmopolitan, and they are hostile to immigration and growing ethno-cultural and religious diversity. While some of these groups feel economically insecure, their hostility springs from a combination of social-economic, spatial, and nostalgic deprivation resulting from their belief that immigrants and ethno-cultural and religious minority groups are threatening societal and national security (Reynié, 2016). In other words, the anxieties driving support for these parties are rooted not solely in socio-economic grievances but in cultural fears and a (cultivated) sense of cultural threat coming from globalisation, immigration, multiculturalism, and diversity, which have been stocked by liberals too. Such fear of social-economic, spatial, and nostalgic deprivation is likely to bring about a form of reactionary radicalisation (Calhoun, 2011) among self-identified native youth residing in remote places, who demonstrate the need to generate a defensive form of political mobilisation in alliance with their peers in organised populist parties and social movements (Tilly, 1977).

At the very heart of the rise of right-wing populist nativism lies a disconnection between politicians and their electorates. Right-wing populist parties have gained greater public support in the last decade in the mist of two global crises: the financial and the refugee crises. The former, combined with neoliberal governance, has created socio-economic deprivation for some Europeans, while the latter has triggered nostalgic feeling that established notions of identity, nation, culture, tradition, and collective memory are endangered by immigration. The populist moment has both strengthened many of the former far-right-wing parties or created new ones (Kaya, 2019).

5.3. "Lost in Diversity"

Right-wing populists often construct a racialised enemy. They feed on a culturally constructed antagonism between the "pure people" and "the corrupt elite" and other "enemies." In Europe, right-wing populists define "the people" largely in ethno-religious terms while more or less openly rejecting the principle of equality. Despite national variations, populist parties are characterised by: their opposition to immigration and Islam; a concern for the protection of national culture and European civilisation; adamant criticisms of globalisation, multiculturalism, the EU, representative democracy, and mainstream political parties; and the exploitation of a discourse of essentialised cultural difference, which is often conflated with religious and national difference (Mudde, 2004). Our native interlocutors in remote places have often laid blame on Islam for different kinds of ills that they have experienced in everyday life. In other words, Islam becomes an easy target, or a scapegoat, that is being addressed by many of our interlocutors as an epitome of all kinds of maladies resulting from globalisation, unemployment, mobility, diversity, anomy, deindustrialisation, depopulation, and ambiguity. A 20-year-old native male youngster in Oldenbroek in the Netherlands said the following when asked to talk about himself in general:

> When I was 14 years old I "accidently" signed up as a member for the SGP [Reformed Political Party, an Orthodox Calvinist party] youth party….I am particularly proud of two events I organized. One was a debate about the refugee crisis in 2015, the whole room was packed with people, I led the debate and afterwards a lot of new members signed up for our party. The other event I organized was in 2018, a debate about the danger of Islam in our society, I called it: "Is the Islam a threat for the Netherlands"? During the debate there was a lot of security and police because we received threats from several Muslims. (Interview in Oldenbroek, 17 September 2020)

Picking up the refugees and Islam has certainly brought popularity and fame to this youngster, who also talked a lot about the detrimental effects of globalisation on his traditional community. His resentment against social change resulting from the flows of globalisation finds tune in his Islamophobic statements. It is a fact that the global financial crisis and the refugee crisis of the last decade have accelerated and magnified the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe. However, it would be wrong to reduce the reasons for the populist surge to these two crises. They have played a role, but they are at best catalysts, not causes. After all, if "resentment" and "reaction" as sociological concepts posit that losers in the competition over scarce resources respond in frustration with diffuse emotions of anger, fear, and hatred (Allport, 1954; Tajfel, 1981), then there are other processes that may well have contributed to generate such resentment and reaction, such as de-industrialization, rising unemployment, growing ethno-cultural diversity, terrorist attacks in the aftermath of September 11, and so on (Della Porta & LaFree, 2012).

6. Conclusion

In this article, we have seen that the notion of radicalisation is not clear, while its use by politicians and state authorities unambiguously targets political opponents advocating changes in the system. Mostly, radicalisation as a rhetorical tool allows neo-liberal forms of governmentality to push their economic reforms, to downplay the challenging aspects of radical groups against their ideological hegemony and to do so by gathering majority support. The downside of this strategy, however, is the rise of Islamist radicalisation and right-wing populist-nativist radicalisation as a consequence.

Neoliberalism, which hides a corporate agenda behind discourses advocating for the dismantlement of the welfare state, leads to progressive social isolation

and alienation of the individual. This in turn, leads individuals to seek empowerment, and precisely, it is argued, through identity politics. Thus, it is concluded that the discourse surrounding radicalisation can partly explain the parallel rise of reactionary forms of Islamist and right-wing populist radicalisation to express discontent with the current social, economic and political climate, because it allows to push further security and police related policies within societies while rendering salient divisive ethno-religious and ethno-cultural identity topics in the public sphere. The interviews conducted with both self-identified Muslims and self-identified natives demonstrated that radicalisation is the end of a causal chain involving factors such as social-economic, spatial, and nostalgic forms of deprivation. However, one should also be reminded that they might be other powerful arguments raised in psychology to underline that radicalisation cannot be reducible to a causal explanation relying on structural factors, but it could also be explained through emotions and group belonging dynamics.

Based on the theoretical interventions by Craic Calhoun, Charles Tilly, Andrés Rodrigues-Pose, Victor W. Turner, Gordon W. Allport, and Henri Tajfel, as well as on the empirical data driven from an ongoing field research conducted in several European cities, this article concludes that the defence of religion, tradition, culture, and past by religious, nationalist, nativist, or populist groups has become a radical stance today. This radical stance can be interpreted as a reactionary form of resistance against the perils of modernisation and globalisation experienced by both self-identified Muslim and self-identified native youth groups in Europe. As the channels of communication between these two groups are rather limited, or even non-existent, they cannot refrain themselves from co-radicalising each other on the basis of religio-political and ethno-cultural differences since September 11. This article suggests that both Islamist revival and right-wing populism can be regarded as outcries of those who feel pressurised by the perils of modernisation and globalisation. Then, one could also assess these protests as struggles for democracy, rather than threats to democracy.

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