

RADICALIZATION, VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

TURKISH NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY

RADICALIZATION, VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

Prepared by:

Asst. Prof. Muhammed Faruk Çakır

Asst. Prof. Ömer Aslan

Res. Asst. Hakan Kıyıcı

Res. Asst. Hatice İlbay Söylemez

Res. Asst. Müberra Öztürk

Res. Asst. Yakup Şahin

Res. Asst. Mehmet Demirbaş

.....
COPYRIGHT © Turkish National Police Academy - 2017.

All rights reserved and owned by Turkish National Police Academy. Not for reproduction, distribution or commercial use unless otherwise specified by Turkish National Police Academy. The content of this publication does not reflect the official views of the Turkish National Police Academy Directorate. The data and views presented in the report are owned by the participants of the 1st International Antalya Security Symposium organized on Dec. 2-4, 2016 in Antalya, Turkey..
.....

Turkish National Police Academy Press: ??

Report No: ??

November 2017

ISBN: ??????

First edition: November 2017

TURKISH NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY

Turkish National Police Academy Institute of Security Sciences The International
Center for Terrorism and Security Studies (UTGAM)

Necatibey Caddesi No: 108 Anıttepe 06400 Çankaya/ANKARA

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION:	10
TYPES OF RADICALIZATION	10
RADICALIZATION PROCESSES	13
Effects of Rhetoric on Radicalization	13
Employing Violence as a Method in Radicalization Processes.....	14
Radicalization of Security Officers.....	15
RELIGION-BASED VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND PREVENTING INCLINATIONS TOWARDS VIOLENCE	17
Violence in Primary Sources of Islam	17
Preventing Violent Inclinations in Muslim Communities.....	18
Salafi Extremism	19
VIOLENT EXTREMISM/RADICALIZATION: CASES FROM AROUND THE WORLD.....	21
Radicalization in the Case of Boko Haram.....	21
Radicalization in Central Asia	22
Radicalization Based on Discrimination in Scandinavia: The Soldiers of Odin	22
Salafism and Radicalization of the Muslim Community in Macedonia.....	23
RADICALIZATION: THE FETÖ CASE.....	25
The Fight against the FETÖ.....	26
MEDIA AND RADICALIZATION.....	30
Social Conflicts and Media	30
The Changes in Media and the Use of Media for Radicalism	31
New Media and Self-Radicalization	32
COUNTER-RADICALIZATION AND DERADICALIZATION	34
CONCLUSION	41

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although there is no single generally-accepted classification regarding the term radicalization, it can be argued that there are four main types of radicalism that might occasionally intermingle:

a) Ethnicity-based radicalization that is seen in the cases of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) based in Turkey and the Basque militant separatist terror group ETA based in Spain.

b) Radicalization based on religious exploitation, such as Daesh, al-Qaeda and Hezbollah terror groups.

c) Radicalization of fake mahdi movements, such as the Gülenist Terror Group (FETÖ).

d) Radicalization based on sectarianism and far left ideologies, such as the Revolutionary People's Liberation Front (DHKP-C) and Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Turkey (MLKP).

- Three of these categories are in line with the assumptions made in the literature on radicalization to a great extent, while the fourth one, namely the radicalization observed in fake mahdi movements, is qualified as a sui generis type of radicalization. The FETÖ is a quintessential example of such movements.

- In this report, radicalization is scrutinized with a particular emphasis on Daesh and FETÖ.

- In the case of Daesh, radicalization is materialized in a short span of time. Daesh's discourses are particularly attractive to Muslim youth in Europe since the personal and social factors affecting these juveniles (subjection to discrimination, racism, Islamophobia etc.) coincide with the discourse of Daesh.

- Daesh tries to convince the European Muslim youth that Muslims are under a global threat and that Daesh is the only force that can protect the Islamic world from the danger of extinction, adding that other Islamic groups are not capable of comprehending the situation and helping them. This picture they paint is nothing but a utopia tailored to the Muslim youth in Europe.

- This utopia sends the message that their participation in Daesh will render them faithful Muslims, which is believed to bestow them an eternal and perpetual bliss. The youth are also told that they will reach eternal felicity if they die while fighting in Daesh's jihad fights.

- Considering the possibility that Daesh might lose all the territories it seized, the terror group might be expected to lose its attraction among European Muslims.

- However, it can be argued that such a religion-based radicalization might not end across Europe even if Daesh is eradicated.

- The discourses and methods employed by radical groups in the radicalization processes, are of critical importance.

- If their discourses and target groups' personal and social realities coincide, radicalization can occur by means of discourses. The duration of the radicalization processes can vary according to the structure of the terrorist group.

- It is crucial to find out which factors trigger inclination towards violence among the groups in the Middle East that legitimize violence by utilizing religion.

- Considering how violence is spurred in the Middle East, it has been observed that political exclusion and oppression are significant factors spurring violence while ideologies and religions are not as influential as deeply-rooted political issues.

- However, this approach remains incapable of understanding the role of opinions and people's faiths and ideological commitments. In other words, the participation of Europeans and Egyptians in Daesh is not the outcome of the same process.

- In democratic countries such as France and Germany, domestic or foreign political problems, reactions particularly against foreign policies, and practices of socio-economic marginalization and exclusion are what encouraged people to join Daesh forces.

- In authoritarian states, the factors spurring radicalization include oppressive domestic policies and the absence of an alternative other than armed violence. The oppressed individuals settle accounts with the authoritarian state by joining radical groups and heading up struggles against the state.

- Another subject matter that has been under the spotlight over the last couple of years is that radicalization might also occur among security forces considering that many former security officers joined violence-prone groups.

- For instance, the highest participation in Daesh among former army members has been from Malaysia. Their involvement in planning terror attacks and training militants could have serious consequences if their number of members increases.

- As the sociologist Elyamine Settoul puts it, one of the possible reasons for the radicalization of former army members might be the failure to obtain “a positive identity” over the course of their time in the army rather than the appeal of radicalism. What Omar al-Shishani, a Georgian

Chechen who joined Daesh by leaving the Georgian Army, many former Iraqi officers and such figures have in common is that they could not properly perform their military duties for various reasons, which did not allow them a space for self-fulfillment.

- Some terror groups including Daesh and al-Qaeda employ the term jihad to express the violence they resort to, which is nothing but a manipulation of the Quran.

- Currently, most of the Salafi organizations constitute the leading exponents of religion-based violence. The violence prone and extremist Salafi groups legitimize violence through “takfir”, the act of declaring other Muslims heretics. According to Salafi extremists, Muslims can abandon religion due to their action or inaction. Those abandoning religion, according to their perspective, lose their right to life and property. Consequently, using violence against those persons is not considered heresy.

- In order to protect especially the youth from the effect of Salafi extremism and recover the ones involved in Salafi violence, it is necessary for there to be alternative religious discourses taught by people who are specialized in their field and who can present irrefutable arguments based on genuine evidence.

- Alternative discourses must corroborate that “takfir” and other discourses and actions employed by extremist groups go against the rules stated in Islam's primary sources. In so doing, an approach that completely excludes Salafism, a deep-rooted tradition with many different branches, might backlash.

- Examples of violent extremism can be found in different parts of the world. Boko Haram for example, a terror group based in Nigeria, is among the leading terror groups resorting to violence to accomplish their goals.

- The main reason behind youth radicalization is the fact that Boko Haram promises the youth a new identity and authority within the group.

- The presence of people of Central Asian descent in Daesh, al-Qaeda and other terror groups proves the radicalization is a regional problem. For instance, reports revealed that around 500 people from Kyrgyzstan joined Daesh; and Gulmurod Khalimov, the commander of the police special forces of the Interior Ministry of Tajikistan, became a senior member of Daesh.

- Just as in other regions, mostly juveniles lean towards violence in Central Asian states. Efforts to overcome isolation and obtain a new identity stand out as the main reasons behind the radicalization in the region, parallel to the causes of radicalization in other regions.

- The Soldiers of Odin, which was established in Finland in 2015 and mustered up many supporters across a number of Western countries, sets a good example to demonstrate that violent extremism can also appeal to masses in societies who are not aggrieved by extreme poverty or maladministration.

- The primary purpose of this group is to rule out multiculturalism across Europe, which has been shaped with the influx of immigrant populations arriving in Europe, and to spread the view that the golden age of white Christian and Scandinavian Europe must be reestablished.

- Defined as a fake mahdi movement, the FETÖ recruited its militants in a systematic way at certain private teaching institutions and schools, raising them from very early ages. With this uncommon method, the FETÖ differs from other terrorist groups with ethnic, religious, sectarian or ideological motivations.

- Unlike other religion-based radicalization processes, in which objectives are clearly outlined as in the cases of Hezbollah, al-Qaeda and Daesh, the FETÖ's radicalization took place over a long period of time by disguising the group's true motivations. As a result, a schizophrenic militant profile with multiple personalities was formed.

- In the literature on radicalization, it is emphasized that radicalization occurs in a brief period of time that can vary from a couple of months to a year. However, the FETÖ's radicalization encompasses a period corresponding to nearly 30 years, during which the terror cult patiently weaved a parallel universe.

- Experiencing a very peculiar kind of radicalization, the FETÖ turned into a terror cult which is against the society it comes from and humanity in general.

- Two main peculiarities stand out in the FETÖ's radicalization. Firstly, the radicalization occurred although a radical discourse was avoided in public. The other peculiarity that complements the first one is the fact that the FETÖ valorized itself to an excessive degree throughout its radicalization process while marginalizing everyone outside of the group.

- The first step that can be taken towards understanding the FETÖ's radicalization is to understand that it occurred in the framework of a group consciousness.

- When the deceptive language the FETÖ employed in public is put aside, some similarities can be seen between the group and other radical movements in terms of the functions of their organizational structure.

- By taking advantage of the vertical organizational structure, the FETÖ ensured a hierarchy within the group. The group members think that due to this structure they will be rewarded if they carry out the orders of their leaders. They also believe that a divine power will punish them relentlessly if they abandon the group.

- The current political, economic and social circumstances in the Middle East incite the youth in the region to seek an identity, rendering them vulnerable to ideas prone to violence.

- Most media outlets shape or influence political agendas in accordance with their financial and ideological interests, which leads the youth to search for alternative ways in social media platforms, which are affordable yet unrestrained. In this way, political struggle is conveyed from the streets to the media world.

- With the rise of social media, the groups who express themselves, run propaganda or find supporters through media no longer have to rely solely on the requirements of conventional mainstream media. The control and monitoring gap emerging from this situation has enabled especially terror groups to address the masses by concealing their true identities.

- Recommendations for solutions are urgently needed to prevent the manipulation of conventional and social media platforms by terrorism proponents.

- Required measures in media regulation must be immediately taken when public safety and interests are in question. Otherwise, media outlets run the risk of turning into manipulative tools that breed terror groups. Also, media outlets should do their part by averting popularity concerns and putting more value into the content of their news reports.

- In order to overcome radicalization, the reintegration of radicalized persons into society must also be enabled aside from fighting against radicalization.

- The purpose of counter-radicalization is to prevent acts of violence, which constitute the ultimate stage of violent extremism, by ruling out the factors leading to such acts.

- The reintegration and rehabilitation of members of terror group is a complex process that entails comprehensive and long-lasting endeavors.

- To prevent radicalization, democracy and human rights must be guarded, economic and social injustices and marginalization practices must be precluded, and the judicial system must operate effectively and fairly.

- Rehabilitation of the radicalized subject includes the processes of abandoning violence and reintegrating violence-prone persons into society. As many study participants have pointed out in different contexts: it is not easy to “make a militant give up his violence-prone and extremist tendencies stemming from his political and ideological engagements.”

- Rehabilitation of individuals or groups involved in acts of violence is a long and arduous path, which needs to progress systematically and methodically, and requires the coordination and cooperation of many actors.

- The true success of rehabilitation programs will become evident when permanent acquisitions are achieved in terms of overcoming primary concerns.

■ INTRODUCTION: TYPES OF RADICALIZATION

Although there is no single generally-accepted classification regarding the term radicalization, it can be argued that there are four main types of radicalism that might occasionally intermingle. Such a classification will allow us to go beyond the narrow view that equates the notion of radicalization with terror groups based on the exploitation of religion, such as the Taliban, al-Qaeda and Daesh. Within this scope, a type of radicalization based on claims regarding a certain ethnic identity is seen in separatist terror groups such as ETA in Spain, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka and the outlawed PKK in our country. Also, it is required to mention another radicalization type which is based on sectarian and far left ideologies, such as the DHKP-C and MLKP based in Turkey. In addition to these, there is a type of radicalization based on the exploitation of religion, of which examples humanity has witnessed throughout history, such as Daesh, Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, extremist Buddhist groups and various movements and groups based on abusing Christianity or Judaism. Last but not least, it is essential to touch upon the type of radicalization led by self-proclaimed mahdis, the clearest example of which is the Turkey-based Gülenist Terror Group, also known as the FETÖ. Although sharing some similarities with the other types of radicalization, this type, and the FETÖ in our case, displays a sui generis character. This report aims to scrutinize Daesh and

FETÖ terror groups while analyzing the radicalization processes employed as observed in these two organizations.

The radicalization observed in terror groups exploiting religion can be characterized as the type of radicalization that poses the highest potential of threat. In such groups, it is widely seen that religion is manipulated in order to achieve the group's objectives. Groups such as Daesh and al-Qaeda interpret religion by distorting it in accordance with their own values and interests, decontextualizing verses from the Quran and engaging in strict and literal readings of Islamic sources and as a result impose their interpretations as the absolute truth. In so doing, they legitimize all their actions while declaring other Muslim groups heretics. On the other hand, although the issue of "Islamic radicalization" has only recently come into the limelight, it is actually argued that radicalization as a notion has been "Islamized", which means that the already existing problem of radicalization has taken on an Islamic guise. Although the conflicts that emerge as a result of radicalization are politically-driven, it is still observed that the languages they adopt are highly religious, and such religious arguments are used in mobilizing militants.

Even though the outlawed PKK, which the Turkish state has been fighting against since 1978, defined itself as a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organization during its formative years, it can be described as an ethno-nationalist terror group. Consequently, the radicalization occurring through the PKK propaganda is predominantly an ethnic radicalization. The PKK and far left terror groups strive to recruit militants mostly among high-school students. Such groups in Turkey particularly target sectarian minorities and groups who are economically and socioculturally marginalized, or negatively affected by immigration movements.

The radicalization observed in fake mahdi movements corresponds to some of the assumptions within the literature on radicalization. However, it must be characterized as a unique kind of radicalization that does not coincide with some of the presuppositions. The FETÖ is a very fitting example of this type. With its deceptive emphasis on the notion of mahdi and its slow yet long-standing radicalization process which begins by brainwashing its targets from very early ages, the FETÖ's radicalization goes against the general contention suggesting that radicalization occurs suddenly and quickly. In addition, the belief that the group members are the chosen ones who understand and practice the religion most correctly, which is seen in various terror groups such as Daesh and al-Qaeda, is also prevalent in the FETÖ. Due to this delusion, this terror group regards all its activities that go against the philosophy of Islam as legitimate, including plotting against people with false evidence, feeding confidential state secrets to foreign intelligence organizations and opening fire on civilians. Contrary to other terrorist groups in Turkey with motivations stemming from ethnicity, sect or far left ideologies, the FETÖ

didn't recruit its militants in coffee houses or cell houses. Instead they systematically utilized certain private teaching institutions and schools for this aim, raising their militants from very early ages. While far left, ethno-nationalist and separatist terror groups select high-school or university students as target groups, the FETÖ has been more interested in primary and secondary school children. It cannot be ignored that many FETÖ members joined the terror group due to their socio-economic constraints as the group provides individuals with an opportunity to obtain a new identity and a sense of belonging. In addition, being well-educated and academically successful play a significant role in FETÖ's organizational profile. Although the radicalization of educated middle-class individuals has recently been observed in the context of other radicalization cases or terror groups, education is a key component in the organizational structure and radicalization process of the FETÖ. While social media is used to recruit militants in most of the currently active terror groups such as Daesh, the radicalization type seen in the case of the FETÖ does not employ social media for this purpose.

The FETÖ's radicalization also differs from the radicalization processes of Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, Daesh, PKK and DHKP-C in that it concealed its true agenda and formed a schizophrenic militant profile with multiple personalities. In the groups like al-Qaeda, Daesh, Taliban and Hezbollah, it is quite clear how they generally approach the West and what their objectives are (founding an Islamic state, etc.). However, the FETÖ disguise their true intentions, and multiple personalities are deliberately developed in this respect. Intolerance, coup plots, blackmailing, monism, oppression and intimidation all lie behind their discourses of democracy, human rights, dialogue and tolerance.

■ RADICALIZATION PROCESSES

Effects of Rhetoric on Radicalization

The effects of rhetoric on radicalization are discussed in this report through the example of the rhetoric Daesh employed with the aim of radicalizing the Muslims living in Europe. It can be argued by way of general observation that radicalization can occur by means of rhetoric if the rhetoric coincides with the personal and social realities of the targeted individual. The fact that Daesh's rhetoric especially appeals to the Muslim youth in Europe stems from the correspondence between Daesh's rhetoric and the targeted group's social and personal circumstances. Currently, the Muslim youth living in European countries confront rampant xenophobia, Islamophobia, marginalization, cultural degeneration, socio-economic exclusion and political disenfranchisement. Under such circumstances, they find solace in the devious religious identities offered by groups like Daesh. Such identities do not only meet their needs to feel important and have an identity, but also help them change their lives by escaping from failure, marginalization and involvement in crime or lethargy.

The Daesh rhetoric tells the European Muslim youth that Muslims are subjected to global-scale assaults (the attack of Zionist-Crusader alliance), and that Daesh is the force guarding the Islamic world while other Muslim groups are incapable of doing so. In a nutshell, they present a utopia to youth. This utopia promises that joining Daesh will ensure becoming a member of

a community of true believers and suggests that they will reach eternal bliss if they die for Daesh. So, Daesh fills the void caused by the feeling of not having an identity by offering those individuals an identity on the basis of global religious fellowship.

Along with the appeal of its rhetoric, the non-selective attitude shown by Daesh while recruiting militants is another factor that increases the participation in the group. The majority of Europeans joining Daesh do not have adequate knowledge about Islam and were not familiar with the Islamic lifestyle before joining the terror group. Most of them endeavor to learn about Islam through a number of works such as “Islam for beginners” and “the Quran for beginners”. They generally have a secular upbringing. After joining the terror group, religion functions as a pattern for them rather than a source of motivation. It was revealed that terror group’s members behind the Daesh attacks in Germany, France and England over the course of 2016 and 2017 were rapidly radicalized after coming from a non-Islamic background, which corroborates this observation.

Considering the possibility that Daesh might lose all the territories it seized, the terror group might be expected to lose its appeal among European Muslims. However, it can be asserted that the radicalization in Europe will not come to an end even if Daesh is annihilated since the main factors leading to radicalization in European countries have not yet been resolved. It must be noted that those taking to the streets and setting fire to cars in France in 2015 were third or fourth generation immigrants from Northern Africa.

Employing Violence as a Method in Radicalization Processes

This subject has been discussed through examples of groups in the Middle East who turn to violence with reference to religion and who are defined as jihadists in the terrorism literature of the West. Within this scope, it is important to note which factors played a role in turning these groups towards violence. According to the freedom discourse developed by the former U.S. President George W. Bush in the aftermath of the 9/11, the violence prevalent in the Middle East can be explained through the absence of democracy in the region rather than caused by Islamic ideologies. However, with the uprisings kicked off by the Arab Spring, the rising violence in Libya and Syria, and the challenges faced by several Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt with regard to democratic practices, many problems have arisen, causing democracy to lose its charm. The U.S. and Western Europe, meanwhile, prefer to cooperate with authoritarian regimes against radical groups instead of supporting the democratization of these regimes.

Considering how violence is produced in the Middle East, it has been observed that political exclusion and oppression are the leading factors causing violence while ideology and religion

remain on the surface and do not affect the problems as deeply as political issues do. However, this approach remains incapable of understanding the role of opinions and people's faiths and ideological engagements. In this sense, the situation of people living in democratic states and authoritarian states must be distinguished from each other while discussing the violence used by radical groups. In other words, the participation of Europeans and Egyptians in Daesh are not the result of the same process. In democratic countries such as France and Germany, domestic or foreign political problems, reactions to foreign policies, and practices of socio-economic marginalization and exclusion are what encouraged people to join Daesh forces. The former members of illegal groups and ex-convicts rationalized violence by arguing that jihad is a religious duty by referring to jihad as a term specified by the terrorist group. Also, direct contact with the terror group in countries like France and the "brotherhood" rhetoric employed by the group increased participation in Daesh. Still, it is difficult to grasp the motivation behind the participation in Daesh or any other radical group from Western countries through a unilateral ideological, religious or socio-economic logic. It would be useful to look at how organizations like Daesh successfully manage to diversify mobilization on an individual basis.

In authoritarian states, the factors spurring radicalization include oppressive domestic policies alongside the absence of an alternative other than resorting to armed violence. Thus, the oppressed individuals settle accounts with the authoritarian state by joining radical groups and struggling against the state. Any radical groups in the Middle East did not actualize this belief before confronting state oppression although they did not consider the use of violence problematic. For instance, many juveniles in Egypt did not prepare for the possibility of armed struggle during the years 2012 and 2013, prior to the military coup, even though they favored this alternative. However, having an ideology that legitimizes violence does not guarantee that an armed conflict will take place. But when viewed through the lens of radicalization, it can be argued that the main causes of violence in the Middle East include detentions, assassinations and the systematic repression of Islamic movements that do not lean towards violence. However, the causes of radicalization may vary depending on the country or the region. In some regions are more vulnerable to the effects of radicalization and why the profiles of members of terrorist groups are so different are questions worth examining.

Radicalization of Security Officers

Another subject matter that has been under the spotlight over the last couple of years is that radicalization might also occur among security forces considering that many former security officers have already joined violence-prone groups. Daesh is noteworthy in this respect since aside from the Middle Eastern countries the group benefits from participation of individuals

from various regions including France, England, Germany and Malaysia. In a paper analyzing the subject, it was pointed out that the overall number of security officers involved in violence as a result of a radicalization process is not very large. For instance, the highest participation in Daesh among former army members has been from Malaysia. According to official records issued in April 2015, some 70 people from Malaysia had joined Daesh. If this number continues to increase than their involvement in planning terror attacks and training militants could have serious consequences. Moreover, the security officers joining Daesh pose the risk of further recruitment by contacting and influencing their acquaintances who are still in the army in their home countries. Some states who have become aware of this risk have taken measures to increase their disciplinary measures regarding the members of the army. .

The relevant paper also stated that the data currently available does not suffice to explain the reasons why former officers joined Daesh and why the participation rate in terrorist groups is so much higher in certain countries. As sociologist Elyamine Settoul puts it, one of the possible reasons for the radicalization of former army officers could be the failure to obtain “a positive identity” among their ranks over the course of their time in the army rather than the appeal of radicalism. What Omar al-Shishani, a Georgian Chechen who joined DAESH by leaving the Georgian Army, former Iraqi officers and other such figures have in common is that they could not properly perform their military duties for various reasons, which did not allow them a space for self-fulfillment. Another factor affecting the varying participation rates of former officers among different countries might be surveillance and whether the suspicious actions of persons leaving the army or retiring were monitored or not.

■ RELIGION-BASED VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND PREVENTING INCLINATIONS TOWARDS VIOLENCE

In the academic literature examining Islam's approach to violence, three main points come to the fore. The first one is the problem of whether the primary sources of Islam approve of violence. The second one concerns the measures required to be taken in order to prevent the inclination towards violence in Muslim communities. And the third one is about developing a discourse against Salafi violence and gaining a deeper understanding of the Salafi movement.

Violence in Primary Sources of Islam

One speaker discussed the fallaciousness of associating the inclination towards violence within Muslim communities with the Quran since the Quran does not approve of violence. Rather, the causes of violence prone tendencies among Muslim communities must be sought in the societal texture of the relevant Muslim communities and the differences in the interpretations of religious sources that reflect the peculiarities of the societal texture (such as the varying interpretations of Sunni and Shia Islam). The most controversial matters in this context include

jihad, wars, the notion of an Islamic state and issues regarding prisoners and concubines. When the verses of the Quran concerning jihad are closely examined, it can be seen that the meaning of jihad is not limited to waging war. In Islam, the word jihad is used as an umbrella term that encompasses the notions of self-discipline, jurisprudence (producing opinions that will resolve problems) and interpreting Islamic law. The verses assert that a phase where arms are taken up is named jihad. Also, the concept of jihad is divided in two in hadiths (the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad). The jihad used with the meaning of war is referred to as minor jihad while the individual's self-discipline endeavors constitute major jihad. The Quran ordered jihad during the Mecca period, when Muslims had not yet formed a political community, which indicates that the Quran also acknowledges this distinction. Furthermore, the Quran uses the term qital (fighting) to refer to warfare instead of jihad. Qital is suggested in the Quran as a last resort. Allowing only defensive wars, the Quran subsequently adds that fighting is a “vile and grim” act. According to the Quran, Allah wills that the state of peace is essential to all of mankind and everyone should endeavor in this respect. The Surah al-Baqarah (the Cow) rules that mankind shall seek peace together. Indeed, the employment of the term jihad by terror groups such as Daesh and al-Qaeda as a means to justify their violent acts is nothing but a manipulation of the Quran.

According to another source who discussed the Quran's approach to violence, the groups referring to Islamic sources for their violent acts try to legitimize their violence (which is mostly used in order to achieve political objectives) by making attributions to religious sources. Their method of referring to the verses of the Quran comprises a number of fallacies. For instance, fighting is not allowed in the Quran. Warfare is represented as the last resort in cases where no other alternatives remain. It is wrong to represent warfare as essential and peace as incidental when considering that the Quran only allows fighting under limited circumstances. On the contrary, mercy is essential in Islam while warfare is incidental. Interpretations suggesting that the terms in Islamic sources approve of violence are the result of a literal reading of terms such as jihad, qital, spoils of war, captives and concubines by excluding the sociological dimensions of the relevant period. Such readings impose an isolated and anachronistic viewpoint onto present conditions. Those involved in such readings endeavor to legitimize the violence they use by referring to the Quran, which is against the rules of the religion.

Preventing Violent Inclinations in Muslim Communities

Some measures that can be taken to prevent violent inclinations (radicalization) in Muslim communities can be outlined as follows:

i) Efforts must be exerted in ensuring the correct understanding of the terms that are employed and abused to legitimize violence.

ii) Muslims must try engaging in “existential communication” in their communication with other groups, which means focusing on the lifestyle of one's own.

iii) A more integrative notion such as Dar al-Sulh (House of Peace) should be given preference over the distinction of Dar al-Harb (House of War) and Dar al-Islam (House of Islam). Dar al-Sulh means a world established on the basis of peace through a social contract based on fundamental human rights (Hakk-ı Ademiyye) and promoting the coexistence of people with different faiths.

iv) It must be noted that interpretations of the notions in the Quran that aim to legitimize violence, the traumas in the Muslim world's collective memory caused by the experiences of colonialism and postcolonialism, and the traumas caused by foreign interventions such as the invasion of Iraq are all interrelated. Reactive interpretations are not likely to direct societies onto the right path.

Salafi Extremism

Currently, the Salafi organizations constitute the leading exponents of religion-based violence. The violence prone and extremist Salafi groups legitimize violence through “takfir”, the act of declaring other Muslims as heretics. According to Salafi extremists, Muslims can abandon their religion due to their action or inaction. Those abandoning religion, according to their perspective, lose their claims to life and property. Consequently, using violence against these persons is not considered heresy.

Salafi extremism is identified by three main aspects. First of all, Salafi extremism represents a religion-based ideological stance. There are some historical and religious grounds that form a basis for this stance. Several incidents that took place during the early periods of Islam, including the Battles of Camel, Siffin and Karbala, underpinned the conception that Muslim blood can be shed for significant political purposes. In religious terminology, the mainstream Salafi movement adopts the Ahl al-Hadith tradition, which is one of the two branches of the Sunni tradition. Compared to other groups, Salafi groups are more inclined to believe in the hadith stories which claim that the world will get worse as the apocalypse approaches and mahdi will show up as the savior. The extremist groups within the Salafi movement turn to takfir-based violence by taking on self-assigned missions pertinent to the imminent apocalypse. Salafis also adopt the idea that “amal (work) is more important than iman (faith)”, as a religious principle. Consequently, even mainstream Salafism is prone to takfirism. However, it must be noted that there are some takfiri groups such as the Taliban who adapted some religious works

written according to the conditions of old times, particularly the books on *alfaz al-kufr* (the words that makes a person an unbeliever), to the present conditions without engaging in any censure.

Secondly, political and socio-economic factors are much more effective than religious factors in the emergence of extremist Salafi groups. Some of the leading factors include foreign interventions in predominantly Muslim regions in various places and over different periods of time with varying extents of violence, civil wars, oppressive regimes that hamper political dissidence, the rise of more sectarian educational institutions such as those in Saudi Arabia with the decline of traditional educational institutions, the decline of traditional establishments such as *sufiyyahs* and *madrasahs* that came into prominence during the resistance to Western intervention, and the birth of a cyber world Islamism that leans toward reactive approaches. Some other factors include the lack of religious knowledge in the regions that left the former Eastern bloc and the subjection of Muslims living in Western metropolitans to all kinds of discrimination. Quest for an identity, disappointment and despair, which emerged as a result of all these political and socio-economic factors, led to an environment in Islamic communities with just the right kind of vulnerabilities ripe for breeding all kinds of extremism. In such environments, all kinds of extremist activities including Salafi extremism could find a ground.

Thirdly, the introduction of alternative religious discourses is of vital importance to protect especially the youth from the influence of Salafi extremism and to recover those involved in Salafi violence. However, alternative discourses must pay regard to these three aspects: First of all, Sufistic or mystical interpretations such as the doctrines of Rumi, Haji Bektash and Yunus Emre might be a suitable option to create a counter-discourse. However, such a *sufiyyah*-based discourse, which is noticeably esoteric and based on a symbolic culture that is not in the literary canon, is considered a *bad bid'ah* (innovation) in Salafism. Therefore, this discourse does not have the potential or force to persuade Salafi audiences. Secondly, the alternative discourse must corroborate that *takfir* is against the rules according to Islam's primary sources. In so doing, an approach that completely excludes Salafism, a deep-rooted tradition with many different branches, might backlash. Instead of confronting Salafism, the Ibn Taymiyyah Salafism that objects to *takfiri* extremism can be emphasized. Lastly, the alternative discourse must express with reasonable evidence that the *takfirist* mindset undermines Salafism since it causes constant divides and remains incapable of coming up with solutions to the problems of the Muslim world.

■ VIOLENT EXTREMISM/RADICALIZATION: CASES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Radicalization in the Case of Boko Haram

Examples of violent extremism can be found in different parts of the world. Boko Haram, a terror group based in Nigeria, is among the leading terror groups resorting to violence to accomplish their goals. Particularly active in the northeastern Nigeria, Boko Haram terrorizes the three provinces located in the region. The terror group's target is to reshape political and societal life with its ideology based on its own interpretation of religion. Boko Haram continues its terror activities and insurgency in order to reach this target. As of 2009, Boko Haram has increased its number of attacks, employed more sophisticated methods and expanded its field of activity. Boko Haram has also established ties with other terror groups in the region and in the rest of the world. Today As a result, Boko Haram has evolved into an organization that threatens not only local security in Nigeria but also international security.

In the region where Boko Haram is active, some of the leading problems include extreme poverty, unemployment, low literacy rates and deprivation. When deficiencies regarding governance are added to the list, it is clear why the region has become a breeding ground for the

radicalization of already vulnerable youth. The main attraction for youth radicalization is the fact that Boko Haram promises the youth a new identity and authority within the group.

Radicalization in Central Asia

In Central Asian countries, inclination to violence is not as common as the governments in the region claim. The number of terror attacks experienced in these countries is very low, which indicates that radicalization has not yet reached a serious level within the region. Radicalization is not a common problem in the region largely due to the fact that the moderate interpretations of Islam (such as Maturidi and Hanafi theologies) have generally been adopted in the region throughout history. This situation has also played a role in restricting the influence of violence prone religious groups in the region after the region gained independence. The Tablighi Jamaat, one of the most influential religious groups reaching the region, so far, has not fomented violence although it urges returning to orthodoxy.

Still, the presence of people of Central Asian descent in Daesh, al-Qaeda and other terror groups proves the radicalization in the region. For instance, reports revealed that around 500 people from Kyrgyzstan joined Daesh; and Gulmurod Khalimov, the commander of the police special forces of the Interior Ministry of Tajikistan, became a senior member of Daesh.

Just as in other regions, juveniles are more susceptible to violence in Central Asian states. Efforts to overcome isolation and obtain a new identity stand out as the main reasons of the radicalization in the region, parallel to the causes of radicalization in other regions. Also, following their independence, the Central Asian states adopted the approach that religious life should be practiced under state control. The question of whether this approach is related to the youth's interest in extremist ideas must also be scrutinized.

While assessing the radicalization in Central Asia, it must be taken into account that a substantial portion the people of Central Asian descent who joined the terror groups operating outside of Central Asia had formerly worked in Russia and were subjected to marginalization and discrimination by Russians.

Radicalization Based on Discrimination in Scandinavia: The Soldiers of Odin

The Soldiers of Odin, which was established in Finland in 2015 and mustered up many adherents across a number of Western countries, illustrates that violent extremism can also appeal to the masses in societies who are not aggrieved by extreme poverty or maladministration. The primary purpose of this group is to eradicate multiculturalism across Europe, which has been shaped by the influx of immigrant populations arriving in Europe, and to spread the view that

the golden age of a white Christian and Scandinavian Europe must be reestablished. The group identifies itself as an anti-jihadist movement. Given its basic characteristics, the group employs an anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and ultra-nationalist rhetoric. The Soldiers of Odin is estimated to have around 100.000 members. The group has made its presence felt in many countries including Canada and the U.S. within a short period of time, and resorted to practices such as performing identity checks in the streets of residential areas that are largely populated by immigrants, which can be regarded as signs indicating that the group might cause serious social problems in the future. Also, the group's success in spreading and gathering adherents shows that even developed societies are not purified from the issue of violent extremism.

Salafism and Radicalization of the Muslim Community in Macedonia

The Balkans is a region that encountered Islam during the Ottoman period. Muslims in the region form a majority in several political units such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo while remaining as minorities in other areas of the region. Religion-based terror groups recruit militants from the region although their number is considerably lower. Nearly the entire region was ruled by communist governments during the Cold War period. The Muslim groups who were oppressed during this period began showing an interest in religious matters after the communist governments were toppled. However, this time they were predominantly subjected to the influence of Salafi and to a lesser extent Shia theologies. Aside from other factors, the Muslim groups coming to the region, especially the former warriors who came during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War to support Bosnians and stayed in the region in the aftermath of the war, played a considerable role in introducing the influence of the Salafi and Shia into the region.

The Salafism mentioned in this context is the Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine. The main characteristic of the Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine is that it regards fighting against all ideas or actions contradicting its own conception of Tawhid (oneness of God in Islam) as a religious obligation. At this point, the Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine dissents the Ibn Taymiyyah Salafism, one of the leading theologies of the Salafi tradition. Ibn Taymiyyah's conception of jihad does not allow targeting fellow Muslims. The Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine is different from the conception of religion prevalent in Balkan communities, which was largely shaped by the Hanafi-Maturidi doctrines introduced by Ottoman Turks. Consequently, the region's encounter with the Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine led to tensions and polarization among Muslim communities. This situation has facilitated the emergence of a mindset that lays the groundwork for violent extremism in the region.

The activities and influence of the Salafi groups in Macedonia, where approximately one third of the population is Muslim (mostly comprising Sunni Muslims while the rest are Bektashi or Alawite), are similar to the rest of the region. Just as in the other parts of the region, the Salafi groups in Macedonia operate to meet people's demands of learning about religion. Within this scope, they are mostly active in mosques, prayer rooms or courses. The financial means obtained by the Salafi groups from external sources facilitate their activities. Besides, the number of people who are erudite on religious subjects is very low in Macedonia. The Mufti offices in the country are not well-organized. Finding an imam who can duly recite the Quran can often be a challenge. This situation makes it easier for the Salafi groups, who are well-versed in reciting the Quran and other religious issues, to become influential members of the community. Also, the Salafi groups display aggressive behaviors towards the Muslim cultural heritage in the Balkans, including both the material aspects of the culture such as mosques and mausoleums and the immaterial aspects such as the tradition of reading the whole Quran (Hattim). They often harass or affront other religious officials.

■ RADICALIZATION: THE FETÖ CASE

In the papers focusing on the case of the Gülenist Terror Group (FETÖ), it was underscored that FETÖ has followed a sui generis method of radicalization and turned into an overt terror group as a result of this radicalization process. Two main peculiarities stand out in the case of FETÖ's radicalization. Firstly, the radicalization occurred despite the absence of a radical discourse in public. The other peculiarity, which complements the first one is the fact that the FETÖ valorized itself to an excessive degree throughout its radicalization process while marginalizing everyone outside of the group.

The FETÖ has attached a great importance to forming a collective consciousness and identity since groups tend to behave in a riskier way than individuals. Le Bon asserts that crowds as a collective can easily turn into either heroes or murderers. The FETÖ has always acted with this awareness. As one of the first steps in forming a collective consciousness, the individual adopts the group's identity by leaving his own individual identity aside. The group identity is consolidated with the frequent use of the pronoun “we”. During the process of establishing the consciousness of “we”, the organization can set up its own norms by eliminating all the other norms an individual has so far adopted. Thanks to the importance attached to “we”, the collective pride, another important aspect of collective consciousness, is also consolidated. Moreover, the FETÖ has greatly valued the method of supporting and strengthening a collective

identity and solidifying collective pride by employing certain phrases, symbols and dreams. Reminiscent of Marian Kech's example, the so-called prophesying performed within the terror group also has a great significance in terms of group identity and loyalty to the group.

The FETÖ acted with a motive to form a collective consciousness while choosing its members. They specifically selected individuals with a strong sense of self-discipline. The importance ascribed to self-discipline provides a major advantage to the group as the group easily manipulates this sense of self-discipline and forms a basis for the operation of its norms adopted in the framework of its own values. As a result, the group members develop similar personalities, and shared feelings such as mutual mourning and mutual delight constitute the leading rhetoric employed by the group's senior operatives known as “abi” (meaning elder brother in colloquial Turkish).

The Fight against the FETÖ

The FETÖ's collective identity and the discourse it adopts before the public are the two leading factors that make it hard for the West to realize the fact that the fight against this group is within the counter-terror fight. The assumption that fighting against terror groups is possible by way of understanding them is rampant in the West in the context of the fight against terror and radical groups. This idea was developed as a result of the studies conducted on the IRA, ETA and ethno-nationalist groups in Africa. From the analyses of these groups' behavioral patterns, a number of generalizations have been made with regards to radicalization by considering several factors such as parent-child relations and family-government relations rather than focusing solely on the role of collective identity. Consequently, they do not provide useful data in analyzing the FETÖ, as the organization puts significant emphasis on collective identity. Furthermore, the West considers how violence is instrumentalized while evaluating terrorism. Various groups in Islamic world express that they are inspired by the works of several Islamic theorists such as Ibn Taymiyyah, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and Sayyid Qutb while justifying violence to realize their political objectives. According to the West, such a situation enables the groups exercising violence in the Islamic world to be identified with certain labels such as radical Islamist, religious fanatic or jihadist. Yet, such labels imply that there is a connection between Islam and terrorism. The West also views the FETÖ through this lens.

Looking exclusively at the discourse FETÖ employs before the public, the West is unable to find any evidence of their legitimization of violence. The FETÖ introduced itself both to the national and international public as a hizmet (service) movement, and through its propaganda made the public believe that hizmet is an endeavor run for the benefit of all of humanity. Furthermore, as part of the so-called efforts towards a dialogue of civilizations, which is one of

the FETÖ's key rhetorics, the group operatives met with the Pope and other spiritual leaders in countries where the group operates. Within the scope of this rhetoric, the FETÖ declared its commitment to contribute to global issues. However, throughout the coup attempt organized on July 15, 2016, the FETÖ operatives engaged in blood shed. This situation bemuses the West: How did acts of violence take place without a radicalization process? How did people avoiding a violence-prone rhetoric end up as radicals?

The first step toward understanding the FETÖ's radicalization is to understand the fact that the radicalization occurred within the framework of a collective consciousness. When the questions asked to the FETÖ members are addressed with "sen" (singular you) rather than "siz" (plural you), people respond differently. By formulating questions with singular you, the reasons why the people radicalized within the FETÖ resorted to violence can come to surface. When the FETÖ adherents are asked questions with a singular you, most of them state in their responses that people must guarantee what is going to happen in the afterlife as they are powerless. This answer is reminiscent of the answers given by militants of several other terror groups that also justify violence.

When the deceptive language the FETÖ employs in public is put aside, there are still many similarities between the group and other radical movements in terms of the functions of their organizational structure. By taking advantage of the vertical organizational structure, the FETÖ ensured a hierarchy within the group. The group members think that due to this structure they will be rewarded if they carry out the orders of their leaders. They also believe that a divine power will relentlessly punish them if they abandon the group. Therefore, the promise of heaven plays a major role in ensuring absolute obedience within the organization. According to the FETÖ members, an absolute obedience to their leader can eliminate the risk of being ostracized from heaven. The belief that one cannot reach his destination without means is employed by the FETÖ in a similar way to other factions but with more of an emphasis on it.

A peculiar use of the dream metaphor in the valorization of means and the orientation of the group members to the direction urged by the means (including the use of violence) is one of the distinctive characters of the FETÖ. It is also among the means to provoke the FETÖ operatives to use violence. The followers believe that the FETÖ leader speaks to prophets and other religious leaders in his dreams and determines a route according to the information he gets from them. So, through these so-called prophetic dreams the leader can seize authority and his every action is accepted without being questioned. Also, the dreams the group members claim to have had are narrated within the organization, which is used as a method to consolidate the predetermined positions within the organizational hierarchy. In a nutshell, the dream metaphor has become an effective instrument that ensures unconditional obedience, which easily enables the group members to turn to crime.

The FETÖ's style of managing financial affairs (their methods used to generate income, the legalization of income, and spending processes) also boosts the collective consciousness of the group members. So, the management of the group's financial affairs contributes to the radicalization process of the group members. The concept of “himmet” illustrates this process.

Within FETÖ's financial structure, one of the primary sources of income is called “himmet”. Himmet is the name of the funds collected from the FETÖ members as a compulsory checkoff and from the FETÖ proponents and other persons under the guise of charity by exploiting religious and nationalist sentiments without any official document necessitating it. Collecting money in such a way is against the charity regulation. Therefore, they were required to legitimize the large amounts of money collected through this method. The business enterprises, foundations and associations affiliated with or owned by the FETÖ intervenes at this point. They declare that the money was collected through these companies, foundations or associations by legal authorities in order to bring profits or income. In other words, the FETÖ is charging its own members while also influencing them to engage in criminal activities.

To legalize the money, the FETÖ primarily founds umbrella organizations such as holdings or corporations whose headquarters are generally located in either Istanbul or Ankara. Those chairing the organizations are then assigned to establish a number of individual businesses in other provinces. After that, several NGOs and associations are also connected to this system. In so doing, the FETÖ creates a closed circuit system for itself. Since it establishes the production, control and consumption cycle within this system, the group does not face any deficits or shortages. As this closed circuit system is used to legitimize himmet funds, it gets much easier to legalize the system in indirect ways.

An early yet tangible example of the FETÖ's radicalization is that the military cadets who were not affiliated with the FETÖ were forced to drop out of military schools by FETÖ operatives who infiltrated the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK). Between the years of 2008 and 2016, more than 2.000 cadets dropped out of military schools “at their own request” according to official reports. However, it was subsequently revealed that an overwhelming majority of those cadets left school because they were subjected to psychological pressure, violence and discrimination. This was also confirmed by the former students who were interviewed as part of a paper written on the subject. Moreover, the majority of the military officers exercising pressure, violence and discriminatory practices were found to have participated in the July 15 coup attempt, which is another indication of the FETÖ's link to these purges. Given the role the purges played in the FETÖ's target of infiltrating the TSK, it can safely be argued that the repression and violence targeted towards cadets was carried out to accomplish a political goal.

Furthermore, the evidence proving the FETÖ's cooperation with the outlawed PKK in drug trafficking are crucial in terms of demonstrating the sheer contradiction between the so-

called pro-peace rhetoric of the terror group and their actions in practice. . With the objective of getting a share of the money earned in drug trafficking activities, the FETÖ resorted to various means, including cooperating with the PKK. The FETÖ-affiliated public officials seized the unmarketable drugs by cooperating with the PKK, while also receiving government funds. Also, the informants who notified the officials about the drugs were given shares of the profits earned from the seized drugs. The important points in this context are that firstly the informants were affiliated with the FETÖ and secondly 90 percent of all seized drugs were captured by way of informants.

Finally, the logic of the FETÖ's focus on bureaucracy has been analyzed. As already known, the FETÖ aspired to seize control of Turkish bureaucracy and to reshape society through bureaucratic means, and ultimately organized the July 15 atrocity when it faced obstacles in its path. In the paper discussing the subject, it is stated that an administrative tradition based on bureaucratic tutelage began in Turkey in the 19th century with the introduction of the modernization process. Within this tradition, bureaucracy has a self-assigned mission to impose its own perspective on society. As an elitist organization, the FETÖ sought to uphold this tradition through its operatives.

■ MEDIA AND RADICALIZATION

Social Conflicts and Media

When society is on the verge of a transformation, the question of whether there is a consensus among the elite regarding this change is what steers social movements. As for the stance that regimes would adopt in the face of social change, their repression capacity and willingness play a significant role. This criteria may vary from country to country, but the general principle suggests that radical movements gain prominence when reformist movements are repressed. Both reformist and radical movements need various resources in order to achieve their objectives. Each resource, including money, human resources, technology, media consumption and access to media, is of great importance. In the formation of new discourses over the course of social change, perception can occasionally take precedence over phenomena since the reality and what is believed are the same in terms of the resulting outcome (effect). The role of the media stands out during the construction of new discourses.

In the case of the Middle East, it has been observed that the countries in the region with under-developed economies do not have any problem in providing the human resources and time required for social change. The youth is the most prominent group in the changes taking place in the Middle East. The region is affected by many factors that provoke the youth to radicalize, such as unemployment, restricted educational opportunities and obstacles to political participation. Furthermore, idealism is more common among the youth than other age groups. In addition to these factors that can also be encountered in other places, the political

structure in the Middle East functions solely to the advantage of experienced individuals and seniors, which evokes a feeling of despair among the youth. Studies conducted on Nazi Germany indicate that the youth who were detached from their families at the time were more inclined to adopt Nazism. Likewise, the current conditions in the Middle East catalyze a search for identity and inclination towards violence prone ideas among the youth. Most media outlets shape or influence political agendas in accordance with their financial and ideological interests, which leads the youth to search for alternative ways on social media platforms, which are affordable yet unrestrained. In this way, political struggle is conveyed from the streets to the media. In order, to prevent radical movements in both the streets and social media, the youth must be guided in a way that enables them to retain their idealism without developing radical tendencies or ending up apolitical.

The Changes in Media and the Use of Media for Radicalism

When the development of media is considered within historical processes, it can be seen that the changes in media have also influenced the relations between terror groups and media outlets. Especially with the invention of the television in 1945, people now have the opportunity to bear witness to many colossal incidents across the world such as hijackings and bomb attacks. Television has played a significant role in shaping people's outlook on life.

As the internet became a more popular tool, a new wave of transformation was kicked off in the media. The internet first appeared as a platform that was only readable, functioning similarly to conventional media outlets. However, with the introduction of internet forums in the mid 2000s, the internet turned into an interactive platform which one can now contribute to. The mobile social media applications that have entered our lives as a result of this growing interaction have also caught the attention of terror groups, which has led to the commencement of a new phase. The onset of this period, in which social media can now be used in accordance with the motivations of terror groups, can be regarded as a social media revolution. With this revolution, almost all the methods employed by terror groups have changed. The illegal groups that seek to recruit militants and gain support are now able to reach a greater number of people via social media. Twitter in particular, one of the most widely-used social media platforms, has become an essential tool for terror groups. For this reason, terror groups started making their operational announcements through this platform.

New Media and Self-Radicalization

Social media has completely transformed the dynamics of communication. Although mass media has been available for a long time, it had certain rules and modes of operation that limited access possibilities until the introduction of social media. With the birth of social media, communication possibilities peaked. The mechanisms to control and restrict communication, publication and broadcast activities have declined to the level of extinction. Therefore, while conventional media has lost its popularity and monopoly as a result of declining usage rates, social media has opened the doors to a new world. However, the new media introduced a number of new problems. Most importantly, with the rise of social media, the illegal groups who reach out to the public, run propaganda or find adherents through media were freed from relying solely on the requirements of conventional mainstream media. The control and monitoring gap emerging from this situation has enabled especially terror groups to address the masses by concealing their true identities.

The similarities in various terror groups' relations to social media are noteworthy. For instance, an outstanding similarity can be observed in social media usage by the PKK and the FETÖ. Since both terror groups have a mutual target, the content they share on social media is parallel to one another. In addition to this, the illegal groups' success in the field also affects their success in promoting social media discourses. Just as a terror group who is successful in the field gains prominence in social media, just as the success of the counter-terror fight can also hamper the terror group's impact on social media.

The FETÖ's relationship to media is a unique case that is worth a thorough examination. Owing a number of TV stations, newspapers and periodicals, the terror cult have also actively used social media. It was observed that they intensified their media activities particularly before and after the July 15 coup attempt. They formed many anonymous accounts on social media and used them to spread speculations. By means of the conventional media apparatuses and social media accounts they had, they ran an intensive pro-coup propaganda prior to the coup attempt, and tried to instill fear in the public after the July 15 by spreading speculations of another impending coup attempt. When the accounts sharing such speculative content were examined, it was uncovered that they were created in various countries.

Furthermore, social media has already facilitated and guided many social movements. The Arab Spring is one of the leading examples of this. During the Arab Spring, the civilian domain experienced a growth particularly with the interactions and calls made via social media.

However, using social media with an aim to mobilize people to take to the streets and catalyze social change is not an unproblematic realm. It can not be neglected that the large conventional media corporations such as CNN and BBC do actually dominate the social media

realm. This dominance stems from their large numbers of followers and popularity. Once they withdrew the support they gave to street demonstrations, the large-scale users ignored the slogans, videos and photos shared by social media users. Once this happened, the people who could not communicate as effectively as they formerly could were disappointed.

When the youth who expect to get attention and support through what they share on social media do not get the response they're hoping for, they may feel rejected or exposed which can lead to psychological problems. This indifference can also spur hero syndrome among people in the field. Exaggerated content and misinforming news items that are shared with the effect of this psychological state also lead to information pollution to a serious degree. The exaggerated content that aims to attract attention also ends up as a major distortion. Such a situation was clearly observed in Turkey during the Gezi Park uprising in 2013 in which social media had an important effect and played a significant role in shaping public opinion. Especially on social media platforms, it is known that the more provocative a news item is, the quicker it spreads. This realization turned distortion into a deliberately employed instrument to gain more media exposure. Unfortunately, refutations of the contentious news are unable to compensate for the unjust treatment or other negativities repercussions that distorted news can cause.

Recommendations for solutions are urgently needed to prevent the manipulation of both conventional and social media platforms by proponents of terrorism. Required measures must be taken immediately in the media realm when public safety and interests are concerned. Otherwise, media outlets could confront the risk of turning into manipulative tools that breed terror groups. Also, media outlets need to do their part on this delicate subject by averting popularity concerns and valuing the content of their news reports. Although social media helps illegal groups attract supporters by addressing especially the youth, it can also have positive effects. At this point, the effects of accessibility must be used not only within the scope of the counter-terror fight, but also as part of the effort to raise awareness among youth.

As part of the effort to organize and regulate the media (including both conventional and social media), relevant findings obtained in various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, informatics and law, should be incorporated to introduce interdisciplinary works. Unless multidimensional measures are taken to regulate the media, which has no restrictions or limitations, a series of problems that could have far-reaching consequences will inevitably be confronted.

■ COUNTER-RADICALIZATION AND DERADICALIZATION

Radicalization is the process in which individuals or groups accept and engage in violent extremism in an attempt to reach a political objective. Radicalization ultimately results in terrorism. Although the literature on radicalization generally accepts that radicalization precedes violence, it is disputable whether joining a terror group can be considered as a phase of radicalization.

In order to overcome radicalization, aside from fighting against radicalization the reintegration of radicalized persons into society must also be enabled. Although accomplishments in both fields are needed in the face of radicalization, it has been observed that counter-radicalization activities have come to the fore especially within recent years with the rise of terrorism. The purpose of counter-radicalization is to prevent acts of violence, which constitute the ultimate stage of violent extremism, by ruling out the factors leading to such acts. The consequences of terror attacks can be quite severe. Also, reintegration and rehabilitation of terror group members is a process that entails comprehensive and long-term endeavors. It can be argued that predetermining the factors that radicalize an individual and developing a solution or alternative to offer them is a much easier method that is more likely to be successful rather than a rehabilitation performed after radicalization has occurred.

Counter-radicalization activities can be categorized into two: preventing radicalization and preventing the participation of radicalized individuals in terrorist activities. The academic literature on the issue of counter-radicalization scrutinizes both types of prevention activities.

The first phase in the prevention of radicalization is determining the causes leading to radicalization. The literature on radicalization often underscores that many reasons, both on the macro and micro (individual) levels, can underlie the emergence of radicalism. The leading causes of radicalization include the exclusion and discrimination (such as Islamophobia), an individual's expectation of being appreciated, the quest for a status or an identity, the anger stemming from feelings of oppression and other psychological states related to this, subjection to intense political oppression, the obstruction of political dissidence and reconciliation channels, anti-Western sentiments, the presence of discriminatory norms and practices in society, marginalization, constraints in educational opportunities, problems stemming from urbanization, and economic marginalization, among other related problems.

Although it is possible to list numerous reasons that lead to radicalization, each case differs from one the other in terms of prominent determinants. Consequently, there is no single answer to the question of which causes should be eliminated first in order to prevent radicalization. For instance, the first method that comes to mind in this regard is the prevention of radicalization through the elimination of socio-economic causes. However, as the relevant papers indicated, there is no solid evidence available to suggest that certain socio-economic deprivations necessarily lead to the use of violence for political purposes. Reactions to socio-economic deprivations might vary in different countries and societies. For instance, in the case of the Boko Haram poverty and income inequality play a major role in influencing the Nigerian youth to accept the use of violence. Nevertheless, the radicalization of the Nigerian youth is determined by how these factors are interpreted through certain religious and political perspectives. Although unemployment rates are higher in other Muslim countries such as Senegal and Niger, these countries are not radicalized. Therefore, taking specific measures against radicalization is also crucial as much as fighting against the socio-economic causes of radicalization.

As can be seen in the case of Turkey, there is not always a causal link between constraints in educational opportunities and radicalization. Two examples can be given from Turkey regarding the ambivalence of the relationship between terrorism and lack of education. The FETÖ stands out as a terror group that utilized education to recruit members. To put it otherwise, the FETÖ went beyond other illegal groups in the education realm by means of the private schools it owns. The group also used education as a tool to infiltrate public institutions. Thanks to its operatives' high level of education, the group managed to infiltrate civil bureaucracy, the police department and the military. Within the police and the military, the infiltrated

members attached a great importance to seizing control of key units such as personnel, terrorism, intelligence and anti-smuggling and organized crime departments. As the second example from Turkey, the terror groups with leftist-Marxist ideologies based in Turkey were found to have relatively higher educational levels as it was revealed that high-school and university graduates within those organizations form a majority. One of the underlying reasons for this is the need to have a certain level of educational background in order to comprehend the Marxist doctrine that is used in their organizational training. It was also observed that the educational level of the PKK militants is on a gradual increase.

Minimizing participation in Daesh thanks to its efforts to prevent radicalization, India stands out as one of the most successful countries in the world in preventing radicalization through a sui generis method. As a matter of fact, India appears as a country that can provide a suitable ground for Daesh to recruit militants since it has the third largest Muslim population in the world. Around 35-40 percent of this population consists of juveniles. India has more than 9,000 formal madrasahs and numerous informal schools. Despite the progress the country has made, a large number of people in India still face serious problems in terms of accessing basic necessities. Also, the South Asia region where the country is located is one of the oldest realms of conflict and is home to various radical groups. The prevention of radicalization in India is partly a result of the importance the Indian government has attached to the subject. For instance, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the annual meeting of the Indian police department in 2015 in view of the risk that Daesh influence could increase in the area. Modi made a presentation during one of the meeting sessions that focused on preventing radicalization. Nevertheless, the main factors leading to India's success in minimizing participation in Daesh include the culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence that prevails as a result of being a country with multiple ethnicities and languages, the challenges faced in daily life, and the prevalence of Islam's Sufism theology among the Muslims in the country.

Based on the examples given from Turkey, several suggestions were made regarding the question of what can be done to prevent radicalization. Among these, three suggestions stand out: First of all, democracy and human rights must be consolidated. Secondly, economic and social injustice and marginalization must be precluded. And thirdly, the judicial system needs to operate fairly and effectively. The shortcomings regarding these three points facilitate the activities of violence prone groups in many respects. For instance, problems such as torture, ill treatment, marginalization, denial, neglect, and loss of trust in judicial bodies undermine trust in governments and cause unjust suffering. Terror groups take advantage of such situations of suffering and unjust treatment to recruit militants. However, it must be noted that an emphasis on democracy does not necessitate the negligence of public safety. As a matter of fact, these two aspects are interdependent. Democracy would be undermined if those providing public

safety were to violate people's rights. Unless public safety is ensured, terror groups can easily put pressure on people.

In the context of counter-radicalization, the Kosovo case is also noteworthy in terms of demonstrating the importance of eliminating the main factors that cause radicalization while also presenting the causes that acted as determinants in Kosovo. The primary concern with regards to radicalization in Kosovo is the participation of citizens in Daesh or similar formations based in the Middle East. Although the participation rates are not very high (around 300 people joined Daesh from Kosovo), it still poses a serious problem since the overwhelming majority of the radicalized are youth. The factors restricting Kosovo's counter-radicalization efforts include it being a newly-founded state, financial constraints, shortcomings in inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, and the absence of cooperation with organizations such as INTERPOL and EUROPOL due to the country's problems in international recognition.

Despite all these handicaps, the definition and sources of the problem in Kosovo were scrutinized and the following observations were made:

i) The people going from Kosovo to Syria to join the jihad are not informed about what is happening in Syria.

ii) The youth in Kosovo who are concerned about their future join radical groups to feel a sense of belonging. For example, a desperate young man in Kosovo has the opportunity to become a commander in Syria, which spurs youth to join such groups.

iii) People who are vulnerable on religious matters are more easily convinced to join the group.

iv) The corruption problems and weakness of the legal order in the country are among the problems that form a basis for radicalization. Similarly, the serious economic deprivation experienced in the country is another factor that shatters any hope for the future.

Preventing the participation of radicalized individuals in terrorist activities, which is another aspect of counter-radicalization, was discussed in the context of foreign terrorist fighters. The mobility of foreign fighters, especially the ones who intend to join terror groups in Syria and Iraq, has been a serious concern on the agenda in recent years. Due to its geographical location, Turkey is one of the key countries on route to both Syria and Iraq. Turkey places great importance on the subject due to the security risks posed by foreign fighters while crossing borders. As a first step, Turkey recognized Daesh as a terror group on October 13, 2013, before other Western countries. Other measures taken by Turkey in this respect include forming lists to prohibit entry (more than 52.000 people were prohibited from entering the country between 2011 and 2016), founding Risk Analysis Units, which are entitled to conduct interviews with suspects to enable early identification, the deportation of around 4.000 people between

2011 and 2016, sharing passenger information for the identification of individuals on the terrorist list penned according to the UN Security Council Resolution 2178, and tightening physical security around the Syrian and Iraqi borders.

Along with endeavors at the national level, Turkey has also made significant progress in fighting against foreign terrorist fighters on international platforms. The country co-chaired the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) with the U.S. and currently co-chairs the Global Coalition Against Daesh's Foreign Terrorist Fighters working group with the Netherlands. Furthermore, Turkey signed an agreement with the U.S. in 2015 that includes information sharing concerning foreign terrorist fighters.

The rehabilitation of radicalized subjects includes the process of abandoning violence and reintegrating violence-prone persons. As many participants have pointed out in different contexts: it is not easy to “make a militant give up his violence-prone and extremist tendencies stemming from his political and ideological engagements.” The rehabilitation of individuals or groups involved in acts of violence is an arduous path which takes a long time.

One study participant redefined the deradicalization process and pointed out that this process involves two aspects: a change in outlook on the politically-motivated use of violence and terrorism and a transformation of the ideology that legitimizes violence. According to this perspective, the IRA, for example, has not completely abandoned its radical stance since it has not yet accepted to withdraw from the conflict process. However, a radical change that will pass down to the next generations has not occurred in the culture of conflict. For instance, the IRA is against resorting to armed violence in the future and made a promise in this respect. However, the senior members of the group continue praising the violence of the past activities. However, to a certain extent embracing violent activities from the past does actually mean continuing to value violence. Some developments indicate that former IRA members unwillingly adopt such behaviors. For instance, some IRA operatives, realizing that this attitude encourages violence started protesting against the negative effects of the violent atmosphere of the past. By organizing meetings at schools, they addressed the youth to suggest that now only the police is entitled to ensure security and not arms. The IRA's complete abandonment of violence and reintegration depends on the success of the process that entails giving up the valorizing of violence, which will take a long time. Former IRA militants have a considerable role in this.

The rehabilitation of those involved in acts of violence was expressed in the framework of the rehabilitation examples of former militants in Pakistan and Nigeria, which were inspired by the DDR (demobilization, disarmament and reintegration) model.

The Pakistani Army launched a successful operation to rehabilitate extremist militants throughout the Swat valley in 2009. Thousands of militants and proponents were detained

and/or returned to their families during the operation. Following the operation, the army introduced a rehabilitation program to the detainees. The program was designed to address adult detainees and family members of the detainees. It was comprised of four different modules: the educational module that enables the adult detainees to continue their education, the psychological counseling and therapy module for developing independent and logical thinking, the social module that includes social issues and family participation, and the vocational training module that enables the detainees to make a living. Although the program suffered from some financial constraints and an insufficient number of trainers throughout the process, all 700 people who joined the program have been reintegrated into society.

Pakistan's successful Swat program was mainly developed for the rehabilitation of lower level militants coming from low-income families. However, mid-level militants also need to be incorporated into the program for a more effective fight against radicalization since mid-level and senior militants have stronger ideological and political tendencies. Great achievements can be made towards a comprehensive rehabilitation if these individuals abandon violence and find their place in society.

Another shortcoming of the Swat program is that it was designed to avert insurgency in the Swat valley and it concentrated on smoothing out anti-government tendencies. Given the whole slew of extremist views that are articulated in Pakistan and the presence of other terror groups' activities, the discourse of the Swat program does not inhibit former militants' participation in other radical groups. At this point, a nationalist yet pluralist discourse is needed. Last but not least, the Swat program is managed by the army. This deficiency could also be filled if the government offered more support to the program and the civil bureaucracy took over its management. If these shortcomings are tackled, the Swat program might constitute the essence of a model that could be applied in other regions of Pakistan.

Another case that involves rehabilitating radicalized subjects is the integration of the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), which abandoned violence after engaging in acts of violence in the Niger Delta region located in Nigeria. The oil exploration and drilling activities in the Niger Delta taken up by multinational corporations as of the 1950s impoverished the locals and seriously destroyed the natural environment in the region instead of bringing economic progress. The radicalization in the region is a reaction to these negative developments. According to the IYC, the activities of oil companies in the region constitute the reason for the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta. The IYC urged the corporations to cease their activities, demanding that the soil and natural sources in the region be used by locals and that the people must determine their own status. The movement formed militant groups to realize these goals. The militant groups were involved in various detrimental activities such as abducting or killing oil workers,

government officials and foreigners as well as sabotaging oil wells. Their activities continued despite the military intervention.

With the aim of resolving the conflicts, the Nigerian government initiated a program inspired by the DDR model in 2009. The program included granting amnesty to militant groups and their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. According to the field work conducted in the region, the program yielded some positive results in terms of taking the youth away from the conflict environment. For instance, vocational education opportunities addressing the youth were expanded, trade circles were formed and monthly scholarships were awarded to many juveniles as part of the program. The field work indicated that the primary factor that radicalized the youth in the Niger Delta was the prohibition of benefiting the region's resources through legitimate ways. The field work also propounded that not enough progress has yet been made in overcoming some major issues such as neglect, social inequality, underdevelopment, and inaccessibility to economic markets. Consequently, the true success of the rehabilitation program will only become evident once permanent acquisitions can be achieved in terms of overcoming primary concerns.

■ CONCLUSION

The introduction of alternative religious discourses is of vital importance to protect especially the youth from the influence of Salafi extremism and to recover those involved in Salafi violence.

Alternative discourses must pay regard to these aspects: First of all, Sufistic or mystical interpretations such as the doctrines of Rumi, Haji Bektash and Yunus Emre might be a suitable option to create a counter-discourse. However, such a sufiyyah-based discourse, which is noticeably esoteric and based on a symbolic culture that is not a part of the canon, is considered a bad bid'ah (innovation) in Salafism. Therefore, this discourse does not have the potential or force to persuade.

The alternative discourse must corroborate that takfir is against the rules according to Islam's primary sources. In so doing, an approach that completely excludes Salafism, a deep-rooted tradition with many different branches, might backlash. Instead of confronting Salafism, the Ibn Taymiyyah Salafism that objects to takfiri extremism can be emphasized. Lastly, the alternative discourse must express with reasonable evidence that the takfirist mindset undermines Salafism since it causes constant separations and remains incapable of coming up with solutions to the problems of the Muslim world.

Some measures that can be taken to prevent violent inclinations (radicalization) in Muslim communities are as follows:

- Efforts must be exerted to ensure the correct understanding of the terms that are abused in order to legitimize violence.
- Muslims must try engaging in “existential communication” in their contacts with other groups, which means focusing on the lifestyle of one's own.
- A more integrative notion such as Dar al-Sulh (House of Peace) could be used to distinguish between Dar al-Harb (House of War) and Dar al-Islam (House of Islam). Dar al-Sulh means a world established on the basis of peace through a social contract based on fundamental human rights (Hakk-ı Ademiyye) and promoting coexistence of people with different faiths.
- It must be noted that the interpretations of the notions in the Quran that aim to legitimize violence, the traumas in the Muslim world's collective memory caused by the experiences of colonialism and postcolonialism, and the traumas caused by foreign interventions such as the invasion of Iraq are all interrelated. Reactive interpretations are not likely to direct societies onto the right path.

The FETÖ's relation to the media is a unique case that is worth a thorough examination. Owning a number of TV stations, newspapers and periodicals, the terror cult have also actively utilized social media. It was observed that they intensified their media activities particularly before and after the July 15 coup attempt. They formed many anonymous accounts on social media and used them to spread speculations. By means of t conventional media apparatuses and their social media accounts, they ran an intensive pro-coup propaganda prior to the coup attempt, and tried to instill fear in the public after July 15 by spreading speculations of an another impending coup attempt.

Solution recommendations are urgently needed to prevent the manipulation of both conventional and social media platforms by proponents of terrorism. Although social media helps illegal groups attract supporters by addressing especially youth audiences, it can also play a positive role in the counter-radicalization discourse. At this point, the amenities of accessibility must be used not only within the scope of the counter-terror fight, but also as part of efforts to raise awareness among the youth.

As can be seen in the case of Turkey, there is not always a causal link between the constraints in educational opportunities and radicalization. Two examples can be given from Turkey regarding the ambivalence of the relations between terrorism and a lack of education. The FETÖ stands out as a terror group that used education to recruit members. To put it otherwise, the FETÖ has gone beyond other illegal groups in the education realm by utilizing its own private schools. The group also used education as a tool to infiltrate public institutions.

The rehabilitation of radicalized subjects includes the process of abandoning violence and reintegrating violence-prone persons. As many participants have pointed out in different contexts: it is not easy to “make a militant give up his violence-prone and extremist tendencies stemming from his political and ideological engagements.” The rehabilitation of individuals or groups involved in acts of violence is an arduous path which takes a long time.

In order to overcome radicalization, the reintegration of radicalized persons into society must also be enabled aside from the fight against radicalization.