

ALLAH IN VALHALLA:
A PRISMATIC INQUIRY INTO SWEDEN'S ANTI-MUSLIM MOVEMENT

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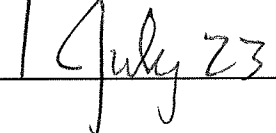
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ABSTRACT

Violence and discrimination against Muslims and immigrants from countries with a Muslim majority is a pervasive problem that is becoming entrenched in Western societies. Sweden, often considered a bastion of peace and tolerance, is experiencing the escalation of violence against these populations coupled with a growing movement to institutionalize anti-Muslim sentiments through government policy. This study explores literatures across disciplines and perspectives across cleavages to analyze the issues and processes that contribute to violence and those that promote the peaceful resolution of Sweden's conflict. Using a combination of methodological approaches, interviews were conducted with relevant actors to bolster the analysis by exploring the sources and drivers of conflict as individuals within the conflict context conceive them. Analysis of relevant government policies and programming is also included, with a conclusion that recommends enhancing the incorporation of established theories from the field of peace and conflict resolution in policy and social programs.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On July 22nd of 2011 news quickly spread that a bomb had detonated at the executive government offices in Norway's capitol, Oslo. Early speculation on the perpetrator of the attacks was cut short as details soon emerged that a man by the name of Anders Behring Breivik, a Norwegian with blue eyes and blonde hair, had now advanced to a shooting spree on the nearby island of Utøya, killing everyone in sight. When Breivik was finally apprehended, a truly horrifying picture emerged: 69 people, most teenagers as young as fourteen, died on the island and eight more were killed in Oslo.¹ After learning that the deranged killer was largely motivated by Islamophobia, citing typical anti-Muslim ideas and popular "counter-jihad" authors in his manifesto,² the worldwide surprise and shock at the event was quickly supplemented by realizations that the undercurrents for this type of violence had been evident in the region for some time. Hostility toward multiculturalism and hateful public rhetoric against Muslims and immigrants (often legitimated by the increasingly popular anti-Muslim political parties) have become regular features of European political discourse.

Norway and her eastern neighbor, Sweden, share several structural features relevant to the development of Anders Breivik's maniacal Islamophobic rage. For example, both countries operate in a multi-party system framework, and the main political parties in each country have neighboring counterparts: Norway's Labor party (the target of Breivik's attacks) closely matches

¹ The number dead at Utøya was unknown for days, as it took time to recover the bodies of victims who died in the freezing cold water trying to swimming away from the island. "Norway Attacks: The Victims," *BBC News Europe*

² Breivik's manifesto, self-distributed online just before the attacks, frequently makes praising references to Robert Spencer as well as European anti-Muslim writers and groups. "Norway Shooting: Anders Behring Breivik 'Inspired' by Robert Spencer and Unabomber," *Daily Mail Online* (2011). <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2018976/Norway-shooting-Anders-Behring-Breivik-inspired-Robert-Spencer-Unabomber.html> (accessed June 27, 2013).

the ideology of Sweden's Social Democrats, and on the far-right Norway's Progress Party (of which Breivik was once a member) is comparable to the Sweden Democrats.³ Both countries are parliamentary constitutional monarchies and are annually ranked as the least corrupt in the world.⁴ As strong social welfare states, Norway and Sweden also share similar economic structures: they are among the world's largest bi- and multi-lateral donors with the highest-ranking equality and human development index scores measuring health, education and living standards.⁵ The cultural similarities between all Scandinavian nations, particularly Norway and Sweden, are abundant and substantial.⁶ Further, and perhaps most relevant, these two nations have similar historical experiences with immigration from the Muslim world, though migrant demographics differ as does the scale of migration. However, Sweden has seen higher rates of immigration and experiences anti-Muslim violence with more frequency and intensity than in Norway.⁷

Although anti-Islamic sentiment related to immigration and integration was already on the rise in Europe before 9/11, the attacks on the United States sparked a sharp rise in the worldwide trend of xenophobia and Islamophobia in particular. In the last decade, Sweden

³ See "Nordic Populists Search Souls after July Attacks," *The Local: Norway* (2012). <http://www.thelocal.no/20120416/nordic-populists-search-souls-after-july-attacks> (accessed June 27, 2013).

⁴ Sweden ranked fourth and Norway fifth lowest on the Corruptions Perceptions Index in *The Economist*, "Pocket World in Figures 2013 Edition," (The Economist in association with Profile Books Ltd., 2012).

⁵ Norway ranked first and Sweden third of the world's largest bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors as percentage of GDP, with the same rankings on the Human Development Index. Sweden ranked as the world's lowest Gini coefficient and Norway the second lowest. Ibid.

⁶ See Hofstede indices. Geert and Gert Jan Hofstede Hofstede, Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 3rd. edition ed. (McGraw Hill, 2010).

⁷ In recent years, Sweden has received more immigrants than ever before. The proportion of the Swedish population with a foreign background can be compared to the US, and is higher than in the UK or France who have much larger populations and economies than Sweden. Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*, 2009.

(along with her neighbors) has seen an escalation of violence associated with the conflict between Muslim immigrants and non-Muslim Swedes. Repeated mosque arsons and other vandalism of public religious symbols, death threats and assassination plots on the life of Swedish cartoonist Lars Vilks in response to derogatory Mohammed cartoons published in 2007, serial shootings targeting Muslim immigrants in Malmö, and the bombings in Stockholm in December 2010 are all evidence of this rising current of contention. The institutionalization of an anti-Muslim attitude in Sweden is also on the rise, made clear with the national elections in 2010 where Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden's far-right political party selling an anti-Muslim platform),⁸ finally received enough votes to put members into parliament. While the party officially advocates nonviolent approaches, their rhetoric directly contributes to an anti-Islamic attitude that can translate into violence. The Oslo attacks in Norway can be seen as a dramatic escalation of the underlying trend of Islamophobia that has been growing in breadth and intensity in Norway, Sweden and elsewhere.

Purpose of the Research

All of these considerations come together to clarify the purpose of this research project: to examine what meaning is attached to Anders Breivik in Sweden, and how this relates to their own domestic conflicts with Muslims and a growing anti-Muslim movement. Through an in-depth analysis of qualitative interviews with various actors in Sweden, this thesis will put forth a modest attempt to develop a base of knowledge regarding Swedish perspectives on the changing dynamics, sources and drivers of this conflict, as well as effective approaches to peace. With a strong emphasis on the power of perceptions and relationships in conflict dynamics and conflict

⁸ SD's stances to this end are made explicit on the policy program made available on their website, as well as throughout the discourse contained on party leaderships blogs and user comment sections of these blogs. See "Sverigedemokraterna: Security & Tradition" <https://sverigedemokraterna.se>.

transformation, this analysis will hopefully reflect a plurality of cultural, religious and political approaches to this complex issue. The research is decidedly guided by an interest in what can be done to alleviate tensions and address underlying grievances, as well as exploring the factors that can potentially exacerbate the conflict. Numerous studies in Sweden indicate clearly that many Swedes have preconceived and negative opinions about Islam and Muslims, and given the growing visibility of this community in the public sphere, the debate on Islam and Muslims has become more intense in media.⁹ However, the dynamics through which these feelings translate into action against Muslims- in the form of discrimination or violence, for example- have so far been too narrowly assessed.

While social/political violence in Scandinavia is hardly the most extreme or intractable of the world's violent conflicts, several unique features of this conflict context make it an important endeavor in the field of international peace and conflict resolution and deserving of increased attention by policymakers and average citizens alike. First, this study shows that there is significant violence and discrimination in Sweden with evidence indicating a pattern of escalation. Second, this violence seems to be a somewhat puzzling occurrence in Scandinavia, a culture often considered to be essentially tolerant and peaceful. Though not harbored from social problems, Scandinavian nations have long been seen as resistant to violent conflict for several reasons: the region is highly developed socially and economically, and lacks the common conditions that lead social conflicts to escalate to violence. For example, great power asymmetries notorious for triggering violent social conflict elsewhere in the world do not exist in Sweden. In general, everyone resident in Sweden has basic needs met by a generous welfare system. Another condition that makes Sweden a curious candidate for violent social conflict is

⁹ Göran Larsson, ed. *Islam in the Nordic and Baltic Countries* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 65.

her strong institutional resilience- there are legitimate avenues for managing personal and communal conflicts, however some actors in the system still choose to resort to violent tactics to seek redress for their grievances. Finally, this study can uncover features of the Swedish context that can be applied in understanding other areas where Islamophobia contributes to violence such as the United States and elsewhere in Europe.

Defining Terminology and Key Concepts

One cannot speak with confidence on this complicated subject matter without first making clear the intentions behind the use of specific terminology. Engaging with the complexity of multiple ethnic, cultural and religious traditions- as well as a diversity of personal experience- that exists in this case can make it seem difficult to affirmatively assert generalizable conclusions about observed phenomenon and relationships. For accuracy, it is necessary to explicitly qualify any claims and substantiate all generalizations. Admittedly, the use of generalizations can often be misleading and unrepresentative of the plurality of a subject, but without their use it would be difficult to accomplish anything! In order to perform a tangible and valuable examination of this topic, while accommodating the limited scope in place, it was deemed necessary to employ a generally normative approach to the concepts of the research. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge a few of these resulting limitations.

In order to categorize this wealth of information, definitions were assigned to terms and social categories- not based on an ideal type, but on observed resemblances between those individuals belonging to this broader category. For example, when using the term “Swedes”, obviously the intention is not for this to apply to every single Swedish national, but rather to a substantiated generalization of the group of people relating to the specific issue on hand. Identity issues being confronted in this research are complicated, but must be organized and understood

to evaluate their role as sources and drivers of conflict and peace. Therefore, it is valuable to distinguish the social groups in this case as “people who are generally recognized by themselves or others as a distinct group based on social or cultural characteristics such as nationality, language and religion”, or what sociologist John Farley refers to as ethnicity.¹⁰

As a practical matter, the fact is that race, religion and ethnicity are socially meaningful because people are treated differently on those bases- even if distinctions do not make sense as a purely scientific concepts. Below is a non-exhaustive overview of some of the more loaded terms that will be used in this paper, along with a description of the intended- though admittedly convoluted- meaning. I have also tried to be explicit in the parameters of the terms applications, and specific problematic outcomes or considerations of limiting the terms use in this way.

Swede: Though this term may seem straightforward, for the purposes of this project arriving at useful boundaries for this fluid concept was difficult. The term ‘Swedish citizen’ is not useful in distinguishing between the groups under consideration here, as use of the term would assume that the majority immigrants are not citizens of Sweden, and this is factually incorrect.¹¹ Using the term ‘native Swede’ also proves problematic. Logically, this category would include all of those individuals born in Sweden, even if both or one parent is from the Arab/Muslim world, for example. However, it seems that common perceptions would group these individuals with ‘immigrants’ or ‘Muslims’ regardless of their religious identification or place of birth. Therefore, if an individual/group is seen to be ethnically Arab or culturally

¹⁰ Farley defines this as an ethnic group (John E. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, Fourth ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000), 9. For some, ethnicity is a highly salient feature of life, and for others it is not (example: Irish Americans), thus psychological identification with a group is an important part of what makes ethnicity real to people, though discrimination by others makes people’s ethnicity a salient feature whether they want it to be or not. It makes a difference in terms of intergroup relations whether or not a group is identifiable by appearance.

¹¹ Göran Larsson, *Muslims in the Eu: Cities Report- Sweden* (Göteborg: Open Society Institute- EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program, 2007), 11.

Muslim, despite factually being native to Sweden, they are not included in this category. The term ‘Swede’ will be used to describe a person with a ‘Swedish background’, i.e. a person born in Sweden with one or two native-born parents. Frequently, the more specific term ‘ethnically-Nordic’ will be implied, meaning both parents are from northern, Western Europe and at least one parent is from Sweden, Denmark, or Norway. For example, Scandinavia has a large number of Germans who moved after the world wars, and the children culminating from these migrants are commonly perceived to be “Nordic”. However, an individual born in Sweden, with one Scandinavian parent and one Somali parent, for example, would likely not be considered Swedish in most cases, specifically for purposes of discrimination that are relevant to this study.

Immigrant: For purposes of this research, references to ‘immigrants’ will largely refer to migrants from Muslim-majority countries. This category is defined as such for two reasons: First, there is extensive migration *within* the Nordic countries, and these migrants are very culturally and often visually similar to Swedes and thus rarely face discrimination, and are therefore far less relevant to this study. Second, according to official statistics, while immigrants come to Sweden from a diversity of regions and nations, the majority of non-Scandinavian immigrants are from Muslim-majority countries. Of this category, government statistics reflect that the largest numbers come from Iraq, Iran, Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia. Somalis, Turks and Pakistanis also have significant populations in Sweden. The term ‘foreign-born’ may also be used to describe first generation immigrants, and ‘a person with a foreign background’ to describe individuals born either in another country or in Sweden with two foreign-born parents. Obviously there is great cultural variance within the immigrant community in Sweden, especially when you take into consideration why an individual emigrated (i.e. refugee/asylum, migrant worker, family reunification, etc.) and when they moved to Sweden (i.e., 1970’s, after 2003 war

in Iraq, etc.). When using the term ‘refugee’ or something similar the intention is to refer to those who left the borders of their country by little personal choice.¹²

Muslim: Because this research assumes no objective understanding of Islam, there is a resulting inability to come to a conclusive definition on who exactly is a ‘Muslim’; definitions for this purpose will therefore be based on simplifications and normative assumptions. Ideally, one will look to how Muslims define themselves, rather than follow the pattern of defining categories for them. According to Tariq Ramadan, “A Muslim is someone who ‘feels Muslim’ irrespective of the extent to which he or she adheres to the principles of faith and how strictly observant he or she is”.¹³ However, reference to ‘Muslim immigrants’ for the sake of this study has been defined external to the community itself, and is extremely loaded to often include non-Muslim immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, as well as the children of Muslim immigrants that were born in Sweden and thus are not immigrants at all. This category has been defined as such for two reasons: First, it is unfortunately the case that while the Swedish Muslim population is diverse in regards to ethnicity, language, and religious orientation, they are often perceived categorically as a homogenous “other”. Second, it is forbidden to register data on religious affiliation or ethnic background in Sweden, so self-reported data is unavailable and scholars must estimate religiosity in other ways.¹⁴ It is common to read in literature of the

¹² It is often claimed by the anti-immigrant movement that many asylum claims to Sweden do not meet international standards for a refugee, therefore it may be relevant to present that definition now. According to the UN Refugee Convention, a refugee is “a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted...[reasons] is outside the country of his nationality”. Sweden has ratified this convention, meaning they have pledged to grant asylum to people in need of protection. "The 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol" <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49da0e466.html> (accessed June 27, 2013).

¹³ Tariq Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 208.

¹⁴ “In Sweden, acknowledged religious associations achieve funding from the government and the board responsible estimates that there are around 100,000 Muslims who are members of such associations”. Susanne Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," *Religion, State & Society* 37, no. 3 (2009): 281.

category ‘cultural Muslims’, which is a functional reference to what is often stereotyped as Arab or North African cultural behavior. For purposes of this research, relative levels of religiosity and secularity are not assessed, and the term ‘Muslim’ will be used to denote both cultural as well as religious identities. For some ‘Muslim’ even carries ethnicity attributes (for example, assuming that all Arabs are Muslims). Finally, given the nature of this study, use of the term ‘Muslim’ in this paper will exclude reference to ethnically Swedish Muslims, such as converts to Islam.

Assimilation and Multiculturalism: There are three major approaches to immigrant assimilation:¹⁵ 1) Immigrants should adopt and adapt to dominant culture as quickly as possible, 2) It is up to immigrants to decide how much they will assimilate; they should not be pushed in either direction, and 3) Immigrants should remain separate and not mix with the dominant culture. For the purposes of this study, approach one will be termed ‘assimilation’, and it would assume that the believer promotes inter-mixing of immigrants and natives as much as possible. Approach two, ‘multiculturalism’ may arguably contain the most internal diversity as a category, for example debates on what cultural features *must* be assimilated to the host culture (ex. moral norms) and which are voluntary. There is also a lot to be said about if, what and how the immigrant’s home cultures contribute to the dominant culture of their new country. ‘Integration’ also belongs in this category, and will be used to denote the goal for immigrants to meet priority areas of assimilation, such as language, employment, and housing. Approach three will be termed ‘segregation’, and it assumes an interest in keeping clear distinctions between “us” and “them”, including the suggestion to send immigrants back to their original home countries or refusing their entry in the first place.

¹⁵ Sean Richey, "The Impact of Anti-Assimilation Beliefs on Attitudes toward Immigration," *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2010): 198.

Finally, this study is guided by definitions related to conflict resolution that were critically developed by experts at the United States Institute of Peace:¹⁶ **Conflict** is an inevitable aspect of human interaction and is present when two or more individuals or groups pursue mutually incompatible goals. When channeled constructively into processes of resolution, conflict can be beneficial. **Conflict resolution** includes efforts to address the underlying causes of a conflict by finding common interests and overarching goals. It includes fostering positive attitudes and generating trust through reconciliation initiatives, and building or strengthening the institutions and processes through which the parties interact peacefully. **Conflict transformation** is a recently developed concept that emphasizes addressing the structural roots of conflict by changing existing patterns of behavior and creating a culture of nonviolent approaches. It proposes an integrated approach to peacebuilding that aims to bring about long-term changes in personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions. Recognizing that societies in conflict have existing systems that still function, conflict transformation focuses on building up local institutions as well as reducing drivers of conflict.

Overview of the Research Structure

The intention of this study is not to evaluate “the problem with Muslims in Sweden” as if there is an ideological boundary that separates the two categories. Rather, this project leads with the assumption that there is a significant conflict related to relationships between the Muslim/immigrant communities and the growing anti-Muslim movement in Sweden. Therefore, to understand conflict causes and dynamics as well as effective approaches to peace, this research will attempt to deconstruct the positions, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of the

¹⁶ "Glossary of Terms for Conflict Management and Peacebuilding" <http://glossary.usip.org/resources> (accessed June 27, 2013).

parties involved. While external actors do admittedly play a role in this conflict, this study will focus on three specific groups of Swedish society: the Muslim and immigrant communities, the socio-political anti-Muslim movement, and the government establishment. Certainly not the only option, the C.R. SIPABIO conflict assessment tool developed by Amr Abdallah, et al.¹⁷ was utilized to prepare a holistic initial map of the Swedish conflict context for this research. This conflict assessment model was selected over the more popular ICAF and DIFID models of conflict assessment because of the focus on relationships, which it is assumed are likely to prove very relevant to this case.

As for any thesis research, analysis of primary and secondary materials will be included. In addition to a review of existing literature on the subject, original data collection was pursued between October 2011 and September 2012. Methods of data collection and analysis have been identified that are appropriate to this context and are intended to gather a “thick description” of the context of the thesis questions. The goal is not to gather data that will allow for valid inferences about all Swedish citizens, or Sweden as a nation, but rather will explore the depth, nuances and subtleties of personal perspectives, approaches, and opinions of the problem. Original quantitative analysis will not be included in this project due to limitations with resources such as time, money and access to data sources. However, it is admitted that quantitative data would provide an interesting and important tool of analysis for this conflict, and can be incorporated into a continuation of this research in the future. With familiarity of the limited scope of qualitative analysis, as well as the finite range and validity of the data, the

¹⁷ In this tool, Abdallah identifies seven essential elements to any conflict: Sources/causes; Issues/interests; Parties; Attitudes/feelings; Behaviors; Intervention; Outcomes/stage. Amr et al. Abdallah, "Understanding C.R. SIPABIO: A Conflict Analysis Model," in *Say Peace: Conflict Resolution Training Manual for Muslim Communities* (Virginia: The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, 2002).

results of this study will be applied accordingly, noting assumptions and specific methodological limitations where appropriate.

Most broadly defined, the following research questions were considered in this study:

- What were the immediate reactions to the Norway attacks?
- How do people perceive the way the attacks- and the underlying conflict- were/are reflected in public discourse in Sweden?
- Along what lines are Swedes divided as to how to approach this conflict?
- What is the role of government, law enforcement, immigration and integration services, and Muslims organizations in this conflict and its resolution?
- How are perspectives on this conflict related to knowledge of Islam, relationships with Muslim individuals, and/or perceived culture and value differences?

The conceptual framework for this study is informed through a multiplicity of disciplines and attempts to assess multiple levels of analysis (individual, local, national, regional, international), and the linkages between these sectors. While more traditional disciplines will inform the analysis of the context of the conflict, the theories of peace and conflict resolution will strongly guide the analytical framework.

This introduction was intended to explicate the purpose and emphasize the relevance of this project. Additionally, the goal was to briefly explore important terms and concepts that will be referenced throughout this work and to introduce an organized research design. The next chapter will provide a thorough and detailed account of the methodology used guide this study, followed by a chapter that explores relevant literature and theoretical concepts to construct a viable contextual framework that can holistically inform the study of Muslims in Sweden. Armed with an understanding of this methodological and contextual background, the original findings will be presented, systematically arranged into functional categories. Next, an analysis of the data presented is pursued using the paradigms of peace and conflict resolution to inform

recommendations for both government policy as well as broader social programming to reduce and prevent violence and discrimination in Sweden.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

*The world is very complex. There are no simple explanations for things. Rather, events are the result of multiple factors coming together and interacting in complex and often unanticipated ways. Therefore any methodology that attempts to understand experience and explain situations will have to be complex.*¹⁸

The quote above elucidates the challenge to be expected when establishing a sturdy foundation for social science research, and this chapter on methodology will reflect an attempt to capture the complexities of this important social and political conflict in Sweden.

Research Design

Identifying a research area, defining the topic, and focusing and narrowing this scope were the foundational steps of this substantial research project. Initially, the interest was to explore incidents and causes of violence against Muslims in Scandinavia, in light of the attacks in Utøya and Oslo in July 2011. This would have included a survey and comparison of the phenomenon in Sweden, Denmark and Norway- each state exhibiting patterns of anti-Muslim sentiments in different ways. While an interesting topic, the data necessary to thoughtfully analyze this broad, complex phenomenon was clearly too copious for the resource parameters of a master's-level thesis project lacking outside funding. Therefore, the focus was significantly narrowed to analyze Swedish responses to the Norway attacks.¹⁹ Specifying the topic in this way is born of the assumption that Sweden and Norway share many relevant social, economic and political conditions that relate to Muslim/non-Muslim relations, and that Swedes would likely have an opinion on how the motivation for the attacks relates to Sweden's domestic situation

¹⁸ Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, "Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory," (SAGE Research Methods, 2008).

¹⁹ While still shedding some light on the dynamics of the initial research interest.

with Muslim immigrants and their own burgeoning anti-Muslim movement. A related practical concern of the project is to explore options to prevent this kind of extreme violence in Sweden, which has seen regular, albeit low-level, violence within and against the Muslim community. These assumptions and priorities determined the decisions that were made throughout the development and implementation of the project, and therefore it seems prudent to make them known at the outset.

After selecting a relatively manageable research area, background information was collected to situate the conflict in a broader context and trace the issue over time. Next began a preliminary literature review consisting of books and academic journals loosely related to the situation of Islam and Muslims in Europe, as publications focused entirely on Sweden the Nordic countries were sparse.²⁰ Additionally, a theoretical literature review was conducted to explore major theories surrounding the roots, drivers and trajectories of identity-based and intercultural conflicts. The literature review chapter of this thesis strives to fulfill an important criterion of any holistic research by surveying a multiplicity of disciplines,²¹ allowing for a well-rounded understanding informed from fields including theology, political science, economics, sociology, and of course, conflict resolution. The assumption underpinning this interdisciplinary design is that the complexity of this subject risks being distorted if viewed from only one angle.²²

Recognizing multiple recurring themes across these approaches, key concepts relating to the

²⁰ Further, as research for this project began shortly after the attacks in Norway, academic (i.e. peer-reviewed) publications about the event were unavailable at the project's inception and consequently, newspaper and magazine articles were heavily relied on for general information rather than analysis.

²¹ Amr Abdallah, "Principles of Research in the Areas of Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution," (Costa Rica: University of Peace, 2003).

²² Amr Abdallah, Heidi Resetarits and Lilian Umir, *Peace Research: A Practical Guide and Stories from the Field* (University of Peace, 2011), 4.

central thesis question were identified and explored throughout the collection of primary resource data focused specifically on Sweden and its Muslim population.

Original quantitative data was not included in this project due to limitations with resources such as time, money and access. However, this study would be well served to incorporate mixed methods of original data collection, combining both qualitative and quantitative processes.²³ Due to resource constraints, as well as the abundant availability of what can be assumed to be relatively reliable data collected by other institutions, this research incorporates analysis of several external statistical data sets compiled by other researchers that were found to overlap with this project.²⁴ In addition to a review of existing resources on the subject, original qualitative data collection was pursued for this project, intended to gather a “thick description” of the context of the thesis questions. The goal was not to gather data that would allow for valid inferences about all Swedish citizens, but rather to explore the depth, nuances and subtleties of personal perspectives, approaches, and opinions of the stakeholders involved in the conflict. While there is doubt about the objectivity of qualitative research, so long as it is understood that the selection of this type of research method affects how well the data will be able to reflect general opinions on the topic (and the population to study was chosen with this in mind) the methodology is viable.

Data Sampling Procedures

Because the intention of this project is not to compile data that can be generalized, purposeful sampling was used to select research participants. While this project will not discount

²³ For example, this research requires an objective picture of immigration patterns in order to situate the conflict in a historical context, and this kind of research is best achieved through quantitative approaches.

²⁴ Among these are national data sets (election statistics, immigration, housing, etc.), world rankings (from The Economist data sets), cultural indicators (Hofstede data set), and social trends studies published by Sweden’s universities.

the importance of identifying the substantive interests and issues affecting the conflicting parties, the focus on relationships will be central.²⁵ With this in mind, Lederach's model of the pyramid of actors and approaches to building peace are a central grounding of this research methodology and will be expanded upon further. Concerning actors, Swedish culture is considered to have a low Power Distance Index,²⁶ meaning that power is quite equally distributed throughout society, and people on the lower end of the power spectrum do not feel very detached from those at the high end of the spectrum. Therefore, focusing resolution efforts solely at the top-level leaders may be ineffective. Rather, for Swedes, it may be more appropriate to concentrate on mid-level efforts at mitigating this conflict.

According to Lederach, this middle range includes: persons who are respected or occupy leadership positions in various sectors; the networks that link institutions such as religious, academic and humanitarian organizations; and well-known leaders of informal community groups.²⁷ The benefit of collecting data from mid-level actors cannot be understated, as their position between the powerful top-level and the grounded constituency gives them a comprehensive context of the situation, as well as resources to coordinate efforts at creating infrastructure to support positive change. Another important point presented by Lederach is that leaders at this level did not reach their positions through physical or political power- their status derives from ongoing professional, institutional relationships.²⁸ Finally, midrange leaders often

²⁵ In his book *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, peace and conflict scholar John Paul Lederach offers a key theory that informs the assumptions that filter throughout the design of this research- the idea that peace comes not through traditional statist diplomacy, but rather from a process of transforming relationships between conflicting parties rather than focusing solely on the issues of contention. John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1997).

²⁶ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 59.

²⁷ Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, 41.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

have already established relationships across culture lines- precisely what is assumed to be necessary in the Swedish context being researched here.

Locating Potential Respondents

In this regard, active members in the midrange level of Swedish society- specifically individuals with political party, religious association, trade union, immigration, or law enforcement affiliations- were highly coveted for interviews. The breadth of the sample size depended largely on access to these individuals, and communication proved to be impossible with individuals from all of the aforementioned categories. Personal and professional connections were capitalized on initially to locate potential respondents, and relevant actors were identified and targeted for interviews. These connections were sought using social media websites such as Facebook and Skype, as well as by email. In the end, interview data was collected from individuals affiliated with the following organizations:

- Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden Democrats, political party)
- Sveriges socialdemokraterna (Social Democrats, largest political party)
- Kommunfullmäktige of Lund and Karlstad (Municipal Councils in Lund, Karlstad)
- Svenska Kommunalarbetsförbundet (Swedish Municipal Workers Union)
- Jusek (Professional Association of Graduates in Law, Economics and Management)
- Malmö Moské (Mosque and Islamic Center in Malmö)
- Svenska Muslimer för Fred och Rättvisa (Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice)
- Sveriges Unga Muslimer (Sweden's Young Muslims)

Limitations and Considerations of the Sample

A confessed limitation of this method of data sampling is the parameters of its application, but as previously noted the conclusions gleaned from the data collection and analysis are not meant to constitute a representative sample. This project recognizes the constraints of qualitative analysis, as well as the limited range and validity of the data, and will interpret the

results accordingly noting assumptions where appropriate. Further limitations emerging from the data collection processes will be discussed later in this section.

An important consideration of this methodology was the diversity of cultures to be navigated throughout the project design and implementation. Maintaining a suitable level of cultural appropriateness was particularly challenging when developing interview questions. Interviews were sought from leaders of organizations in Sweden including both the anti-immigrant political party, as well as the Muslim immigrant community, and it was assumed that these groups would hold strongly divergent opinions on the topic in question. However, ideally the same interview questions would be used for respondents from all communities, so that direct comparisons could be made with their responses. In conjunction with specialists in the field of culture and conflict resolution, appropriate steps were taken to ensure that the research design and implementation of data collection methods were as culturally informed and as sensitive as possible. For example, the wording of questions on the interview schedules used was revised numerous times to ensure that phrasing was as non-threatening and culturally nuanced as possible. A diligent effort was made to construct a participatory and inclusive research design, using simple language and gathering data in a way that ensured respondents could express their answers to their fullest capacity.²⁹

Data Collection Procedures

The survey method, well established in the social sciences, was used to collect data on respondent perceptions, attitudes and opinions, as well as to gather characteristics of

²⁹ The interview questionnaires were available in English and were offered in Swedish, though all respondents utilized the English language questionnaire. The interviewer had elementary knowledge of the Swedish language, but was also well aware of the general English fluency to be expected from most Scandinavians. A Swedish translator was available to the researcher at all times, and was occasionally utilized during interviews. The need for Arabic (or Somali, Pashto, Urdu, Turkish, etc.) translations or translators was considered as a possibility, however this need never presented itself when gathering data as all respondents were proficient, if not fluent, in English.

respondents. Responses were gathered by use of an interview schedule³⁰ delivered online and through in-person interviews when possible. A survey design was chosen with a flexible layout so as to leave room for brief or comprehensive answers to the questions asked. The questions were open-ended, eliciting unstructured, free responses that could be given in great detail, as well as qualified and clarified. This question format gave room for unanticipated responses and allowed for adequate responses to complex issues, richness of detail, and revealed the respondent's thinking process.³¹ Data was recorded through electronic communication storage methods, as well as handwritten notes and audio recordings of in-person meetings.

Two interview schedules were developed for this project, titled Organizational Response Questionnaire and Personal Perspective Questionnaire (see Appendix). The first questionnaire was intended to gather objective data about a single organization's response to the Utøya/Oslo attacks. In practice, the Organizational Response Questionnaire did not produce very prolific results, and this data was not heavily relied upon. The second set of questions were intended to collect individual opinions and perceptions about a variety of issues related to Sweden's response to the attacks, and proved to produce an abundance of thoughtful responses. The content and structure of the Personal Perspective Questionnaire (PPQ) deserves a more elaborate explanation of methodological considerations.

Special Considerations in the Collection of Data

To improve the likelihood of receiving honest answers, the questions on the PPQ were ordered with the least sensitive questions first, allowing some time to make the respondent more

³⁰ W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Pearson Education, Inc., 2006), 276.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 287.

comfortable answering potentially difficult questions. This was also intended to avoid the respondent tendency to understate their opinion or attitude toward a particular question that they felt might be viewed as unfavorable. Careful attention was made to avoid social desirability bias, by “phrasing questions in ways that make norm violation appear less objectionable”.³² A web-based survey was piloted, and was deemed appropriate for individuals that preferred more anonymity in their answers, again increasing the likelihood of honest answers. All attempts were made to carefully probe for more information and clarify where needed, and to identify and prevent retreat behavior during interviews. Some interviews were considered high priority for in-person interviewing due to the sensitivity of the topic in regards to the individual’s position.

Experience with Swedish culture, language, and geography was utilized by the interviewer as a method of rapport building with respondents prior to delving into the interview schedule in an effort to make them comfortable and more likely to share an authentic “Swedish perspective” than they may have provided to an uninformed American student with little to no knowledge of Swedish norms and customs. During interviews, a concerted effort was made to be courteous and approachable while simultaneously asserting a professional demeanor. The behavior and communication style of the interviewees was purposefully considered and the interviewer’s behavior was adjusted accordingly to maximize rapport building as the interview questions were delivered. These strategies proved to be successful, with some interviews lasting several hours and all respondents appearing to enjoy having the opportunity to meet the apparent curiosities on these important issues.

³² Ibid., 285.

In Person Versus Online Interview Formats

The original intention of the interview questionnaire was to elicit unstructured responses that would allow the interviewee to provide qualifying explanations along with direct responses, and to encourage elaboration on relevant details. More importantly, clues were being sought that would reveal the respondent's thinking process on the questions. After testing a web-based survey method, it became apparent that despite the open-ended questions, responses tended to be very brief and lacking in deep personal content or rich descriptors. Even on phone interviews, it grew concerning that the lack of intimacy was inhibiting the development of a strong rapport between the interviewee and interviewer, and in this may have discouraged thoughtful, honest answers to the questions. It became apparent that in-person interviews would significantly improve the depth of responses and would welcome and encourage the unanticipated yet highly valuable insights of the research subjects. A grant was secured to fund travel to southern Sweden in order to remedy this deficit in the original method plan for interviewing subjects. Interviews were conducted in Skåne, specifically in Malmö and the surrounding suburban areas, in August of 2012. Malmö is Sweden's third largest city with one of the highest proportions of foreign-born residents; it is also home to some of the most problematic immigrant enclave neighborhoods in the country- a primary reason that it was selected as a research site.³³

By invitation, two interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents, and it was clear from the duration, dynamism and tone of these discussions that this setting significantly improved the quality of responses, particularly in regards to tense issue areas. Due to the sensitivity of this subject for some individuals, it was important to carefully navigate delicate issues during the interview. The opportunity to conduct interviews face-to-face allowed for the

³³ Two individuals had tentatively agreed to complete interviews during this time, and more connections were successfully pursued after finalizing funding and confirming travel dates.

reading of non-verbal and physiological cues as to when the interviewee was comfortable with being probed for more information. This had been somewhat of a challenge when conducting interviews over the phone and via email, as it was difficult to interpret the respondent's reaction to questions without being able to see their body language and facial expression. Without the in-person interviews, the ability to collect these relevant observations during the interview (deliberate pauses, gesticulation, fluctuating levels of emotional intensity, hesitation, level of interest, etc.) would have been critically limited.

Finally, while the initial set of interviews produced interesting perspectives on this conflict, most respondents that had been secured at that time were under the age of 35. This was largely attributed to the fact that recruitment for respondents was conducted almost exclusively online. While the perspectives of youth in Sweden are surely a relevant category of study, it was not the intent when constructing the delimitations for this project. The respondents that were interviewed in person fell within the 45-70 age range, and it is clear that the project was in many ways enhanced by gathering intergenerational perspectives on the issues.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis...relies on what we call qualitative significance. This means we look at the relevance of what is important in what people say or do as well as what this means to the research. In doing qualitative data analysis we are concerned with the stories of people, their anecdotes, their experiences and the meanings of them all. We accomplish this by conducting various types of analysis such as content analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis.³⁴

After collecting and organizing the interview data from all of the stakeholders who participated, the interview responses were catalogued into themes and broken down into their component parts. These themes were examined separately in order to identify the properties and functions of

³⁴ Druckman in Abdallah, *Peace Research: A Practical Guide and Stories from the Field*, 29.

each respondent's narrative. In addition to the verbal and written discourse provided by respondents, this research includes analysis of nonverbal aspects of the interview. In addition to what was said and by whom, it addresses *how* things were said, *why* they were said, and *with what effect*. This required the researcher to play the role of interpreter, by bringing out and refining the perspectives presented by the subjects.

The accumulated data was categorized into the following six naturally emerging themes: 1) Anders Breivik and the Oslo/Utøya attacks; 2) Islam and Muslims; 3) Sverigedemokraterna (SD) and the anti-Muslim movement; 4) Immigration and immigrant integration; 5) Trajectory and drivers; 6) Options for intervention and outcomes. From here, direct comparisons were made to illuminate how different stakeholders perceive each of these concepts. The categories that emerged from the discourse analysis, and are systematically interrelated in the way shown throughout the literature review, form recognizable patterns of meaning that can help to explain the factors involved in this complex conflict phenomenon. Applying aspects of a grounded theory methodology, additional literature was sought and analyzed *after* the data collection phase to further elucidate areas that were not originally emphasized in the research design, but emerged as relevant to the actors on the ground.

The goal of the analysis was to find a balance between conceptualization and descriptions of the problem, and then to use the acquired knowledge gleaned from this combination of analytical approaches to make informed inferences about the conflict as a whole. The goal was not necessarily theory development but rather to collect descriptions of lived experience, as viewed under different conditions from a diversity of individuals, to be analyzed through the lens of peace and conflict studies and then applied to inform action for peace. This decision reflects a deliberate choice regarding the most suitable approach to and aims for the research that was most

likely to make a positive contribution to the field of peace and conflict resolution. It was hoped that achievable goals and specific recommendations to reduce violence would clearly emerge at the conclusion of the data collection and analysis process.

Ethical Issues

It would be great if one could be honest in saying they entered their research without assumptions in mind, and rather, would develop assumptions as they go to guide them along the research process. Unfortunately, this ideal is difficult to maintain in practice. In this project, there were some preexisting biases pertaining to preferred interventions and recommendations to successfully address the conflict between “ethnically Nordic Swedes” and “culturally Muslim immigrants to Sweden”. These assumptions undeniably guided the collection and analysis of data by focusing on peacebuilding through deconstruction of attitudes and behaviors that lead to anti-Muslim sentiment. Another assumption that informed data collection (and more basically, the topic itself) is the fact that unlike the context of several international conflicts, and intergroup conflicts in particular, Sweden does not appear to have unjust structures and institutions; questions included in the interview schedule sought to uncover through qualitative interviewing if respondents share the same perception.

The risks of participation are another important ethical consideration of any research using human subjects. Respondents for this project were never at risk for any physical or emotional harm, and the risk classification designated by the Institutional Review Board for this research was minimal. The confidentiality and privacy interests of the subjects were of primary importance throughout the data collection process,³⁵ and it was decided in the early stages of the

³⁵ Data collected continues to be kept confidential and is stored securely according to established standards. Consent was obtained from all of the subjects by presenting them with a consent script (see Appendix) verbally when in person or on the phone, and via email when contact was electronic; verbal acknowledgement of consent was

research design phase that while minimal privacy provisions were necessary for the nature of this study, it was not pertinent to the data that subjects be identified by name. Therefore, only organizational and other affiliations were recorded on the subjects during the interview. A table of all respondents, with pseudonyms used and relevant personal characteristics and affiliations can be found in the Research Findings chapter.

sufficient for these purposes. Emails containing subject consent were stored, and verbal consent was recorded in interview notes when given. The consent script described to participants what identifiers would be collected on them; all interviewees were made fully aware of how they would be identified in the presentation of the research findings.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Known determinants of attitudes towards Muslims and immigrants include socioeconomic demographics, party identification, tolerance, perception of economic contribution, ideology, social networking and media exposure. Investigation of these factors has been woven throughout the literature review.

Swedish Historical Context

In this section, a limited number of relevant historical contexts will be detailed in order to situate the research in time. This will begin with a chronicle of the migration and integration of individuals from Muslim majority countries to Sweden, followed by an overview of trends in violence and discrimination against them.

Immigration and Muslims in Sweden

A survey of the factors involved with Islamophobia in Sweden requires familiarity with the evolution of the immigrant communities. Specifically, distinctions such as country of origin and reason for migration, as well as time periods of mass immigration from individual countries, must be acknowledged as they carry certain implications relevant to this study. Beginning with an overview of the patterns of immigration to Sweden from the Muslim world, the latter half of this section will be purposed with briefly tracing Swedish discourse on Islam and Muslims over time.

In what used to be a relatively homogenous country³⁶, Sweden's current population of almost 9.5 million people is now comprised of at least 14% immigrants, a further 4% with two

³⁶ For example, in 1930 only 15 individuals in Sweden were recorded as Muslim. Ingvar and David Westerlund Svanberg, ed. *Blågul Islam? Muslimer i Sverige* (Nora: Nya Doxa, 1999), 13.

foreign born parents, and another 6% with one foreign born parent.³⁷ The future will likely see demographics continue to trend in this direction, as 2012 saw the highest annual number to date of residence permits granted, an increase of 19% over 2011 figures.³⁸ Sparing a full recollection of periods of immigration to Sweden, which includes large waves of migration from Nordic countries and Finland over the years, this report is concerned with immigrants from Muslim-majority countries. Early periods of migration to Sweden (1960-70's) consisted largely of laborers from Turkey and the Balkans³⁹ most of whom were generally assumed would eventually return to their home country. However, in the 1970's, family members of migrant workers began coming to Sweden in large numbers, indicating intentions of more permanent settlement. This pattern of immigration through family reunification continues but has been matched by the migration of asylum, refugee, and individuals otherwise in need of protection⁴⁰ - a category dominated by countries in conflict with large Muslim populations such as Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania, Afghanistan, and today, Syria.⁴¹ Unlike migrant workers who thought they would eventually leave Sweden, more and more immigrants today are applying for Swedish citizenship.⁴²

³⁷ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

³⁸ Migrationsverket, *More Than 111,000 Individuals Were Granted Residence Permits in 2012*, 2013. pt. 2013-01-15.

³⁹ Larsson, *Muslims in the Eu: Cities Report- Sweden*, 13.

⁴⁰ For complete data on the migration of family members of immigrants, see: *Immigration of Family Members* (Stockholm: Statistics Sweden (SCB), Forecasting Institute, 2008).

⁴¹ See Migrationsverket, *Statistik*. pt. July 29, 2013. or European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Country Factsheet Sweden* (2010).

⁴² Migrationsverket, *More and More People Are Applying for Swedish Citizenship*, 2012. Vol. Updated June 11, 2012.

Although Muslims did not feature prominently in Swedish demographics until the late 20th century, there has existed a discourse on Islam throughout Sweden's modern history. In the mid-16th-18th centuries, Sweden formally adopted Lutheranism over Catholicism, and as in general in Christendom at the time, there existed a strongly negative discourse on Islam where the religion was characterized as violent and aggressive. The Prophet Mohammed was portrayed as a womanizer, among other negative qualities.⁴³ During this period, Sweden's King Karl XII spent five years under Ottoman protection after a devastating setback against the Russian armies, and from this emerged an interest in Ottoman culture and customs, and even religious rituals and theology.⁴⁴ However, as economic and power balances shifted away from the Ottomans, representations of Islam again became more disparaging in Sweden.⁴⁵ During the European colonial era, there was a shift in attitudes towards Islam and Muslims as they moved from being the *demonized* other to an *inferior, backward* other; the academic world in Sweden gradually adopted this discourse throughout the 19th century, as did much of the Western world.

In the first half of the twentieth century, as Sweden grew in economic power in Europe, a nationalist discourse emerged at the expense of acknowledging any domestic diversity. Some of Sweden's public schools continue to use textbooks written in this period by leading Swedish Archbishop Nathan Söderblom who uses a derogatory discourse toward Islam, asserting it as conservative, in need of strict legalism, and intrinsically greedy for power, among other things.⁴⁶ However, after World War II when Sweden began to see its first immigration, this trend began to

⁴³ Jonas Otterbeck, "The Depiction of Islam in Sweden," *The Muslim World* 92, no. 1/2 (2002): 143.

⁴⁴ Muslims and Jews who came to Sweden from the Ottoman Empire were even guaranteed the right to practice their religion, a law that did not extend to other Swedes at the time.

⁴⁵ Otterbeck, "The Depiction of Islam in Sweden," 147.

⁴⁶ Census sources show that in 1930 only 15 individuals registered as Muslims in Sweden, therefore it is likely that few Swedish scholars had any contact with Muslim believers. Svanberg, ed. *Blågul Islam? Muslimer I Sverige*, 13.

shift. Multiculturalism was eventually adopted as an official policy in the 1970's by the now strong political left, and radical changes in public school curriculum were introduced emphasizing international solidarity, feminism, and equality among other things. The new curriculum intended to focus on religious practice rather than doctrine, but this became problematic when considering issues of gender equality in Islam, particularly Islamic dress, and Muslims and Arabs started to become associated with culturally conservative interpretations of Islam. This oversimplification often led people to relate to existing stereotypes of Islam⁴⁷ as hijabs and burqas became more visible in Swedish society with continuing immigration from Muslim world countries such as Iran, simultaneously threatening ethnic Swede's perception of their societies' cultural homogeneity. During the 1980's, Muslims increasingly became the symbolic other in discourse on immigration, assimilation and integration, contributing to the rise of violent xenophobic groups and conservative Christian sects in Sweden.

Throughout the last decades of the 20th century the Swedish media has tended to focus on Islamic groups abroad leading many to begin to associate Islam strongly with violence. A 1990 study conducted by Stockholm University professor of journalism Håkan Hvitfelt found almost 65% of Swedes have "a rather or very negative attitude to Islam" and the majority considering Islam to be incompatible with democracy, expansive, and oppressive to women.⁴⁸ Hvitfelt claims the media is largely to blame for cultivating a negative attitude toward Islam by focusing an unproportional amount on violence. Another scholar compared Swedish pop culture depictions of Muslims with those of "Westerners" and found glaring evidence of popular Orientalism in that sets up a binary between Muslims and Swedes, seeing them as two opposing, not complementary

⁴⁷ Otterbeck, "The Depiction of Islam in Sweden," 149.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 151.

categories.⁴⁹ While ongoing conflicts in the Muslim world have brought violent Muslim groups to the attention of the Swedish public, more mundane personal contact between Muslims and non-Muslims Swedes has also increased in spaces such as school, work and public transportation. Immigrants with Muslim backgrounds have become more visible in the public arena in Sweden, not just as Muslims but as individuals that *happen to be Muslim*.

As a growing number of integrating Muslims seek to be simultaneously European and Muslim, the challenges that come with this integration are often expressed in religious freedom issues such as women's dress and other public identity signifiers. In examples of how these boundaries are being negotiated, Sweden has not banned symbols of religion such as the headscarf (as in France) or minarets (as in Switzerland), but halal slaughter is not permitted in Sweden as it conflicts with secular animal welfare laws. In 2000, following other smaller reforms, the Church of Sweden and the state were finally separated to accommodate the changing makeup of society. Marriages rituals are performed by religious congregations but must also conform to Swedish law.⁵⁰ Confessional schools are another example, which are allowed in Sweden but must follow the national curriculum that includes teaching a World Religions course in a non-denominational manner.

Incidents and Trends of Violence

Legislation and awareness continue to be adjusted in Sweden to better accommodate the new demographics and needs of the country, however the level of prejudice against immigrants with Muslim-backgrounds is still high. Utilizing statistics from state and local law enforcement

⁴⁹ Ibid., 152.

⁵⁰ Jørgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, Third Edition ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2004), 86.

authorities, a report was produced in 2011 by The Swedish National Council on Crime Prevention (Brå) to study the scope and development of reported hate crimes in Sweden as a tool to inform decision making on preventing this kind of criminality. Offering a comprehensive overview of documented violence (including harassment and threats) and discrimination motivated by xenophobia/racism as well as anti-religious motives,⁵¹ the report serves as a valuable underpinning to this research project. However, their methodology bears the following limitation: the statistics only include crimes known to the police, and it has been found that the discrepancy between actual and reported criminality is large for hate crime.⁵² Further, the propensity to report depends of several relevant factors including the type of crime, as well as an individual or group's previous experiences with law enforcement or the justice system- within or outside of Sweden. This is obviously pertinent to the study of immigrant communities from countries with high levels of corruption in the police and security forces such as Iran, Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia and Afghanistan.⁵³ Other studies recognize specifically that many Muslims refrain from reporting incidents of Islamophobia because they do not believe action will be taken.⁵⁴ Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that statistics underrepresent the true scope and nature of hate crimes in this case.

Crimes motivated by xenophobia and racism⁵⁵ slightly increased in 2011 from the previous year, and the large majority of those crimes were committed by someone from the

⁵¹ Fredrik and Carina Djärv Aspling, *Hate Crime 2011 (English Summary)* (Stockholm: Brå, 2012), 9, 2012:7.

⁵² Ibid., 21.

⁵³ For example, the corruption perceptions index ranks Somalia second highest in the world, Afghanistan third, and Iraq eighth. The Economist, "Pocket World in Figures 2013 Edition."

⁵⁴ Larsson, *Muslims in the Eu: Cities Report- Sweden*, 6.

⁵⁵ "Visual identifiability- people's appearance- is one of the most important criteria for a presumptive offender when categorizing people into groups". Aspling, *Hate Crime 2011 (English Summary)*, 36.

majority group with a victim from a minority group. Only 3% were committed against the majority by a minority group member. Statistics about the victims status in Sweden only tracks parent's country of birth and does not take into account second generation victims who may have dark skin and are frequently targeted as "foreigners". Examples of anti-religious hate crimes are far less common than racist or xenophobic attacks, but have been steadily on the rise for years up 18% in 2011 from the previous year. Forty-three percent of these attacks were motivated by Islamophobia and primarily consisted of reports of defamation and vandalism of religious locations. In 1993, the Shia mosque in Trollhättan was set on fire during the night, and the Malmö Mosque and Islamic Center has in recent years been the target of repeated arson attacks. In 2003, Malmö's mosque was severely damaged, some parts irreparably burned. In September and October of 2005 there were two more arson attacks here, resulting only in minor damage to the property. In Hultsfred in 2007, Molotov cocktails were used to attack a building used as a mosque on the night before Eid.⁵⁶

In addition to these instances of hate crime, Sweden's Muslim community has in the last decades seen numerous eruptions of more extreme public violence carried out by ethnically Nordic individuals that contributes to a tense climate of insecurity. In the fall of 1991 and January 1992, a Swedish man named John Ausonious engaged in a serial shooting spree in the Stockholm area targeting people of foreign origin. Eleven people were shot and one killed, with most of his victims being of African or southwest Asian descent.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, a strikingly similar pattern of serial anti-immigrant gun violence would emerge in Malmö in 2009-2010.

⁵⁶ Sources include: *ibid.*, 40, 42. and Steig Larsson, *National Analytical Study on Racist Violence and Crime* (EXPO Foundation), 62.

⁵⁷ Ausonious, initially a suspect in the assassination of Sweden's liberal Prime Minister Olaf Palme in 1986, was given the nickname of Lasermannen or "Laser Man" by the media, because his initial weapon of choice was a laser-sight rifle. "Malmö Shooter Targeting Immigrants: Police," *The Local: Sweden* (2010). <http://www.thelocal.se/29720/20101020/> (accessed June 27, 2013).

Invoking considerable fear for the ethnic minorities, a series of shootings was committed in Malmö over a period of almost a year, again targeting foreign-looking individuals, ending in a total of 15 victims. Peter Mangs was recently found guilty of murder and multiple counts attempted murder in association with the Malmö shootings.⁵⁸

A notorious controversy related to the conflict with Muslims in Scandinavia is the production and publication of cartoons depicting the Muslim prophet Muhammad. Occasionally, ethnically Nordic individuals have chosen to publically confirm their valued free-speech rights by challenging others to the debate on the tolerance of Islam in a multicultural society. Denmark's now well known newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, solicited and then published primarily derogatory cartoons of Muhammad, fully aware of the potential to offend and inflame the domestic and international Muslim community. And offend it did. Violent protests, burning effigies, riots and attacks on Danish embassies abroad ensued⁵⁹ and those involved in the publication of the cartoons were targeted for assassination- several men were recently arrested in Sweden on this charge.⁶⁰ The Danish cartoon crisis spilled over into Swedish politics: In 2006, Sweden's foreign minister Laila Freivalds resigned after it became public that she lied about having ordered the closing of the Sverigedemokraterna party's website when they sought to publish the cartoons on their website.⁶¹

⁵⁸ "Malmö Sniper Peter Mangs Found Guilty," *The Local: Sweden* (2012). <http://www.thelocal.se/42202/20120724/> (accessed June 27, 2013). and Christina Anderson, "Peter Mangs Trial in Sweden Has Echoes of Breivik Case," *The New York Times* (2012). http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/16/world/europe/peter-mangs-trial-in-sweden-has-echoes-of-breivik-case.html?_r=0 (accessed June 27, 2013).

⁵⁹ "Muslim Cartoon Row Timeline," *BBC News* (2006). http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4688602.stm (accessed June 28, 2013).

⁶⁰ "Four Guilty of Danish Plot over Muhammed Cartoons," *BBC News Europe* (2012). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18321160> (accessed June 28, 2013).

⁶¹ "Analysis: Why Freivalds Had to Go," *The Local: Sweden* (2006). <http://www.thelocal.se/3336/20060321/> (accessed June 28, 2013).

Further, in 2007 a Swedish cartoonist named Lars Vilks published his own derogatory Muhammad cartoon in Sweden, and years later he continues to face death threats, vandalism and arson attacks on his home. Vilks has been violently attacked in public and in September 2011, three men were arrested for plotting to kill him. It is important to note that those Muslims who engage in violent retaliation for these cartoons represent a minority, especially when it comes to Western Muslims who found this response to the defamation of Islam seriously detrimental to the security and reputation of the global Muslim community. Hamid Khan, an American Muslim legal expert currently serving at the United States Institute of Peace, is one who recalls in his blog the anger he felt at these violent responses:

My anger was prompted by this latest round of senseless and unconscionable violence in the name of "defending" the Prophet, a tactic that has emerged since the publication of "The Satanic Verses" in 1988. Even after a generation, when an event like this occurs, some Muslims reflexively leap to the streets committing violence and often taking lives in the process, suggesting to the world, and proving to the delight of Islam's detractors, this is the only appropriate reaction for a self-proclaimed religion of peace.⁶²

At the least, these cartoon-related incidents agitate all sectors of the Muslim community, and at worse, these perceived defamations of Islam induce the ire of violent extremist terrorists like Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly. The Iraqi-born longtime citizen of Sweden killed himself and injured others trying to detonate explosives on a crowded Stockholm street just before Christmas in 2010, citing the Lars Vilks cartoons (among other things) in the audio recording he sent to the Swedish Security Service just before his attacks.⁶³ This incident contributed to significant domestic insecurity; among Swedes who now grew increasingly fearful of what they perceive to be Islamic extremism, and for the Muslim community who were not only disgraced by the

⁶² Hamid Khan, "The Blasphemy of Islam," (Huffington Post: The Blog, 2012).

⁶³ "Stockholm Blasts: Sweden Probes 'Terrorist Attack'," *BBC News: Europe* (2010). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11978389> (accessed June 28, 2013).

actions of this terrorist, but who were also now facing widespread suspicion from their co-nationalists.

Political Framework in Sweden

Sweden's political, social and economic system meets the criteria of democratic socialism. It has a unicameral parliament, a fully proportional electoral system and a market-based economy. It also has universal literacy, very high rates of labor unionization (77%), and high rates of public revenue collection proportional to salary (49%).⁶⁴ The system makes diligent efforts to ensure citizen's personal, cultural, material and social freedoms; these measures are all intended to foster a healthy lifestyle that keeps citizens active in the labor market and facilitates national prosperity. Sweden's supreme decision-making authority is housed in the parliament (Riksdag), a 349 seat legislative body with leaders elected proportionally and by party every four years.

Political Parties

Sweden currently has eight major political parties, and although studies show political interest in Sweden is high and voter turnout for national elections is almost always over 80% of eligible voters, actual political party *membership* is rather low.⁶⁵ While there are numerous smaller parties, below is a table listing the eight political parties that currently hold seats in Riksdag, as well as their political alliances:

⁶⁴ Devin and Neha Navlakha Joshi, "Social Democracy in Sweden," *Economic and Political Weekly* XLV, no. No. 47 (2010): 75.

⁶⁵ Lennart Weibull and Henrik Oscarsson Sören Holmberg, *Swedish Trends: 1986-2010* (University of Gothenburg: SOM Institute, 2011), 25.

Table 1. Sweden's Major Political Parties

Eight Major Political Parties Represented by Seats in Parliament (as of 2013) ⁶⁶								
Of 349 Seats	19	25	112	107	24	23	19	20
	Left Party	Green Party	Social Democrats	Moderate Party	Liberal People's Party	Centre Party	Christian Democrats	Sweden Democrats
	Red Green Coalition (2008 – 2010)			Centre-Right Alliance (formed 2006)				No allies

The Social Democrats have dominated Swedish politics for decades, leading the government for all but nine years since 1932. From 1969-1976, Olaf Palme was Prime Minister as leader of the Social Democrats, and many consider his social and political philosophies to endure within the political establishment of Sweden today. In 2006, the Moderates won the parliament majority for the first time in decades with current Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt as the party leader. Sweden will hold its next national election in September 2014. The positions of the political majority toward the specific policy areas considered in this research will be described, as put forth by the parliament, in detail in the next section. The focus will now turn to the growing anti-establishment party, the Sweden Democrats.

Sverigedemokraterna, (Sweden Democrats, or SD) shocked the country and region in 2010 when they finally received enough votes to enter parliament.⁶⁸ According to the party's website, SD is a "Sweden-friendly party that strives for a high degree [of] belonging in the community,"⁶⁹ while others in the mainstreams of Sweden view the party and their youthful,

⁶⁸ Sanna Rayman, "Sweden Baffled - but Rise of the Right Was Obvious," (2010). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11374155> (accessed June 28, 2013).

⁶⁹ "Sverigedemokraterna: Security & Tradition".

vociferous members as far-right Islamophobes or racists; different online sources also frequently equate the behavior of prominent party members to that of “football hooligans”. During campaigning, SD was not allowed to participate in national debates, some private TV stations refused to run their ads, and their conventions were often disrupted by violent protests and riots.⁷⁰ Soon after the elections, the two major party alliances in parliament publically declared their refusal to work with SD.

In SD’s view, Sweden’s policies related to the immigrant situation- constructed by the left wing Social Democrats- have resulted in social fragmentation and segregation over the past decades, continuing today. Referring to the established approach to immigration policy as “reckless”, SD’s platform is very upfront about their views that the current track is divisive for Sweden and in desperate need of reform:

We do not believe in the idea of a multicultural society because it is an ideology that leads to fragmentation, exclusion and segregation. Multiculturalism is the idea that a state be built on widely different values reconciled with each other.⁷¹

The policy program goes on to officially endorse a hardline assimilationist view:

We believe, therefore, [in] assimilation and the strengthening of the Swedish culture... With assimilation, we mean that the immigrants adapt to Sweden and not Sweden to adapt to immigrants... the objective is that immigrants will take the custom to where they [are] and will eventually abandon their original cultures and identities and instead become part of the Swedish nation.⁷²

Specific features of the party’s proposed “responsible immigration policy” include: heavily restricting asylum and family reunification; putting an end to Swedish adaptation to other cultures; stricter requirements for Swedish citizenship, including language; active and generous

⁷⁰ For example, see "Protests against Swedish Far-Right Election Gains," *BBC News Europe* (2010). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11378565>. And "Protesters Rally against Sweden Democrat March," *The Local: Sweden* (2011). <http://www.thelocal.se/33126/20110410/>.

⁷¹ See “Ideology” section on the party’s website "Sverigedemokraterna: Security & Tradition".

⁷² See “Preventing Exclusion” section at *ibid*.

support to migrants who wish to return to their home countries; and investing an extra billion SEK to aid refugees in areas neighboring conflicts.

On religion, the party puts forward several specific views on Christianity and Islam. Their platform outlines an argument for why Christianity deserves a predominant role in Swedish society:

Few other ideas and institutions have been less important for the formation of the Swedish culture as Christianity and the Swedish Church. The Swedish language, art, literature, philosophy, morals, traditions, architecture, music, etc. are all examples of areas of society that has been and is heavily influenced by our Christian heritage... the preservation of this heritage is thus a matter of concern for all Swedes, believers and non-believers... Christianity should by virtue of their history allowed to hold a special position in relation to other religions in Sweden.⁷³

In this same section, the policy document then specifically presents Islam as a great concern to the party:

Islam and particularly its strong political and fundamentalist branch...proved to be most difficult to harmoniously coexist with the Swedish and Western culture. Islamism's influence on Swedish society should be [to] the greatest possible extent counteracted and immigration from Muslim countries with strong elements of fundamentalism should be very strictly limited.

In addition to religion, SD espouses a controversial opinion about culture. The party creates a cultural hierarchy based on human rights and advocates for Swedish intervention abroad to “change those aspect’s of a country’s culture in direct conflict with democracy and basic human rights”, reasoning:

It is obvious that some cultures are better than others at safeguarding basic human rights, democracy and the creation of material wealth, good health, high levels of education and equality before the law. This makes these cultures, in our eyes better than the cultures that do not want or are not able to create good living conditions for the people living in them.⁷⁴

⁷³ *Sverigedemokraternas Principprogram 2011*, 2011. 21.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

Repeated direct references throughout multiple party members' blogs indicate that the problematic cultures being generally alluded to here are simplified in function to describe anything perceived to resemble "Muslim" culture.

Current Government Policies Related to the Conflict

Analysis of the contributing factors to this conflict is complex, and can be seen to relate to numerous areas of public policy. In regards to research questions specifically about the Anders Breivik attacks, the government's newly introduced policy toward violent extremism is considered. Further, during the data collection phase of this project interviews with research subjects reflected a substantial interest in and focus on policies of immigration and integration, therefore these will primarily engaged with here as most relevant to the conflict. Additionally, the government's policies toward religious communities will be presented in brief.

Four months after Anders Breivik's attacks in Norway, the Swedish government adopted a forceful Action Plan Against Violent Extremism consisting of 15 concrete measures.⁷⁵

Presented by the minister responsible for democracy issues, Birgitta Ohlsson:

The Nordic countries are not immune to acts of violent extremism motivated by political, religious, or ideological beliefs... Our efforts to combat extremism need a broad and comprehensive approach. This is also a task for society as a whole. Our common security calls for joint responsibility.

Ohlsson continues, "We must defend the cornerstone of democracy, including the rule of law, freedom of expression and other fundamental human rights". The fifteen-measure action plan is put forth as follows:

1. Support to civil society organizations for activities that strengthen the democratic values of young people
2. Broader dialogue with faith communities on democracy promotion work

⁷⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, *Government Action Plan against Violent Extremism*, 2011.

3. Spreading of methods and training material to strengthen the democratic values of young people
4. Inquiry on initiatives to combat xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance
5. Spreading of knowledge and methods concerning radicalization to professional groups that may come into contact with extremism
6. Study on how young people can be steered and protected against the influence of anti-democratic messages via the Internet
7. Special knowledge-enhancing initiatives for children and young people to combat anti-Semitism and Islamophobia
8. Multidisciplinary research on democracy
9. Collaboration on preventive work to combat violent extremism at local level
10. Support to civil society organizations or activities for defectors
11. Survey of threats and violence against elected representatives
12. Study on the conditions for elected representatives
13. Study on preventive methods in other countries
14. Greater international cooperation against radicalization
15. Spreading of examples of successful methods to prevent violent right-wing extremism in the EU

Mechanisms to engage with the items on this list will be of increasing importance as the anti-Muslim movement in Sweden gains supporters and expands the platforms through which it promotes its violent ideology.

On immigration, Sweden has limited labor migration for quite some time so the majority of Swedish immigration policy relevant to this context is asylum seekers and others in need of protection, and family reunification. On asylum seekers, the current refugee-welcoming policy is clear on philosophy, as put forward on the government's website:

Sweden must take its share of the responsibility for the international protection of refugees. An important part of this responsibility is to provide protection - through resettlement in Sweden - for people fleeing in a third country who do not have access to

any other permanent solution. Sweden is to engage in constructive cooperation with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and to have a humane refugee policy, as well as be a place of refuge for people fleeing persecution and oppression. The possibility of seeking asylum must be safeguarded and the trend in Europe towards more closed borders must be opposed.⁷⁶

A study conducted by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights surveying the perspectives of asylum seekers on access to justice found Sweden to be exceptionally accommodating during the initial application period as well as in individual case appeals.⁷⁷ According to statistics, the largest reason migrants enter Sweden today is to reunite and join family members that previously immigrated to Sweden.⁷⁸

The heterogeneous makeup of Sweden's immigrant population is both positive and difficult when it comes to constructing and implementing integration policies. In regards to the Muslim community, a diversity of voices enriches theological and political debate on the issues, but internal differences and tensions inhibit a united front for the community which Swedish policymakers in particular may find troublesome to work with.⁷⁹ According to a study on immigrant assimilation, there are three distinct approaches toward the integration (the author uses this term in a broad sense) of immigrants. First is a belief that immigrants should adopt a lifestyle as close as possible to the host culture as soon as possible. The second belief supposes that immigrants should be free to choose their lifestyle and should not be pushed to assume the dominant culture. The third belief urges the separation of immigrants from the dominant culture through measures such as segregation or sending immigrants back to their home country.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Government Offices of Sweden, *Migration and Asylum Policy*. pt. July 25th, 2012.

⁷⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Country Factsheet Sweden*.

⁷⁸ *Immigration of Family Members*.

⁷⁹ Larsson, *Muslims in the Eu: Cities Report- Sweden*, 57.

⁸⁰ Richey, "The Impact of Anti-Assimilation Beliefs on Attitudes toward Immigration," 198.

Clearly espousing the second belief, Sweden adopted multiculturalism as state policy in 1975 with three objectives: 1) full equality between immigrants and Swedes, 2) freedom of cultural choice for immigrants, 3) cooperation and solidarity between the Swedish majority and the ethnic minorities. This translated into policy through funding of comprehensive integration programs,⁸¹ and according to one study Sweden ranked first in the world with their successful “mainstreaming” approach to improve equal opportunities for immigrants.⁸²

With equality as the stated aim of current integration policy, the philosophy and assumptions behind the policy are laid out:

Integration is a mutual process in that every member of society is involved and shares responsibility regardless of their background. In a society of ethnic and cultural diversity, people should complement each other and contribute their skills and life experience so that the potential inherent in diversity can be released and utilized. Segregation, voluntary or enforced, is just as undesirable as enforced assimilation.⁸³

Initiatives to move integration policy in this direction were adopted by the Riksdag in 1997, but statistics showed that newcomers, especially refugees and women, were facing long waits to find jobs and become established in the labor market.⁸⁴ It was determined these low employment rates, as well as variances in integration measures throughout the country, were the result of structural burdens, so change was instituted.⁸⁵ Major reform and reorganization to integration policy was undertaken in 2009 (to be instituted at the end of the following year) putting more responsibility on the state to remove the burden from the municipalities; as of

⁸¹ Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, 84.

⁸² MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*, 2013.

⁸³ Government Offices of Sweden, *Pocket Facts 2010- Integration Statistics*, 2011. 4.

⁸⁴ MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*.

⁸⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, *Government Reform to Speed up the Introduction of New Arrivals in Sweden*, December 2009.

January 1, 2011 the Ministry of Employment (along with the Swedish Public Employment Service) is responsible for coordinating integration policy. These reforms are intended to speed up introduction to working and social life by providing incentives for activities and work and utilizing the skills of new arrivals better than before. The government's website states that while the new programs will have a large initial increase in costs, eventually the new policy will greatly benefit society (through more immigrant entry into the labor market) and lower costs for municipalities (on public support programs). Sweden's comprehensive integration policy prioritizes seven key areas, paraphrased in detail below:

1. New arrival introduction and refugee reception programs

The primary objectives for new arrivals are the acquisition of a job, enrollment in language classes (to further facilitate mobility in the Swedish labor market), and enrollment in school for children. The state is responsible to negotiate with municipalities (preferably ones that have adequate job markets) to organize new refugee reception in the cities.⁸⁶ To facilitate the initial phase of integration, an individualized introduction plan (based on work and school experience) is constructed for all new arrivals to outline their path through the integration process. The government will subsidize tuition for language (Swedish for immigrants, or SFI) classes, labor contacts and employment preparation, and free childcare for new immigrants as needed as a part of this plan. Recent reforms have introduced a benefit- a financial reward- for immigrants who actively participate in these introduction measures.

To assist arrivals in navigating these numerous integration benchmarks, the policy has constructed the position of "introduction guide", a person selected by the individual migrating, to

⁸⁶ Government Offices of Sweden, *Integration*, 2011. pt. Published 25 April 2005, Updated 03 January 2011.

help the new arrival find a job.⁸⁷ The introduction guide is compensated based on performance, so there is an incentive for them to assist the new arrival in developing self-sufficiency skills as soon as possible. Mentoring schemes such as this also address unintentional segregation tendencies by creating a more diverse network of acquaintances for new immigrants. Before the 2009 reforms were introduced this type of “coach” was not available to all immigrants, and was often only consulted when an individual had been in the country for a while and had failed to integrate.

2. More work

It is difficult to draw conclusions from statistics on immigrant employment, as it is a heterogeneous group in terms of origin, age, education and length of stay in Sweden resulting in major differences in terms of participation in the labor market. With that in mind, the employment rate for native-born Swedes has been over or close to 80% for all of the 2000’s, however it is always significantly lower for the foreign-born population, usually coming in around the mid to high 60% range.⁸⁸ Additionally, median incomes in Sweden are still lower for immigrants than for natives, even for those who have lived in Sweden for more than 20 years.⁸⁹ The 2009 Labor Market Introduction Act aims to facilitate finding or creating jobs that match new arrivals’ skills so they may more quickly support themselves as equal members in a more inclusive society. In this regard, specific initiatives to promote employment and enterprise for immigrants are being undertaken. For one, the state is working to improve mechanisms to assess

⁸⁷ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

⁸⁸ When considering the employment rate for refugees only, the proportion is significantly lower. When comparing Swedish statistics to other countries, it is important to remember that other EU countries with large foreign-born populations, such as France and the UK, have immigrant populations that usually speak the native language. With this in mind, Sweden has the highest differential between the employment rates of native compared to foreign born. MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

work skills and validate foreign qualifications. Many immigrants have sound vocational experience that is needed in the labor market⁹⁰ - for example health and medical care workers- and a secure validation procedure will allow employers to more equally assess the skills of an applicant and enable individuals to find out what skills they need to develop to supplement their experience. As Sweden is short of qualified healthcare staff, the government is initiating secure ways to recognize and supplement foreign health and medical care qualifications to ensure immigrants can contribute to society's labor needs to the best of their abilities.

The integration plan also includes several government subsidy programs to promote employment, such as “step-in” jobs for new arrivals, the Job and Development Guarantee, and the Young People's Job Benefit.⁹¹ Further, the government's plan supports entrepreneurs from non-Swedish backgrounds, specifically through negotiations with the banking sector to encourage them to finance immigrant entrepreneurs, and by offering new start subsidies. Finally, there is a reduced tax on earned income to make it more worthwhile to work, and employers' contributions have also been reduced to make it more worthwhile to employ.

3. More equality and higher performance for immigrants in schools

Sweden's integration plan includes measures for improved educational achievement and equality in school⁹² as national statistics show major discrepancies in level of education attained between different groups in Swedish society.⁹³ For example, the proportion of students eligible for upper secondary school in Sweden is below 60% for individuals with African and Asian

⁹⁰ Underemployment is a significant problem for immigrants in Sweden, where the percentage of individuals with vocations that match their level of education is significantly lower for foreign-born individuals at 58% compared to 73% for native-born workers.

⁹¹ Government Offices of Sweden, *Integration*.

⁹² Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

⁹³ Government Offices of Sweden, *Pocket Facts 2010- Integration Statistics*, 40.

origins; the percentage is over 90% for students with Swedish backgrounds. However, trends do show increasing balance in higher education, as the proportion of first year undergraduate students with a foreign-background has increased in the last 10 years, while the proportion with a Swedish background has decreased. In 2008, national education guidelines were created with the inclusion of targeted measures for the education of newly arrived pupils, as many students from non-Swedish backgrounds were at risk of not meeting ambitious new national objectives. Sweden's policy believes that each student is entitled to individualized support to meet their needs, including interpreters, tolerant curricula, high standard SFI and mother tongue training.⁹⁴ In addition to student's needs, the policy recognizes the importance of teacher development (ex. pedagogy for teaching non-native speakers) and training (ex. managing a diverse classroom, vocational programs of high quality) as a priority.

4. Swedish language acquisition and adult higher education

In this area, it is the policy's aim to develop SFI teacher training programs, and to improve the provision of supplementary education and vocational training to adults. All new arrivals are entitled to basic education in Swedish language, but standards of teaching vary, and not all immigrants participate in language instruction or complete the instruction programs they begin. In 2009, a pilot project awarded bonuses to immigrants who completed their Swedish language studies within a year, to test whether financial incentives would encourage people learn Swedish;⁹⁵ a similar benefit has now been extended nationwide. New reforms will also double the funds allocated for supplementary education for individuals with foreign qualifications, specifically health and medical care, and teachers.

⁹⁴ MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*.

⁹⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*; Sören Holmberg, *Swedish Trends: 1986-2010*.

5. Anti-discrimination measures

Anti-discrimination initiatives have continued to improve with recent legislation and in 2009 the Anti-Discrimination Act was entered into force in Sweden. This Act replaces seven laws with one and four equality bodies with one Ombudsman.⁹⁶ The government has also implemented legislation for judges to award higher damages-both to compensate and deter- and there are new active measures aimed at the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these programs.⁹⁷ Sweden continues to refine implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, with more effective and comprehensive policies and procedures, in more sectors of society.

6. Urban development to reduce exclusion

Strongly connected to reducing discrimination, the policy program looks to identify effective methods to reduce exclusion in urban areas with high unemployment rates and high levels of public insecurity. Most newly arrived immigrants live in urban districts- namely Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö- where there is extensive exclusion.⁹⁸ There are relevant economic and logistical explanations for this, but additionally, immigrants often *want* to stay in the same areas as their fellow Muslims or in neighborhoods where it is easier to preserve their language and culture.⁹⁹ It is important to recognize that this segregation has a voluntary component; how significant a component it is beyond the scope of this study. With the latest

⁹⁶ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

⁹⁷ MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*.

⁹⁸ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*. Also: The segregation index (a scale from 0 to 100 with 0 being zero segregation and 100 meaning maximum segregation) is a measure of the difference in housing patterns between the population group, foreign-born, and the entire population. For the period from 1997-2009, Malmö was rated between 36-32, peaking at 37 in 2000; Göteborg rated between 38-39, peaking at 40 in 2000; and Stockholm rated between 27-31, peaking in 2009. Government Offices of Sweden, *Pocket Facts 2010-Integration Statistics*, 91.

⁹⁹ Larsson, page 58

reforms, the state government has reorganized to enter into local development agreements with metropolitan municipalities to effectively coordinate the work of the all partners working in these urban districts.¹⁰⁰ This constructed partnerships with the police, Swedish Social Insurance Agency, and the Swedish Public Employment Service with municipalities. Additionally, “New Start” offices were opened in nine of the particularly segregated cities to promote employment, and one-stop offices that offer individually adapted guidance and support are also in place. Another initiative is to support resettlement from municipalities with a large number of immigrants to municipalities receiving few immigrants but that have a good labor market. The government has recently extended the period of eligibility for immigrants to receive help relocating to municipalities with job markets and lower immigrant populations.

7. Promotion of common basic values and civic orientation

As part of their introduction plan, immigrants are to participate in a civic orientation with the following intended purpose:

Civic orientation is to convey the importance of fundamental values such as democracy and the equal value of all people. It should include the acquisition of knowledge and reflections on what living in Swedish society entails, gender equality, and respect for the integrity of young people. It is also to provide clear information on the rights and obligations of the individual.¹⁰¹

According to the policy, the first step is to support non-state values-based organizations already engaged in work on dialogue concerning basic values¹⁰² and communicate the relationship between the state, municipalities and the non-profit sector. It also helps develop forms and

¹⁰⁰ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

¹⁰¹ Government Offices of Sweden, *Government Reform to Speed up the Introduction of New Arrivals in Sweden*.

¹⁰² Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

methods for the activities of values-based organization, for example, encouraging methods that strengthen people's involvement in issues concerning democracy and human rights.

The political participation of immigrants can also be considered a crucial marker of integration into society and one's commitment to Sweden's democracy and democratic values. Sweden opens up opportunities for all to engage in general politics, allowing newcomers to better access their rights because policies are implemented to inform them and include their association in civic life.¹⁰³ Rights extended to all residents, not even exclusively for citizens, include the right to vote in local and regional elections and to form or join associations, media and political parties. Despite these seemingly equal structures for equal political participation, participation is not in fact equal. Election turnout of eligible voters usually carries with it a discrepancy of at least 15% fewer voters with foreign backgrounds.¹⁰⁴ Those foreign-born individuals nominated and elected to parliament, county and municipal assemblies make up even smaller proportions.

In addition to the immigration and integration policies detailed above, the government's treatment of religious communities is a relevant consideration of this project. Though the Church of Sweden wasn't officially separated from the state until 2000, Sweden is a religiously diverse country with a broad policy of support for all religious communities. This religious diversity is largely due to immigration, and therefore it is explicitly stated in government policy briefings that religion is an important component of integration, "Giving people who migrate to Sweden the opportunity to find security here through their culture and religion is important for integration. Knowledge, understanding and collaboration are vital if people are going to live

¹⁰³ MIPEX, *Migrant Integration Policy Index- Sweden*.

¹⁰⁴ Government Offices of Sweden, *Pocket Facts 2010- Integration Statistics*, 95.

together”.¹⁰⁵ In addition to a 13 million SEK (2 million USD) increase in state support to religious communities, government bodies maintain an ongoing dialogue with religious groups to address important issues such as values, respect and tolerance. The state has its own objectives in mind for these religious communities, and the purpose of the newly available funding is specifically to conduct long-term religious activities in the form of worship, pastoral care, teaching and social service.

Interpreting Islam

Among other things, the gradual emergence of Muslims (particularly youth) from isolation in European societies is pushing forward the discourse on the implications of the rise of Islam in Europe. Commonly, non-Muslim responses to this phenomenon attempt to find a balance of social inclusion with Muslims, but occasionally responses to the rise of Islam in Europe are instead characterized by public and vitriolic denigration of the religion and its followers. To this end, turmoil in the Muslim World is often projected to imply the intrinsic maladaptive nature of the religion as a whole, painting Islam as, “a totalitarian ideology that seeks to undermine personal and political freedoms; Islam as a system is opposed to individual rights and is a barrier to the creation of a tolerant, pluralistic and democratic society”.¹⁰⁶ Muslim scholar of Islamic studies Muqtader Khan makes clear his discrediting assessment of the rigors of this argument, highlighting an important assumption being made by keepers of this view. Proponents of this perspective highlight the poor state of substantial democracy in the contemporary Muslim world as primary evidence for their case, assuming that the Western world

¹⁰⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, *The Swedish Government to Strengthen State Support to Religious Communities*, 2012.

¹⁰⁶ M.A. Muqtadar Khan, "The Politics, Theory, and Philosophy of Islamic Democracy," in *Islamic Democratic Discourse: Theory, Debates, and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. M.A. Muqtadar Khan (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 151.

has had nothing to do with the marginalization of populations in the Middle East and the global system is not at all to fault; “Muslims are in bad shape only and only because they are Muslims”.¹⁰⁷ Khan’s perception is that this debate not only seeks to place Western ideals as superior to Islamic ideals, but also aims to exonerate the West, and the US in particular, of any culpability for the poor state of democracy and human rights in the Muslim world. Finally, the rise of global Islamic extremism has sparked a respondent discourse essentializing political Islam by focusing heavily on violent Salafi movements. This contributes to a perception of Islam by non-Muslims that, when not at its extreme of associating all Muslims with terrorism, is laced with reasonable and critical concerns that therefore warrant closer scrutiny.

Major Areas of Concern for Non-Muslims

It is helpful to make explicit from the outset that there is no consensus among Muslims in Europe (or globally) as to the desired role of Islam and Muslim culture in the public sphere.¹⁰⁸ Contrary to the desires of some non-Muslims who seek a simple answer to complex questions, there is much debate within the Muslim community on major issues of public concern such as: gender norms; the status of religious minorities or non-Muslims; Islamic education; halal slaughter, alcohol bans and other implementations of *sharia* law; and the construction of minarets and mosques.¹⁰⁹

Gender equality has been a major site of contention with the rise of Islam in European public space, and there are numerous studies that consider these issues in depth including several

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 152.

¹⁰⁸ For example, compare the approaches of Tibi, Ramadan, and others with fundamentalist preachers in Sweden.

¹⁰⁹ Focus is commonly put on medieval criminal codes in *sharia*-phobic discourse.

that use multiple perspectives to illuminate the so called “headscarf controversy”.¹¹⁰ Research also shows the more contentious gender issues such as polygamy, arranged marriages, and female circumcision are largely in the decline among European Muslims.¹¹¹ These debates also evaluate Muslim European women’s participation in the labor market as well as family status issues, revealing significant variation among Muslims, coupled with major concern from the human rights standpoint of non-Muslims and Muslims alike. On the issue of rights, the liberal secular scope and limits to freedom of expression are also problematic for some of Europe’s Muslims, evidenced in incidents of threats and violence like the Salmon Rushdie affair, Ayaan Hirshi Ali and Theo Van Gogh, and Scandinavia’s boundary-testing cartoonists. However, these inflammations are either ignored or dismissed by the majority of Muslims with varying degrees of disapproval, “It is not a disagreement about the value of freedom of expression but rather a trade-off between it and offense to religious sensibilities”.¹¹²

Some of the leading debates among Muslims scholars (and often against Muslims) engage with complex notions such as the boundaries of social and political authority, the rights and duties of participation in secular government, and Islam’s compatibility with democratic processes. According to Khan, wide acceptance of John Esposito and John Voll’s study of Islam and democracy in 1996 settled the debate on the compatibility of Islamic values and democratic processes. An earlier symposium at the United States Institute of Peace held in 1992 had “concluded that while there were political and cultural hurdles to democratization, Islam and the

¹¹⁰ For example, see Mark Howard Ross, *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹¹¹ Bhikhu Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Anna Triandafyllidou Tariq Modood, Ricard Zapata-Barrero (New York: Routledge, 2006), 184.

¹¹² Ibid., 185.

resurgent political Islam were potential facilitators of democratization and not barriers”.¹¹³ In addition to these formal endorsements, scholars assert that most Muslims believe democracy is worthy of support because it’s structure, “shows respect for human dignity, protects fundamental human interests, ensure responsible use of power, guarantees freedom of religion and institutionalizes *shura*, all of which are not only consistent with but often enjoined by the Quran”.¹¹⁴

It is widely assumed that there is no distinction between religion and politics in Islam, but Ramadan is quick to note this theory is invalid. He goes on to give Qur’anic and legal examples of why this is not the case, citing instances where certain behavior is prescribed for the private realm but not in public social affairs, indicating crucially distinct religious and socio-political dimensions of Islam.¹¹⁵ Recognizing this diversity of approaches to religion and politics, “It would be quite mistaken to suppose that all religious spokespersons, or at least all political Muslims, are on one side of the line, and all others on the other side”¹¹⁶ of opinion on major issues affecting the polity. For example, the sources of authority and limits of obedience to Muslim and secular leaders alike is a hotly contested issue within this supposedly homogenous group. Construction of religious and political authority in Islamic thought largely hinges on a

¹¹³ Khan, "Introduction: The Emergence of an Islamic Democratic Discourse," xvi.

¹¹⁴ Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," 183. Further, according to Khan, recent surveys have indicated that over 80% of Muslims would like to see their countries democratize, and even steadfast Islamists include democratic principles in their conceptualizations of an Islamic state- Mawdudi (Pak, theodemocracy), Qutb (Egypt, democratic processes in an Islamic state). Taqiuddin An-Nabhani (Hizb ut-Tahreer, Palestine, d.1977), an advocate of a global Islamic caliphate, also advocated for elections and his ideal constitution closely resembled the American constitution wearing Islamic makeup. Khan, "Introduction: The Emergence of an Islamic Democratic Discourse," xii-xiv.

¹¹⁵ Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 210.

¹¹⁶ Tariq and Riva Kastoryano Modood, "Secularism and the Accommodation of Muslims in Europe," in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Anna Triandafyllidou Tariq Modood, Ricard Zapata-Barrero (2006), 168.

particular Qur'anic verse, 4:59, which directs Muslims to "obey...those in possession of authority among you"; the phrasing of this term has given rise to many historical and contemporary debates among Muslims. A thorough study by Asma Afsaruddin looks at the implications of the evolutionary transformations that emerge when multiple interpretations of this one verse are considered.¹¹⁷ Those in the anti-Muslim camp frequently question Muslim obedience to secular political authority, and it is true that Muslim arguments on political participation in secular governments extend across a range of views that include seeing it as forbidden, as a permissible right, or as a duty required to fulfill one's spiritual obligation to improve the lives of the umma (the whole community of Muslims).¹¹⁸

Orientalist scholars can point to later treatises on *sura* 4:59 as evidence that Islam has intrinsic authoritarian impulses, ignoring the diverse and primarily non-political understandings of this verse, and allowing Western commentators to talk about Islamic conceptions as relentlessly conducive to "Oriental despotism";¹¹⁹ as Bernard Lewis has famously done. Loyalty to the umma (i.e. to the global Muslim community, movements in the Muslim World, or specifically an immigrant's country of origin) is a related concern of Western Islamophobes, but studies show it has rarely led to disloyalty to the country of settlement, and in fact we've seen

¹¹⁷ Asma Afsaruddin, "Obedience to Political Authority: An Evolutionary Concept," in *Islamic Democratic Discourse: Theory, Debates, and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. M.A. Muqtedar Khan (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 37.

¹¹⁸ Scholars seem to agree that investigation into the specific context is required, meaning it is not sufficient to compare circumstances of Muslim groups in the UK and France (large numbers of immigrants that migrated from former colonies) with Sweden, as the ideological background of immigrating groups are widely varied, as are the different shades of secular government structures and social norms in the country of settlement.

¹¹⁹ Additionally, the concept of a caliph ruling infallibly- often touted as foundational to Islam by the anti-Muslim movement- is actually exogenous to Islam; scholarship shows that this seeped into Islam in the Persian and Hellenistic periods. Afsaruddin, "Obedience to Political Authority: An Evolutionary Concept," 53-54.

widespread participation by Muslims in peaceful protests against policies they oppose.¹²⁰

Muslims have shown respect for democratic institutions via their political participation as citizens and voters, occasionally as candidates, and frequently as active participants in constructive debate. Unfortunately, for various reasons, most Muslims, “often remain silent [in politics] and most of the voices in the cacophony of Muslim politics represent aggressively active minorities”.¹²¹ In other ways, democratic processes are structurally enforced for European Muslims: most Islamic organizations in Sweden function under the umbrella of the Islamic Cooperation Council and are eligible to receive generous funding from the government, unless they are perceived to promote undemocratic principles.¹²²

As an important aside, some scholars argue that the friction with Muslims in Europe is not related to Islam in particular, but rather a secular discomfort and disorientation in dealing with religion and religiosity in general. Europe’s own historical memory involves major struggles for secularism, and “Muslims do not sometimes appreciate the stresses and compromises of that history and why their demands are sometimes met with exasperation even by some of their political allies”.¹²³ Further, religion is a cause of anxiety for Europeans who feel “it rejects many of the central principles of liberalism such as humanism, individualism, critical rationality, commitment to scientific enquiry, freedom of thought and belief in progress”.¹²⁴

While admittedly disorienting to secular Europeans, theological reasoning for political issues is

¹²⁰ Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," 182. Protests against policies in Israel/Palestine are common a common example of this in Europe and Scandinavia. Also, mobilizing against Islam-inspired violence and extremism.

¹²¹ Khan, "The Politics. Theory, and Philosophy of Islamic Democracy," 152.

¹²² Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," 281.

¹²³ Modood, "Secularism and the Accommodation of Muslims in Europe," 163.

¹²⁴ Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," 188.

valuable to the discourse on Muslims in secular European (specifically Swedish) society. The dominating Christian undertones in these supposedly secular societies are widely recognized to influence current social policy, so it seems only prudent that Muslims be accorded the space to “speak loudly in the same language that the rest of society speaks in a gentle whisper”.¹²⁵

Hermeneutics

In history, Islam showed itself to be culturally friendly and, in that regard, has been likened to a crystal clear river. Its waters (Islam) are pure, sweet, and life-giving but- having no color of their own- reflect the bedrock (indigenous culture) over which they flow... Today, the Muslim world retains priceless relics of its former cultural splendor... but the wisdom of the past is not always understood and many of its established norms and older cultural patterns no longer seem relevant to Muslims...¹²⁶

There is a heightened tendency for critics of Islam to make judgments about the religion based on literal or medieval interpretations of the Qur'an without considering its historical context, but despite undeniable examples of violence legitimated by interpretations of the Islamic sources, there exists an equally abundant tradition within Islam of peace and justice. An authoritative interpreter of the sources theoretically has the power to evoke principles of peace that are already familiar, ingrained and important in the hearts and minds of the Muslim community. This signals opportunity for scholars of Islam to truly explore the Islamic sources with the goal of conflict resolution, but presents a challenge when religious leaders use their status or employ hermeneutics to promote violence.

Peaceful or violent, when interpretations are distributed to a broad base (or specifically target and appeal to those individuals that are in danger of moving onto a violent path) they can be quite persuasive in either direction. Studies show how the changing dynamics of interaction

¹²⁵ Ibid., 189.

¹²⁶ Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," *Crosscurrents* 56, no. 3 (2006): 357.

between Muslims in the West and their Islamic homelands¹²⁷ has resulted in a multi-directional and multi-leveled communication; this means liberal European Muslim ideas are being exchanged in more authoritarian settings in the Muslim world, invoking thought and change. Most Muslims believe that Allah provides core underlying principles, and scholars are meant to draw on these sources to identify best practices and guidance. Encouraging indigenous yet progressive approaches to textual interpretation, reconsidering the boundaries of the legal schools of thought, and understanding the role of history and culture on traditional understandings of the sources will all move opportunities for peaceful engagement forward.

Hermeneutics in Islam primarily deals with the universally accepted sources of the Qur'an and *hadith*, where disagreements about the message of the Prophet and his companions abound.¹²⁸ It is crucial to note that while the methodology of hermeneutics in Islam is rigorous and well developed, there does not exist a universally agreed upon and fixed set of rules to guide interpretation. For example, the question of who can engage in interpretation is debated in Islam, with more conservative Muslims viewing the role of religious leaders as the gatekeepers to the faith, while others perceive a broader, progressive, even limitless spectrum of interpretive opportunity to be found in the sources.¹²⁹ In her thorough historical/linguistic study Afsaruddin considers evolution of interpretations of verse 4:59, tracking understandings of religious

¹²⁷ John L. Esposito, "The Muslim Diaspora and the Islamic World," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 245-246. In contrast to the past when ideas only moved in one direction, new generations of Muslims, especially those in diaspora, are producing fresh interpretations on critical issues (*ijtihad*), resulting in a process of reformation on "issues of faith and practice, religious leadership and authority, religious and political pluralism, tolerance, minority rights, and gender".

¹²⁸ In addition to different understandings of *hadith*, some are widely considered the authentic sayings and doings of the prophets, while others are more questionable in origin and acceptance, leading to further divergences of opinion (and outcomes) among Islamic scholarship.

¹²⁹ Faruq does recognize that contemporary Islamist rhetoric tends to be culturally predatory, reflecting a selective retrieval and reinterpretation of Islam in that light. This is largely an attitude that has been fostered in the cultural dysfunction and social instability of the modern Muslim world; Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 358.

authority in Islam. It seems that exegesis on this verse is heavily clouded by the political, social, historical context of when the interpretation took place, as well as who is doing the interpreting. Historically, as Muslim leaders began to collect significant political power, they began to close the meaning of who is in authority, the extent of that authority, and the duties of the *umma* to that authority figure.¹³⁰ To show how dramatically (and essentially) interpretations of the same Qur'anic verse can differ based on who is interpreting, Afsaruddin shows how just one term, *uli 'l-amr*, is put forward in different contexts to have demanded obedience to: God only, God and Mohammed only, religious scholars, only religious *legal* scholars, only *reasonable* religious scholars, military leaders, political leaders, organizational leaders, any leader with good qualities, any leader with faith and the interests of the people at heart, and more.¹³¹

The Prophet and his companions held an honest and accommodating view of the social endowments of others, and Islam in its foundation did not impose itself on other cultures.¹³²

Rather, Muslims believe that the Prophet Mohammed's message only sought to distinguish and nurture what was good and beneficial in non-Muslim societies, pruning only what was considered to be obviously detrimental as a means of constructing a positive Islamic synthesis.

¹³⁰ Examples include Rida, Qutb, al-Mawardi, Taymiya's and others. Historical periods of importance to the Muslim community, such as the Mongol invasions [Taymiya's time], lend to different interpretations being put forth and accepted.

¹³¹ Afsaruddin, "Obedience to Political Authority: An Evolutionary Concept," 38-42. Also, Afsaruddin's research plots a clear trajectory of the meanings of *uli 'l-amr*. First, it was understood to refer to "people of knowledge and discernment" and military commanders during the time of the prophet [i.e. broadly refers to those with moral authority based on their sound knowledge, as well as those appointed to military positions by the prophet himself] (page 50). Later, the term included political leaders. Later, includes different kinds of authority- moral, religious, political, even secular positions such as labor leaders and prominent journalists. Then, a narrowing of the term by Qutb and Mawdudi.

¹³² Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 358. Examples of the prophet allowing cultural practices that did not conform to Arab Muslim norms. Using the story of the "Sons of Arfida", the Sunna puts forward an "abiding legal precedent for respecting different ethnic and cultural traditions and acknowledging the emotional needs, tastes, and cultural inclinations of all who embraced his teaching." Page 362. The author also gives examples of early Arab Muslim/European encounters that include expressions of cultural appreciation for personal qualities and cultural attributes of the Byzantine Christians. He also includes reflections on Chinese Muslim culture, as well as Swahili-speaking Muslims and West African Muslims.

This is how modern Muslims tend to negotiate living in non-Muslim societies: they are free to do anything that does not contradict fundamental principles and Islamic laws.¹³³ However, *sharia*-laws that guide a Muslim on the virtuous path emanating from the textual sources- is also highly subject to interpretation. Having broad caveats as, “within the broad parameters of the sacred law...” and, “as long as it is not clearly repudiated in the revealed law...”, *sharia* can be very problematic (even reminding one of Iran or Saudi Arabia’s constitutions) and presents concerns for just implementation in the secular, liberal contexts of Europe. Liberal Muslim thinkers (Tibi, Ramadan, Khan and others) prefer understandings that reject seeing *sharia* as given and instead emphasize the consultative processes of *shura* in arriving at Islamic rulings. Khan forcefully concludes, “...Until we dismantle the exclusivist and often dictatorial authority of the jurists, and democratize *ijtihad*, there can be no Islamic democracy,”¹³⁴ stating that jurists themselves must encourage the democratization of interpretation. The primacy given to *sharia* in Islamic discourse is also considered by many to be deeply troubling; Islamic jurists, as well as anti-Muslim activists, tend to equate Islam with Islamic law and privilege the study and exploration of *sharia* over and above all else, “thereby colonizing Islamic thought and marginalizing other fields of inquiry”, resulting in the reduction of Islamic thought “to the status of a medieval legal tradition”.¹³⁵

¹³³ Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 210.

¹³⁴ Khan, "The Politics, Theory, and Philosophy of Islamic Democracy," 160-165. Throughout his treatment of the role of the jurists in the discourse, Khan takes a hardline against the authoritarian interpretations of *sharia* from the sources, explicitly stating they are the biggest barrier to democracy and referring to them more than once as arrogant and tyrannical.

¹³⁵ Khan, "The Blasphemy of Islam," 159-160. “The fatwa wielding Islamic jurists, who with one stroke can make democracy halal and political philosophy haram, remain an important barrier to the development of Islamic political theory”

While current circumstances reflect real barriers to opening the door for liberal Islamic thought and may make progress seem difficult, achieving this task is not impossible and progressive hermeneutics must engage in the crucial area of Islamic peacebuilding. Muqtader Khan sets out specific tasks that Islamic philosophy must accomplish that can go a long way to “loosen and bind” contemporary understandings of Islam and its innate compatibility with European democratic society:¹³⁶ 1) enforce the binding character of *shura* (consultation), 2) reject fixed *sharia* rulings in favor of negotiated understandings, 3) acknowledge the limits of Islamic legal tradition or the inherent flexibility of the tradition instead of rigid, one-size-fits all rulings) 4) ensure that past legal opinions must not subvert contemporary political reflections, 5) treat Islam as “a fountain of values that guide” rather than a fixed set of solutions to problems.

In another attempt to constructively address this dilemma, a discussion and resultant summary report was issued by USIP from a workshop of four experts in Islamic law and interpretation, and distinguishes four categories of statements from the Qur’an and *hadith*: 1) definite source, definite meaning; 2) definite source, probable meaning; 3) probable source, definite meaning; 4) probable source, probable meaning.¹³⁷ As you can see, this theoretically leaves the last three categories of revelation up for interpretation.

In sum, the authority and validity of interpretations of the sources of Islamic knowledge- including but not limited to Qur’an, *hadith*, Sunna, medieval Islamic legal tradition, and modern interpretations- vary considerably and must be considered *only* when coupled with comprehensive, holistic awareness of the time, place, norms, and prevailing conditions of when

¹³⁶ Khan, "The Politics. Theory, and Philosophy of Islamic Democracy," 156.

¹³⁷ "Ijtihad: Reinterpreting Islamic Principles for the 21st Century," *United States Institute of Peace* (2004).

an opinion on the sources was rendered.¹³⁸ Further, there must be recognition of the significant diversity in how interpretations of religious sources are received and internalized. An Afghani octogenarian Salafi living under intense daily insecurity and a Muslim college freshman living in Stockholm will undoubtedly understand Islam and apply its principles differently due to their experience, context, needs, culturally-learned approaches to reasoning and their extremely divergent immediate and long-term priorities. However, Islam is a religion that philosophically centers itself on the concept of unity and oneness (*tawhid*), and a diversity of interpretations can cause considerable anxiety to those who feel that this may undermine the unity of the *umma*. This diversity has resulted in so-called “communities of interpretation” or when understood most simply, *Islams*.

Islams

An understanding of the concept of *Islams*, and in this case Euro-Islam and Blue-and-Yellow Islam in particular, is critical to the analysis of the integration of Muslims in European society. Several scholars support the active pursuit of a cultural identity that meets the needs of European Muslim by balancing respect for Islamic norms harmoniously with the cultural ethos of their environment:

Human beings generate culture naturally like spiders spin silk, but unlike spiders’ webs the cultures people construct are not always adequate, especially when generated unconsciously, in confusion, under unfavorable conditions, or without proper direction... Building a successful indigenous Muslim culture cannot be left to occur haphazardly, unconsciously, or without direction... Cultural development must be intentional and proactive, focused on clear and valid goals with a concrete vision of how to attain them.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 358, 369, 371.

Ramadan believes that European Muslims will develop a new vision of Islamic culture and Islam through a rereading of the original sources, some of which must be reinterpreted when read with a new perspective. If *sharia* is a Muslim's way of staying faithful to their principles, discourse in this arena can return to more authentic conceptions of *sharia* that recognize a need for adaptation to one's environment rather than emphasizing defined principles of some foreign and outdated legal system. Esposito sees movement here, recognizing that Western Muslim thinkers are now being enabled to address the concerns that arise from their unique situation, leading them to reconsider "the relationship of tradition to reform (*taqlid* and *ijtihad*), faith to national and cultural identity, religion to politics and society".¹⁴⁰ Thus a rigorous process of reinterpretations of Islam is taking place, encouraged by the experiences of Muslims in the West, reshaping previous conceptions of political participation, women's status, and the rights of minorities in Islam, to name but a few areas.

When conceiving of the possibility of European versions of Islam, it is important to recognize the seemingly impassable assumptions implicit in this question. Framing the issue by claiming that Muslim identity must be *reconstructed* to be in accordance with so-called European values, as put forth in the project of Euro-Islam, assumes Muslim populations are still the "other" in Europe. To move beyond Euro-Islam is to propose a new approach to thinking about identity by deconstructing the concepts of identity, difference, and other and is a worthwhile endeavor in healing intergroup conflict in this case.¹⁴¹ These concepts of identity will

¹⁴⁰ Esposito, "The Muslim Diaspora and the Islamic World," 251. He provides examples of Western Muslim scholars influencing these processes, such as Abdullahi Naim and Fathi Osman among others.

¹⁴¹ Badredine Arfi, "'Euro-Islam': Going Beyond the Aporiatic Politics of Othering," *International Political Sociology* 4, no. 3 (2010): 237, 244. Arfi's original contribution to this debate comes when the author posits a new way of thinking about identity in the context of Euro-Islam where she suggests that Muslims are faced with undecidability between fixed choices. She goes on to say that, "undecidability does not necessarily mean indeterminacy of options or choices. To the contrary: undecidability occurs exactly when we are faced with a well

be considered with care in upcoming sections specifically dealing with identity issues. Keeping these critiques in mind, the fact is that Muslims in Europe often struggle to preserve their Islamic identity in the context of globalization,¹⁴² and this means constantly having to negotiate the sometimes problematic boundaries of secular society and still regard oneself as an authentic Muslim. A Swedish study shows the apparent ease with which some are able to construct an Islam that is capable of adapting to society and forms in response to new interpretations emerging from the context of secular democracy;¹⁴³ this view is especially popular with Sweden's young Muslims:

Sweden, with its democratic traditions, social welfare policies and ideals of freedom, corresponds in many ways with an Islamic pattern. More Muslims are being born in Sweden. Together with converts, this first generation of Muslims born in Sweden are taking part in forming a Swedish Islam that is moulded in a Swedish social culture and against a Swedish sounding-board, an Islam that therefore could be called Blue-and-Yellow.¹⁴⁴

Instead of viewing the development of European Islamic identity as necessitating a tradeoff of Islamic values for Western ones, emerging perspectives such as these attempt to reduce the perception of a binary between essentialized notions of Islam and Western civilization.¹⁴⁵

“Europe’s Muslims are no longer guests that one day will return home, but rather Europeans of Muslim faith”.¹⁴⁶

determined and defined structure of options that are competing with on another and we are not able to decide which way to decide, all the while sensing the urgency and necessity of deciding”.

¹⁴² Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," 279. In another study, Arfi considers the existing concern for Muslims of being Westernized or Europeanized, as if this limits the authenticity of one's Islamic identity, though the author does not argue that this in any way represents the opinion of the majority of Muslims, and even recognizes that this position is often taken up by non-Muslims.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 283.

¹⁴⁴ Svanberg and Westerlund, 1999, quoted in *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Khan, "The Politics, Theory, and Philosophy of Islamic Democracy," 149.

¹⁴⁶ Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 207.

An important mechanism for enabling the emergence of liberal, moderate interpretations of Islam is the development of conscientious Islamic education systems in Europe. This includes both the training of Islamic leaders knowledgeable in navigating non-Muslim majority contexts, and more broadly, equipping average Muslims with a strong and comprehensive knowledge of their own religion. To this end, Ramadan recognizes:

Today, most Muslims are not speaking out of confidence, because they do not know their own principles, which means they do not know themselves well. And because they do not know themselves, they are afraid of their environment. The same applies to Europeans...[they] are afraid of those Muslims who have religious convictions and a better sense of who they are and what they want from the future.¹⁴⁷

Recognizing the importance of the transmission of Islamic knowledge and the benefits of the construction of a moderate European Islam, there has been a shift in Western policies away from a preference for Muslims citizens to seek spiritual guidance abroad. Current trends reflect an understanding by Western governments that the development of legitimate homegrown Islamic leaders and organizations is a successful means of limiting Islamic extremism. This gives Muslim citizens reliable alternatives to the “basement mosques” of Europe that routinely rely on foreign ideological and financial support; the informality of these organizations makes them appear mysterious to Western governments, causing them to be heavily prone to suspicion.¹⁴⁸

One way state-funded Muslim organizations achieve the goal of combatting extremism is through *dawa* activities (dialogical engagement on issues of faith) within their own communities that directly address certain phenomenon such as “honor killings”; recognizing these as serious

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 211.

¹⁴⁸ The author presents several Muslim criticisms of these policies, some that condemn the state for trying to change or even destroy the Islamic identity of Muslims living in Europe; others perceive this as a threat against their identity. Arfi, “Euro-Islam”: Going Beyond the Aporiatic Politics of Othering,” 238. This argument reminds of Galtung’s discussion of structural violence in forced assimilation. Also, Sweden has had its issues with basement mosques, source on Somali fundamentalist preacher, distribution of terrorist materials.

social problems, and promoting information that shows how these behaviors have nothing to do with their understanding of “true Islam”.¹⁴⁹

There has increasingly been dialogue about training Swedish imams, an option that would likely serve the needs of both Euro-Muslims looking for religious guidance that understands the context of their daily lives, as well as non-Muslims who can feel secure knowing the promotion of democratic values and indigenous cultural norms will be incorporated into Islamic teachings.¹⁵⁰ Most domestic training programs currently in effect for Islamic leaders in Sweden focus on training them in integration matters, which- while important- ignores the provision of exhaustive theological and philosophical training. Secular government actors may ignore the relevance of training imams in Sweden, while others shy away from the political complications associated with establishing these types of institutions. However, numerous Swedish politicians have supported revitalizing Swedish imam-training programs, but so far initiatives have not materialized into appreciable higher learning institutes.¹⁵¹

In conclusion, one can establish three very generalized- but still somewhat useful- categories of European Muslims to be used in guiding analysis of specific contexts. It is important to be clear that these categories themselves have rich internal diversity as well as a character of fluidity where people may find themselves selectively attached to and detached from various components, such as nationalism, over time. First, there are Muslims who just happen to live in Europe but have no commitment to it. Next, we see Muslims who view Europe as their home and distinguish their nationality from their religion, and then there are those who follow a

¹⁴⁹ Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," 284.

¹⁵⁰ See Larsson: 2005, cited in *ibid.*, 281.

¹⁵¹ Larsson, ed. *Islam in the Nordic and Baltic Countries*, 67.

European form of Islam.¹⁵² Parekh claims the first group is the smallest, and the last two groups form the overwhelming majority of Muslims in Europe; studies on religiosity in Sweden seem to agree. Further, it should also be noted that in addition to these categories of explicitly *practicing* Muslims, the diversity of religiosity and observance is as real in Islam as for other religious communities, but is more frequently ignored due to the attention paid to Islamic religious extremism in research, media and popular discourse.¹⁵³

Theories of Culture

A key assumption being made in this study is that cultural differences (values, norms, practices) play a role in the conflict and resolution dynamics in the Swedish context. The concept of culture is complex and often an inadequate idea of the term is used to oversimplify culture, or worse, to connect assumptions about culture to a particular political agenda. However, after thorough investigation and consideration, Kevin Avruch applauds the virtues of Theodore Schwartz's definition of culture:

Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images and encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves.¹⁵⁴

Another related definition sourced from Edward and Mildred Hall conceives of culture as a silent language that "includes broad evolutionary concepts, practices, and solutions to problems which have their roots not only in the lofty ideas of philosophers but in the shared experiences of

¹⁵² Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," 199.

¹⁵³ Larsson, ed. *Islam in the Nordic and Baltic Countries*, 58.

¹⁵⁴ Theodore Schwartz, "Anthropology and Psychology: An Unrequited Relationship," in *New Directions in Psychological Anthropology*, ed. G. White T. Schwartz, and C. Lutz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 324.

ordinary people”.¹⁵⁵ On the all-encompassing role of culture in one’s life, development and interactions, Umar Faruq concludes the following, “Culture governs everything about us and even molds our instinctive actions and natural inclinations. It gives our values functional expression by integrating them into customary patterns including the routine facets of our activities as well as the ‘deepest dimension of our psyches’”.¹⁵⁶ Faruq goes on to show how culture encompasses every fundamental aspect of society including family relations, business practices, gender norms, learning and the cultivation of knowledge, as well as political organization.

According to Avruch, built in to the modern meaning of culture is a purpose to both describing differences between social groups with some objectivity, as well as to assert a moral equivalence of all cultures.¹⁵⁷ Faruq on the other hand, is more comfortable with the direct evaluation of culture: “A culture is ‘successful’ when it imparts an operative identity, produces social cohesion, and gives its members knowledge and social skills that empower them to meet their individual and social requirements effectively”.¹⁵⁸ Avruch takes care to emphasize that culture is ultimately an individually derived experience, and that cultures are not homogenous, timeless, or evenly distributed among the population. However, there are national and societal generalizations that can be made with some useful degree of accuracy. Avruch credits Gert and Geert Hofstede as having the most methodological authority in this subject,¹⁵⁹ but disagrees with

¹⁵⁵ Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall, *Understanding Cultural Differences* (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1990), 3.

¹⁵⁶ Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 359.

¹⁵⁷ Kevin Avruch, "Type I and Type II Errors in Culturally Sensitive Conflict Resolution Practice," *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (2003): 356.

¹⁵⁸ Cited in Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 360.

¹⁵⁹ Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1998), 66.

their optimism in applying these results having only predicted 49% of cultural variation.¹⁶⁰

However, for the purposes of this project, these indexes will serve as useful cultural barometers to understand where Swedish values and norms lie relative to those cultures in the home countries of Sweden's Muslim immigrant communities. Familiarity with culture concepts and the actualized cultural paradigm differences between groups is crucial to conflict resolution practitioners, as errors occur when one unconsciously imposes their own rules on another system.

Cultural Differences in Sweden

The concept of culture must be used with sensitivity and caution in order to remain useful and accurate. For example, it is critical to acknowledge that individuals are bearers of multiple cultures simultaneously, and that individuals *acquire* cultures in a multiplicity of ways. Culture can be passed down through child rearing and unconscious socialization, but it is also emergent and responsive to shifting environments; it is a dangerous line of thinking to assume cultures are monolithic and stable when reality reflects them to be widely fragmented and often passionately contested.¹⁶¹ When evaluating cultural difference, Kevin Avruch- an expert in the field- pleads for researchers to distinguish between “experience-distant culture”, which is a technical analytical category, and “experience-near culture”, which refers to how subjects themselves define their identity and demarcate group boundaries. When used in an e/n sense, the concept of culture is almost always intended to show collective communal identity, always requiring an

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 68.

¹⁶¹ For example, “Entire cultures can hardly be classified as violent”, expressions of cultural violence is a preferred description over the use of cultural stereotypes. Johan Galtung, “Cultural Violence,” in *Violence and Its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Manfred B. Steger, and Nancy S. Lind (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 39.

“other” to distinguish group difference;¹⁶² culture used in this way seems to more accurately refer to ethnicity. Any confusion between e/n and e/d concepts can be deleterious for conflict resolution, and ethically precarious as well as the concepts of race and culture can start to become confused. Small traits of culture are objectified to make ethnicity until eventually actual cultural content does not matter as much as instilling the existence of politically or socially significant differences.

Regardless, it is admitted that:

Confinement to experience-near concepts [of culture] leaves an ethnographer awash in immediacies, as well as entangled in the vernacular. Confinement to the experience-distant ones leaves him stranded in abstractions and smothered in jargon.¹⁶³

However, at least some discussion of cultural differences is necessary in this case to describe and deconstruct cultural features (here, experience-distant culture) that immigrants bring with them to Sweden, and to how those features converge or contrast with the cultural features of Swedish society. The chart below compares the Hofstede’s cultural indicator index scores of Sweden with four main countries of origin for Sweden’s immigrant population to demonstrate observable cultural differences between the communities in the areas of power distance, PDI; individualism, IDV; masculinity, MAS; and uncertainty avoidance, UAI:

¹⁶² Avruch, "Type I and Type II Errors in Culturally Sensitive Conflict Resolution Practice," 357-358.

¹⁶³ Geertz in *ibid.*, 355.

Table 2. Cultural Differences in Sweden

Hofstede, Hall- comparing Swedish and immigrant home country patterns of cultural tendency ¹⁶⁴						
Country	Power distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty avoidance	Context	Time
Sweden	31	71	5	29	Low	Mono
Iraq	95	30	70	85	High	Poly
Syria	80	35	52	60		
Turkey	66	37	45	85		
Albania	90	20	80	70		

Culturally unique in many ways, Sweden (and the other Scandinavian countries) ranked exceptionally in almost all of the Hofstede indexes. For example, Swedes ranked 76th of 76 countries on the Masculinity index,¹⁶⁵ indicating that Swedish culture is incredibly feminine according to the definitions put forth by the researchers that generally align with an assertiveness – modesty spectrum. Sweden also ranked 69.5 of 76 on Power Distance Index (PDI),¹⁶⁶ an indicator of how individuals interact across power boundaries and hierarchies. According to the Hofstede's, among other things PDI is correlated with how individuals behave in the workplace, and how they relate to their government. In Sweden, one of the lowest PDI countries, there is a cultural tendency to favor equality in interactions between employees, employers and the state; this is correlated with low PDI. Finally, Sweden ranked low (72.5 of 76)¹⁶⁷ on the Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), but ranked high (13.5 of 76) on the Individualism index.¹⁶⁸ These last two indicators are correlated with risk taking behavior and conflict management styles.

¹⁶⁴ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 57-59, 95-97, 141-143, 192-194.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 194.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 56.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 194.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 92.

In regards to the Muslim immigrant communities in Sweden, there are significant barriers to making accurate generalizations of the culture of this community. According to the government of Sweden, immigrants come from a diversity of regions and nations, but the majority of non-Scandinavian immigrants are from Muslim-majority countries. Obviously there is great cultural variance within the Muslim/immigrant community in Sweden, especially when you take into consideration why a person emigrated (i.e. refugee, migrant worker, etc.) and when they moved to Sweden (i.e., 1970's, after 2003 war in Iraq, etc.). In consideration of available data and the purposes of this research, we will consider four countries included in the Hofstede indexes: Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Albania.¹⁶⁹ As you can see in the chart pictured above, these nations rank similarly to one another on all of the noted indicators. Individuals from these cultures are likely to have quite a large power distance culture when compared to Sweden, to be much more collective, significantly more masculine or assertive than Swedes, and have a greater intolerance for uncertainty.

In addition to the Hofstede indicators of culture (PDI, UAI, IDV, MAS), there are a few more interactional areas of culture difference between Swedes and the immigrant communities that deserve mention here. According to Edward T. Hall and observed with support by others, contexting is a significant category of cultural difference that heavily influences communication. Culture groups can be placed on a spectrum from high-context to low-context, with Scandinavians among the lowest on the spectrum, and Arabs, Turks and Africans on the higher end of the spectrum. Individuals from low-context cultures compartmentalize their personal relationships

¹⁶⁹ These four nations were selected because they not only represent nations with major migrant flows to Sweden, but because the Hofstede data set includes complete data on them (unlike Somalia and Afghanistan for example, which would be more relevant for comparison here if the necessary data were available). Government statistics show that over 200,000 individuals have migrated to Sweden from only these four countries since 2000. See Foreign-Born Persons by Country of Birth and Period, in the Statistics Sweden, http://www.scb.se/Pages/SSD/SSD_TablePresentation____340508.aspx?layout=tableViewLayout1&rxid=f3fe1d19-5939-4164-a384-537f6ac702bb.

and make clear divisions between work, community and home; correlations are apparent with individualism traits. High-context groups, such as the immigrant communities in Sweden, value having extensive and overlapping networks among family, friends, coworkers, clients, etc.; this reflects values of communalism. Practical differences can manifest when the amount of context information that needs to be conveyed in an interaction doesn't match one's own cultural style, for example, being provided too much context information can be received as patronizing, whereas being given too little context can leave one feeling excluded or confused.¹⁷⁰ Personal space differences are also related to contexting, and result in different approaches to touching, for example. Not surprisingly, if an interactional partner does not maintain a "normal" conversational distance, and touches when it is unwelcome, we feel offended or threatened,¹⁷¹ when the real culprit is not the intention to be invasive, but rather a cultural difference.

Differing levels of apparent commitment to an agenda or an appointment may also be attributed to cultural differences, potentially causing offense or being misperceived as disinterest or disengagement. In this case, differences in the perception of time may be at play. Cultural worldviews perceive and orient themselves to time differently, with some variations focused on the past, with others more concerned with the short- and long-term future. Monochronic people see time as almost literally tangible and adhere religiously to plans, whereas polychronic people prioritize their obligations differently and change plans often and easily. These differences in time orientation can also have a marked effect on relationship building, with monochronic people (Westerners) being more accustomed to forming short-term relationships- some intense, many

¹⁷⁰ Hall, *Understanding Cultural Differences*, 9.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 12.

superficial-, whereas polychronic people have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationships.¹⁷²

Culture and Conflict Resolution

Previously, theory and even practice ignored the importance of cultural difference as relevant to the sources or outcomes of a conflict.¹⁷³ Following the approach of current peace and conflict scholars, this research project bears the assumption that within almost any culture there are aspects that can be used to justify and legitimize direct and structural violence at the same time as aspects exist that facilitate, or necessitate, direct and structural peace. With an understanding of some of the core cultural tendencies of the groups involved, conflict analysis can more accurately assess the context of the conflict, for example appreciation for significantly different orientations toward time and different cognitive representations bound up in symbols or metaphors. With an understanding of the varieties of beliefs on how to process conflict, uncertainty, and the roles of authority in disputes and conflict resolution, practitioners can refer to effective communication styles among culturally different disputants. Therefore, it would seem that diagnosing the specific impacts of culture on a particular conflict setting is the first task in conflict analysis.

In doing so, Avruch warns the analyst to be aware of which sense of culture is most relevant, e/n or e/d, to avoid mistaking difference as representing e/d culture, when in fact, the differences are manifestations of e/n culture.¹⁷⁴ A diagnostic error that assumes culture does not

¹⁷² Ibid., 15.

¹⁷³ Avruch, "Type I and Type II Errors in Culturally Sensitive Conflict Resolution Practice," 352.

¹⁷⁴ Avruch finds that Type II errors will probably occur under at least these two conditions: the conflict is self-evidently interethnic or interracial, and in settings where there is institutional emphasis on multiculturalism. Ibid., 362-363.

have a significant impact when in fact it does (Type I error), is less likely than the second kind of error that mistakes ethnic differences for cultural ones (Type II error); both types of errors will affect the efficacy of intervention efforts.

Consequences of Type II errors can be devastating: culture becomes a crude stand-in for race, and since relations among cultural groups are hierarchical and entail disparity, cultural differences (from the perspective of the majority group) become indicators of deficiencies of the other culture or race group. As long as multiculturalism is still accompanied by structural socioeconomic disparities, then this type of racism is not avoided but rather driven underground away from critical view.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, when multiculturalism drives a fear of honest public discourse, spokespersons for particular culture groups may emerge (often without communal support), to represent the community as having one voice- a perfectly shared culture. The issue of who gets to define culture, and who pays for culture so defined is quite troublesome, and is the source of research conducted on immigrant communities in Norway. Norwegian social anthropologist Unni Wikan writes about the problematic liberal insistence on respecting the “culture” of immigrants for fear of being deemed a racist for any action deemed disrespectful of culture, which may have the unintended consequence of reinforcing injustices against the most disempowered subordinate parties in society by denying them venues or opportunities for reform or just accountability.¹⁷⁶ Clearly, open and honest dialogue with fully inclusive participation can benefit the development of more positive and realistic perceptions on what are viewed as troublesome cultural differences between interactional partners in Sweden.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 364.

¹⁷⁶ Examples are given that include women being beaten, repatriated, etc. by conservative family members for assimilating into Western culture. Ibid., 365-366.

Cultural features can also have an effect on participation in and views toward structural violence and inequality. To take only one example, low PDI such as Sweden's can inform individual behavior in employment, a social arena where structural inequalities are often most evident. This implies that Swedish workers can be expected to participate in decision making with their superiors: "Subordinates and superiors consider each other as existentially equal: the hierarchical system is just an inequality of roles, established for convenience, and roles may be changed...".¹⁷⁷ This type of highly democratic relationship would likely be quite outside the norm for an immigrant worker from the MENA region for example, who may avoid providing input and constructive criticism to superiors and does not have such high expectations for vertical mobility in business. PDI in the labor market is also directly linked to the value of equality between individuals; it is therefore expected to see high levels of labor organization (collective bargaining) in low PDI cultures, intended to limit any perceived inequalities in the social relationship between workers, businesses and the state. An important outcome of this cultural feature is the Swedish government's commitment to equality through the provision of generous universal welfare benefits, which has more or less succeeded in freeing individuals from dependence on the market.¹⁷⁸ This is achieved through relatively high taxes, and remains popular in some part because of the feminine traits of Swedish culture:

Most Swedes feel that society should provide a minimum quality of life for everyone. It is normal that the financial means to that end are collected from those in society who have them. Even conservative politicians... do not disagree with this view, only with the extent to which it can be realized.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 74.

¹⁷⁸ Joshi, "Social Democracy in Sweden," 77.

¹⁷⁹ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 171.

Identity, Prejudice, and Intergroup Conflict

Why do we become so passionate and sometimes violent in response to our differences? This is a central question of literature that explores identity and the relationship to conflict, and majority/minority relationships in general. It is widely recognized that human needs theory is part of the core explanation of intergroup conflict,¹⁸⁰ therefore this section will begin by exploring some of these concepts at the individual level of analysis. Moving on from here, identity theory shows how connections to self and group identity influence a great deal of one's social interaction. An understanding of basic needs, particularly the need for secure self and group identity, is essential to the improvement of intergroup relations but is often ill considered in conflict analysis that prefers to focus extensively on issues and positions. This section intends to provide a brief exploration of theories regarding the construction of self-awareness and other awareness as a means of fulfilling one's basic human needs, and then considers the development of skills in intercultural perception, communication, and finally, conflict resolution.¹⁸¹ With the assumption that peaceful conflict transformation is possible through the strategic improvement of intergroup relationships, this approach hopes to deviate from the traditional norms of dominance (direct violence) and/or conflict avoidance (structural violence), asserting that in the search of their full potential, "individuals take responsibility for their own lives, adopt a here-and-now perspective, accept expression of the full range of human emotions,

¹⁸⁰ This conceptual framework is largely drawn from Ronald J. Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," in *Human Needs Theory*, ed. John Burton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

¹⁸¹ Fisher's model of eclectic conflict was developed by focusing directly on the intergroup level of analysis supplemented with selectively integrated factors from other levels, and was a helpful theoretical tool in organizing this section on identity, prejudice, intergroup conflict, and its resolution.

search for mutuality and authenticity in social relationships, and adopt a growth orientation to their experiencing of life”.¹⁸²

Individual and Group Identity

Like Sigmund Freud, German sociologist Thomas Adorno believed that adult personalities largely reflect childhood experiences. His studies describe an authoritarian personality, measured using nine basic characteristics and emerging from variables including displaced aggression and projection, which tends to be correlated with people who are prejudice.¹⁸³ These traditional studies found prejudice to frequently function as means of meeting the personality needs of individuals with certain kinds of experiences. Authoritarian personalities tend to need to see the world in largely oversimplified terms, and are unwilling to acknowledge faults in themselves; they also tend to be unable to view their parents critically. However, they are very likely to find faults in other groups and are prone to scapegoating. While patterns of individual psychological and psychoanalytical investigation along these lines is surely relevant, particularly in looking at direct motivations in incidents extremist- both Islamic and xenophobic extremism- it is far beyond the capacities of this research to engage in meaningful considerations of these factors. Rather, this section will continue by looking at the individual level of analysis in regards to the universal human need for identity and belonging, and how this need drives and influences self and group identity construction.

Malsow's hierarchy of needs, widely referenced in conflict literature, specifies the basic motives that underlie human behavior, spanning from physiological and safety needs to needs

¹⁸² Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 90.

¹⁸³ Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 25.

related to social relationships such as belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization.¹⁸⁴ There are some critiques as to the nature of the needs described as well as Maslow's hierarchical model, but in general the model believed to holistically present most, if not all, of the relevant factors that drive humans. Human needs theories help set the agenda to understand the dynamics of conflicts surrounding identity, a need regarded by several contemporary theorists as a fundamental requirement for constructive human development.¹⁸⁵ Identity informs one's frame of reference, which is foundational to all relationships and social decision-making. We are more comfortable with a certainty of identity, as it confirms one's reality:

It is our 'natural' tendency to assume that what we see is true and real and that our picture of the world is accurate. Given our need to establish and rely on a reality construct that is comfortable and predictable, the thought that our understanding is inaccurate or incomplete can be deeply unsettling.¹⁸⁶

When one encounters someone with a different frame of reference, it is easy to fall into right/wrong, in-group/out-group thinking patterns.

When faced with a crisis of self-identity, as both Muslims in Europe and Western anti-Muslims are likely to be, one is "unwilling, or not easily willing, to let go of our view of what is happening or our conclusions... We attach concepts of necessity, duty, appropriateness, rightness and moral imperative to the issues".¹⁸⁷ Galtung, Klineberg, and other scholars agree that individuals are willing to suffer and sacrifice immeasurably in the struggle to protect their

¹⁸⁴ Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 91.

¹⁸⁵ Identity is developed through exchange with one's environment (Nudler), social interactions (Mead), social structures (Galtung); *ibid.*, 94.

¹⁸⁶ Tim Hicks, "In Practice: Another Look at Identity-Based Conflict: The Roots of Conflict in the Psychology of Consciousness," *Negotiation Journal* Volume 17, no. 1 (2001): 36.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

identity.¹⁸⁸ Baderine Arfi investigates this concept specifically in the context of Euro-Islam, with a discussion of identity differences and the internalized process of compromising one's self and thus one's protections (self-security) over immunizing against this risk by over-securing one's identity.¹⁸⁹ For Muslim individuals and Islamic scholars, a key dilemma is how their perception of the religion's universality (umma identity, universal not relative values) can coincide with respect for a diversity of worldviews. According to Tariq Ramadan, a true and equal dialogue exploring human relativity coupled with universal transcendence can seek to fulfill this need for Muslims in Europe.¹⁹⁰

As detailed above, it is clear that nurturing a positive self-identity and esteem is crucial to the development of a well-rounded human being, as is a feeling of needs security. However, a sense of hyper-security may develop under certain conditions and can manifest as ethnocentric glorification and superiority, often leading to violent conflict. Armed with a distinguished sense of self, one will naturally connect with others that share a similar worldview; this is how boundaries of "us" and "them" are clarified. Group identity is largely perpetuated by socialization via agents such as child rearing practices, peers, and the media and is therefore heavily influenced by the environmental context in which the group exists. An environment where prejudice is the norm tends to produce prejudiced individuals;¹⁹¹ in other words, when the setting is strong to encourage prejudices, the personalities of individuals becomes a lot less

¹⁸⁸ Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 95.

¹⁸⁹ Consider Arfi- Difference becomes otherness to immunize oneself and secure self-certainty; this process is basically us succumbing to the process of auto-immunity- is it possible to go beyond this aporia?

¹⁹⁰ Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 209.

¹⁹¹ An environment where prejudice is the norm tends to produce prejudiced individuals, even if those individuals have no personality need to be prejudiced. In this case, prejudice is a top-down phenomena, taught by society to the individual. People do, in the absence of some social or psychological force to the contrary, tend to conform. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 29, 31.

important and the need to conform and belong is primary. Transmission methods of in-group identity and out-group prejudice can be deliberate or unintentional and include selective exposure, modeling, reward and punishment; they can be planned or informal, but regardless they eventually lead one to internalize and then retain biases about other groups.¹⁹²

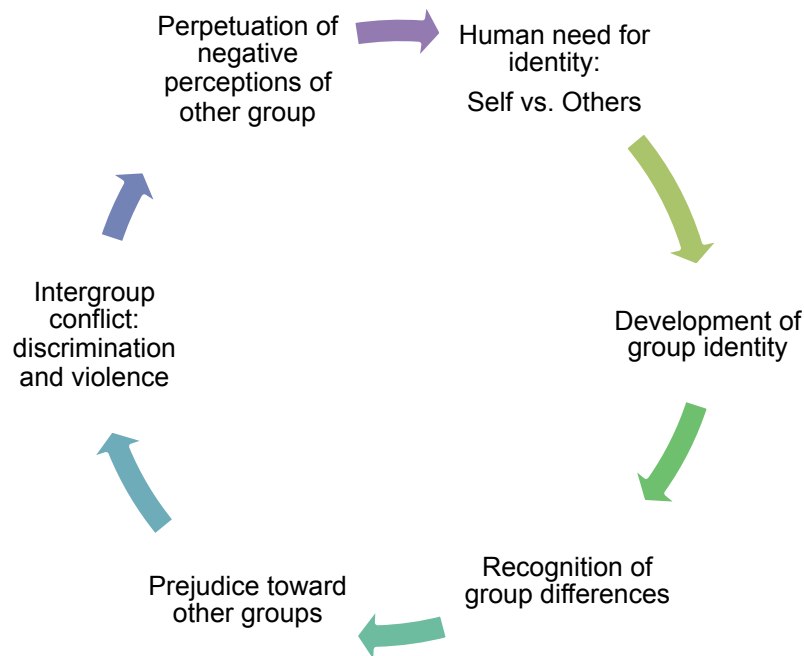


Figure 1. Perpetual Cycle of Identity Formation and Intergroup Conflict

The relevant scholars are critical of experience distant conceptions of group boundaries that define attitudes and behavior as determined by culture and ethnicity, preferring instead to recognize socially constructed boundaries between “others”, so called “imaginary identification” as proposed by Swedish philosopher Michael Azar.¹⁹³ This progressive approach attempts to confront the common feature of prejudice of over categorization, where beliefs, attitudes, etc. are applied to a group as a whole without recognition of wide variations that are bound to exist in

¹⁹² Ibid., 30.

¹⁹³ Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," 279. Also, see Benedict Anderson's concept of “imagined communities”.

individuals in any given group.¹⁹⁴ In the contemporary Western context, there is an annoyingly common tendency to oversimplify Islam and overgeneralize Muslims, plotting them squarely in the “other” category and resulting in devastating consequences for the Muslim world. Khan attributes Bernard Lewis for “launch[ing] the discourse of civilizational incompatibility and hostility” of Islam, followed by Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilizations, just after the cold war.¹⁹⁵ At a time when the West needed a new recipient for their hostilities, Western academics- falling short of industry standards of analysis- presented a view of the Arab world as, “a closed, traditional and religious society unenlightened by western secular humanism; devoid of any appreciation for freedom, tolerance, and gender equality; afraid of democracy and things modern because they are seen as foreign”.¹⁹⁶ Unfortunately this obviously biased and elementary understanding continues to inform some groups’ view of Arabs and Muslims today.

Intergroup Conflict

What is considered to be an intergroup social conflict in this context? Orientations toward conflict vary, and social conflict can be defined as something that “threatens the smooth or efficient functioning of a society or that threatens to cause such drastic social change that a new, less well-adapted form of society may result”,¹⁹⁷ another view is that the most threatening social

¹⁹⁴ Also, It has often been suggested that people form prejudices because they observe characteristics they do not like in members of the group against whom they are prejudice, rather than trying to explain the characteristics and experiences of the person who is prejudiced. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 19, 21.

¹⁹⁵ Bernard Lewis in “The Roots of Muslim Rage” published in 1990, established Islamic resurgence as the enemy after the cold war, established freedom as the most significant difference between political Islam and the West. Then came the Clash of Civilizations, Sam Huntington. The politics related to this discourse are extremely relevant to the debate in the American academy. The discourse includes studies to explain the absence of democratization in the Muslim world, and the moral and philosophical compatibility of Islam and democracy. Khan, "Introduction: The Emergence of an Islamic Democratic Discourse," xv.

¹⁹⁶ The study does not meet the standards of rationality or analysis but still went a long way in making the case that Islam is incompatible with democracy.

¹⁹⁷ Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 77.

problems are poverty, racism, and social inequality in general. For the limited purposes of this research, we are concerned only with the violent variations of conflict, and will rely on the analytical breadth provided by Johan Galtung's typologies of violent conflict: direct violence (an event of aggression), structural violence (structures of unequal exchange and exploitation, domination), and cultural violence (cultural sources of direct and structural violence; an invariant).¹⁹⁸

If the review of needs and identity theory has taught us anything, parties meet in conflict not only over the substantive issues being contested, but at a baser level, in defense of their identity".¹⁹⁹ According to Hicks, identity based conflicts are "social conflicts that are based on ethnic, cultural, religious or national identity differences...related to our perceptions, beliefs, and assumptions about what is real, true, right or good to which we are attached as they confirm our sense of identity".²⁰⁰ People need to construct a positive self-image and to do so must compare oneself favorably to other groups; this comparative process fuels ethnocentric responses to differences. Social identity theory takes self-esteem, identity theory, and social comparison theory to explain discrimination on identity lines.²⁰¹

According to Ramadan, himself a European-born Muslim, there are two main perspectives on the identity-related causes of the specific intergroup conflict context being researched here: indigenous Europeans fear the intentions of Muslims, often suspicious of intentions to convert European society to have Islamic features; for European Muslims, the

¹⁹⁸ Galtung, "Cultural Violence," 41-43.

¹⁹⁹ Hicks, "In Practice: Another Look at Identity-Based Conflict: The Roots of Conflict in the Psychology of Consciousness," 43.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 38.

²⁰¹ Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 95.

biggest fear is the potential loss of their religion, culture, and distinct identity.²⁰² Further, it is shown that “Overlapping cleavages occur when, for example, racial, religious, class, and language divisions all cut the same way... the potential for conflict [is] very high,” and few people have mixed loyalties.²⁰³ Therefore, summarizes Avruch, “The parties themselves will see their conflict in ‘cultural’ terms: protecting traditions, preserving identity, keeping the faith, [etc].”.²⁰⁴ Echoed by Fisher,²⁰⁵ it is clear that satisfying one’s personal and group identity needs, such as the construction of a European Islamic identity, can escalate the intergroup conflict by and fueling in-group glorification and solidarity which is perceived by other groups (non-Muslims) as threatening to their security.

Intergroup conflict has many sources related to needs and identity, but some believe it stems primarily from a person or group’s relative position in the larger social structure, which fosters real and perceived competition over resource and position scarcity. According to Avruch, “In the real world, the fact of diversity is usually correlated with forms of inequality and stratification, and dominant groups can relate, both ideologically and in terms of political praxis, to subordinate ones in a variety of ways”.²⁰⁶ Conflict, discrimination, and inequality are deeply entrenched in society, and despite a general decline in discrimination, the aggregate pattern remains one of racial and ethnic inequality.²⁰⁷ For some minority group members, this means

²⁰² Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 207.

²⁰³ Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 242.

²⁰⁴ Avruch, "Type I and Type II Errors in Culturally Sensitive Conflict Resolution Practice," 358.

²⁰⁵ In-group glorification and solidarity, related to negative perceptions of out-group, is an ethnocentric reaction likely when group security is threatened. Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 104.

²⁰⁶ Avruch, "Type I and Type II Errors in Culturally Sensitive Conflict Resolution Practice," 360.

²⁰⁷ Considering income, education, political representation, or any other measure of status. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 3.

facing socially imposed disadvantages, and for members of the dominant group this means coping with the dilemma of living in a society that preaches equality but in large parts fails to practice it. It also means the near certainty of turmoil and social upheaval in the future. “All that is needed is the right mix of precipitating social conditions to set off the spark”. In Sweden:

By law, equal rights are to be promoted, as are mutual respect and tolerance. At the same time, however, it is common to discuss ‘culture’ in Sweden today and to speak of cultural differences in a way which demarcates the ‘us’ from the ‘other’, for example, Muslims. This is a kind of cultural racism, maintaining the idea of collective identities.²⁰⁸

Due to the continued existence of an “us and them” discourse in Sweden, Ohlsson compares multiculturalism to the mere toleration of differences, rather than the inclusion of diversity. “The fragility of the multicultural and pluralist ideals in Sweden is evident whenever ‘the other’ attempts to claim more space than the majority views acceptable.”²⁰⁹

We cannot focus exclusively on prejudice, ideological racism, or deliberate acts of discrimination to fully understand intergroup conflict and violence. We must also examine the nature of political, economic, educational, and other institutions to identify ways in which they may perpetuate inequality.²¹⁰ These economic and social structural inequalities are major barriers to peace, as they perpetuate violence in many ways both direct and indirect. Over time, structural inequalities become normalized, and then are given inflated cultural meaning- this is what Galtung refers to as cultural violence:

[Cultural violence] dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them at all. Then come the eruptions, the efforts to use direct violence to get out of the structural iron cage, and counter-violence to keep the cage intact. Ordinary criminal activity is partly an effort by the underdog to ‘get out’... there

²⁰⁸ Azar: 2006, quoted in Olsson, "Religion in the Public Space: 'Blue-and-Yellow Islam' in Sweden," 282.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 286.

²¹⁰ Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 17.

could also be a feeling of hopelessness... that shows up on the inside as self-directed aggression and on the outside as apathy and withdrawal.²¹¹

Galtung goes on to say that it is common for the dominant group to cast blame on the victims of structural violence who try to get out of their cage. This perspective assumes that these sociological forces largely shape individual attitudes. For example, it has been shown that prejudice is often related to socioeconomic status (SES), with people in lower SES groups being more ethnocentric and negative toward out-groups. However, some researchers claim this is more a reflection of sophistication, and that middle and upper class individuals “know better” than to make prejudiced statements in research settings and other observed interactions. However, factors clearly associated with prejudice, such as level of education, feeling of security/insecurity, and real or perceived competition with other groups are related to and affected by SES.

Sociological views of intergroup relationships suggest two schools of thought on how relationships across groups are shaped, how they operate and how they change: the functionalist perspective sees that society can only function with the coordination, cooperation, and stability of its independent but interdependent parts and promotes assimilation strategies to meet this end. The conflict perspective, well known as the view of society espoused by Karl Marx, sees the status quo as a state of structural victim exploitation, and thus conflict is necessary to affect change in violent patterns. Galtung, famous for insistence on the consideration of structural violence in peacebuilding, defines violence as “avoidable insults to basic human needs”,²¹² and thus directly connects the cultural assimilation programs of contemporary (and often well-

²¹¹ Galtung, "Cultural Violence," 43.

²¹² Threats of violence are also violence. Cultural violence shows how direct and structural violence can be rendered acceptable in a society. “A violent structure leaves marks not only on the human body but also on the mind and the spirit.” Ibid., 39-42.

meaning) governments to an invasion of an individual or group's need for an authentic identity. Socialized internalization of culture, i.e. forcing an individual to express the dominant culture and not their own (at least not in public), leads to alienation. Research shows that when Muslims begin to feel the secular state is intruding too much on the religious sphere, measures may be taken- as means of maintaining group security- to preserve an Islamic identity, such as deciding to send their children to religious schools,²¹³ and other behavior that may hinder integration:

True religiosity and deep spirituality require inner consistency and stability, which are only possible within a sound cultural nexus. When adults are confused about themselves and live contradictory lifestyles- one persona at work, another at home- they can have little of value to impart to their children, who are likely to be even more confused about who they are, a perilous state of affairs in today's youth culture.²¹⁴

Clearly, whenever needs such as identity aren't being met there is an inexorable push for redress and to seek satisfaction for those needs.²¹⁵ This analysis will combine both conflict and functionalist approaches by considering the characteristics of both the minority and the dominant group, and putting the burden of change on both groups equally.

Intergroup Conflict Resolution

Considerations for the resolution of intergroup identity conflicts are complex and of critical relevance to the parties involved. First, one must carefully diagnose the problem to understand why people are approaching group difference in maladaptive ways; practitioners must recognize the baggage of identity needs that are likely to come with the disputants. Next, consider the ultimate goal of resolution efforts in order to construct solutions that are fair, inclusive and progressive. In other words: what is the problem, what is the ideal, and how do we

²¹³ Parekh, "Europe, Liberalism and the 'Muslim Question'," 188.

²¹⁴ Abd-Allah, "Islam and the Cultural Imperative," 371.

²¹⁵ Burton and Azar in Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 103.

get from one to the other? The approach taken by this research assumes that conflict transformation is indicated by the satisfaction of human needs, particularly identity needs in this case, through social relationships that are positive and equitable. This requires the intervention of government actors who theoretically have the power to modify unjust institutional structures that perpetuate discrimination. For example, anti-discrimination legislation can force, enforce, and reinforce certain adaptive intergroup behaviors, shaping attitudes towards minorities over time.²¹⁶ However, non-governmental initiatives that seek to meet the fundamental needs of identity in daily social interactions must also be implemented to avert the perpetuation of destructive relationships that can easily spark into direct violence in future interactions.²¹⁷

Milton Bennett provides a comprehensive study of the development of intercultural sensitivity in which he describes a sequenced continuum of stages of development for individuals or groups. His model assists in diagnosing ethnocentric behavior, recognizing more adaptive ethnorelative behavior, and mostly helpfully, provides a curriculum tailored to particular stages of growth so practitioners from different sectors can sequence activities in ways that facilitate development toward more sensitive stages.²¹⁸ The information presented in his article proved to be helpful in moving from analytical conceptualization to practical considerations for implementable conflict transformation strategies, and for the purposes of this research has been condensed and formatted into a useable table to be found at the end of this section.

²¹⁶ In the southern US during the civil rights movements, prejudice was widespread but overt discrimination was made illegal. Eventually, prejudice was reduced. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 57.

²¹⁷ However, settlements over interests will only deal with surface issues, and the problem of fundamental needs, such as identity and belonging, will guarantee destructive future interactions. Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 108.

²¹⁸ Milton J. Bennett, "Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity," in *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, ed. R. Michael Paige (1993), 24.

According to Bennett, the ethnocentric stages reflect a rudimentary level of development and include denial, defense, and minimization. Ethnocentric individuals assume the worldview of their own culture is central to all reality, not just their own. Ethnocentric responses to difference commonly function as racism, negative evaluation of dissimilar cultures, and the construction of in/out group distinctions.²¹⁹ The *intention* of denial, defense and minimization responses is not always negative in nature, however the *impact* regularly materializes as discrimination by the dominant group of the minority. Existence in the stage, where there is no interest in or perception of differences, is largely considered to be a luxury of the dominant group who are the only ones that can practically afford to remain oblivious to cultural differences,²²⁰ whereas minority group members are forced to confront differences throughout almost all of their social interactions.

Moving along the spectrum is the defense stage of ethnocentrism, which can seem particularly nasty (perhaps even more maladaptive than earlier less sensitive phases) as it is frequently characterized by hostility, self-aggrandizement and superiority complexes. Minimization of differences is the final phase, and in comparison to defense may seem rather harmless. However, one in this stage can degenerate quickly back into defense stages when their assumed universality doesn't fit reality, and the blame then rests on the interactional partner. Additionally, Bennett recognizes that the minimization position is quite patronizing, "These assumed universal characteristics are almost always derived from the native culture of the person making the assertion, who is usually a member of the dominant culture in a society".²²¹

²¹⁹ Ibid., 30.

²²⁰ This can be particularly dangerous as it becomes normalized: "When others are merely objects in the environment, they may seem like a subhuman force to be reckoned with or a vermin to be controlled". Ibid., 33.

²²¹ This view is problematic, as failure to consider cultural context leads people to assume they only need knowledge of human nature to understand all people. Further, truth is still derived from one's own worldview. Concern for conversion efforts to "help others see" the truth. Ibid., 42.

The ethnorelative stages represent more sophisticated levels of development, and it is not expected or intended for everyone to move through all of them in their lifetime; they do however, reflect particularly important for characteristics of successful peacebuilders. Movement to these stages requires a paradigm shift, where one is able to conceptualize the world in a way that is relative and non-absolute. Often, minority group members are pushed into these stages of development by nature of their social circumstances. The first stage is acceptance and is indicated by a genuine respect for both behavioral and more substantial values differences in others. Movement from this stage to the next stage, adaptation, is a skills-additive process where new ways of being are added to one's repertoire of cultural alternatives.²²²

Individuals at the adaptation level are characterized by their ability to and interest in understanding from within a foreign cultural framework; this includes minority group members who maintain their own culture and can also operate successfully in the dominant culture.²²³ The final stage of this model, integration, produces, "a new type of person who's orientation and view of the world transcends their indigenous culture and is developing from the complex of social, political, economic, and educational interactions of our time".²²⁴ The skills of those in this stage include the ability to make judgments of relative goodness that is specific to a specific context, and to evaluate and select alternatives that fit a situation best. They are able to see the strengths and limits of their own culture, and are released from the dilemma of betrayal, or exist on the margins of particular culture groups altogether.²²⁵

²²² Ibid., 52.

²²³ Individuals in this stage can be considered particularly threatening: "People dealing with identity issues in defense are likely to see every act as political, and their evaluation of people in adaptation can be devastating". Ibid., 56.

²²⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 59.

²²⁵ Ibid., 61.

While it is not expected, realistic, and not necessarily critical for peace, that members of society achieve all these advanced stages of ethnorelative development, there is validity in critically considering how the desired outcome of intergroup relationships is conceived. For example, with an understanding of Bennett's model, variations of the assimilation perspective to intergroup conflict resolution clearly show an unrefined skillset on understanding cultural differences: an ethnocentric perspective. Careful attention must be made to avoid falling into the assimilationist mode of thinking- *imposing a culture is violence*. Integration represents the liberal alternative to conservative assimilation, where the boundaries of public and private life are debated and certain parts of minority culture are relegated to the private sphere with different levels of intensity in different settings (ex. France versus Sweden). Bennett warns that ill-conceived integration policy (reflecting more of an *assimilation light* view than true integration), "Forces minorities who desire both inclusion and unique identity into fight or flight".²²⁶

To replace the outdated, and short-sighted cultural assimilation remedies to intergroup conflict, a review of existing literature seems to suggest that enduring, sustainable, structural peace in the context of multiculturalism requires fostering strong self and group identity, other group acceptance and tolerance, and equitable, cooperative intergroup contact, sharing and interdependence.²²⁷ Additionally, unethical distribution of economic resources compromises social justice and fuses group identity with social status thus perpetuating negative stereotypes and the disparaging of minorities.²²⁸ Efforts must be targeted to make environments more

²²⁶ Ibid., 28.

²²⁷ For example, Four major elements of multiculturalism policy according to Berry's analysis: "own group maintenance and development, other group acceptance and tolerance, and intergroup contact and sharing, and the learning of official languages." Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 100. The ideal, "minority in-group development is fostered at the same time as meaningful interdependence is encouraged," proposed by Pettigrew and others in Fisher, page 97.

²²⁸ This sows the seeds for future conflict. Ibid., 98.

conducive to tolerance by altering these features of society that cause people to be prejudice or to discriminate. Fisher's study of identity conflict acknowledges that an essential mechanism for affecting this social equality is participatory democratic institutions, where individuals are involved in making the decisions that directly affect them, and is thus the system is responsive to the views and needs of the people within that institution.²²⁹ The ideal outcome of these resolution efforts will be see social groups who have "sufficient identity, autonomy and power in order to enter into an interdependent relationship in a secure, respectful and meaningful fashion".²³⁰

In addition to the realization of fundamentally just social structures, prejudice (and its behavioral function, discrimination) must be overcome to support positive intergroup relationships. As prejudice comes from a variety of overlapping causes, there is no one solution to overcoming it, however one intervention recommendation seems unanimous: these initiatives are most successful when implemented before major crisis arises, and when they involve the participation of government policy, NGO's and civil society organizations, and, ideally, all individuals in society. After addressing personality needs through individual or group therapy²³¹ (which is a highly relevant process but well beyond the scope of this research), perspectives on group identity and "other" group boundaries are next to be contended with. Methods to peacefully engage with group differences can include education programming and persuasive communications; it is helpful if exposure to programming of this kind is not voluntary, as most groups and individuals vulnerable to prejudice will not seek out participation in these kinds of activities. Additionally, intergroup contact is a hopeful arena for the development of positive

²²⁹ Ibid., 90.

²³⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, 96.

²³¹ Group or individual therapy targeted at personality development: serves to fulfill personality needs that drive prejudice, handling the feeling of insecurity. Can be aimed at personality change, or showing that prejudice is poor way of adjusting given one's personality. Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 52.

relationships across identity divisions. These specific strategies of overcoming prejudice, each relevant for different purposes and in different contexts, will be considered in further detail below;²³²

Education:

Research shows that education efforts can be successful in correcting false stereotypes and reducing prejudice,²³³ but they cannot change the personality of a prejudiced person. Efforts must be taken to increase the number of minorities in teaching professions and to ensure educators themselves are not prejudiced. School materials must be free of stereotyped portrayals of other groups but must not succumb to the common tendency to ignore minority groups. When teaching about differences, educators must sometimes allow hostile attitudes to surface; while this tension can be uncomfortable, it is better to explore risky issues in the safe space of the classroom, with a skilled facilitator present. “Mediators [should] ask parties to actively listen to points of view with which they are in strong disagreement and suggest that it is possible to really listen and understand without necessarily agreeing (and therefore losing one’s own point of view)”.²³⁴ Institutionalization of this approach may go a long way in reducing prejudice in future generations.

Persuasive Communications:

Supplementing education initiatives to address prejudice are persuasive communications campaigns that are intended to influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. These can be tricky to deliver and thus have been limited in their efficacy. Communications must be heard, listened to,

²³² These are largely drawn from Farley, but also include models from Ron Fisher’s article on an “eclectic” model of conflict.

²³³ Outlined by Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 43.

²³⁴ Hicks, "In Practice: Another Look at Identity-Based Conflict: The Roots of Conflict in the Psychology of Consciousness," 39.

correctly understood, received positively, retained and internalized in order to be successful.²³⁵

To improve the likelihood of success, careful thought must first go in to the features of the message receivers, which will then determine what would be considered a credible source for the message, what is appropriate content, and what would be the most founded process of presentation for the message. While effective in reinforcing tolerance and perhaps reducing mild prejudice, Farley recognizes that selective exposure is a major barrier to the success of persuasive and even purely informational communications as a resolution effort:

People tend to expose themselves to messages that are consistent with what they already believe. They also tend to pay better attention to, and retain longer, messages that support their preexisting viewpoints...People tend to dislike having their beliefs seriously challenged, and they tend to resolve inconsistencies by ignoring or rationalizing away communications that are inconsistent with their attitudes and beliefs rather than changing their thinking.²³⁶

These psychological processes of cognitive dissonance and consistency play a definitive role in the success of persuasive communications, and must be carefully navigated in the planning and delivery stages of this type of intervention.

Intergroup Contact:

Studies show that intergroup contact can show that stereotypes are unfounded, leading to a reduction in prejudice.²³⁷ Conditions under which intergroup interaction is likely to lead to a reduction of prejudice and hostility include: high acquaintance potential (contact in educational, employment, recreation and other settings), equal status for mutual respect (unfortunately often majority/minority contact is marked by unequal achievement due to past unequal opportunities and socioeconomic inequalities; facilitators should present contradictions to the generalized

²³⁵ Farley, *Majority-Minority Relations*, 38-40.

²³⁶ Ibid., 39.

²³⁷ Contact hypothesis, in *ibid.*, 45.

pattern), supportive norms and expectations that encourage positive qualities, and cooperative task and reward structures. Many of these conditions require foundational adjustments to existing social structures, but intergroup contact can also be artificially constructed and still find success. Depending on the features of the participants, simulation or experiential exercises may work well to help majority group members experience the discrimination felt by minorities to foster empathy,²³⁸ but skilled facilitation and debriefing of these activities is crucial to their effectiveness. The effects of intergroup contact can be greater and more enduring when contact occurs in childhood,²³⁹ therefore contact strategies should be considered alongside educational activities as part of school curriculum. Complex or sustained projects may also work well with more prepared participants, as shown with the work of Fisher and McNabb in Canada,²⁴⁰ who found success by constructing, “activities and programming wherein each group could maintain its unique identity and independence and yet come together to interrelate and collaborate on matters of common concern”. Intercultural group problem solving activities designed to be non-competitive but that require dependence and cooperation from one another (for example, extended nature excursions) can encourage participants to “engage creatively in building solutions (with those with whom they are in sharp disagreement) that might be quite different from the solution they had in mind”.²⁴¹

²³⁸ Ibid., 51.

²³⁹ Ibid., 46.

²⁴⁰ Quoted in Fisher, "Needs Theory, Social Identity, and an Eclectic Model of Conflict," 98.

²⁴¹ Hicks, "In Practice: Another Look at Identity-Based Conflict: The Roots of Conflict in the Psychology of Consciousness," 40.

This literature review has explored interdisciplinary considerations of many of the central questions to this research project, including how to best understand and accommodate Islam in Sweden, how individuals can be simultaneously Muslim and European, and how social conditions and processes can be improved to limit the rise of xenophobic parties. Next, original qualitative research findings will be presented before revisiting these concepts again in the analysis chapter.

Table 3. Bennett's Model of Diagnosing and Facilitating Intercultural Sensitivity

Milton Bennett's Model Of Diagnosing And Facilitating Intercultural Sensitivity²⁴³		
STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT	CHARACTERISTICS	STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT
Denial: Isolation & Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proudly not noticing differences • Creating social boundaries between differences 	Create more differentiation while also avoiding premature discussion of really significant differences that can be used as rationale to maintain the comfort of denial. Cultural awareness activities, or lectures for more sophisticated audiences. Exposure to manageable differences in media, socialization, education.
Defense: Denigration & Superiority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of differences and defenses against them • Evaluating differences negatively • Statements of hostility toward certain groups • Negative stereotyping to rationalize inherent inferiority • Building cultural self-esteem 	Emphasizing the commonality of cultures, particularly the positive. Allowing, without aggrandizing, cultural pride. It may be relatively worthless to address the inaccurate assumptions, as the culprit here is not misinformation but ethnocentrism. One technique to construct a challenging group activity that necessitates cooperation, allowing mutual vulnerability and value to emerge. Exposure to differences will initially create different problems or temporarily exacerbate hostilities; the relative peace of separation shouldn't be mistaken for "unending friction of contact", and retreat to denial should be discouraged.
Minimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burying differences in human similarities • Trivializing difference to preserve one's own worldview 	For physical science bias, focus on the role of the social context in human behavior. Encourage individuals/groups to place their own behavior in a cultural context and engage in discussion with a member of another culture group.
Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for behavior and/or value differences 	Support non-absoluteness; facilitated interactions to explore substantial differences.
Adaptation: Empathy & Pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating to people of other cultures • Participating in multiple worldviews 	Adding new cultural scenarios to the repertoire; provide opportunities for increased interaction at this stage.
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A orientation that transcends one's indigenous culture • Consciously, contextually choosing from among a collection of worldviews 	Continual exposure to various cultures in a variety of contexts. This is an ideal stage of development for practitioners and peacebuilders.

²⁴³ Bennett, "Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity," 34-52.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

By the end of the data collection phase, interviews with seven individuals were conducted and will be summarized and analyzed for this project. The respondents have been assigned pseudonyms to be consistent with ethical guidelines of the research design. Presumably relevant demographics and affiliations of each individual were explicitly collected and are presented in Table 5 to assist the reader as they make sense of the research findings contained in this chapter. Respondents independently chose to include discussions and their perspectives on whatever issues they felt were relevant to the broadly framed questions contained in the interview schedule, and there appeared to be significant convergence on what issue they felt were relevant to the context of the Swedish conflict. Several overlapping categories distinctly emerged from an initial analysis of the interview discourses collected for this project. While there is considerable overlap in the designations and meanings attached to these themes, each category will be considered separately for purposes of organization. Connections will be detailed and further explored in the Research Analysis chapter.

The emerging categories are as follows: 1) Anders Breivik and the Oslo/Utøya attacks, 2) Islam and Muslims, 3) Sverigedemokraterna (SD) and the anti-Muslim movement, 4) Immigration and immigrant integration, 5) Trajectory and drivers, 6) Options for intervention and Outcomes. As this topic involves numerous facets and complex phenomenon and duration of interviews was limited, omissions from the respondents on particular subjects should not be read to conclude that a certain respondent doesn't indeed have even strong opinions on the topic, or find it relevant to the conflict. Areas that were explicitly dismissed as unimportant were noted as such where appropriate. Italicized quotes reflect the speaker's emphasis, not that of the author.

Table 4. Respondent Characteristics

Table of Respondent Characteristics				
Name	Affiliations	Interview format	Geography	Age Group
“Johan”	SD party member since 2006, serves on Lunds Kommunfullmäktige for SD, counter-jihad activist; atheist	Skype call, Email communication, In person interview	Born in Sweden, lives in Lund (Malmö area)	Early 30’s
“Abdul”	SMFR board member; active in the Social Democrat party; holds position on Karlstad city council; member of SUM; member of trade union Jusek (Law, Economics, Management)	Email communication	Born in Sweden, lives in Stockholm area	30’s
“Fatima”	Self-identified as a “non-practicing Muslim”	Email communication	Born in Iran, living in Sweden for 15+ years	Late 40’s
“Nassim”	Board Member at Malmö Mosque and Islamic Center, one of the earliest members of the mosque	In person interview	From Macedonia, moved to Sweden in 1984	60+
“Anna”	Kommunal member, voted for SD in 2010 election, but does not consider herself an active party member	In person interview	Born in Sweden	Late 40’s
“Tarek”	Works as a consultant on refugee issues abroad, supporter of Social Democrat party	Skype call	From Lebanon, moved to Sweden in 2005; lives in Stockholm area	30’s
“Khalid”	Board member of Sveriges Unga Muslimer, active in other Muslim organizations	Skype call	From Somalia, moved to Sweden in 1992; lives in Stockholm area	30’s

Anders Breivik and the Oslo/Utøya Attacks

Johan

When Johan, an active SD party member, was asked to describe his initial reactions to the Oslo attacks, his response was similar to that shared by many, “First was the bomb of course... and I was convinced that this was [an] Islamic terror attack.” However, after hearing about the shootings on the island of Utøya he began to question this assumption, explaining that Norway’s Social Democrats would be a counter-productive target for a Muslim attacker as they are “on the side of” Muslims. Johan was eager to share his opinions on mainstream Swedish responses to Anders Breivik’s attacks in relation to how violence perpetrated by Muslims is received. Over eight hours of conversation, this particular theme of discussion was clearly one of the topics of most importance to Johan, reflected in his rapid speech and tone of emotional intensity. On violence committed by Muslims:

Swedish media and politicians say that, 'Well, he's just a lone Muslim, he has misinterpreted the Qur'an and the Muslim religion; this is not Islam.' They always try to whitewash this, and they say 'Well you can't refer to the Qur'an, you can't refer to Islamic history, or Islamic ideas or values, because this is modern and that was like 1500 years ago, and today is today, and you can't mix the two, and blah blah blah'. *Now* when it turned out to be a white, blonde, Norwegian guy who committed this terror attack, then it is highly relevant to look at where he come[s] from?! They did a lot of investigation of what *he'd* written in his manifesto... then it was all of a sudden very relevant that his ideas came from, you know, the anti-Muslim world...they blame the counter-jihad movement for his actions... When they actually try to look at [Breivik's] background... it's so flawed and so biased...they want him as political tool against the counter-jihad movement, and against SD...

On Breivik:

I'm sure he was convinced he was doing the right thing. I'm pretty sure. But he didn't. He actually destroyed a lot of things- not only lives, but also a valid political movement that is the counter-jihad... of course everybody felt for the victims- but this is not good for us. We are fighting a just cause here and this idiot comes along and wrecks it.

Johan eagerly offered several distinctions between Anders Breivik and the movements that he affiliates himself with: “If you look at the general counter-jihad movement, Robert

Spencer for example, or a lot of others, they are very much against any form or usage of violence”. He continued to deliver prepared distinctions between Breivik and his own idea of the anti-Muslim movement:

If you look at the counter-jihad movement, it's not like anyone involved there or anyone with those ideas are interested in working with Islamists for example. But Breivik obviously is. He talks in his manifesto about cooperating with al-Qaeda and other Islamic terrorists so that he could blow up some European cities with a nuke... If you read his text even further, I mean, he's a nutcase!

Johan went on to discuss the “crazy” ideas outlined in Breivik’s manifesto, referring to him as “nuts” or a “nutcase” more than four times throughout the discussion. Before moving on from the theme of Anders Breivik, Johan offers a critical response as to how the Norway attacks should be remembered:

Breivik...doesn't have people behind him, He doesn't have an ideology behind him. He doesn't have a following. He has nothing. He's on his own. He's not a problem anymore. They don't have to deal with him at all. What he did was of course disgusting, but he is a parenthesis in the history, it's not like there is the next Breivik coming up anytime soon. However, I think you should still focus on the bigger problem here, and that is we have a lot of Anders Breiviks within the Muslim extremists. And this is not once in a blue moon, this happens *every day*, not maybe in Sweden but in the rest of the world... Let's say the 9/11 hijackers were the only ones, and they were really a fringe out of the Muslim population, then that wouldn't be a problem either. But that's not how I see it. That's not how it is.

Anna

Anna, who voted for SD in the last elections, described her reactions to the Oslo attack, sounding a bit weary: “I think we are getting a little bit used to hearing about something like that- from the United States, [etc.]... it happened- but what can we do? Nothing”. Anna was asked if she feels a climate of insecurity in regards to the situation of Muslims in Sweden was heightened after the Breivik attacks:

It goes back to 'it wasn't us, it was them'. The Swedes are like that; [they want to believe] it doesn't happen in Sweden, but it does. We have had that in Sweden... [discusses recent strings of shootings in Malmö, targeting "dark people"]... That kind of thing, where a

person gets that kind of paranoia, that society isn't doing anything about the immigration situation, and they have the idea that they should take things in their own hands.

When asked directly, if it was her opinion that something like what happened in Norway would happen in Sweden, she responded without hesitation, shaking her head, “It could, it really could”.

Nassim

Nassim’s response was concise and delivered with a somber tone when he was asked to describe his personal feelings on the Anders Breivik attacks:

Personally, I didn't have any thoughts in that direction at all that it was a Muslim; but many other colleagues of mine thought that it could be. Personally, I think I have a good idea of what is going on in Norway, and with Muslim groups in Norway, so I didn't think that at first... but neither did I think it could be someone like that- like a monster doing things like that to his own people. It was hard to believe in general.

Tarek

Tarek, who moved to Sweden from Lebanon in 2005, felt it was a big shock for everyone to learn that Breivik wasn't Muslim, and in a way this was a relief for him and others within the Muslim communities of Scandinavia:

It gave me a relief- relax- but of course I feel sorry and bad of what happened, but at least I can go to the bus without challenging those looks and thoughts that comes to my mind that people are now looking at me because a Muslim guy has been doing that.

Although Breivik’s attacks were horrible, there were some positive outcomes of this tragedy: it brought people together and gave them a common bond, and it opened a space for honest dialogue on the issues related to Islamophobia and right-wing extremism:

It created a kind of balance, and also it confirmed a belief that people almost forgot in the last ten years- that terrorism and criminality has no religion, has no color, has no identity. It helped me to go into discussion with more self-confidence because now we’re not discussing about only Muslims, now we’re discussing *an issue*, [with] different factors interfering and reacting. Whatever- Muslim, Christian, white, black; it’s created a kind of common bond between me as a Muslim and between a blonde Swedish Christian. It created that bridge actually, it united us together and it created more space to open more

discussions. Because we felt that both of us, [whether] we are black or white in this country, we are targeted, anybody can be...[Oslo] was really horrible, but at the same time it brought people more in together, creating kind of a space [for] open discussion on this issue.

According to Tarek, the attacks in Norway also put pressure on Swedes who voted for SD in the last elections to reconsider their affiliation with that party:

Here in Sweden, after the last elections when SD came into the parliament, it was a big shock, and also after the Oslo attacks, people *really* were shocked. *Those* are who you elected?! Some people in Sweden were saying this- *you see?! We're maybe going to see something like this happen in Sweden...* because they [SD] share the same values with that guy in Oslo. The bigger part of Sweden was telling those who voted for SD, 'this is what you have elected; [now] maybe we're going to see something like it'.

Khalid

Khalid recognized, as other respondents admitted, that the Oslo attacks were initially assumed to be the work of Muslim extremists. As a leader of the largest organization for Muslim youth in Sweden, he notes that this suspicion came to directly involve his organization as the media in Sweden was eager to get a jump on the story in Norway before learning about Breivik: "They were still speculating who it was- the main suspects were al-Qaeda and Muslim groups- and journalists were calling our organization, just one hour after the attacks, and they wanted us to give a comment." He continued to discuss his initial responses and thinking process about the attacks in the period before information about the perpetrator and his motivations began to unfold in the media:

Just like most of us, I actually thought it was someone who had a Muslim background. I was thinking that maybe in Norway, is a part of NATO, and fighting in Afghanistan and so on, those were actually my first thoughts.

Khalid seemed subdued as he shares how his shock at the attacks quickly turned to a realization that the social climate reflected in Breivik's actions has existed for some time:

I was surprised in the beginning, but then I wasn't that surprised at all after I gave it a second thought. Because, for many years now, since 11th of September, there have been events in Europe such as people getting harassed, and mosques being burned and you

know, there have been politicians have come with legislation that wants to forbid Muslim symbols such as the *burqa* or the scarf. And so Muslims and Islam [are] still very in focus, and people have actually been victims of these kinds of things. So this was actually the perception that I have of the climate of the society- [it] is reflect[ed] in Anders Breivik's terrorist attacks.

When asked about his opinion on the effects of the Norway attacks on Swedish society, Khalid had a similar response to Tarek as he discussed a unifying response to the attacks, as well as what he perceived as a backlash against Sweden's anti-Muslim movement:

This kind of horrifying event that occurred in Oslo, actually unified people for once... Except for a small group of people... except for the far right extreme, the far right political parties... they got pressure from the whole society, they got blame, but not blame actually, but some of the responsibility of what happened in Oslo.

Finally, Khalid spoke directly about how he thinks the attacks should be remembered:

We should remember it as a horrifying attack on innocent people, and we should remember that it could also happen here in Sweden- those children could have been our children. They were only young people at the age 15-20, they were actually political active, many of them may have been the future leaders of Norway. And we should [see] that the cause wasn't just an accident, or an *incident*. We should see the greater picture, and actually think of it more wisely and deeply and try to prevent this kind of attacks in the future.

Abdul

Abdul, a board member for Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice (SMFR), described media responses to the Oslo attacks as: "thirsty for commentators wanting to see that there was a Muslim terrorist organization behind the scene...". He recalls his thought process:

This must have been the actions of some lunatics. My feelings were mixed between the frustration [from] the previous Stockholm suicide bomber- not wanting to be experiencing a similar episode again- and... that I wanted to do something actively and publicly to contribute in having a positive influence on the terrible situation.

Abdul continues:

The more I watched the news and later hearing about the attacks on Utøya it seemed likely that this was some right wing extremist lunatics who had committed these disastrous actions – and when confirmation about it was unfolded I still felt frustrated but relieved that this would not be another case where Muslims as a collective are being given the blame of the wrongdoings of a single Muslim.

He concludes his reflections on Anders Breivik: “In times like these we need to stand up and protect our values without blaming a collective of people for the wrongdoings of one person”.

Fatima

Fatima, though very brief in her responses, reiterated common themes in her discourse. She admitted that her initial reaction to hearing about the Norway attacks was, “I hope [there are] no Muslims behind the attack”, and then after hearing it was Anders Breivik, her thoughts went from “Good- it was no Muslims”. In her opinion, the media was, “Quick to speculate about Muslim terrorism... then quick to inform about [there was] no Muslim connection”. Finally, she concludes: “the attacks had nothing to do with Muslims in particular, the guy just hated immigration and cultural integration.”

Islam and Muslims

Johan

“I would say that the biggest problem that proponents of multiculturalism have is Islam.”

Johan discussed several controversial opinions on Islam and Muslims. He insists that he is well-read on this subject, and cited numerous authors and studies throughout the conversation. In summary, he believes that Islam is an all-pervading, unchanging, violent and expansionist movement without a significant moderate composition. While Johan echoed a familiar list of claims against Islam, the emotions attached as he spoke on these topics were intense, extremely self-assured, frequently angry and very relevant to this research.

Johan perceives a unified and all-encompassing Islam, he frequently used the word “dangerous” to describe the religion, and is eager to talk about the subject:

Culture, religion, politics- it is all the same in Islam- there is no difference... unlike other religions, Christianity for example, they don't claim to define everything in your life; they don't claim to have rules and laws for how society is supposed to run- Christianity doesn't have that, no one has that, but Islam definitely has that.

According to the Johan, Islam:

[Is] not debatable, it's not discussable; the laws cannot be amended, changed, added, removed- because God has said this is the way it is, [how] does that make that political ideology possible to change? ...It's out of their hands, and they say that themselves, which makes this a very dangerous movement.

In addition to it's fundamental all-encompassing nature, Johan describes his perception of Muslims as historically, culturally, and fundamentally violent:

Everything from their start up until now is the same- we have warlords that have explicitly gone to kill the nonbelievers, and this is commanded by Mohammed, their prophet; they call him the perfect human being. And they see him as the perfect example of how you should live your life- and this man went around and killed and maimed and slayed and murdered a lot.... You read the Qur'an, you read the *hadiths*- the story of Mohammed- and you see what he did and why, and to me it's obvious. This man was an alphabetic madman. A violent madman... And the followers that took up after Mohammed have done the exact same thing. For 1400 years now. The only time they stopped doing this was when they didn't have the power enough to do it.

Giving Egypt, Mali, and Nigeria as examples, Johan goes on to discuss what he sees as a fundamental component of Muslim ideology- expansion: "There is a big campaign... they kill Christians everyday... In our countries, which they are unable to invade militarily, immigration is the key." Johan preens himself with his familiarity of the arguments against his ideas on Islam as he presented his understanding of the religion, one that requires adherence to fundamental baselines such as *sharia* and *jihad*:

People say that, yeah well there are so many Muslims, and they all have their different opinions. And I bet they do. But there are a couple of base lines that they all agree on... They're not arguing: is *sharia* mandatory? No. That's out of the question. Everybody agrees *sharia* is mandatory. Is *jihad*, violent war against the infidels, is that mandatory? Yes it is. No one argues that either.

He continues by painting a picture of the mechanisms of separation he sees between Swedish Muslims and the rest of Swedish society:

First of all, they all have satellites. That's the first thing they do when they get to Sweden- get a satellite, tune in to the home channels, and that's what they listen to. Secondly, most of the imams that come here are not Swedish. They are imported from guess what? Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia pays for the mosques, and in return they get to choose their imams and so on and so forth.

He concludes with a striking assessment of just how serious and threatening he finds this community, “We, our side, is attacking Islam as much as we can, because I, personally, think that Islam is the single and biggest problem that mankind has seen since, I don't know, a long time back. Nazism was a big problem, but I don't think it's even close to the problem of Islam.” Finally, the theme of Muslim culture also pervaded this respondent's answers, “[Islam] is incompatible with the way we live in the free West; you can't be Swedish culturally and practice Islam”, but Johan's perceptions on culture will be expanded upon further in the other discourse categories.

Anna

Anna's attitude toward Muslims shares some similarities, but important distinctions, to that of Johan. She goes a little further to construct more nuanced distinctions within the Muslim community, fundamentally and in Sweden, as she sees it. “There are two types of Muslims: the orthodox type and then there are the Muslims that break rules- like we are Christians- they are secular... There are Muslims, and then there are *Muslims*.”

On her view of this orthodox group, Anna shared a view that seems less than compatible with successful integration into Sweden: “They are very interested in transferring *their* values and religion to Swedes. They are quite secure, and they are more interested in spreading the teachings of Mohammed to Swedes, more than taking in values from Swedes.” In regard to the secular group, she began with a tone of optimism, “They just have this ability to adjust to society very well, so they are really not a problem.” When asked which group she perceives to be larger

and more powerful in Sweden, the tone of thoughtfulness in her voice changed to reveal a more pessimist outlook, and she indicated without hesitation- the orthodox group. “They are the strongest one, and also in a way are accusing and attacking people who are the secular Muslims.... [who] don't talk much...”. Pressing further, Anna was asked to consider what could be done by the secular Muslims do to break away from the orthodox community, “Nothing”, she laughs.

Expanding on some self-recognized antipathy toward Muslims, she explains herself a bit further on where her issues with this group lie, citing what she sees as major values differences between Swedes and Muslims. In doing so, Anna echoes two common themes for the anti-Muslim movement- gender inequality issues and a perceived proclivity toward violence:

The girls are not so (pause) they can't go out. It's just the boys who are allowed to do anything they want, but not the girls. They don't have the same view on the equality between a man and a woman, and they don't have the same view on respect... as I understand it, [in] Muslim culture you don't show the woman that kind of respect.

Anna identified her impression that Muslims are prone to commit violence: “There is a stronger tendency toward violence among Muslims than among Swedes. It is *closer* to their culture in a way.”

With great frustration, Anna identified a theme also found throughout Johan’s discourse- a feeling that Muslims are being specially “protected” in Sweden, and taking unfair advantage of the Swedish adherence to exaggerated standards of political correctness. When asked if this applies to the Muslims or immigrants she knows and interacts with, Anna proceeded to laugh and joke with the translator in Swedish, scoffing and otherwise displaying very humorous annoyance. Anna sighs and described, with a tone of obvious frustration, someone she works with at a developmental center:

I work with someone who is Muslim; it is a female. And she has lived in Sweden for a very long time; she has two kids, grown up. But she can't speak Swedish, really. So every

time we try to tell her what to do, she always says 'Ja'- But [doesn't] understand me! She speaks Swedish, but can't speak so good... and she don't understand all words we are saying. Its not just [nomenclature], it's common Swedish... And when you work with people with developmental disabilities...you have to have the correct Swedish language so they can understand... But she hasn't. I don't understand how you can work with that kind of people... She's not doing so much, she's just watering flowers and stuff.... My boss is very afraid [to fire] her, because she is afraid she'll call her a racist... In Sweden they are protected, special.

Anna was asked to think of something she can admire about Muslims in Sweden, or about Islam, and she gave a thoughtful reply, “Not the religion, but the women, they are often very strong women”. She continued to explore this further, again relating directly to her personal experiences:

I have friends that have fled from Iran... they have this strength somewhere. I think something is done to make [Muslim] daughters strong. There is a female- maybe it has nothing to do with the religion- a female tradition in some parts of Islamic cultures that they help each other to be strong. And [my Iranian friends] have done great success in work... Fluent in Norwegian... And then there is the other opposite, totally passive, totally just victims for their men in that culture... For us in Sweden, we think it is almost impossible to be a woman of that strength in such a culture. That is why we admire some of the women and what they do.

Nassim

Not surprisingly, interview responses from Nassim, a leader at a mosque, present the religion and the Muslim community very differently than as it is perceived by Johan and Anna. Specifically, he does well to consider more complexity within and among the Muslim communities of the world than the opinion provided by common anti-Muslim assessments: “Islam, it is clear,” he acknowledges, “but as human beings it is not clear. Maybe I say I am Muslim... [But] I take Islam or Muslim culture as adaptable to fit my ideas.” He voluntarily goes on to detail another common misperception he believes the anti-Muslim movement uses against Muslims, on their supposed incessantly violent history:

Under the Ottoman Empire in Europe- they have many documents about how the society is organized, where it was free for the religion, free speech, other things. And it was [a]

Muslim Empire (if you want to say so), but nothing was a problem, they had cooperation, many things. It was for the better of humanity and the people.

When prompted, Nassim discussed the topic of Swedish Muslims with considerable knowledge evident in his delivery. Asked about the size and indicators of the level of religiosity of the Muslim community in Malmö where he lives, he replies:

The core itself, the most active part, is three thousand. But 50,000 are registered as members, but out of those there are three thousand active members, regularly coming here. The others may just come for a funeral, or Ramadan, special occasions.

When asked where a Swedish Muslim, interested in being an imam, would go for religious education and training, the discussion shifted to exploring the Malmö Mosque's criteria for their leadership:

That's the problem, we don't have that [religious education for imams] in Sweden, so we have to *import* [laughs at his own word choice] from Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Bosnia...The imam we have now is from Albania. We were interested in having him, so we hired him from there. You cannot trust imams from anywhere- you have to look at what they've been studying, and what their interests are, and how that fits in Swedish society. Macedonia, Bosnia, these are countries where we feel we can trust their education, their theology. *Not everybody who says they are an imam is actually an imam*; it depends on what kind of education they have or where they come from. We want someone with a university background, where they've been reading about history and Islam, and not just taking on a role of teaching people how to pray and how to read the Qur'an. So that they themselves can interpret the Qur'an in a good way.

Khalid

Khalid perceives an important distinction that is critical to a holistic and realistic understanding of how Islam is involved in Swedish society; his perception is not surprisingly in stark contrast to the opinions and attitudes that permeate the anti-Muslim movement. His responses also echo a theme brought up by other respondents regarding where sources of religious knowledge are sought by Muslims in Sweden. In his perspective, most Swedish Muslims are relatively secular and for those who *are* religious, he sees a generational divide regarding where they seek sources of Islamic knowledge:

Most of the Muslims in Sweden are not that religious... it's not that many that actually practice their religion, and when I mean practice I mean daily prayers, fast, and so on. Most people are really [Muslims by descent]; it's more a culture thing. And they don't actually seek that much information, whether the imam is from Sweden or is from Saudi Arabia, because they don't have any interest in it. But those people that are actually practicing their religion... When it comes to our elders, our parents, I think most of them seek their knowledge abroad because of the language barriers... but the young people actually seek knowledge here in this country.

Khalid was asked to expand on this issue, and to speak from personal experience:

It depends actually. If it comes to something that is basic, like fasting, then I could go to my local mosque- the imams here in Sweden- but also I can read some article from imams abroad. And there is no problem at all. But when it comes to some questions that are that can become a conflict with the religion, for instance some people want to be politically active, in some political party. We have some imams who say no, you shouldn't engage in politics in Sweden because the system is not built on Islam. And you have imams who say it's totally okay to engage in politics to benefit society and to benefit Muslim groups. And when it comes to these kind of questions, a conflict within the Muslim group, I [most] of the time [see] my local mosque, because they know the situation you are living in and they can give the best interpretation of the religion. Not some imam in Saudi Arabia or Iraq. Not that I have anything against them, I'd rather seek information from someone who I can relate to.

Abdul

On being a Muslim in Sweden:

I am a Muslim and during my 5 first years in school I was the only Muslim in my class. With time I have had a few Muslims in my class and my interactions with them has been like that of anyone else, since they were mostly secular Muslims while I was practicing.

When asked where he learns about Islam, Abdul replied, "From home, mostly my father. Later on from internet."

Sverigedemokraterna and the Anti-Muslim Movement

Johan

Johan, an active SD member and municipal councilman, confidently shares that Swedes are being drawn to SD more and more as time goes on: "The party has always gained in every election... we started out with nothing, and then it was 1/2 a percent, and then steadily, steadily

increasing- but none the less 50% increase *at least* every election”. Probing for elaboration on why he believes the party is rising in popularity, Johan was asked if the issue of immigration is one of the more important reasons that someone joins or votes for SD. His reply was unperturbed:

Yes. Definitely. That is the absolute major one, there is no question... It was formed with an explicit aim that immigration policies in Sweden [were] not good...this normally comes down to critiques on multiculturalism... but it also is sort of an outlet for the widespread mistrust I would say of the Swedish media and politicians.

In this regard, Johan describes a prevalent feeling that his party is being directly discriminated against by the political mainstream in Sweden: “We know several people who lost their jobs because of their membership. We know people who have been kicked out of their unions...” The interviewer inquired as to whether this reasoning was made explicit, “Yes, explicitly. They just do it because the unions are run by politicians. Social Democrats, you know, the left wing.”

Beyond the Sweden Democrats, Johan finds there are broader connections to be made with others who share his views on these issues, presenting himself as an avid activist for the “global counter-jihad movement”. Fully aware of the leading perceptions against his kind of ideology, he shares his experience with the movement:

I've been thinking about this: am I an extremist here? But everyone I meet who sees the same problem, when I go to meetings, when I go to the counter-jihad things, each and every one of those are genuinely good people who genuinely see a big problem. And none of them are as we are portrayed- [racist]. I would say that this movement is our times' anti-fascist movement.

When asked to expand upon the organization and mechanisms of the counter-jihad movement as he sees it, Johan had the following to say after some hesitation:

There is no organization, there's no membership, there's no nothing like that. There is nothing to join. This is just a network of people who has the same ideas about Islam and the problem with Islam. That is the important thing to say. Anyone can be part of the counter-jihad movement if they say they are. There is no one to say they are not.

Johan was asked to elaborate further on how exactly he connects with this global movement, and in addition to naming well-known friends such as the leader of the United Kingdom's notorious English Defense League, he details, "We can chat on Skype, or we meet every now and then around Europe to discuss, we email and we try to try to help out where its possible, or just keep each other updated on events... and [discuss] what can we do and so on."

Anna

Anna, who did not identify as active with SD but disclosed that she voted for them in the last election, abstracted her perception of the party's recent growth in popularity, but later was able to more directly connect this to her personal feeling: "SD had very many votes [in the last election], and it wasn't because people wanted them to take over, it was because they wanted to see a difference [in] what's happening."

Nassim

Nassim was forward in his opinions of what is often called the "extreme right" (including proponents of ideologies such as SD), urging a call for action, "They don't like Muslims at all... All organizations, all the states who are in charge, they must be workings to destroy these kinds of ideas. It is difficult, but they must do something!"

Nassim was pressed to elaborate as to why this movement has so many issues with Islam as a religion: "First, maybe it is they don't really know Islam. Second, it is [people] who don't have contact with us... racist groups who are just like him in Oslo; he killed so many young people for such ignorant ideas. This [ignorance of Islam] is the problem." Nassim explores the reasoning presented by the counter-jihad movement, noting that the historical periods of Islamic peace are purposefully ignored in their arguments in favor of highlighting tumultuous times: "Why don't we take this for an example?! [They] take something [else]. We know all the

religious dictators that have taken the Qur'an or Bible to make their political [goals]- that is not Muslims, this is not Islam.”

Tarek

Respondents representing the Muslim and immigrant communities, including Tarek, seemed to find the trend mentioned by Anna above, toward voting for SD to show anti-mainstream sentiment, to be very threatening. When asked about Sverigedemokraterna, Tarek responded:

It was shocking last year when the election happened, and 20 seats for the Sweden Democrats. They are anti-Muslim, anti anti anti anti anti-everything. I was really scared when they finalized the results of the election and we knew there was 20 seats for them... I'm not talking about this as a black or colored Muslim Swede, I'm talking about as a *Swede*, because they are scary.

Pressed to explore the factors that influence the popularity of SD and their ideology, Tarek returns the discussion to third party influences, alluding to how he believes the party uses world events (the bombing in Stockholm, the Danish cartoon crisis) as evidence for their cause. But after Oslo, he explains, Swedish people connected Breivik's ideology with that of SD, realizing that *this* is the party that had just been popularly elected to parliament. The connection between Breivik and SD is reiterated by Khalid, from the Swedish Muslim youth organization, who saw the far right parties, “[get] pressure from the whole society. They got blame- not blame actually- but some of the responsibility of what happened in Oslo.”

Immigration and Integration

Johan

Johan offers an unsurprisingly strong criticism of the current trends of immigration and integration policy; he regards these processes as a politicized, fraudulent, incompetent and over-worked system that has failed in Sweden. Beyond what Johan sees as a problem with the number

of immigrants (Swedish lawmakers continue to expand opportunities for people to immigrate to Sweden beyond seeking asylum), he takes particular issue with the *kind* of immigrants Sweden is letting in. He gives a clear picture of his attitude on immigration, saying that in general, it is bad for a nation economically, it increases crime and lowers trust, and it makes citizens feel insecure. Additional relevant and distinct features of his responses on immigrant integration follow.

Johan had a lot to say on his perceptions of the role of culture as a barrier to successful integration of Muslims in Sweden. He introduced the discussion by stating his conclusion, “I don't think you can be Swedish culturally AND practice Islam.” He then began a very candid discussion on how he sees cultural differences as a major driver of the problem, “This is about culture, and all cultures are *not* the same.” As Johan continued this discussion, it became very clear, even before he said it explicitly (which he eventually did), that he subscribes to a belief that cultures can be “ranked” on a scale of better to worse, with the “best” cultures being those that are Westernized and value high levels of education and development. However, he also occasionally talks with a disparaging tone on the culture of mainstream Swedish society:

The general public [doesn't care], mostly. They read the news, they have their Coke, they go to the gym, go to [their] job, and that's what they do. Most people are not up to date with what's going on, and most people, I would say *especially* in Sweden, they don't have the energy to look in to it and especially if its a stance that is contrary to mainstream.

He continues, “I think the culture of the Swede is very [interested in] consensus- Swedes don't like conflict. And if everybody thinks one way, there are few who are going to say anything else.” He continues to say that he considers his views to be very different from the average Swede, but does not consider himself “far-right”, “right”, or “conservative”.

Johan also picks up on a commonly recognized cultural difference between Muslim immigrants and native Swedes- individualism versus collectivism-, but ends with a tone of superiority: “It's clan thinking; they're not individuals, they are a collective... That's a big

barrier... They are all connected, everyone's action affects everyone else in some way... We're very individualistic, which is a good thing". Premised with his assumption of a fundamental incompatibility between the two, Johan delivers a controversial outlook when asked to further discuss his thoughts on the culture of the immigrant communities in Sweden, versus Scandinavian culture:

I think, there are a lot of cultures who in not too big doses, would actually work. I mean, is it multiculturalism if we have a lot of Spaniards? In a way yes, they have a different culture than us, but it's not like they come from Congo... some [cultures] would actually work pretty well, but *Islam doesn't*... If there is an earthquake in Norway tomorrow and 250,000 Norwegians come the next day, I would say 'Welcome'. You're immigrants, technically, because you crossed the border, but you're not really immigrants here, because we have the same culture... I don't think there would be... close to nothing... no problems... If 250,000 Americans would show up, and I'm not talking about illegal Mexicans, I'm talking about Americans, if they would show up here... you're good people. We wouldn't have a problem either. Same thing with Germans, French, English, Finnish, Danish, [etc].... 250,000 people from Congo were to show up tomorrow, we would have a civil war here the next day.

He was asked to talk more specifically about what he thinks *embodies* Muslim culture that is so incompatible with Swedish society. As usual, he had a well-prepared and well-constructed argument on the subject: "You cannot differentiate Islamic religion, Islam, from culture. Islam is culture, is a religion, is a political ideology...". He goes on:

Their *culture*, the Arabic *culture*, the Muslim *culture* specifically, is very authoritarian, it is very hostile to science and development, you can trace this back to the Qur'an, you can trace this back to Mohammed, you can trace this back to all the Muslim leaders back in the day, you can trace this back to *sharia*, you can trace this back to anything you want. They are- and have always been- antagonistic when it comes to science and education. They do not like the mix of genders, which we have seen in all Arabic countries and Muslim countries. There's a lot in their culture, religion, that does not mix with our atheist liberal way in Sweden and many parts of Scandinavia and Europe.

Given these definitive views, Johan was asked to share his attitudes about current cultural integration programs for Muslim immigrant in Sweden, and he replies, mockingly:

If they can just get [a] job and see how good we have our lives here, they will just realize that- 'Oh shit! My old life and my *whole culture* and my *whole way of thinking* is shit because look at how nice these westerners have it!' That's their view, but that's not how

the world looks. People do not want the same things as we do, and this discrepancy- that they cannot understand that the cultures differ- is the major problem with their analysis of why we have these problems. It's wrong.

Now, very serious again:

Culture matters; your environment matters. If you come from an environment that spreads the idea, for example women are not equal to men...that is very *very* very widespread within the Muslim world- not just the Arab world but the Muslim world in general- to deny that those ideas are sort of 'left at the Swedish border' when they come in here is ridiculous.

He mockingly discusses the position of the left parties on this issue, outlining multiple policies of theirs with humorous sarcasm at their "silly...ridiculous ideas". Throughout the conversation, the tone and volume of his voice fluctuated dramatically:

They think they can solve this by building more *frikshuset* [community centers], giving them more money- and then all of a sudden they will stop burning cars?! And then you look at other areas where there are poor people but they are *Swedish* people. Have you ever ever heard of *anyone* going out and burning cars and burning houses and throwing stones at the fire trucks, because they don't have a job? That's *unheard* of until the [immigrants] showed up of course. It's ridiculous... the point of the matter is this is not about getting a job or not. This is about what *culture* they come from, what *values* they have, what *ideas* they bring here, and how much that differs from what *we* are, [what] the Swedish culture is.

Johan projects that the Swedish political establishment engages in a cultural relativism that allows Muslims to engage in extreme behavior, and further, censors Swedes who raise concerns about it with the establishment.

Growing frustrated, Johan elaborates on the extent of the problem, claiming "the Left" policies reflect what he calls "monoculturalism" rather than *multiculturalism*, protecting only *Muslim* culture- whereas pride in one's Swedishness is viewed unfavorably by the mainstream. "Yeah, so to say that you're Swedish and proud, it's not viewed favorably." Johan gave examples of being harassed for wearing a shirt with the Swedish flag on it, or for flying a Swedish flag at your house: "you'll be [considered] as a Nazi or something". When Johan was pressed to consider what values he thought Muslims (globally or in Sweden) and his community, have in

common, he was able- after some prodding and hesitation- to provide a genuine and substantial answer, which was unfortunately then quickly followed with a final railing against the Muslim community, causing his sentiment to lose some of the genuine character it seemed to exhibit at first:

What I would say that Sweden Democrats have, if you want to find any similarity, if you're really looking for it, then I would say we have a focus on family values. A stable family, usually brings up stable kids... I'm pretty sure Islam, Muslims, feel the same way. Except they would kill their woman if she would flee, and we wouldn't.

Anna

Anna, who identified herself as sympathizing with most of the immigration philosophy of SD, feels that her opinions on the problems with immigration are widespread in Sweden, "A lot of people feel like that," she says:

I think it is very representative to many, especially the feeling that we don't take good care enough of our *own* people, especially kids and old people in Sweden, and that's why many Swedes... We want to limit immigration because we can't take care of our own... The irritation of people in general is that the money is spent on [immigrants], and we receive far more people than we can actually welcome in a good way and take *good* care of. [But] then people don't like that you're sending sick and old people and sick children back to their countries. It is a conflict in many people because once you have received them, then you can't treat them like dirt afterwards...

She goes on to explain *why* she thinks this is the current policy: "There is a feeling that it is done to look good to the outside." She continues, "They [Swedes] don't take care of their own people, they put them aside to help [immigrants]- it has to look good from the *outside*."

Anna, who's family is from Denmark, also had a lot to say about her approach to the integration of Muslims:

I'm Danish! But, we live in *Sweden* so we have to take the *Swedish* culture with us. I can always also have my Danish, but we live *here* so I have to take the Swedish. That's how I see it. If someone moves to Sweden, they have to accept it, because if I moved to Iran, I couldn't say, 'I want to go to Catholic church'- they wouldn't have it, wouldn't accept it... It is just *Sweden* who must accept everybody and take care of everybody, and adjust to everybody. I would like to see people who move to Sweden- they are welcome- but they

have to adjust to Swedish society, that's what I'm saying. Because the Swedish culture is about to disappear.

Anna was encouraged to elaborate on this, and she brought up the threat to gender equality in Sweden that she sees is imposed by incoming Muslims: “[My grandson] met for the first time a woman who had a *burqa*- you couldn't see anything, and he was really afraid... [Now] I have to explain this to him...” Further: “In my daughter's class, there are four kids who are Swedish; there are 22 in the class. [From] Greece, Iran, you name it... And it's even worse in Falladan [a lower income neighborhood in Lund]”. Anna was asked how daughter thinks about this- being a minority in her class- and Anna was quick to say, “She has no problem with it...”. She doesn't see a difference, “...because I haven't taught her that”. She continued to deliver concrete, personal examples, again relating to her children, of ways in which she sees Swedish culture is being eroded by the accommodation of Muslim culture:

When they go to school, and they finish in the summer, in *all years* they have gone to church, but they can't do it now. The Muslims- there are so many Muslims in the school- so they can't go to the church. So the leaders of the school have to choose religious-neutral bases, so everyone can participate in the finishing ceremonies each semester, but some of us are very upset that we can't keep our own traditions, out of consideration for people who we have actually *welcomed* into the country.

And:

[My daughter] comes home and speaks Swedish with an accent [denotes the accent common to immigrants] then I get upset. Because I don't think *she* should take after *them*; *they* should take after *her Swedish* and learn a little better. My older daughter did that when we lived in Falladan, but she turned that around.

Speaking Swedish continued to be a reoccurring theme for Anna, as a marker of one's integration in Swedish society, “It's still a big problem that they can't read, they have been in Sweden for 20 years, and they still don't Speak Swedish, because they are in their own society.” Later, she adds while laughing, “Sweden doesn't say, 'if you come to Sweden, you have to learn Swedish' so you can go out and work. *That's* not a priority. *I* think it must be the first- learning

the language.” When Anna was prodded to consider what role parliament could play in improving cultural integration programs, such as requiring language acquisition for citizenship, she interrupted with sarcastic laughter:

They are afraid of doing that. In Denmark they [have] done it, and Sweden has been critical of Denmark in forcing immigrants to learn Danish... It's Sweden! [Laughs] You don't force people in this country. Unless it's taxes. They are so afraid of being called racists, anti-immigrant; it's very not politically correct.

Changing topics, Anna was asked to consider possible contributions that Muslim culture has given to Sweden and she enthusiastically agreed without hesitation that Muslims do, indeed, have positive cultural traits that Swedes can appreciate, “They have all this exciting food, music, non-traditional medicine...” she goes on to complement their knowledge and appreciation for natural health remedies. While Anna sees Muslims as, “very interested in transferring their values and religion to Swedes,” unfortunately, she does not seem to see a strong effort toward cultural *integration* as even being in their interests, “They are their own society- with the school and the mosque... It is almost like they have a Swedish passport, and an [for example] Iranian passport.” Anna does not see movement in the right direction on this issue, “They want to keep it as it is; they are not interested in change. Because it is in their safety to keep a hard grip to keep their culture...” She does not extend much hope to the second-generation immigrants, either, “They are not adjusted to the society, that's the problem. They are not raised in the *Swedish* society.”

Nassim

As a leader within this structure, Nassim was asked about what he sees as the role of the mosque in the immigration and integration process in Sweden:

First and foremost we want to make sure that we respect the Swedish system. Those who are in charge of taking care of new immigrants should do that, do their part. We just want to make sure that we're open and welcoming them when they come here. But we don't go

to them; we just want to fill out the voids that may exist with the *religion*, and if they feel the need to have a place to come to.

He also describes a rare, but multiple occurrence where the local immigration authorities connect with the mosque community seeking information/assistance with unaccompanied minors that have immigrated to Sweden, “There were children coming on their own, and *they* contacted *us* [for assistance], but it’s not the other way around.”

On integration, Nassim chose to discuss aspects of what he seems to regard as successful mechanisms of integration, directly connecting to his experience with the Islamic Center. When asked if he thinks most his community wants to integrate, his reply was definitive:

Absolutely, absolutely. We are trying to give them the message that if you want to have a normal life in Sweden, you must have a job. You must have something to do. Because the society is rigged in this way. So if you don't participate in this, you'll [have] problems. And many of our members, they get this message. We can say time and time again, that it is better for a [men and] women to have a job, and the children to go to college and university... [So] they have another mind of the future.

As language acquisition was an important theme for other respondents, Nassim was asked if the majority of his congregation speaks Swedish, and he responds without hesitation:

Most people do, but maybe the older members might not... our opinion is that Swedish language should be the main language. The reason for that is that it's not just a group of people coming here, but people from 90 different nations. So then Swedish becomes the unifying language, and Arabic [is used] because prayers *are* in Arabic. Well, we couldn't have Friday prayers in every language- it would take all of Friday!

When asked if the Islamic Center plays a role in immigrant integration, such as offer language classes, he replied:

We [could] do the course or lesson in Swedish [here], but today it is not necessary. Many of our members, they have their own nationality group organization, and in *this* organization, they can [do] these kind of activities, whether it is cultural, or language. Here at the mosque, in our organizations, [it is] more the religious services for the Muslims in Malmö.

Nassim presents a fundamentally different vision of culture in Swedish society than other respondents:

First of all, I think it is wrong to compare Swedish culture and Muslim culture. I'm Muslim, but I don't have a problem with Swedish culture. And a Swedish person doesn't have a problem with my culture; we're the same. I think it's wrong to say Muslim culture and Swedish culture; it's not comparable. There are immigrants coming from different parts of the world, from different cultures, for instance a person from an Arab speaking country and myself, comparing- we're both Muslims, but we're very different... I told you before I think we have a problem with media, just generalizes, thinks that everybody's the same that is Muslim- like a stamp.

He proceeded to laugh while humorously making a physical gesture imitating putting a stamp on his, and then the translator's, forehead with the word 'Muslim'.

Tarek

Tarek, a relatively recent immigrant to Sweden, offers an interesting perspective on what it feels like to live in the immigrant-heavy neighborhoods, giving a bit of a commentary on integration as well:

I just recently moved to the area where I live now, called Söderort area... and I'm really shocked. I don't feel like I'm living in Sweden actually....I really miss Sweden, and I've been living in Söderort area for five months but I feel I'm living somewhere else! It's rare to see blonde people...

He eagerly goes on to discuss the segregation in neighborhoods in Stockholm:

It's weird to find a Somali guy living in the middle of a Turkish community. You find that it's mostly Somalis here, mostly Turkish here, mostly Iraqi here, mostly Ethiopian here. It is like this in Sweden. We have something in our subway; we have different colors like red, green and blue. The blue color, at a certain point it reaches certain stations that you don't see blonde people going there. That's another country.

He continues to share quite personal impressions of the stress of being discriminated against in these areas:

They have, the Swedish people living here, have almost one look, and they look in only one eye to all the people who are not blonde. I am so tired [of it]. I'm looking forward to leave here, I don't want to live here anymore, because I have a daughter and a new baby is coming into my life, so I don't want my daughter to live in such a stressful situation and stressful life because she's not fully blonde. She could be discriminated against. I want to move to another place where they can be more tolerant, more open and more sharing. Here people- it is very stressful to live in Söderort area these days.

Tarek mulls this dilemma out loud, as his delivery became more and more enthused:

The government is responsible for such a crisis because most of the foreigners like me, even if they're Swedish citizens, they live in the suburbs. Although the government gives so much money for local organizations to work on targets as merging people together and such activities, but they give the people, they give this money to organizations already working in the suburbs, and in the suburbs most of the people are from Somalia for example. Those from Somalia who are living in this community, which is about 80% of that community are Somali, they are going to merge with who?...The policy of the state is not... [hesitates] it's not well planned actually. And also, it is the strategy of the Swedish government as I know, they put the groups, for example the Somalis in this suburb mostly, the Iraqis in here, the Palestinians in here, which is in one way good because people have a similar background, that way they feel safe and it's easier to find their way in the new country. But also, it builds a big wall between them and the other part of the country, of the community, because they can say simply, 'well, if all of my community is here, then why do I need to go there?'

He goes on to state specifically how these immigrant enclave neighborhoods prohibit successful integration, "Immigrants come to Sweden, they stay with themselves in one block, and I think this in itself is a problem. It is prohibiting them from communicating with the other part of the country, the other part of the community."

Tarek uses personal examples to justify his opinion of the pervasiveness and manifestations of discrimination against immigrants. He goes on to describe a day when he was at a public park speaking in Arabic to his young daughter when they were approached by an angry Swedish woman who scolded him for not speaking Swedish. Tarek was animated with frustration as he relayed this story, but was also able to see the comedy in its absurdity:

My daughter goes to kindergarten to learn the Swedish language, but in the house I keep talking to her in Arabic when she is with me. And one day I was walking next to a lake here, and I was talking to my daughter in Arabic trying to tell her a story about the area we live in, 'Here is some water, here are some trees, some ducks or something' in Arabic, and a lady about 50 years old- I don't know her, I never met her- she directly said to me in Swedish, 'If you want to live in this country, you have to speak Swedish to her, otherwise you have to leave'. I was like, 'Wow, do I know you? Do you know me? If you are in the United States and you are speaking to your son in Swedish, do you think somebody would tell you this?!' Maybe you are just a visitor here for one week, for a short time! 'If you went with your son to Thailand, as you do every year', (because everybody here goes to Thailand [laughs]) 'Do you think somebody is going to stop you

for not speaking Thai there?! Don't you think it's stupid?! To just stop and tell me what [I] have to do!' I was just shocked and angry.

When redirected to talk about his ideas of Swedish culture and values, Tarek responded without hesitation, "The first thing is the tolerance. This is how I know Sweden and I know the Swede: being open, transparent." When asked what he thought the Muslim community contributed to Sweden, he delivers an engaging response that shows this is a meaningful topic to him and one he feels is not considered frequently enough:

This is one of the main issues [for Swedes]- that these people are coming from poor countries to take our money and take our jobs and blah blah blah. No, those people are coming here of course [because] they are looking for peace, they are looking for social justice, they are looking for jobs, a better life, [and] at the same time *they contribute so much!* This country- educationally and culturally- it's very narrow. I mean, they get their 'spices' from the people coming from other countries outside of Europe. For example, Germany, UK, France, they are culturally really rich because for hundreds of years they have been occupying other countries, they have been melting... they have been somewhere where they could learn and share. But Sweden, they have been occupying only Norway and Denmark! They haven't been away. So *we* are contributing so much to this country culturally... We are giving the other *face* of this country. We're giving *the 'spices'* to this country! Because being only in Denmark and Norway, it's the same thing. People eat the fish; that's the common thing in these three countries. With all my respect to the culture and their history, but this is a fact... They are always denying that part.

Khalid

Khalid had significant contributions to make to the discussion when asked to give his opinions on integration:

There should be a change with the way they do the integration policies and integration process. The way the integration policy I working right now, they are seeing the Swedish Muslim as a non-Swede. And that is a problematic way of seeing it. Because you're depriving young people who were born and raised in Sweden, they have never been to their home countries, as foreigners. That is why our organization is so critical today of the integration policy, because the integration is not on a mutual level; it is the Muslim that needs to learn how the Western society is working. The Muslim that needs to be, almost civilized. We're using a colonial way of thinking, and I am as an integration minister, need to sit down with Muslims and tell them how to behave... That's the wrong way of doing it. I'm not saying that integration is bad, it's very good, but integration should be on a mutual level.

Khalid shared a personal experience that further elucidated the foundations of his attitudes on this theme- the feeling that many Swedes promote a (however subtle) anti-Muslim bias. When asked what he remembers learning about Islam in his Swedish school, Khalid tells a story of his teacher talking about Christianity and Judaism with a focus on the religious and spiritual aspects, but when teaching about Islam he spoke only of conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, and about how Islam was violent. Then, the teacher asked Khalid in front of the class, “You’re Muslim, right?” causing him some confusion and likely, a bit of embarrassment at being highlighted as different in front of everyone, particularly given the teacher’s disparaging tone. He remembers that following this, other children on the playground were curious, and asked him questions. “It was the first time any of them realized I was a Muslim,” he finished.

Khalid was then asked to speak about his ideal way of living in the country, as an immigrant:

The ideal way [pauses], is like everybody else. To live in this country without any problems regarding my race or religion, to not be discriminated at work, to have the same opportunity as someone else that is white or ethnically Swede. They give us the same chances like everyone else to open our own schools, and not be always suspecting of Muslim people as something that is different; I would like to even say the opposite, you know Muslims have been in Europe for a while now. It's nothing new or strange, it's actually part of Europe.

When asked what he admires about Swedish culture, Khalid candidly and with a genuine tone in his voice, responded:

I like the way Swedes, it could be too much sometimes, but the administrative parts of the country- they can dig up a file that's 100 years old as proof of something; very organized. The infrastructure, the institutions are very organized. And also the way they have respect for time- they're never late. We Muslims should actually learn something from that one, we're always 15 minutes- for instance, I was half an hour late for this interview [laughs].

Abdul

When asked what he appreciates about Swedish society, Abdul shared his thoughts:

I am raised up in Sweden and I fully feel as a Swedish citizen with great admiration for the developed information society where everything can be found through internet... The political system is very stable and takes the laws and regulations seriously. I admire the sense of being given equal opportunity to reach wherever you want in society.

Fatima

Fatima, who could be described as a highly *assimilated* immigrant, had the following to say on herself as a Muslim immigrant: "I believe in God but I don't "practice" Islam (So I'm not sure if you would say I'm a Muslim). There is no special "Muslim-Swedish" way for me to live in Sweden; I just act kind and normal. I like the "free speech"... and the openness..."

Trajectory and Drivers

Johan

When asked to discuss how he thinks this conflict has evolved over time, Johan's opinion is that the "problem of multiculturalism" in Sweden has been an issue since the 1960's with the rise of the leftist political parties. The conflict as he sees it "took a turn for the worse" in the 1990's as immigration to Sweden from Muslim countries rose dramatically, citing as evidence for this the rising crime rate in Sweden. Pressured to talk further on his personal perspective on the timeline and trajectory of the conflict, and specifically, the anti-Muslim movement, Johan had the following to say:

I have been against the spread of Islam for many, many years, way before 9/11, and some of the persons who are older than I am, they said that there were two dates that started their thinking of this issue. And that is 9/11... and the cartoon crisis in Denmark in 2005... Before that they never saw Islam as a problem, or they never reflected on Islamization, but these events sort of- the guys I talked to- woke them up.

In addition to the world events he identifies as driving the conflict forward, Johan also includes his take on how the recent economic collapse will influence the trajectory of the problem, both in Sweden and elsewhere in Europe (where he describes these problems as being much worse):

I think France and England, who [do] not have as good of a welfare system [as Sweden], they do not have as good economies as we do- when *they* start to fall, and *they* can't pay pensions, *they* can't pay this and that, then the problems that have been there for a long time will be [hesitates] it's going to be clearer to them. Then you have to cut down on police because you have no money to pay them, the police get cut down so crime goes up... You'll see a Frenchmen: 'I worked all my life here, all my life in that fields or whatever, and now I'm going to stand in a queue [behind] fifty people [from] all over the fucking world who have not lifted a finger- I'm [not] going to stand for that.

Johan frequently chose to discuss widespread awakening and realization of the problem as an important milestone in the conflict and the success of his movement, describing factors that influence this including geography, “[Attitudes] depend on where you live. If you live in Malmö, there are few people who do not recognize the problem,” and technological capacities, “I have to say the internet has been a good thing, because without that no information [on Islamization] would ever get out there.”

Johan is very frustrated and dramatic when discussing the effect immigration has had on crime in his locality, “Malmö is like a gangster city now, immigrant gangs fighting for drug control and there's a lot of shootings, a lot of rapes, a lot of everything”. When pressed to present where he sees things trending in the future, a pessimistic description was offered:

I'm going to say what I think; not the official stance of the party. I think we're screwed. I don't think we have a chance to salvage this situation at all... my fears of what is to come; it's not going to be pretty. I think- and I think I'm being realistic... I think that there will be more and more separation between the ethnic/cultural groups. We see that everywhere [In Europe]... As they [the Muslim community] increase- they are still increasing by immigration and by birth- they are gonna claim their own rights, and politicians will start to follow, [thinking], ‘Okay, how do we get elected here? We cater to what they want’.

As it was a theme that Johan constantly returned to, he was asked to detail the major issues and policies he perceives the Muslim community in Sweden to be surrounding, he responded, “They are pushing the cultural things- they want separate bathing hours for swimming holes for their women. Some schools put up a [scoffs] divider in the classroom- guys on one side, girls on another. Yeah, that happens in Sweden.” He continues, “We have minarets

some places, but they're not allowed to shout in them (call to prayer). Not yet. But it's coming, I'm sure. I'm completely convinced that it's just a question of time." Challenging this, the common contention that second and third generations of immigrants will be more secular was suggested by the interviewer. To this, Johan argues: "I think that, from what I've seen, we have second generation Muslims here, [and] it's not getting better it's getting worse... and I actually read studies [that] basically second generation immigrants are more radical than their parents."

Johan details a chilling prediction of a violent future when probed as to how people with views similar to his will respond to what he has described as the inevitable rise to power of the Muslim community:

When they feel that politics is no longer working... People are going to say first- this is pointless.... They are voting collectively, and I can't beat them anymore. I, or we, individuals as we are, we cannot beat them, they are doing this as one group. And when the rest see this, they are gonna say, 'fuck that! I am not gonna accept the election results- they're 20% [of the population]! And they are gonna tell me [to take] pork out of the schools? Fuck that! I'm gonna take my kids out of school. Or if they want to have separate bathing hours? Fuck that; I'm not going to go to those bathing hours, or I'm gonna raid the place...I'm just going to get myself a gun and protect what I feel is mine. This is *my* country; this is not *their* country. *They* took it from *me*'. People will see this, arm themselves when it comes to it...I think it is going to go down in a pretty separatist and a pretty violent way...I just think that when the Swede or the Englishmen or the Frenchmen feels that 'I'm out of options in my own country', that 'this is no longer my country, they are running the show', they are no longer going to stand for it. And I think that's the route we're going.

Anna

Anna seemed to share Johan's perception that the current ideology dominating Swedish politics and society began in the 1960's, "Sweden has this role- by tradition- since Olaf Palme's time [1969-1976] ... he was very good at being representative for real human values and that kind of thing, and that kind of lives on but is not handled in the right way." After a candid discussion on what she sees as a problem of far too much immigration (and unsuccessful integration policies), it was clear that, like Johan, Anna also seemed to share a similarly fearful

and pessimistic attitude of where this conflict is heading, sharing that her opinion is this problem will get worse, violence will continue to escalate in areas like Malmö, and Swedes will continue to live in insecurity. “In Sweden they are afraid. There have been very [many] immigrants, and they are about to take over. They have said that 'we want to take over Sweden' and they are about to do it”. The specifics of Anna’s opinion on the future trajectory of the conflict were clear at times and scattered at others, but they always shared an unfortunate character:

I have always said that Sweden will end up like the United States... In the way that you have slums, a lot of violence, [segregation] between rich and poor; you have nothing in the middle. I have said that for a long, long time.

Nassim

Nassim, as one of the early members of the Malmö mosque congregation, has a unique perspective on how the Muslim community has integrated in Sweden over time. He shared memories of where Muslims would pray before the first mosque was built, “The Swedish church helped with localities to be able to hold Friday prayers. Later on they rented an apartment to have prayers”. He continues, “In ‘84 when I came to Sweden there were maybe ten thousand or something [in the whole country] they are now 400,000 Muslims, so it needs many services. So they come to the mosque and we give them this service as good we can”. He also discussed the 2005 success of the Muslim community, working with parliament, to gain the right to have Islamic marriages recognized by the Swedish government. He was asked to speak further on his congregation’s participation in politics:

We encourage them to do that. We say to them every time that they must take part in the political activities, or partake with the political parties. Because it is the only way we can influence their minds and... change beliefs... today we see many of our younger members, they are enrolled in the political parties.

On why this should not alarm non-Muslims:

They think that 2030 it will be in Malmö a majority of Muslims. What shall we do now?... It is simple... it is not dangerous that Malmö will be a Muslim majority by this

year. Because all Muslims are Swedish citizens, all Muslims will do that what Swedish people want, including us! So this [Swedish Muslim political activism] is the priority to do. At this time it is very important.

He goes on:

I see that many media write that it would be catastrophic, especially these people that would be considered extreme right. 'I [w]on't live in the country, or I won't live in Malmö when [alcohol is forbidden] or they forbid this, or they forbid that...' It is not a reality, this. Absolutely [not]! This is *not* our intention to make this. The *people* will decide about this. Not *us*, not the *religion*, not special group of Muslims. It is not so. But you know, they have an interest in making this future look as bleak as this.

Nassim was pressed to elaborate on the drivers of feelings of insecurity in the Muslim, or immigrant in Sweden:

Of course, everybody tends to be a little bit scared. Same thing with [Malmö shootings]...It's a scary situation... Same thing if there is a big congregation here, for instance during Ramadan, 3,000 people gather here. Then of course you think 'what could happen?'. This *has* happened, this *is* something that everybody, something that we thought would never happen. You tend to get more aware, and you are more prepared.

Tarek

When asked for his opinion on the trajectory of the conflict, Tarek began to talk about the Stockholm attack. The conversation took a moving turn as Tarek shared a chilling personal narrative that explores one of the main drivers of the conflict of Islamophobia in Sweden-violence perpetrated by Muslim extremists:

Around the last week of December 2010, people were celebrating in Sweden, shopping for gifts for Christmas. I remember [being] in the street in Stockholm, a shopping street called Drottninggatan...thousands of people are there in the same moment. I remember a guy from Iraq tried to attack, to explode himself but he failed to do so. I was like 100 meters from him, some people were running in [another] direction and I'm running in the opposite direction going toward him to see what's happening... that was a big shock for me, like if that guy had succeeded then I could have been one of hundreds that [could have] been killed.

The frustration in his voice grew as he discussed the impact he felt from the responses of the Swedish media on the following day:

I read in the newspaper Dagensnyheter, which is the biggest newspaper in Sweden, [that] all Muslims of Sweden have to condemn this... Why do I have to go and stand up and condemn it? I'm one of the victims also. I'm a Muslim, but this guy doesn't differentiate between Muslim/whatever... they put us- the Muslim community- in the focus, to [have to] show that we're loyal and Swedish enough... that was actually so strange and stressful for us, being Muslims."

He continues to describe an intense feeling of public discrimination directly following the

Stockholm attack:

Being on the bus, at the moment, people don't know if I'm a Muslim, but obviously I'm Swedish with other origins... I noticed that- maybe it's just my fantasy- that everybody is looking at me, pointing at me saying 'That is a Muslim sitting right there'. That created another challenge for me as a Muslim here, to act in a way just to show that I'm loyal to Sweden, to the community, and to Swedish values.

Tarek directly compares this experience in Stockholm to the Norway attacks, reliving where he was when the bombing first occurred in Oslo (but before details of the shootings in Utøya were known):

I was in Copenhagen with my friends- I remember that we went there for three or four days for fun... we were watching the news and all the channels were pointing at the Muslims, 'the Muslims did it, the Muslims did it'... I [felt] 'I want to go back to Sweden, I don't want to stay here, I want to quit this trip'. I was really scared. I said to myself, 'Again? Again? I have to go on that bus again?' I was telling my friends, 'and face all those looks and people pointing at me again? I have to face all that again? I'm tired of it, I don't want to do it.

He continued to describe the effect of these attacks on the situation of Muslims in Sweden, with a tone of obvious personal attachment in his voice, saying how it this seriously rattled the situation for Muslims, making them scared, worried, and angry.

Delivered with humor in his voice though insisting on being taken seriously, Tarek provided one final factor that he believes drives the conflict- the influence of the weather in Sweden:

It depends on the month of the year actually. If it's in the summer people appreciate everything here. If it's in the winter, it's really terrible... When the sun shines, everybody is smiling, happy, and more open, and more tolerant, and more sharing, and more

accepting, more funny, more more more more. But when it's dark, I mean their hearts are so much darker than in the summer...

Options for Intervention and Outcomes

Johan

Despite his admittedly fatalistic way of thinking about where the conflict is headed in the future, Johan was asked to consider possible nonviolent or political options and interventions:

I think we have to close the borders- no one outside of Europe, and not Albania either for that matter. That's the first step. Second step is, make sure that we do not give money to teach them Arabic in our schools... they teach Swedish and nothing else. Do not give citizenship to anyone that comes in. And I think they should have a review of all the citizenship that has been handed out, and residencies that have been handed out in the last ten years.

Johan gives a specific example of what he sees is another necessary change to be made to current immigration regulations:

They have a direct flight now from Malmö to Baghdad. Do you know why? Because they have so many Iraqis in Malmö. And what did they flee from if they're going back there? Fuck that. If you leave this country and go back where you fled from, you're out. That's my view. You go back there, you stay there. Otherwise they're not refugees, which they're not.

He continues with growing intensity and frustration to detail his opposition to multiculturalist policies that attempt to improve the integration of Muslims citizens into Swedish society. Rather, as he sees it, there are specific policies Sweden must implement to combat the problem of what he calls the Islamization of Swedish society, which is to be avoided at all costs:

[Make] it unpleasant- not unpleasant as in we go beat them up, but hard for them- to live in a lifestyle and a culture that is not Swedish... No accommodation whatsoever of their cultural traits, beliefs or anything... let's say they want their own holidays. No, I would say no. You have Swedish holidays. We have name days... they want to have Mohammed in there. Fuck that! We have *Swedish* names here. You live in Sweden, you come to Sweden, you like it or you leave.... give them incentives to move back... You have to try everything you can to make a Muslim life here close to impossible.

Johan sees current policies of the Left coalitions as being overly accommodating to the immigrant communities, and wants to see them come to an end, for example ceasing to fund the construction of more *friskhuset* [community centers] as a misguided attempt to curb youth violence in immigrant-heavy cities like Malmö. Further pressed by the interviewer to consider successful political solutions, Johan chose to describe an admittedly unpleasant but as he sees as it necessary, mechanisms needed to save this “failed” situation:

You [would] have to start removing democratic principles...for this nation to work at all, we cannot have proportional or normal elections. Because this part here will not accept that that other part will control them, or steer them... I would never stand for that... so [Muslims] voted collectively and win this seat, I would say hell no! My school *will* serve pork and we *will* swim with girls and boys together; if you try to take that away, I will do something about it. I will either force myself in with my daughter or... maybe I'll talk to my neighbor and say 'we're not going to stand for this'.

The interviewer gave one last attempt to draw out peaceful options for conflict transformation from the respondent; improvements to cultural integration policies were offered as an example, with an explicit intention to get Johan to offer distinct, workable adjustments to these policies. He argued that the intention of cultural immigration programs is fundamentally flawed, and only extreme measures could be successful to reshape what he sees as the problematic culture of Muslim immigrants: “You can't learn culture that way. You'll have to get them at the age of three and indoctrinate them. Or actually, take them at an earlier age, let them grow up somewhere else so they don't get to know that culture. Then, you wouldn't have [a problem].”

In sum, Johan feels that Swedes want to see the current political climate change so they can have an honest debate about the critical issue of Muslim immigration, otherwise they will begin to separate themselves from other ethnicities and cultures and withdraw from society. They can try to fight these problems with policy, but only as long as that will work. Barring this, non-violent resistance options include boycotts and other community organization mechanisms, but

eventually violent resistance may be seen as the only option. In his view, only the most extreme strategies will help improve the situation, such as selectively deporting residents and enforcing Swedish cultural norms through any means necessary.

Anna

To improve the situation, Anna feels Sweden should limit immigration to save money so the state is better equipped to care for Swedish children and elderly people. On improving crime and violence within the immigrant communities, she offers one distinct and settled policy position:

In Sweden, the jails are overloaded- and 95% are not Swedish people. And when you have done a crime in this country- you should be informed when coming to Sweden, that if you violate our laws, we will send you back. That will help solve some of the violence.

Nassim

After a discussion on interfaith dialogue over lunch among the students in the cafeteria of the Islamic school (and therefore off the record), Nassim was eager to continue the conversation on dialogue as an intervention option for this conflict. Over tea and cookies- which were neatly set up when we arrived back in the boardroom- Nassim went further into detail about interfaith initiatives he thinks can help solve this problem:

We have a project here at the Islamic Center, from 2005 into today, we have an interfaith organization with our initiatives. There [are] all religions: Muslims, Christians, Jews, Baha'i, Buddhists, Hindu...It's both [young and old]...It is the best way to make an atmosphere that is different between us.

He continued with a conversation about his impression that since Muslims in Sweden know how it feels to be attacked, they must stand in solidarity with the victims of the Oslo attacks, and participate in other gestures of goodwill when other religious groups in Sweden are targeted (like synagogues being burned). On the emergence of this important relationship of cooperation with the Swedish Jewish community:

The first time we had the Jewish people at the mosque [was] because they were afraid. And we were so open, and we want to help them because we know how it is to be attacked for these things. So we gathered in solidarity, and they think it impossible that a Muslim would come to *us*. I was there; at the synagogue with [flowers] when there was a fire there... So when they built it again, I came to the synagogue to congratulate them...

He goes on, “Yes- it began [with] this kind of contacts, and sooner or later they came to us. All the members visited the mosque, they came here, we take coffee and so on to discuss. It's so good to know that many of them... They have such a vision of Muslims...”. Not all members of the congregation are always united behind these gestures, however:

Maybe the Palestinians, they don't understand us sometimes. Maybe they don't understand why we take this stance... When it is an issue about Jewish something. But we must separate the conflict. Political problems [with] Palestinians and Israel, they need to solve that [separately].

Further, Nassim talks about how the mosque tries to put an emphasis on reaching out not only to other faith groups, but to secular Swedes, specifically those that might have negative preconceived notions of Muslims:

First and foremost our idea has been from the start to be an open mosque, so that people feel, that anybody feels they can come here and ask questions. People with prejudices are welcome to come and if they feel like sitting down and discussing things with us, we've always been very open and welcoming to them... We've had that policy from the start to be open like that, and we have study visits every week from schools and all kinds of organizations...

Nassim was asked to provide his impressions of the outcomes of these interactions:

[I] have experienced many times, where people with strong prejudices have arrived and in the beginning they sit down and walk around and they have an angry face, and after we have been talking for a while you can see that they kind of lighten up and realize that maybe [pauses] they realize something. That has happened a lot.

Nassim details a mosque initiative that sought to improve both the employment situation of Muslim immigrants, as well as to improve successful integration of Muslim women:

It was a very important project to give a chance to the small [businesses]... To give them better probabilities with taxes or something. So they can make more jobs, and more places for new employment... This project was more for the women, because... the woman she must come out [of the house], for jobs... And maybe this is a way to [for] the

immigrant woman and take place in the society. To be encouraged to come outside to their job or to start something, some small business.

He goes on, “This project went between 2005-2008. And because this project is dependent on assistance from other financial institutions, like Malmö municipality, they had a time frame for how much they got”.

Nassim was asked to describe his perspective on what the government is doing, and can do, to combat the rise of the anti-Muslim movement:

On the one hand, people try to hide the fact that there are Islamophobic feelings here and there. We think that you have to realize that there are problems like that around and that should be on the agenda. It is not possible to hide in the long run.

When asked to clarify if he is saying that Islamophobia is not on the current agenda enough, he replied, “Yeah, that's the feeling. It's not enough...”. However, he does speak with a hopeful tone on successful progress that he sees is being made to spread awareness of Islamophobia, “There are so many different organizations, and things are taking place- people are writing about it, and trying to make people aware that this is a problem that exists, even if it is not that huge, [it is] something to take seriously.”

Nassim outlines his opinion that more coordination among the mosques in Sweden can improve both the security situation of the Muslim community, as well as contain extremism in Swedish mosques:

We [want] some coordination with all mosques in Sweden; it must be part of the society. Just like the Swedish church... With the imams, or which part of *the line* they can't [cross]. So there it is not so coordinated- our imam can say something, and an imam in Stockholm can say something [contrary]! So we need this. We need a structure for the whole organization. But this cannot be only from us, it must be from the cooperation of the political parties, and with the parliament... so it is a future vision for us.

Nassim was asked to elaborate on any connections with other mosques in Scandinavia, “The other mosques in Scandinavia tend to come here and ask us for opinions. If they're about to build

a new mosque, they tend to come to us first. Since we were the first, and properly planned for, and it has been successful; so they look at us- a bit of a model”.

Tarek

Unfortunately, the immediate option to avoid discrimination that seems to appeal to Tarek is to move his family out of the immigrant neighborhoods and live in a part of Sweden that is more tolerant, open and sharing. But when asked to talk more about what mechanisms he sees will be successful in transforming the conflict, his tone is more hopeful and confident:

We [are] relying on the next generation in the schools, with our kids to melt- I don't like *melt* actually- but they are going to *share* with the Swedish community, and they are going to be *part* of the Swedish community, and this is a big responsibility of the schools and the education system... now it's more the new generation... Kids up to six years old here could live only with their parents... even if they go to kindergarten, they go with only Iraqi or Turkish or Somali...But the school, they could change all this!

Tarek continued to talk through the type of programs and philosophies specifically he sees being successful in schools:

They have to confirm for one thing, that everybody is equal. Everybody is similar- this is the main point. Whether they are Muslim, Christian, Jewish, whatever, this is the first thing...and there are certain values that we have to value and appreciate in this country. Of course, to focus on the common things that bring us [together], which is being Swedish... this could be tricky between nationalism and fanati[cism]. We have to be careful.

Tarek was asked to provide his perspective on interfaith dialogue as an approach to the resolution of this conflict, and while he was familiar with these kinds of initiatives, he shared why he doesn't think *interfaith* dialogue is the right approach:

As a matter of fact, people here are not religious. So if you want to invite them to talk about Islam, I don't think so much that people would come to that debate or activity or whatever. They are not religious; they are not so interested in that... it's about how we issue the invitation, how we invite people, where we invite them. As I know there are some initiatives here around Stockholm between the church and the mosque. They bring people get together and they talk in the open space, but this is just a small part because [who's] coming to that debate are the religious, the church members, which is a minority in Sweden...so it's still on a small scale, but it is very important what is happening. How

we can do it is more about the media. We have to stop talking about Islam; we have to talk about the Muslims.

Tarek introduces an organization called Subtopia in Stockholm that he believes successfully uses performing arts in common space to bring people together:

They show films, they do food, they do circus, they do different things that have to do with culture, and the good thing about this center is they are not only working in the suburbs. They are taking the suburbs into the center [of the cities]. And they use the subway because it's the biggest vehicle that we use everyday to transport people in Sweden.

He goes on:

Culture exchange, this is what they do. This interfaith dialogue, I don't think this will work so much in Scandinavia, but this cultural exchange, building bridges, opening space- that may work... I don't think it's the majority of Swedes who are anti-immigrant or anti-Muslim, or they have this Islamophobia. It's not the majority. But it's the responsibility of regular Muslims [i.e. secular Muslims], too. They have the responsibility to connect and communicate and open the space for people to come in and share together with them.

Tarek resolutely concludes: "The big part of it hasn't been done and [it is] the responsibility of the media and the responsibility of the mosque and the responsibility of the church and the government and the NGO's all together."

Khalid

When asked about options to resolve this conflict, Khalid shares his opinion on the matter, spoken forcefully:

When they talk about the unbalance between the genders, we like to talk about the unbalance of the races. But many people are not comfortable talking about this, and dealing with this kind of questions, these kinds of issues. Because suddenly, racism is not or Islamophobia is not only isolated with far right wing extremists, it also can be found in Social Democrats or even other left parties.

Khalid continues to discuss increasing awareness of the problem- and understanding that Islamophobia affects everyone, not only Muslims- as a fundamental intervention step when asked for options on how he thinks conflict resolution should be approached:

Awareness for me is very important. If you're not aware of anything then it's very difficult to do actually anything... this problem we have within society, even if [it doesn't] affect you, you should be aware of it. Unfortunately not that many people are aware of this... they see Islamophobia as something that is not going to affect me, and my family, and why should I even care? And so the average Swedish citizens should have more empathy towards people who are in difficult situations, whether they be Muslims, or women, or other ethnic or minority groups. When you have that awareness then you can move on and actually start to do something that is real.

After hearing Khalid assert that he sees a need for Sweden to construct opportunities for open and honest discussions about racism and Islamophobia, Khalid was asked to consider dialogue as an option. While he didn't explicitly disregard the possibility for success of this type of programming in the Swedish context, he chose to return the discussion to what he presents as more structural, substantial improvements to equality in Sweden that he would like to see addressed to resolution efforts:

Dialogue is something that is very common, dialogue around different people and discussing, so on. But what people actually forget is when they will talk about anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism; it's not just a lone person. It's not one individual person; it's not like only Sweden Democrats. These are social constructions of norms, and unbalanced power between people who have a lot and people who have nothing, and it's divided by and based on the color of your skin. This kind of discussion is rarely spoken in our public school in Sweden. And our organization [SUM, Sweden's Young Muslims] is very interested in dealing with these kinds of questions.

Beginning with a tone of optimism, as Khalid summarized what is being done versus what *needs* to be done, his voice began to reflect a more pessimistic attitude:

It's getting a bit better. They started realizing that... Islamophobia is a problem- that is a great step. But I still believe that a lot of things can be done. We could use more support to our government to start funding anti-racism projects in school[s]. And you could get some help from the government to get rid of some of textbooks that a lot of young people are reading today that [are] very Islamophobi[c]. We get letters from teachers saying that 'Our textbook is very bad, but we don't have enough money to buy new ones, because that costs too much and the school can't afford it'. So, the government could do a lot of things actually, but they need to prioritize their problems and their issues as well. They can spend a lot of money on some dialogues that often doesn't really lead to anything, but when it comes to real actions, then it becomes a bit quiet from the government side.

Abdul

When asked about possible solutions, Abdul brought up the government's new action plan against violent political or religious extremism, with the following to say:

Yes, there is an 'action plan against violent political and religious extremism' which started already to get worked on after the Stockholm suicide bomber which now the government makes more relevant after the Norway attacks. There is a risk that, because of the vague definition of what 'violence affirmative extremism' really means and that the action plan will put Muslims *as a group* in a position of suspicion and being targeted more easily.

He continues, giving his thoughts on Oslo as he sees it relate to this specific policy:

I think the attacks should be remembered as horrible terrorist actions which could be committed by anyone and that in all times our democratic and free society should be preserved... I think there is a danger that the action plan the government are working on will put people against each other as it is aiming to develop a closer contact to institutions and teachers in schools, organizations – which will try to make channels for informers to speak out where there is suspicions about “violence affirmative extremist” tendencies while the definition of what that means has not even been set. That could create a higher insecurity among citizens and be a backlash in the long run.

Finally, Abdul shares his opinion on what should be done to respond when violence does occur:

I think Muslim organizations should write press releases showing empathy and grievance as well as support... urging to stand up [for] values and principles which we all share in society.

Fatima

When asked about options for transforming the conflict, Fatima concisely stated that the government should “reduce immigration- but there will always be distorted people around.”

Further, she feels the government needs “more precise information, about how to distinguish between political extremists and Muslims in general”.

This Research Findings chapter was intended to present the interview data collected in a systematically organized way so that it can be digested and used for reference in the next chapter, which will offer an integrated analysis of the primary and secondary data reviewed for the project.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

This analysis will synthesize the practical and theoretical knowledge gained from the literature review with the original research findings presented in the previous chapter to make inferences and draw conclusions about the conflict in Sweden. After brief analysis of government and other interventions, a specific set of recommendations will be presented that combines a comprehensive conflict analysis with well-founded principles of peace and conflict transformation. These concrete and achievable mechanisms have been formulated to reduce violence by way of improving social structures and relationships, and have been determined as the most applicable to the Swedish case, given this research.

Literature and Original Data Analysis

While this research began with an explicit focus on collecting Swedish responses to the Oslo and Utøya attacks, it quickly became clear that the topics respondents were passionately eager to discuss were not that directly related to Anders Breivik. He was widely dismissed by respondents and the media as mentally insane (frequently put in a less clinical sense as “crazy” or “nutcase”). While his actions were unequivocally recognized as a horrific tragedy, some talked about the attacks as an isolated event comparing it to school shootings in the United States. More frequently however, respondents shared that upon finding out the attacks were motivated by an Islamophobic agenda, there was a recognition that the climate for this kind of thing has existed for some time, and this could have happened- or could happen- in Sweden.

An interesting contrast of opinions surfaced regarding the way the attacks were handled in the media, with one respondent claiming the media tried to make Breivik’s skewed anti-Muslim ideology relevant when they had dismissed the Islamic extremist ideology of the 2010

Stockholm bomber; a respondent from the Muslim community complained that the Swedish and world media made the Stockholm bomber's skewed Islamic ideology relevant, while dismissing Breivik's extremism as stemming from clinical insanity. All respondents admitted that memories of the Stockholm bombing were evoked in immediate reactions to the Breivik attacks; many initially assumed Muslim terrorists were responsible for the Oslo attacks. Muslim and immigrant respondents shared feeling an initial sense of insecurity and fear of escalation in widespread public discrimination and suspicion for appearing Muslim; this was quickly supplanted by a sense of relief upon learning that a Muslim extremist did not perpetrate these attacks²⁴⁴. This is where the conversations with respondents began to naturally flow toward in/out group dynamics, with reflections such as "Breivik showed terrorism has no color".

There are numerous sources and drivers of this multi-faceted and complex conflict, but throughout the various sectors of society interviewed there seemed to be widespread recognition that the conflict in some way stems from the large-scale immigration patterns to Sweden of individuals from Muslim-majority countries²⁴⁵. However, immigration alone did not necessarily lead to prejudice and conflict in this case. The real difficulty seems to come with the dynamics of integration, as culturally distinct individuals try to navigate their social boundaries to accommodate new identities and unfamiliar relationships. Well-documented cultural differences play a significant role in driving this conflict and hindering resolution attempts. Experience-near cultural differences (how subjects themselves define their identity) facilitate the construction of group boundaries between ethnic Swedes and immigrants from the Muslim world, and experience-distant distinctions in cultural tendencies and orientations (analytical categories, such

²⁴⁴ See Tarek's comments on page 96, Abdul, page 198, and Fatima, page 99

²⁴⁵ See Johan, pages 106, 109, 120; Anna, pages 112, 123; Tarek, page 117

as the Hofstede indicators) also highly affect an individual or group's thinking, communication, and behavior toward major intergroup issues. For some, domestic differences in e/n culture such as race, religion, and language have become the source of great anxiety, and distinctions between the in-group and the "other" are becoming increasingly salient across these cleavages.²⁴⁶ The literature and research findings come together to suggest a clear pattern of in/out group thinking in the Swedish case, possibly functioning to fulfill the universal human needs of identity and group belonging.

"Other" group prejudice is strong between immigrants and Swedes, and appears to be driven by oversimplification and stereotypes, particularly of Islam and Muslims who are viewed by the anti-Muslim movement to bring a unified, static and incompatible set of values with them to Sweden. Historical narratives on Islam in Sweden were generally negative and favored nationalism over appreciation for domestic diversity; this appears attributable to maintaining certain geopolitical balances at the time. Contemporary perceptions about Muslims in Sweden are largely fueled by international conflicts (Israel/Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Afghanistan, Balkans) and the way information about Muslims is presented in the Swedish and global media. The concern about Islamic extremism and violent religious fundamentalism seems to be a major source of fear for the non-Muslim populations in Sweden and Europe in general that cannot be ignored.

When asked to address the claim of cultural incompatibility directed at their community from SD, some immigrant respondents identified strongly with their own *Swedish* cultural identity, and discussed typical "Swedish" values that are important to them, going further to

²⁴⁶ See Johan, pages 106, 109; Anna, pages 103, 113-114; Nassim, pages 115; Tarek, pages 116-117, 132; Khalid, pages 118.

insist that Swedish and Muslim culture can be one in the same.²⁴⁷ Some respondents, ethnically Scandinavian and otherwise, easily discussed valuable contributions Muslims make as they integrate with Swedish society, with many giving cuisine as an example. However, it is still the case that the perception of fundamental values incompatibility plays a role in shaping the attitudes of Islamophobes.

As Muslims in Europe negotiate living in non-Muslim majority societies, they debate the terms of Islam most important to them; this dynamic process is influenced heavily by the environment in which it occurs and thus has resulted in a variety of outcomes. Direct violence has been one possible outcome, and domestic Muslim extremism such as Sweden's cartoon crisis have perpetuated negative stereotypes and give support to anti-Muslim movements. These violent responses increase the feeling of insecurity for everyone in Sweden, including Muslim residents who become exposed to heightened suspicion in public.²⁴⁸ More commonly however, Muslim responses to the European context are characterized by a critical examination of information on Islam coupled with consideration for one's circumstances, resulting in the development of a European Islamic identity, and in Sweden what can be called a Blue-and-Yellow-Islam²⁴⁹. Most seem to recognize the realities of varying levels of religiosity in Sweden's Muslim community, with the perspectives of those interviewed for this study (within the Muslim community) gauging that most Swedish Muslims are secular. However, this diversity, moderation, and Muslim secularism is vehemently denied by Islam's harshest critics, who refuse

²⁴⁷ See Johan, pages 101, 109; Anna, page 101; Nassim, page 116; Tarek, page 118; Khalid, page 119; Abdul, page 120; Fatima, page 120.

²⁴⁸ See Tarek, pages 116, 124-125; Nassim, page 124.

²⁴⁹ See Khalid, pages 118-119; Nassim, page 124.

to see any significant variations of Islam, and if they do still give primary attention to only the most orthodox and orthoprax of Muslims.²⁵⁰

Regarding Sverigedemokraterna specifically, this research shows responses that seem to align into one of two perspectives: the first group, largely those from the immigrant community but also present in mainstream Swedish media and politics, perceive SD as an extreme and poorly-informed anti-Muslim party fueled by negativity and posing a real threat to peace in Sweden. However, the party's own self-perception is not surprisingly in stark contrast to these popular opinions. Their website promotes the party as a wholesome and family-friendly movement with the best interests of all Swedes at heart; one SD respondent made a point of noting that the party activists he knows are not racists, despite this being one of the most common claims leveled against the group²⁵¹. All respondents seemed to have a somewhat similar perception of the party's base lines: it is intended both in its founding and in its current policies to be a movement against the current immigration situation in Sweden. For some individuals, particularly the party's anti-Muslim or counter-jihad activists, there is a strong denigrating and defensive position taken against Islam and Muslim culture with the assumption of certain incompatibility with "Western values". The literature and data seem to present evidence of an ethnocentric defensive orientation toward perceived "other" group throughout SD ideology, functionally represented by a preference for segregationist policies to restrict immigration, repatriate immigrants, and other more drastic measures. The proudly anti-immigrant movement perceives that the disproportionately high rates of crime and other engrained social problems in immigrant communities are caused not only by high rates of unemployment (and thus poor social

²⁵⁰ See Johan, page 100; Anna, page 102.

²⁵¹ See Johan, page 106; Anna 103.

integration) of immigrants, but more directly related to a cultural and learned proclivity toward violence in the Muslim tradition. This is what some scholars of sociology and culture might categorize as “substituting culture for race”.

It appears that third parties and external circumstances regularly, strongly and directly influence SD’s popularity in Sweden (such as 9/11, the Danish cartoon crisis, MENA wars and resulting refugees, global economic recession, Breivik, etc.). Some found SD's rise to parliament in 2010 to be an inevitable outcome of what they see as a rapidly deteriorating situation in Sweden, while members of both the left-wing political parties as well as the Muslim community were shocked and scared at their entry into the Riksdag. It was common for those bearing this opinion to make some connection between SD and Anders Breivik, though it is important to note that no data reviewed here shows anyone making the leap to assume there was a direct connection or collaboration with Breivik beyond ideological similarities. It was agreed by those outside and within the party that after the attacks in Norway, there was a climate of blame in Sweden against SD for these perceived similarities. Sverigedemokraterna shares ideological leanings, policy platforms and personal connections with Europe's other right-wing anti-immigrant parties including Norway's Progress Party and the English Defense League. Some of their members also find broader support for their positions on Muslims by engaging with authors and activists from the American-led ‘counter-jihad movement’, such as Robert Spencer.

Among SD supporters there seems to be a congruence of opinion that the rising popularity of the party is related to the need for an anti-establishment outlet in Sweden for widespread mistrust in or dissatisfaction with politicians, media and the status quo, particularly regarding immigration practices.²⁵² It also seems to be widely accepted that the rise of SD is

²⁵² See Anna, page 107.

directly related to growing support for anti-immigration policies in Sweden, but not necessarily support for the party's specifically *anti-Muslim* sentiments. However, Islamophobia is clearly a position supported by the ideology of SD, and not surprisingly members of the Muslim community responded sharply that the rise of SD is a threat to not only Muslims, but to average Swedes, and ideas like theirs must be destroyed.²⁵³ Many believe that ignorance of Islam fuels the anti-Muslim movement, particularly through selectively choosing periods of history or interpretations of the Islamic sources as relevant while ignoring others that show things differently. For example, it is leveled against SD member's arguments that they ignore positive aspects of Muslim history, religion and culture, and that SD supporters do not have enough contact with the Muslim community to learn anything different.²⁵⁴

Unfortunately, the identity prejudices existent in Sweden appear to have translated into social, economic and political discrimination, segregation and exclusion that is sometimes facilitated by existing institutional structures. Direct and structural violence, in addition to being manifestations of violent conflict themselves, also serve to fuel a future trajectory of intergroup violence. According to Galtung, Sweden is at risk of falling in to this perpetual trap of cultural violence by tolerating the less extreme versions of exploitation that exist. Sweden cannot continue to avoid uncomfortable negotiation with the difficult realities of their multicultural philosophies by insisting on political correctness that doesn't allow for honest debate. All interview respondents converged in agreement that there is not regular and equitable contact between culture groups in Sweden, and this is known to negatively influence attitudes toward Islam and Muslims. This is a critical finding because structural discrimination facilitates further

²⁵³ See Nassim, page 107.

²⁵⁴ See Nassim, page 107.

segregation and therefore lessens the likelihood of future equitable contact, indicating that Sweden's conflict situation is likely to escalate without appropriate intervention.

Interviewees, interdisciplinary literature, and public policy engage extensively with the problem of neighborhood segregation between ethnic-Scandinavians and immigrant communities. Several factors are found to lead to this urban exclusion in Sweden: major immigrant processing centers, housing and integration services are located in Stockholm, Malmö and Göteborg, making it difficult and unlikely that new asylum seekers will move out of these areas in their first years in Sweden. In addition to immigrants who enter as refugees, those who migrate as family members of earlier immigrants are also likely to move in to these enclave neighborhoods. Additionally, access to resources plays a role as unemployed, poor immigrants feel unable to relocate to areas of Sweden where they have even fewer support structures. Further, a feeling of security and safety comes from being around people that you feel are similar to you, and in a similar social situation; particularly for immigrants coming from intense conflict zones, this need for security may be great. Finally, low IDV cultural tendencies lead individuals to place far greater importance on community relationships beyond those of the immediate nuclear family than Swedes may realize. These factors tend to lead Muslims to strengthen relationships within their own community, while in many ways excluding them from more fully integrating into Swedish society.

The Swedish political structure is intended to nurture well-rounded taxpayers and promote national prosperity, and some feel immigration and integration problems are hampering the actualization of this ideal. A spectrum of opinions emerged to address this topic. One perspective is that current immigration policy in Sweden is a problem and that problem is in large part economic: the government spends too much money on social services for immigrants

at the expense of Swedish people who need public assistance such as children and pensioners.²⁵⁵

This was the theme of a recent SD political campaign ad, which visually directly the reader to choose one or the other: immigrants or Swedish pensioners (see Appendix). Further, there is a feeling that Sweden is beyond capacity to properly accommodate the needs of the immigrants already living in the country. However, this presents a difficult dilemma for those who feel an equally strong humanitarian responsibility to welcome refugees who continue to migrate to Sweden with ostensibly nowhere else to go. In general, the intentions and philosophy of current integration philosophy did not seem to be at issue for the majority; concerns seem to lie more with the implementation strategies of these policies. The supporters of SD largely seemed uninterested in seriously considering policy program specifics, stating what they see as fundamental philosophical flaws in the conceptual approach of multiculturalism, frequently citing perceived cultural incompatibility in this regard.

Swedes from across the spectrum were eager to provide varying opinions on what exactly motivates the Swedish establishment to defend their current policy positions with speculation spanning from a true ideological commitment, to desperation to maintain a certain altruistic international image, to face-saving after the obvious failures of multiculturalism policy.²⁵⁶ Statistically speaking, Swedes are shown to be more politically interested and informed than most, however typical respondent perspectives (from both native and immigrant Swedes) of the “average Swede” sensed significantly more social apathy: “they are happy to live in a bubble”, “they just want to live their daily lives”, and “they want to come home after work, go inside and not think about anything else” were trending sentiments during interviews for this research.

²⁵⁵ See Anna, page 112.

²⁵⁶ See Anna, page 112.

There was also a feeling from Muslim respondents that most Swedes, while not Islamophobes themselves, are either oblivious to its realities or feel it is something that doesn't affect them; some connected this to their perception that Swedes tend to be uncomfortable talking about race, inequality and differences. There was also repeated mention that for Swedes the luxury of distance from anti-Muslim violence, and thus the ability to ignore it, was shattered after the attacks of Anders Breivik.

Perceptions of the conflict's future trajectory are diverse and some quite grim. On one side, the respondents supporting SD feel there is little to no chance to salvage the situation and Muslims will further segregate themselves in Swedish society while simultaneously forcing Swedish politicians to cater to their will on policies about Islamic features in public life. The most extreme of these views sees political options ceasing to be viable, and armed defense and raids will be the only option for Swedes to "defend what is theirs". Respondents from the Muslim and immigrant communities countered this bleak perception of the future, suggesting that political participation of the Muslim community is a crucial step showing loyalty and integration in Sweden, and Muslims have no intention of establishing their will on the majority. Some see Sweden's Muslims becoming more secular as generations pass, while others perceive the opposite.²⁵⁷

Recommended Interventions

Of all six discourse categories analyzed in this study, discussions of the intervention options and their potential outcomes presented perhaps the most divergence between the SD loyalist respondent and other members of society. Johan presented classic "counter-jihad"

²⁵⁷ See comments from Nassim, page 104; Khalid, page 105; Abdul, page 105; Tarek, page 131; also, for a contrasting opinion see Johan, page 122.

arguments as he shared his passionately dire opinions of what can and cannot work to resolve this conflict. To be clear, he sees no opportunity whatsoever for social relationship building and the set of possibilities he presents are in nature quite invasive to individual liberties. He perceives an eventual point of desperation where Swedes will be forced to retreat on their democratic principles, such as proportional voting, to prevent Muslims from dominating Swedish politics. According to his argument, if/when Muslims do come to dominate public decisions in Sweden, democratic institutions will lose their legitimacy and those who stand against this Muslim takeover must find their allies and respond with force. At a self-identified extreme, Johan suggested that separating the children of Muslim parents from their families at a young age and raising them within the Swedish culture might be the only possible “integration” strategy.

Despite this minority opinion, access to government support is readily available to the Muslim and immigrant communities in Sweden, such as generous funding for public programs and unwavering commitment to the expansion of anti-discrimination mechanisms in state and social institutions. It seems clear that parliamentary legislation on the main issues related to this conflict attempts to be comprehensive, effective and flexible to the changing needs of society. Assessing whether the intent of these policies matches their impact requires methodical monitoring of implementation and evaluation of actual outcomes and while far beyond the scope of this study, is likely the focus of other important and ongoing research.

The government’s reformed integration policy put priority on the acquisition of employment, in large part based on the assumption that the unemployment of immigrants leads to prejudice and social conflict. To this end, government policy now offers incentives for small businesses and startups, and programs that target getting women to enter the workforce. In the long run, this kind of response can equalize structural inequalities that help maintain divisions

along ethnic lines. Unlike the thinking of Islamophobes who attribute high unemployment rates in immigrant communities to disinterest in work and integration, mainstream Swedes appear to recognize a diversity of complex and layered reasons including individual skills deficits, difficulty verifying foreign credentials, and discrimination against immigrants by Swedish employers. According to this view, the pervasive lack of employment in these communities, particularly for youth, leads to patterns of maladaptive social behavior that not only limit individual opportunities but can also foster discrimination and perpetuate negative stereotypes of Muslims and immigrants. Therefore, to improve the social situation of Muslim immigrants and reduce crime and violence in general, policies must: combat discrimination in employment; provide vocational and language training to immigrants; and improve capacities for determining international academic and professional reciprocity. Further, all data surveyed here, both primary and secondary, agrees that native language acquisition is an important step in getting a job- immigrants to Sweden are considered responsible for adapting to use the Swedish language as an important marker of integration, as highlighted by current policy.

Interventions suggested point to the need for education reform, for example providing Sweden's schools with funding and coordination for anti-racism projects, as well as new inclusive textbooks to replaced outdated ones that perpetuate negative stereotypes. More informal intervention ideas were also discussed with enthusiasm by (most) respondents and include campaigns to spread awareness of the problem and to present more precise information about Islam and Muslims to the public. Almost every respondent from the immigrant/Muslim community indicated a need to heighten awareness of Islamophobia and prejudice against immigrants to promote empathy and action on the part of non-Muslims. Muslims in Sweden, who have been the victims of discrimination and hate, should reach out to others who are

experiencing that sense of victimhood and build cross-cutting relationships on this shared experience. For example, candle manifestations and public mourning after tragedies like Utøya to bring awareness, mobilize against violence, and to show the public that Muslims and Swedes share the same values.

The stated goal of Sweden's internationally recognized and top-ranked integration policy is equal rights for all regardless of cultural background,²⁵⁸ but as reformed policies have only recently been fully implemented, monitoring data such as enrollment and participation statistics, program retention, and participant feedback and evaluations have not been collected and made available for analysis. This is clearly important information for a complete analysis of the cultural competency of Sweden's integration policy, and is an obvious area for future research to enhance this study. However, for the limited interests of this study, three specific programs of the immigrant integration plan will be highlighted with recommendations for their competent implementation in a setting with immigrants who are likely to exhibit significant e/d cultural differences with the majority of Swedes.

The 'new immigrant introduction plan' that is intended to support the acquisition of residence, employment and language skills was recently reformed to include an introduction guide- a Swedish citizen, chosen by the individual- who will help the new arrival implement their introduction plan. As this new program is implemented, it is important that the Swedish guides are able to deliver introduction information in a way that accommodates uncertainty avoidance, such as providing clear directions and thorough accounts of what to expect, to benefit the integration of individuals from countries who have a much higher UAI than Sweden. This will ease anxiety and encourage better relationships between the new immigrant, their

²⁵⁸ Government Offices of Sweden, *Swedish Integration Policy Fact Sheet*.

introduction guide, and any networks that materialize from this relationship. High PDI of immigrants in Sweden is likely to inform a level of comfort with hierarchies, and Swedish culture's low PDI social boundaries should be clarified and made as explicit as possible. This difference could play out in the mandatory SFI or vocational classroom settings, where an immigrant may feel uncomfortable in an open and equal relationship between student and teacher, and will need time and coaching to adjust communication styles accordingly. Initial refusal to directly engage with educators should not be misconstrued as disinterest or disrespect.

The government's organized resettlement plan will encourage and support (through coordination and funding) the re-settlement of immigrants and their families from municipalities with high proportions of immigrants (Göteborg, Malmö, Stockholm) to municipalities receiving fewer immigrants and where there are more openings in the labor market. This proposal seems highly informed by individualist thinking, and is not the most appropriate strategy for individuals from collectivist cultures who rely differently and more heavily on family and community connections than the average Swede. For example, the logistics of this plan are centered on the Swedish conception of a family: an individual with their spouse and children. This plan is unlikely to include accommodations for relatives such as parents, adult siblings, grandparents, cousins and other "extended" family members that might be regarded in much the same way to a Muslim immigrant as the nuclear family is to a Swede. Sensitivity to important community connections should be an important factor in planning and marketing immigrant relocation.

Measures to develop the state's capacity to validate foreign vocational skills are also in need of thoughtful improvement for state interventions to be most constructive. This policy is intended to reduce barriers to employment for immigrants, and may likely appeal to immigrants from cultures with large power distances, where authoritative endorsement instills confidence

and legitimacy. However, Swedish employers (who operate within a low power distance culture) may give little credibility to state validation and will consider potential employees based on demonstrated skills, including language abilities. State validation of work skills is important, but explicit job placement services are needed to supplement this somewhat weak policy.

It is clear that any solutions tailored for this conflict will need to include political intervention to reinforce and construct equal social structures and relationships between different groups within those structures. It is critical that resolution efforts also satisfy needs for individual and group identity using mechanisms that promote peace and cooperation rather than competition and violence. The following four specific recommendations intend to work toward these objectives:

1. Encourage and facilitate the political participation of individuals in the Muslim and immigrant communities. This includes enabling them to become informed voters, engaged participants in public debate, and successful candidates for public office.
2. According to Avruch:

If the conflict arises from the parties' perceptions or beliefs that they are incompatible... since parties act on the basis of perception or belief... then if it can be demonstrated that the perceptions or beliefs are false... then the correction of misperception can end the conflict.²⁵⁹

It would thus seem that dialogue programs to promote shared values and understanding will likely be successful, if implemented carefully and with intercultural competence. The content and delivery of this programming should be constructed and facilitated differently depending on the degree of ethnorelativism or ethnocentrism of participants,²⁶⁰ among other factors. For example, Iraqis from a high PDI culture might work better with a strong and highly facilitated dialogue that might not be the structure instinctually preferred by a Swede.

²⁵⁹ Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, 25.

²⁶⁰ Bennett, "Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity," 22-71.

Programming should aim to create an engaging and open space for honest discussion about the issues that matter to people, particularly youth, but these measures will only be successful with equal participation from all sectors of society. Interfaith dialogue can be a great way to change the atmosphere between groups in conflict, but the Muslim community must be open to having people ask tough questions and all parties must be ready to engage in honest dialogue. For this type of programming to be successful, a safe space must be created where all parties are made to feel comfortable exploring their own prejudice. The government should support cultural exchange programs to appeal to a larger *secular* audience, such as those coordinated by community arts organizations, to build these open spaces for sharing for a wider audience. Dialogue on common values should occur early on, such as in schools, and should be strategically and carefully planned to ensure confirmation of universal equality, and focus on common values while recognizing differences.

3. Despite the unease of some staunch secularists, it is useful to work through aspects of this conflict in Islamic terms; a theological approach to improving integration and arguing Islamophobia is not to be relied on exclusively though, rather as only one piece of a larger project. Given they are pursued with carefully selected partnerships, the following strategies are likely to be successful,: promoting Islamic education for young Muslims to familiarize them with the various traditions and contexts of their faith; recognizing the limits of fixed *sharia* in favor of *shura* and democratic *ijtihad*; deliberate promotion of the contemporary reflections and the development of a moderate Swedish-Islamic identity; and development of domestic Islamic institutions of higher learning to meet these objectives. The Swedish government should be in frequent and multi-directional communication with the country's established religious organizations, and there should be increased coordination between Sweden's mosques. Communicating local issues and concerns with others can foster and monitor security, and further, establishing formal connections between the mosques can ensure the interpretations of Islam being delivered in Sweden are in accordance with democratic values.

4. An interesting project to assess the applicability of Bennett's developmental model to improve the Swedish conflict could include a multi-level analysis of individuals, groups, and their relationship to each other. With data gathered from well-designed quantitative surveys, researchers can first diagnose and then categorize individual respondents into developmental

phases of ethnocentrism/relativism. After grouping students based on their exhibited level of ethnorelative development, Bennett's strategies for improvement can be carefully implemented and monitored for outcomes. Careful evaluation could provide valuable feedback as to how these strategies work in practice in different settings, and what factors seem to affect their likelihood to change attitudes toward other groups. This type of research is crucial in arriving at best practices for conflict transformation.

Finally, open, honest and thoughtful debate, even with groups and individuals who may seem most difficult to communicate with, is always necessary for sustainable peace. Responding with emotion to the Breivik attacks where his family was personally affected, Johan Galtung shares this view, suggesting that to prevent the escalation of violence from the anti-Muslim movement we must:

Challenge these people on the extreme right in debate. Get them out in public space, in the open.... If you want to challenge them, you should have been well prepared. These people are well prepared.... It's a question of going to them personally. Invite them into the best of our society, the open, free debate.... You have to understand them. That doesn't mean you have to accept them, but you have to go your portion of the way.²⁶¹

It would seem the following quote from Tariq Ramadan promotes the same:

We must absolutely learn again the meaning of study, of in-depth understanding, and accede together to a deeper perception of the complexity upon which other people's references and lives are organized. Listening, learning to understand again, admitting at times that one does not understand, are all paths leading to deep subtle thought, often silent and without judgment.²⁶²

This chapter attempts to synthesize the research gleaned in the literature review with the original interview responses acquired during the project to illustrate the positions, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of the parties involved.

²⁶¹ Galtung tells the story of how his granddaughter unknowingly rode the ferry with Breivik to the island of Utøya that day, only to shortly thereafter find herself hiding from his fire under a raincoat alongside a friend, who was later killed. Johan Galtung, *Norway's Johan Galtung, Peace & Conflict Pioneer, on How to Stop Extremism That Fueled Shooting* (democracynow.org), Video interview.

²⁶² Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?," 215.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis project attempts to provide an analysis of interdisciplinary literature and qualitative interviews with various actors in Sweden to develop a base of knowledge regarding Swedish perspectives on the changing dynamics, sources and drivers of this escalating conflict. Unless the security situation in Muslim countries improves (which sadly does not appear to be the current trend), Sweden can expect a continuation of large-scale immigration of Muslims, and thus likely a continuing escalation of anti-Muslim sentiments in Sweden. Some question Islam's ability to function in a democratic secular society given what are perceived by many as undemocratic features of the religion. However, the research presented here shows that there is significant theological and philosophical evidence that Islam can and does function well in democratic society. Working within Islam, through hermeneutical engagement, we can discover peaceful outcomes that are engrained and authentic to religious audiences. Additionally, the culture groups under investigation here do indeed appear to have significant differences, but managing these differences is what distinguishes intergroup conflict from peaceful social relationships among diversity.

While the Swedish government has committed considerable resources toward efforts to reduce discrimination and improve the social, economic and political situation of its Muslim and immigrant residents, the anti-Muslim movement appears to be on the rise. Multiculturalism policies must continue to be promoted by the government in conjunction with robust civil society initiatives to promote peace. Substantive peace requires a citizenry with strong self-esteem, other group tolerance, and equitable relationships among the people, and achieving these ideals requires attention and intervention at the individual, group, and national levels.

Implications for Future Research

Throughout the accumulation and analysis of data for this study, numerous areas of research surfaced as highly relevant but beyond the scope of the project. Future research on the following themes would contribute to painting a valuable, holistically informed picture of the conflict and resolution opportunities:

- Education on Islam for both Muslims and non-Muslims- this would include content analysis and possible revision of outdated school textbooks; exploration of the dominant sources of information for various Muslim groups in Sweden; and research on the current status of the movement to develop Swedish/European imam training, among other areas.
- Media studies that consider what informs how the Swedish media covers stories of Muslim crime versus anti-Muslim issues.
- Studies on crime and violence within the Muslim community to produce an accurate set of relevant crime statistics, including consideration of the factors that are correlated with violent crime in the Muslim community (such as past trauma exposure); research on successful deterrent programs given the different drivers of criminal activity; the role of police in dealing with Muslim communities as well as the anti-Muslim movement.
- More current knowledge of Islam in Sweden is needed, for example, information on the status and experience of Swedish converts to Islam. Also, investigation of the true extent of theological Islamic extremism in Sweden, such as fundamentalist preachers and connections to foreign states or subnational/opposition groups. Additionally, reliable data on the extent of human rights abuses in Sweden carried out under the name of Islam (ex. “honor” killings, stonings, etc.) is needed to consider or counter common anti-Muslim arguments.

- Evaluation of integration policy implementation would be very useful, including studies on the barriers, monitoring, and evaluation of integration programs that measure the effects of reforms and social programs.
- Studies on health services (particularly mental health and trauma counseling) for individuals migrating from violent conflict areas is relevant to the success of conflict resolution, but does not appear to be available at the moment.

Final Thoughts

As illustrated by this study, history, politics, religion, culture and identity all play a significant role in the context of Sweden's conflict with the anti-Muslim movement and Muslim immigrant communities. Of primary importance to the analysis was the development of effective approaches to peace, and critical evaluation of these specific circumstances has resulted in a tailored set of strategies for positive development toward increased intercultural sensitivity in Sweden. By emphasizing the power of perceptions and relationships in conflict dynamics and conflict transformation, the conflict resolution efforts recommended are aimed at the underlying causes and structural roots of the conflict, such as the satisfaction of identity needs and balancing social relationships. This includes fostering positive attitudes toward those from "other" identity groups, as well as a strengthening of the institutions and processes through which the parties can interact peacefully.

APPENDIX A

TIMELINE OF RELEVANT EVENTS

1969-1976	Olof Palme is Prime Minister as leader of the Social Democrats
1984	Malmö Mosque built (first mosque in Scandinavia)
1986	Olof Palme is assassinated (murderer still at large)
1991-1992	Lasermannen (John Ausonius) shoots eleven people, killing one; his targets were mainly immigrants from Muslim countries
1996-2006	Goran Persson is Prime Minister as leader of the Social Democrats (in working coalition with the LeFt/Green parties)
2003	First Malmö Mosque arson; some parts of the Islamic Center are damaged beyond repair [April 28]
2005	Two minor arson attacks on the Malmö Mosque and Islamic Center [September 18, October 12]
2005	Denmark's Jyllands-Posten cartoon controversy (and international fallout- riots, embassy attacks, burning effigies) [September 30]
2006	Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds resigns after she lied about closing an SD website for publishing the Mohammed cartoons [March]
2006	Moderates win parliament majority for the first time in decades; Prime Minister is Fredrich Reinfeldt
2007	Lars Vilks publishes Mohammed cartoons in Sweden
2009-2010	Peter Mangs goes on an immigrant killing spree in Malmö, shooting 15 people and terrorizing the Muslim community for almost a year [December 2009-October 2010]
2010	Iraqi-born Swedish citizen Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly kills himself and injures others trying to detonate several explosives in a busy shopping area of Stockholm; his accomplice Nazzedine Menni was arrested in Scotland recently for funding the attacks

2010	Sweden Democrats are voted into parliament for the first time, initially gaining 20 of 349 seats, or 5.7% of the vote. During campaigning, SD was not allowed to participate in debates, some private TV stations refused to run their ads, and their election rallies were often disrupted by violent protests and riots. The major alliances in parliament refuse to work with SD.
2010	Death threats, arson attacks, and assassination plots on the life of Lars Vilks. Vilks saw countless death threats, was violently attacked in public, his house was burned and vandalized, and in September 2011 three men were arrested for plotting to kill him.
2011	Anders Behring Breivik kills 77 people in Oslo (8) and on the island of Utøya (69); most of his victims were teenagers.
2014	Sweden holds their next parliamentary

APPENDIX B

CONSENT SCRIPT

Research Purpose:

You are being asked to participate in an interview for a research study being conducted by Elizabeth Marsch from American University. The purpose of this study is to understand social dynamics and relationships in Sweden since the attacks in Oslo in July 2011, specifically concerning Muslim communities in Sweden. This study will contribute to the student's completion of her master's thesis for the International Peace and Conflict Resolution program at the School of International Service.

Research Procedures:

You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to your experiences and opinions. The interviews will be digitally or audio recorded. Subjects will not be attributed by name, but organizational affiliations will be identified in the research analysis. Data collected will be kept confidential and stored securely at all times. **Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from participation at any time. You may refuse to answer individual questions without consequence.**

Risks:

The risk classification for this study is minimal; the researcher does not perceive any risks of physical or mental harm from your involvement in this study.

Questions:

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this research project, please contact the researcher or faculty advisor:

RESEARCHER:

Elizabeth Marsch	elizabeth.marsch@american.edu
Master's Candidate, 2012	American University

FACULTY ADVISOR:

Professor Lynn Kunkle	kunkle@american.edu
School of International Service	American University

APPENDIX C

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction to Interview:

Thank you for your participation in this research study. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you have the right to refuse to participate at any time. The design of this survey is intended to create an improved understanding of social dynamics. Your responses will be treated with dignity and confidentiality at all times. This survey contains a set of structured questions, but please feel free respond to each question in any way that you want. We understand that not everyone has an opinion on these questions.

The first questions will ask general information about you:

1. Are you affiliated with any political parties in Sweden?
2. Are you affiliated with any religious organizations in Sweden?
3. Where did you go to school?
4. Are you a member of any trade unions?

Now I would like to ask you questions about the Oslo/Utøya attacks:

5. When did you first hear about the attacks in Oslo and Utøya?
6. What were your immediate reactions when hearing about the Oslo/Utøya attacks?
7. Can you describe your reaction as events unfolded?
8. How would you describe the Swedish media's response to the attacks?
9. Is that how you think the Swedish media should present the attacks?
10. How would you characterize the way Swedish people have responded?
11. Moving forward, what do you think is the best way the average Swedish citizen can respond to the attacks?
12. Along what lines, if any, do you think Swedish citizens are divided on the best way to respond to the attacks?

13. Is there a role for Swedish law enforcement in responding to the attacks? How will this help deal with the problem? Do you think the attacks will change the relationship between police and Muslims in Sweden? What relationship should Swedish law enforcement have with the Muslim community in Sweden [prevention, protection]?
14. How would you characterize the way Migrationsverket (Swedish immigration authorities) is responding to the attacks? Do you have any suggestions for reforming the immigration process? What reforms do you think would be acceptable to the other side [assimilation, integration, help refugees repatriate]?
15. What do you think is the best way that Muslim individuals can respond to the attacks?
16. What do you think is the best way that Muslim organizations can respond to the attacks?
17. What do you think is the best way the Riksdag can respond to the attacks?
18. What do you think the Riksdag is actually doing to respond to the attacks?
19. Does the European Union play a role in responding to the attacks?
20. Do other countries in the world play a role in preventing this problem?

Now I'm going to ask you questions about Muslims, Islam and Sweden:

21. Did you go to school with anyone who is Muslim? Do you work with anyone who is Muslim? Can you describe the interactions?
22. How did you learn about Islam?
23. If you are a Muslim: What is your ideal way of living in Swedish society? What you admire about Swedish society?
24. If you are not Muslim: Is there something that you admire about Muslims or Islam? What is it that they get "right"? What can the Muslim community contribute in Sweden?

One final question:

25. How do you think these attacks should be remembered [as a wake up call]? In your opinion, is Sweden's response to the attacks unifying or divisive for Sweden as a nation?

Thank you for your participation in this survey.

Your responses are valued and we appreciate your cooperation.

APPENDIX D

ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction to Interview:

Thank you for your participation in this research study. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you have the right to refuse to participate at any time. The design of this survey is intended for no other purpose than to gather information. This survey contains a set of structured questions, but please feel free respond to each question in any way that you want.

1. What is the name of this organization?
2. What is the nature of this organization?
3. Did this organization schedule a special meeting to discuss the Oslo/Utøya attacks?

If a special meeting was held please proceed to question #4

If a special meeting was not held, please proceed to question #11

4. Who called the meeting?
5. What was the agenda?
6. Who was invited to attend?
7. What was the format?
8. What were the main topics discussed?
9. Did the meeting result in a plan of action, or individual action items? If yes, please describe.
10. Were the attendants of this meeting in agreement on the appropriate responses to the attacks, or was the discussion divisive?

Now, please proceed to question #16

11. Did this organization discuss the Oslo/Utøya attacks in the next regularly scheduled meeting?

If a the answer is YES please proceed to question #12

If a the answer is NO please proceed to question #16

12. What was the nature of the discussion?
13. Who was in attendance?
14. Did any action plans result from the discussion?
15. Were the attendants of this meeting in agreement on the appropriate responses to the attacks, or was the discussion divisive?
16. If the topic was discussed in any meeting, and a plan of action was devised, what is the status of the plan of action? Has there been an attempt to follow-up on resolutions agreed upon in the meeting?

Thank you for your participation in this survey.

Your responses are valued and we appreciate your cooperation.

APPENDIX E

SELECTION OF RELATED IMAGES



Translation: “Keep Sweden Swedish”

Figure 2. Sverigedemokraterna campaign image from 2008



Translation: “Immigrants or Pensioners? You decide!”

Figure 3. Image from Sverigedemokraterna website, 2012

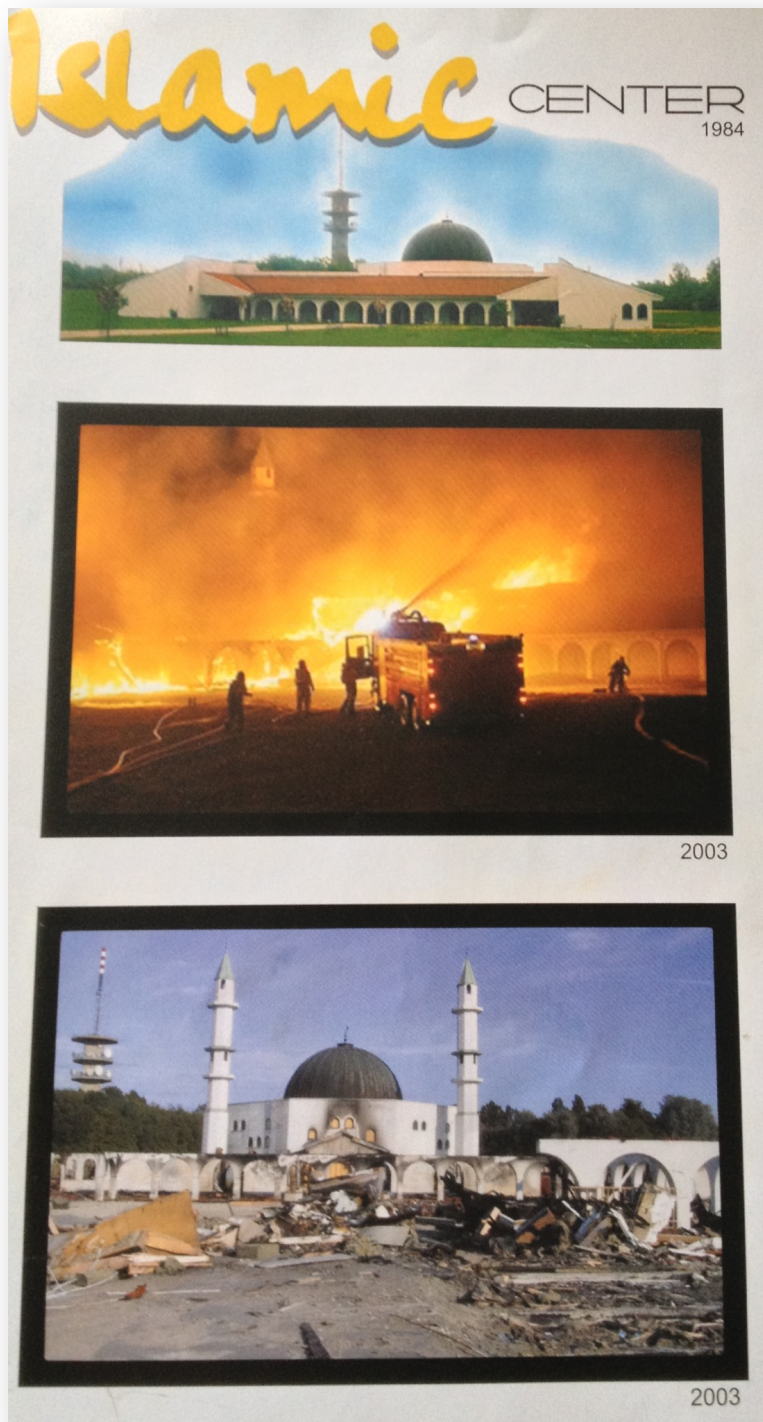


Figure 4. Publication from Malmö Mosque depicting arson damage in 2003 attack

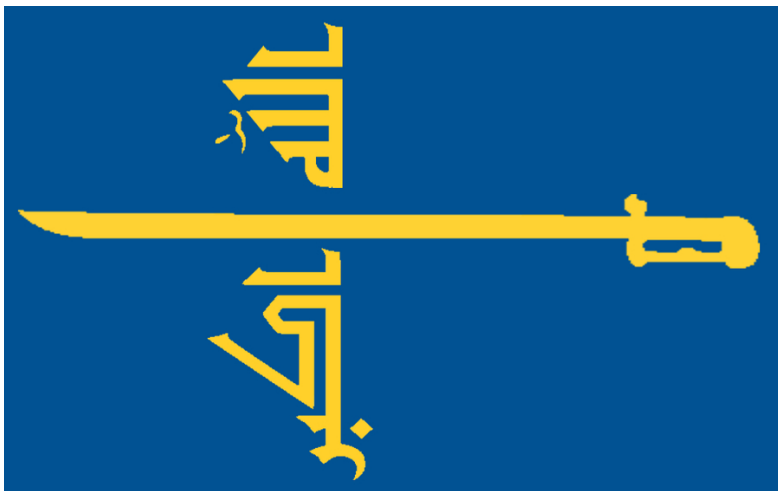


Figure 5. Artistic iterations of the Swedish flag combined with Islamic symbols found online

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