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The Chosen Few

**A comparative study of The Prophet's Ummah
and The Nordic Resistance Movement's language
and visual communication.**

Emelie Maria Brun and Jenny Wikshåland Skouen

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Disclaimer

To the memory of Jenny's father,

Ståle Wikshåland

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ABSTRACT

Title: The Chosen Few: A comparative study of The Prophet's Ummah and

The Nordic Resistance Movement's language and visual communication.

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This study explores the applicability of a combination of social movement theory, narrative criminology and subcultural perspectives to the extremist organisations The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement. These groups differ from the mainstream Scandinavian society in how they both support, and even encourage, violence as a legitimate political means. The aim is to explore how their world view and the stories they tell are reflected through subcultural traits, and how their appearance and ideologies are intertwined and reliant on each other in order to constitute a defined group identity. We aim to identify, analyse and compare each group's political or religious beliefs. Further, we will discuss how these are reflected through subcultural style, and how the combination of linguistics and subcultural traits communicates their world view. Lastly, we wish to establish the importance of studying extremist propaganda through a combination of different theoretical approaches.

The study is divided into three parts; the first analysing each group's beliefs through collective action frames and exploring the master narratives applied in their propaganda. The second, examining the underlying meaning of the subcultural traits and the significance of how the subcultural homology also communicate transhistorical tales. The third part is a discussion of the four master narratives The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement have in common, and how these narratives could be applied to other extremist groups as well. These are; partaking in a war against a foreign invasion, fighting against a twofold enemy, being the chosen few soldiers saving their people, as well as their ultimate goal of establishing a new utopian state. Through a comparative analysis we highlight how – even though the content of the tales differs – both the narrative framework and the communicated message are still strikingly similar, suggesting that these particular stories might have a broader appeal than the extremist consensus in which they exist. In spite of how both The Prophet's Ummah and The

Nordic Resistance Movement arguably have a marginal reach within the mainstream, their affiliation with international extremist environments could indicate that these stories also resonate with a broader transnational milieu. We would argue that these particular stories reveal elements of the sublime underlying doxa of extremist world views and provide insight into the hegemonic consensus within each subcultural sphere.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1.   INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is the ultimate consequence of radicalisation and violent extremism, something the world has witnessed numerous of times; emerging from both radical Islamism and the extreme right.

In Norway, a well-developed welfare state, with high voters turnout and according to the *UN's World Happiness Report 2018;* inhabited by the second most happy population in the world, violent extremism is marginal, and the views promoted are seemingly far from society at large. In spite of this, racially motivated violence does occur, immigration-hostile political parties receive high support and compared to its population size, Norway has one of the largest foreign fighter contingents travelling to Syria (Hegghammer, 2013). Politically or religiously motivated, right-wing or Islamic; what is it the supporters of these Norwegian extremist groups believe in so intensely that they are willing to fight, kill or even die for?

In the following thesis we will explore two of Norway's most radical extremist groups, whose willingness to perpetrate violence to achieve their political goals is one of their defining traits as social groups. The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are from complete opposite sides of the political spectrum, but interestingly they still seem to have more in common with each other than they do with the mainstream. They consider themselves soldiers fighting aggressive oppressors, they despise the contemporary Norwegian society, and consider it their mission to unite 'their people' under one state. They believe themselves to be provided with an infallible and divine insight into how the world really works, as well as a true understanding of the dynamics of societies and social relations; they are the chosen few.

Through a combination of social movement theory, narrative criminology and subcultural theory, we wish to offer insight to the ways these extremist groups assertively and purposively communicate their convictions through a combination of linguistics and subcultural style, to unravel the untold stories, hidden meanings and underlying doxa in which they represent.

1.2 Background and presentation of research subjects

1.2.1 The Prophet's Ummah

The Prophet's Ummah (PU) is probably Norway's most mentioned and controversial Islamic group, and have been a central contributor in radicalising and recruiting Norwegian foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq. As of 2018, The Prophet's Ummah has vanished from the public discourse, much because central figures are either imprisoned, dead or still taking part in the widely publicised Syrian war. The group's organisational structure and collective expression is therefore weakened, but individuals who share their opinions are still present in society.

The group's origin can be traced back to a demonstration against the American film *Innocence of Muslims,* which was held outside the American embassy in Oslo 20th September 2012. Approximately 100 people, mostly men under the age of 30, were part of the demonstration, several holding black Islamic flags, showing their support of al-Qaeda and honouring Osama bin Laden as a freedom fighter. Prior to the demonstration, the group had also uploaded a video clip on YouTube where they threatened the Norwegian Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and the Crown Prince. Many of the people who participated in the demonstration were claimed to have been part of the 'Gaza Riots' in Oslo in 2009, where what started as a peaceful anti-war demonstration, escalated into a violent confrontation between some of the demonstrators and the Norwegian police. It was, according to Lia and Nesser (2016), the collision with the police in combination with The American President at the time, George W. Bush, launching the global war on terror, which gave fertile ground to militant Salafism among Norwegian millennials.

The Prophet's Ummah is a Sunni Muslim group who are part of the ultra conservative Salafi movement, believing in the literal interpretation of the Quran. Being Salafis, they proclaim that by imitating *al-Salaf al-Salih* – the first three generations of Muslims – they will be able to follow the Prophet's example and clearly understand how the contemporary world should be ordered (Linge, 2014). Although, not the only Salafists in Norway, PU differ from groups such as IslamNet through the way they consider violent jihad to not only be a legitimate political tool to ensure the establishment of the Caliphate, but also as a measure that can be used against non-state actors to prove their political standpoint.

The group had a strong affiliation with various jihadi organisations in Scandinavia and Europe, but were closest to the British group Islam4/Sharia4, led by the controversial spokesmen Omar Bakri Muhammad and Anjem Choudary. As seen in several open sources

there were mutual visits between the groups, and Choudary featured in several of The Prophet's Ummah's video conferences about Islam on the chatroom PalTalk. The Prophet's Ummah was considered to be Islam4/Sharia4's branch in Norway under a different name, and similar to Islam4/Sharia4 many of the members travelled to the rather newly commenced conflict in Syria, where they fought under the name Free Syria Army (FSA) (Lia and Nesser, 2016). At first the group's activity in Norway predominantly focused on *street dawah*, which is inviting people to follow Islam, in addition to recruiting other individuals to take part in their group. They were at the time highly visible on social media; posting YouTube clips with militant content, having their own website and creating several Facebook groups designed for the purpose of organising demonstrations. The Facebook group named "Profetens Ummah" had almost 2000 members at the time it was shut down in August 2014, after having been reported as offensive according to Facebook's standards. This number does however not reflect the actual member count.

In 2014, when Islam4/Sharia4 and The Prophet's Ummah announced their support to the Islamic State (IS) and their leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi as their Kalif, there was a clear shift in the Norwegian Islamist milieu. According to Lia and Nesser (2016):

> Jihadism in Norway has witnessed a huge shift from consisting primarily of foreign ethnically homogenous networks with a low capacity for mobilization, to the current situation where a loose country-wide network of domestic extremists has demonstrated a considerable capacity for foreign fighter recruitment over the past four years (p. 121).

The Prophet's Ummah has undoubtedly been a major contributor to the recruitment of Norwegian foreign fighters, in spite of rarely giving any direct exhortation to travel to Syria on any of their online platforms. After PU announced their support of the Islamic State, they even deleted their web page, arguably because they did not want to publish anything that could be seen as not resonating with the guidelines from IS' spiritual leaders (Michalsen, 2016). Those who had travelled and died as martyrs were however hailed as heroes and as examples to follow, and pictures of Norwegian foreign fighters who had been killed in battle often embellished the Facebook profiles of a large number of members (Lia, 2013). Despite central recruiters proclaiming that those who travelled to Syria and Iraq primarily did so for humanitarian purposes, Hegghammer (2014) point out that if the foreign fighters actually participated in humanitarian work, this would have been more visible in public sources.

The Norwegian militant Islamic milieu is both multi ethnic and Norwegian speaking (Lia and Nesser, 2016), and The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) pointed out in their annual threat assessment of 2016 that 68% of male Islamist extremists in Norway have been

suspected of, charged with, or sentenced of criminal acts prior to the time of radicalisation (PST, 2016). In most cases these offences are related to drugs or violent behaviour, such as domestic abuse and threats, but also illegal possession of guns. Central figures of PU are also believed to have partaken in criminal youth gangs, such as Young Guns, from an early age. PST (2018) additionally point at how many of those in the Norwegian Islamist milieu also have a background characterised by mental challenges, low level of education and worklessness. As of February 2016 it was approximated that at least 90 individuals had left for Syria (Lia and Nesser, 2016), but all of these are however not necessarily connected to PU. The Islamist environment in Norway has weakened compared to the period from 2012 to 2015, and events and demonstrations, such as those referred to above, are rare now that central figures have been imprisoned or killed in Syria and Iraq, the jihadi beliefs are however still present in selected parts of the population (PST, 2018).

1.2.2 The Nordic Resistance Movement

The Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM) is considered a relatively new right-wing group in Norway, which has a strong affiliation to the Swedish branch of the organisation. They were established in Sweden in 1997 by the same people associated with the establishment of the now ceased National Socialist organisation *Vitt Ariskt Motstånd* (VAM), which translates to White Aryan Resistance – associated with the American organisation with the same name. NRM being the successors of VAM, clearly links them to the traditional Swedish skinhead environment, as well as international White Power organisations (Bjørgo, 1997; Strømmen, 2013).

The group describes themselves as a National Socialist organisation, whose main concern is to create a new Nordic state consisting of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland, for the purpose of saving the Nordic (Aryan) race from extinction. They believe, as we are to elaborate on in the analysis, that there exists a Zionist elite aiming for world domination, and who wishes to exterminate the Nordic Race. This perception builds on the conspiracy theory referred to as the ZOG discourse (Zionist Occupation Government), which became an apparent part of violent neo-Nazi discourse in North America during the 1970's and the 1980's, and was later observed in similar environments in Sweden during the late 80's through VAM (Bjørgo, 1997; Strømmen, 2013).

The Nordic Resistance Movement explicitly focus more on race rather than they do cultural differences, which demonstrates how they have more in common with white supremacy groups and other neo-Nazi movements, than with the rest of the European right-wing spectre. In Norway, the group differs rather dramatically from other right-wing movements,

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not only because of their racial politics, but also through their uncensored support for violence. Especially in the aftermaths of the terror attack 22nd July 2011 against Utøya and the Norwegian government headquarters, there is initially no widespread culture of political or racially motivated violence in Norway.

As of today, the ZOG discourse, despite its extreme content, is arguably well established in Swedish Nationalist environments, while it is not as prominent in the Norwegian and Danish branches of the group. This might stem from Norway and Denmark being occupied by Nazi-Germany during World War II, and therefore the Nationalism in these countries is instead historically linked to resistance against the Nazi occupation (Bjørgo, 1997). Here, the right-wing extremist and Nationalist environments are interpreting the increased immigration to Scandinavia as a new invasion, in which they will fight the same way they fought the German occupation. Either way, the current multicultural societies motivate right-wing extremists to action, and regardless if they adopt the ZOG discourse or a different Nationalist narrative, they see immigration as an invasion that threaten society and their own people.

As opposed to The Prophet's Ummah, The Nordic Resistance Movement is hierarchically structured. Each country has their own set of leaders, but the organisation has since 2015 been considered a transnational organisation, after they established a common Nordic council; consisting of two leaders from each participatory country. Despite this, it is most definitely the Swedish branch of the organisation that comes across as the strongest and as an example to follow. Many of the Norwegian members have moved to Sweden, or frequently take part in demonstrations there.

According to the Swedish journal Expo (2015), the Nordic Resistance Movement consider themselves as Nazism's elite force, and a survey committed among 159 of the most active members in Sweden at the time, showed that a quarter of them were convicted of violence and/or violating weapon regulations in 2015 alone (VG+, 2017). Beyond this, 27 members are convicted of participating in violent riots, 20 convicted of abuse, one for murder and one for attempted murder (Aftonbladet, 2017).

In Norway, most of the organisation's activities consist of handing out flyers or spray painting their emblem on various walls and lampposts. The Norwegian branch has however become increasingly active, and have promoted themselves in several Norwegian cities such as Ski, Kristiansand, Lillehammer, Arendal, Halden and Sarpsborg. The most publicised activity however was the demonstration against "Homolobbyen" (the homosexual lobbyists), held in Kristiansand on 29th July 2017. The demonstration was a spontaneous consequence of how the local police in Østfold had turned down their request for the same demonstration in Fredrikstad,

and consisted of approximately 70 people. It should however be noted that out of the 70 demonstrators in Kristiansand, only 17 people were Norwegian, two Finns, and the rest being Swedish (Strømmen, 2018). In the wake of this demonstration, the police received much critique for their choice of not intervening (NRK, 2017c).

In Sweden the organisation has had several public events, one of the largest being in Gothenburg 30th September 2017, where approximately 600 activists marched in the streets carrying shields and the organisation's logo on clothing and flags. According to the group's own website, several Norwegian members took part in the Gothenburg demonstration. The group also received massive media attention after a Finnish member kicked a passerby in the head during a demonstration in Helsinki in 2017. The victim died a week later from cerebral haemorrhage, but due to the circumstances, the NRM activist was only found guilty of the use of gross violence, not murder (NRK, 2017d). The same activist was later rewarded internally in the organisation, arguably not because of the act of violence itself, but as a way to show him support in the difficult times he faced after the incident. As a consequence, the organisation was later prohibited in Finland.

There is uncertain how many Norwegian members NRM actually has, but when their website was hacked in September 2017, one could find more than a hundred paying Norwegian members on the leaked lists (NRK, 2017a), with the average age being 30 years, the youngest being 16 and the oldest 71. The group was for the first time specifically mentioned in PST's annual threat assessment in 2018, which consider that the group will try recruiting more members and hold several demonstrations in the year to come.

1.3   Research Aim and Research Question

The aim of this research is to analytically examine the propaganda of the two Norwegian extremist groups, The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement. More specifically we aim to identify, analyse, compare and discuss each group's political or religious beliefs, and explore the motivational power, which lies in referring to transhistorical narratives. Further, the study will discuss how such beliefs are reflected through subcultural style, and how the combination of linguistics and subcultural traits communicates their world view, as well as strengthen their common identity. Lastly, we wish to establish the importance of studying extremist propaganda through a combination of different theoretical approaches.

Importantly, this thesis will not assess the effect extremist opinions, stories and style might have on individuals in terms of radicalisation. Neither will it constitute a risk assessment regarding the organisations' potential of future terrorist acts or other forms of violence. As such, the research question at hand is;

"What are the main narratives and subcultural traits that characterise extremist ideologies?"

In order to answer this, the study is divided into three parts; the first analysing each group's beliefs through collective action frames and exploring the master narratives applied in their propaganda. The second, examining the underlying meaning of the subcultural traits and the significance of how the subcultural homology also communicate transhistorical tales. The third part is a discussion of the master narratives The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement have in common, and how these narratives could be applied to other extremist groups as well.

1.4   Terms and Definitions

As one will quickly discover, there are a whole lot of '*ism's*' to keep track of in relation to this topic, such as; extremism, Islamism, jihadism, Salafism, and National Socialism/ neo-Nazism, to mention some of the most important. These definitions are continually referred to throughout the thesis in their original form, but also in other words (e.g. extremist or jihadi), which is why we find it essential to look at how this study identify these terms before exploring further. As with everything else there are many understandings of the same term, but the way in which they are defined below is how we will utilise them.

Extremism is here understood as individuals or groups that have an utmost political or religious view and who are willing to use violence to reach their political or religious goals. The individual or groups are often seen to identify themselves with their ideological beliefs to such a large extent that all other aspects of life are subordinate.

When speaking of terms related to the faith of Islam there are many pitfalls. *Islamism* is an ideology, and must not at any circumstance be confused with the faith of Islam, as Islamism "is about political order, not faith" (Tibi, 2012:1). However, this ideology has its roots in Islam and much of their ideological reasoning is rooted in religion. The ideology calls for

the return of Islamic history and glory, and their main goal is to establish a rightful Caliphate governed through a Sharia based political order. As Tibi (2012) neatly puts it, Islamism is religionised politics.

Under the term Islamism, there is the division between *Islamists* and *Jihadists*. Both categories have the same political ambitions, but they differ when it comes to the means that are to be used to achieve these goals. Islamists believe in the power of *dawah* – which means inviting people to Islam – and conversation in general, and will only resort to violence to pursuit the goal of establishing the Sharia state. Jihadists one the other hand, have arguably redefined the concept of jihad, by utilising the physical part of jihad also towards non-state actors in form of terrorism in the West or towards Western targets. Both groups' mindset and approach to Islam is built on *Salafism,* which is based on the literal interpretation of the Quran and wishes to go back to the traditional ways of the Prophet. Therefore, the Salafis urge the purification of the Islamic faith and practise, by getting rid of elements considered as non-Islamic (SNL, 2016).

National Socialism, also known as Nazism, is a political ideology that evolved in Germany by the end of World War I. In short terms, the ideology portrays a world divided into different races, where the Aryan race is superior, and the Jews being at the bottom of the hierarchy. The ideology promotes a strong distrust in democratic governance and wants a society ruled by the totalitarian Führer principle (SNL, 2018). As of today, no countries practice this ideology in its true form, but after World War II there are groups of people with pronounced Nazi features, such as the belief in racial politics. These movements are referred to as *neo-Nazis,* a term that should not be used to explain all types of Nationalists activists and organisations, because this term emphasises their sociobiological conviction of the Aryan race as superior to all others.

1.5   Thesis Composition

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter two presents the theoretical framework and previous research on the subject. For this study we utilise three theories; social movement theory, narrative criminology and subcultural criminology. Social movement theory is here represented through collective action framing. Collective action framing divides the rhetoric of these social movements into three categories; problem identification, problem resolution and motivational appeal (Benford and Snow, 2000). Narrative criminology pays attention to the stories and narrative frames the research subjects refer to and identifies with. Here, it is not the

details of the narratives that are of interest, but rather the ways in which these stories are being told (Sandberg, 2010). Further, subcultural theory will be utilised in order to describe how the organisations communicate their values, a masculine identity and potential for violence through non-verbal means such as appearance, attire, symbols and rituals (Gelder, 2005). At last, the chapter will elaborate on and underline the choice of this threefold theoretical synthesis, and how the different theories have been applied in this study.

In the third chapter we will present the full methodological approach, as well as an overview of the data. The study is predominantly based on documents published by the organisations, and a comparative qualitative approach is being used in order to map out similar traits, as well as differences. The analytical focus will, as mentioned, be a combination of social movement theory, narrative criminology and subcultural analysis. An outline of ethical concerns regarding this type of study is also found in this chapter.

Chapter four to seven are the main analytical chapters. Chapter four and five present the language analysis of respectively The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement and provides a description of their collective action frames, as well as how they incorporate different transhistorical master narratives into their world view. Chapter six and seven constitute the subcultural analysis of The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement, looking especially at the elements in which construct their bricolage and homology (Hebdige, 1979). In addition, we point to subcultural elements in which underlines their beliefs, their construction of a masculine identity and how they promote their lifestyles as thrilling and action filled.

The eighth chapter is a comparative analysis of the four main narratives the organisations share. Our argument is that based on their content there is a possibility that these same narratives are representative of other extremist milieus as well as those studied here. This final chapter also includes a theoretical debate on how utilising a combination of different analysing strategies is fruitful when wishing to understand the entirety of extremist organisations. We argue that a narrative framework and subcultural traits are intertwined and reliant on each other in order to make sense, and by focusing on only one side of this, central aspects of the organisational culture risk being overlooked.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are both radical groups that in some ways reflect the antitheses of the Scandinavian ideological spectre of today; both taking part in the larger transnational debate regarding immigration, race and the cultural clash between Muslim and Western values. They share several characteristics of violent street culture and have each created a collective identity and world view based on commonly accepted narratives, which is further reflected in their subcultural traits. In order to capture and ascribe meaning to both language and action and analyse our research subjects in the most holistic manner, this study primarily builds upon three main theoretical approaches. Everything communicated through words, will be analysed based on a combination of social movement theory and narrative criminology; to explore the stories and historical traditions that influence and bind their ideologies together, while non-verbal communication such as style, symbols and masculinity will be understood through subcultural theory.

2.1 Language analysis

Stories, true or false, can both motivate and legitimise harm (Presser, 2013). No matter the content, narratives are consequential, as stories do not only motivate our own actions, but also the action of others (Sandberg, 2010). As an example, several prerequisites were already present before World War II broke out, in order for Hitler to achieve the support he got and later initiate the atrocities he did. The supporters of Nazi-Germany came together through the creation of a fellow enemy, and a rhetoric which described the rival in a dehumanising language.

Even though both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are marginal groups, their ideologies are only extremes in an already existing political spectre, and their opinions are not created in a vacuum outside society. Therefore, we find it valuable to view PU's and NRM's ideology, views and actions as part of a counterculture and thus they are "produced by a dominated culture, not by a dominant culture" (Cohen, P., 1997: 97). The way in which both groups refer to their actions as a 'battle', themselves as 'warriors' and the perceived other as 'evil' or 'cowards' gives us an indicator of how the constructed 'us' is manifested as an opposition against the perceived 'them'.

In order to both structure a somewhat disorganised data, as well as addressing the political rhetoric used to promote their case, we have chosen collective action framing and

social movement theory to create a systematic overview and analyse the political rhetoric. In addition to this, a narrative criminological approach will be applied in order to make sense of the groups' individual and collective stories, as well as placing them in a historical and ideological context.

2.2   Framing Theory

Frames assign meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherent and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists (Benford and Snow 2000:614).

Framing theory studies the rhetoric and language of social movements. Goffman (1974) was first in describing the concept of the collective action frame; a concept which later has been further developed by scholars such as Gamson (1992) as well as Benford and Snow (2000). Collective action frames are active in the sense that something is being done, they are "processual through a dynamic process, they differ from traditional materialist and structuralist frames and might even challenge them" (Snow and Benford 2000:614; Benford 1997:409). As the intention behind political speeches, publishments and interviews is to convince others that their point of view is outstanding, the need for clear, coherent and consistent frames is necessary because this is more likely to persuade people into joining and supporting their cause (Polletta, 2008).

   Gamson (1992) describes collective action frames as "not merely aggregations of individual attitudes and perceptions but also the outcome of negotiated shared meaning" (p. 111). This makes them highly relevant when studying an organisation and their shared narrative, as it does not focus on individual accounts, but rather see the individual statements in light of the shared opinions of the group. Benford and Snow (2000) divides collective action framing into three categories; diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames, which together contribute to our understanding of characters, line of social movements and their construction of meaning. Another commonly used terminology is that of Gamson (1982), where the frames are identified as respectively the injustice-, agency- and identity frame, but in this study the definitions of frames by Benford and Snow are the ones predominantly utilised, primarily because they have written most of the theoretical literature we have applied to the study.

2.2.1 Collective Action Frames

Diagnostic Frame	Prognostic Frame	Motivational Frame
Addresses the problem, allocates blame. Rational, descriptive.	Presents a suggested solution. Rational, descriptive.	Addresses the urgency of the situation. Emotional appeal; why people must act.

Table 2.1 Based on *Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment* by Benford and Snow (2000).

Diagnostic Frame

The precondition for establishing a mobilisation is the belief in a societal problem. In order to call for collective action there need to be a more or less shared understanding of what is defined as problematic (Sandberg and Andersen, unpublished). Drawing a parallel to medical science, a diagnosis is a condition that needs to be treated in order for the body to recover. In framing theory the diagnosis also ascribes responsibility and blame to the one who is responsible for the problem. It is often in this frame where one can discover the division between a clearly articulated 'us' and 'them', creating a distance between the in-group and the out-group or 'the enemy'. Gamson (1982) calls the diagnostic frame the injustice frame, with an emphasis on how a group collectively seek to identify an injustice that has happened, as well as allocate who is to blame. It also puts an emphasis on victimisation in how this injustice negatively affects the victim.

Prognostic Frame

"In social movement theory, prognostic frames describe rhetoric that articulates possible solutions and addresses necessary actions" (Sandberg and Andersen, unpublished; on Benford and Snow, 2000). After identifying the societal issue or injustice in the diagnostic frame, there needs to be a suggested solution or a strategy to make things right. As with the diagnostic frame, the prognosis is rational and descriptive, offering the group's collective opinion as to what should be done. Gamson (1982) calls this the agency frame, and the focus is on demonstrating the group or organisation's ability to handle a certain issue and how they are planning to proceed.

Motivational Frame

Finally, after both identifying the problem, defining who is to blame for it, and addressing a solution to the problem, the following part is to motivate people into engaging in collective

action. This last frame is according to Berntzen and Sandberg (2014) not as easy to define, but is despite this vital in creating a viable movement. While diagnostic and prognostic frames often are considered 'cold' and 'rational' (Sandberg and Andersen, unpublished), motivational frames target people's emotions, with an emphasis on how "highlighting and visualising injustice is crucial for motivation" (Ibid.: 10). In order to persuade and mobilise people to support a cause, emotions such as resentment and vindictiveness, as well as joy and optimism, needs to be awoken. The latter is the reason as to why the motivational frame is considered the most direct frame (Benford and Snow, 2000).

Effectiveness of frames

The combination of these frames should create a clear division between a 'we' – those who suffer, and an obvious 'they' – the people responsible for the suffering and injustice (Polletta, 2009; Gamson, 1992; Stoecker, 1995). For a frame to be effective there are however several prerequisites in place. Polletta (2009) notes how frames need to be 'empirically credible', meaning that they are reliant on calling on already existing agreed upon beliefs in order to act as effective frames. The call for collective action does in other words not solely evolve out of nothing, but is built on an already established latent concern and strong beliefs and should be 'experientially commensurable', meaning that they should "resonate with people's everyday experiences" (Polletta, 2009:3).

The importance of the presentation of frames is not to be underestimated; and Benford and Snow (2000) point at how people who speak on behalf of a movement also needs to be considered as credible by the audience, as a person considered a fool by his audience will not have the power to motivate people to action. Presumably, this is the reason as to why both groups studied have front figures that regularly express themselves on behalf of the group, precisely because they are internally considered as credible. First when a frame possesses all these characteristics, "the stronger the consensus mobilizations and the more fertile the soil for action mobilization" (Snow and Benford, 1988:211) will be.

2.2.2 Extremism and social movement theory

Several studies of jihadi groups have utilised social movement theory (e.g. Wiktorowicz, 2004; Snow and Byrd, 2007; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008; Gunning, 2009), and while there is less framing studies available on specifically neo-Nazi organisations, there are some looking at far right and white supremacy groups (e.g. Adams and Roscigno 2005; Berntzen and Sandberg, 2014). It seems like neo-Nazi organisations, arguably being a marginal phenomenon, have insofar

received more interest from subcultural researchers rather than researchers utilising social movement theory. A recurring theme in the studies of jihadi groups is the clear distinction between an 'us' and 'them', and how this hostile other is to bear the blame for the injustice and suffering of Muslims. Their frames are constructed through classical narratives of heroism, ideological warfare and the pure and good versus the evil infidels. They point to modern days instabilities and conflicts as part of a historical narrative of how Muslim land have been invaded by hostile forces for centuries, and how those who do not follow the narrow path laid out by Allah, will suffer when the world as we know it comes to an end. By utilising collective action frames, researchers are able to decipher what rational, rhetorical and emotional factors that together define a societal issue and allocate blame, a strategic plan for making it right, as well as a motivational appeal in order to recruit and encourage members. Through our data, applying collective action framing has had great value to structure our analysis, as well as help us carry out a thorough comparative analysis with data that differs in both content, the use of narratives and different ways of writing.

2.3   Narrative Criminology

Narrative criminology is any inquiry based on the view of stories as instigating, sustaining, or effecting desistance from harmful action. We study how narratives inspire and motivate harmful action, and how they are used to make sense of harm (Presser and Sandberg, 2015:1).

A theoretical and methodological narrative approach in criminology might aid the researcher when investigating what motivates actors to commit, or obtain from committing, crimes or other harmful actions. By replacing a traditional instrumentalist perspective that separate storytelling from life itself, storytelling and its role in people's everyday life and the codes they live by will appear more clearly (McAdams, 1993; Presser and Sandberg, 2015). Making sense of situations and events are dependent on our capability to connect A and B, ergo A caused B, and B is a consequence of A. This is a common way of constructing a coherent story or recollection of something that has happened, and is the baseline for storytelling. By constructing a story, we are able to place ourselves or our group in the world. The stories we tell can be considered as "temporally ordered statement concerning events experienced by and/or action of one or more protagonists" (Presser, 2009:178-179), because the story will continuously change depending

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on new experiences, new actions and new events. By constructing stories, we are able to forge connection between experiences, actions and events (Presser and Sandberg 2015).

The power of narratives is demonstrated in how they make "individuals, cultures, societies, and historical epochs comprehensible as wholes; it humanizes time; and it allows us to contemplate the effects of our actions, and to alter the directions of our lives" (Richardson, 1990: 117). Studying narratives is not simply studying the exact words, rather, the intention is to study the meaning and motivation behind the words and for us to be able to read between the lines. The accuracy of the story presented, and whether the story is 'true' or 'false' is not of great concern as what is deliberately left out from a story might give insight to another reality and world view than the one expressed through words only (Sandberg, 2010).

Scholars such as Sykes and Matza (1957), and Scott and Lyman (1968) saw the importance of utilising narratives in their work "*Techniques of neutralisation*" and "*Accounts*" prior to the millennium shift. The narrative approach has later become increasingly popular within the field of criminology when studying drug dealing, substance abuse and violence.

Using talk as data has been a common practise for centuries within social research (Polletta et al., 2011). Prior to this narrative shift, interviews have predominantly been used in order to recognise and establish which factors that *led* to a crime or a harmful action, in other words; what made people commit crimes? Narratives "allocate causal responsibility for action, define actors and give them motivation, indicate the trajectory of past episodes and predict consequences of future choices, suggest courses of action, confer and withdraw legitimacy, and provide social approval by aligning events with normative cultural codes" (Smith, 2005:18). The study of narratives might therefore be able to predict *future* action; as stories are often what guides us to harm, and how the story told prior to a criminal act often varies from the recollections of it (Presser, 2013).

2.3.1 Narrative genres and neutralisation

In traditional storytelling, narratives take the form of different classical genres, such as the infamous structured story of the brave hero fighting to save the princess from evil (Labov, 1972) or in the form of Propp's (1968) character types. Smith (2005) sort narratives into four main categories; low-mimesis, romance, tragedy and apocalypse. The *low-mimesis* is downplayed and usually do not encourage violence, the *romantic* story sets out to solve issues without resorting to violent conflict, the *tragedy* emphasises despair and suffering, while the *apocalypse* is dramatic in the depiction on a world on the verge of collapse.

The apocalyptic narrative is the most relevant for this study, with the recognisable story of an oncoming total disaster run by an evil force, and how violence becomes the only viable solution in order to save the world. In a way "stories motivate acts by making them *available* – one had not even considered the possibility – and *attractive* by associating them with particular cultures, identities or life-stories" (Sandberg, 2016:159, emphasis original). Dramatic and exceptionally violent crimes such as terror attacks or school shootings often stem from such apocalyptic stories, which might serve the purpose of neutralising and legitimising such violent acts.

Sykes and Matza (1957) presents *'five techniques of neutralisation'* in order to demonstrate how offenders explain, justify and neutralise their own crimes. They argue that the stories behind the crime is an unrecognised defense mechanism, and a way for the delinquent actors to justify and validate actions that society at large consider to be deviant behaviour. As an example, denying the victim its victimhood is one of these techniques, "the injury, it may be claimed, is not really an injury; rather, it is a form of rightful retaliation or punishment" (p. 668). Drawing examples from our data in particular, one can easily discover a pattern where victims are denied their victimhood and are transformed into wrongdoers. Other neutralisation techniques are the denial of responsibility, where the subject typically blames their deviance on a traumatic childhood or on being failed by society in various ways. Another is the denial of injury, which is common among shoplifters or as an excuse for other petty crimes where there is not a victim present in the traditional sense of the word.

'The condemnation of the condemners' is one of the techniques that is especially applicable for our study, where the delinquent shifts the focus of attention from his own deviant acts to the motives and behaviour of those who disapprove of his behaviour. The delinquent's condemners, he may claim, are hypocrites, deviants in disguise, or impelled by personal spite. By condemning the condemners, the delinquent presents a disclaimer from his personal violent acts by focusing on the motives and behaviour of others. Additionally, there is this constant underlying reliance to a higher loyalty, which Sykes and Matza (1957) describes as "sacrificing the demands of the larger society for the demands of the smaller social groups to which the delinquent belong" (p. 669). In the case of this study, the higher loyalty referred to are Allah and Sharia law to The Prophet's Ummah, while to The Nordic Resistance Movement their higher loyalty is their devotion to the survival of the Nordic race.

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2.3.2 Narrative types

In addition to the classical genres of storytelling, the stories people tell could be categorised into life stories, event stories and tropes (Sandberg, 2016). These are closely connected, and will usually appear intertwined in interviews, text and conversation. Still, their perspectives do differ, and should be taken into consideration when choosing which type of story one would want to focus on. In the search for individual accounts of how a person came associated with criminal behaviour, one would want to focus on life stories, in order to let the individual perspective say something about that person's identity. Event stories will highlight particular events, often events that have made some sort of impact in the informant's life, while tropes could be utilised in order to unravel an underlying hegemonic discourse, or the agreed upon consensus in which narratives that are considered the collective truth (ibid., 2016). Due to this study's aim of research we have found the study of tropes to give the most useful insight. This in mind, the way in which particular events are recollected and constructed into a new meaning that underpins their point and world view is also of high value.

Tropes

Tropes, or stories untold, are "single words or short phrases that hint at familiar stories" (Sandberg, 2016:1664), placed within both life- and event stories. They are considered to be the most salient forms of narrative (ibid., 2016), and might help identify the hegemonic discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) or doxa (Bourdieu, 1977) that goes without saying. Through the use of tropes we are able to say what we want to say without saying countless words that might ruin the rhythm of the narrative (Presser, 2013; Sandberg, 2016). Tropes could be utilised in multifaceted stories open for interpretation, where they provide ambiguity and give the listener the opportunity to choose which story they hear, which in turn might increase the story's potential resonance (Polletta, 2009). Other tropes are not as open to interpretation of meaning, and these could help identify the hegemonic discourse in a specific social environment. A good story is often retold, but this puts pressure on the storyteller in order to maintain the interest of the listeners. In these situations, tropes might serve to ensure that the listeners do not get bored with a story they have heard before. The word 'Holocaust' is for instance associated to a specific event, the genocide on the Jews during the Second World War. This simple word can therefore be considered a trope, as it indicates a hegemonic discourse where there is "little ambiguity and everyone agrees on meaning" (Sandberg, 2016:165). In other words, there are few that do not think of genocide, the Nazi-Germany's politics of race and the horrendous sufferings it led to; when hearing the word. This also applies whether or not

people agree on the extent of the encumbrance of the Holocaust, for example the members of NRM.

Master narratives

The master narrative is defined as culturally embedded stories that to some extent contribute in defining the collectively agreed upon consensus, and these stories are predominantly consistent throughout time and place. "Who we are, what we are here for, and what makes us unique, and so on – is entirely bound up in the narratives we grow up hearing and the stories we connect to them" (Polletta et.al., 2011:12). Connecting stories, narratives and master narratives give us a systematic understanding of the world, and our personal or collective narrative is suddenly given a purpose when connected to the master narrative.

For individuals in extremist organisations, master narratives reveal a great deal about how they think about "where they came from, where they might be going, how they should be organised, what goals they should pursue in light of what they believe, and what makes them [….] unique" (Halverson et al., 2011:12). Extreme views and values does not occur in a vacuum, therefore focusing on master narratives can play an important part in understanding internal motivation and justifications of violence and extremist thoughts.

2.3.3 Extremist Narratives

Narrative criminology is insofar not commonly utilised in terrorism research, but there are a couple comprehensive contributions to the field (Halverson et al., 2011; Hegghammer, 2015; Hegghammer and Nesser, 2015; Kepel et.al., 2008). An individual story must be interpreted in the light of cultural trends, as well as having an opportunity to influence collective actions, which in turn makes narratives a crucial field of study in exploring war and terrorism. Stories could also be motivating in themselves; a good story is captivating, as shown in Katz's (1988) *The Seduction of Crime*, and sometimes the crime itself gives a thrill. From a postmodern perspective, it could be argued that narratives draw upon a variety of cultural repertoires that come from diverse social contexts, and they could be seen as important socio-political forces in a globalised society. The postmodern approach blurs the line between experience and narratives, and argue that we are never completely free from a narrative, and thus all our experiences become narrated (Presser and Sandberg, 2015).

It has been suggested that narratives play a central role in legitimising and motivating harmful actions (Presser, 2013). If an individual is already motivated for the task, then stories could provide a form of legitimation for certain acts. The act they are motivated to do become

legitimised through different neutralisation processes (Presser and Sandberg, 2015:288). In relation to extremist groups, one would have to look at the narratives told within that specific subculture, and Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) describes subcultural violence as "where physically aggressive responses are either expected or required by all members" (p. 298). In other words, the underlying expectation, the norms and agreed upon consensus, is a violent one. Presser (2013) argues that "neutralisation theory goes beyond subcultural theory by specifying what we tell ourselves when we tell ourselves that violence is acceptable – not all together but given present circumstances" (p. 27), which points to why a theoretical synthesis containing both a subcultural as well as an ideological approach would be beneficial when studying extremist groups. While subcultural theory goes a long way in analysing group dynamics and subcultural style, paying attention to which ideologically incorporated narratives that neutralise violence in specific scenarios (for example in self defence), will provide a broader understanding of how subcultural traits and ideology are intertwined and mutually connected.

Narratives "allocate causal responsibility for action, define actors and give them motivation, indicate the trajectory of past episodes and predict consequences of future choices, suggest courses of action, confer and withdraw legitimacy, and provide social approval by aligning events with normative cultural codes" (Smith, 2005:18). The most vital master narratives of the extremist groups presented in this study are in accordance with Smith's (2005) description of the apocalyptic narrative. Both groups have in common a polarised world view with a clear distinction between in- and out groups, as well as clearly defined frames regarding which societal issues they considered problematic, who is to blame for them, and what should be done to solve the issue. To both groups, a legitimation of violent and otherwise harmful acts will be part of this suggested solution, hence narratives should therefore be considered as a supplement to collective action frames. In this study we will present the central master narratives referenced by respectively the Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement. While PU refer to a variety of established jihadi narratives that are intertwined and together form their world view, NRM's world view appear more unified regarding one apparent master narrative.

2.4   Subculture Theory

Subcultures are groups of people that are in some way represented as non-normative and/or marginal through their particular interests and practises, through what they are, what they do and where they do it (Gelder, 2005:1).

In this study we have chosen to utilise Gelder's (2005) definition of what constitutes a subculture. This definition in mind, one can look at subculture as a relatively isolated subdivision of culture, where the focus is not on homogeneity, but heterogeneity, not the known, but unknown. Becker (1974) noted that to study the 'abnormal', one is dependent on studying the 'normal', the dominant culture. As we measure the abnormalities based on dominant culture, one can say that subcultures are to a certain extent produced by dominant culture.

Contribution to the field of subcultural theory is extensive, and the width and variations will not be done justice in this study. A simplifying categorisation divides subcultural theory into two main categories; the American Chicago School, with its focus on urban ethnography in addition to its favourite concepts of deviance and strain, and the British tradition of the Birmingham School (CCCS) and other postmodern approaches, which focus is primarily on subcultural style; including attire, music, language, symbols and rituals. Despite their differences, one can argue that a common trait for both subcultural directions is to explore the elements that link certain individuals together in non-normative ways.

2.4.1   Chicago School

The Chicago School draws upon Merton's (1938) functionalist strain theory and perspectives on deviance as a normal part of society, rather than it being the anomaly. Many theorists have made valuable contributions to the field, but we will primarily focus on the most relevant theories developed by Albert K. Cohen (1955) and his study of delinquent boys, and Cloward and Ohlin (1960) and their study of delinquency and opportunity. Scholars of the Chicago School argue that delinquency is normal behaviour in its relation to cultural and social contexts such as class, gender and ethnic background. Accordingly, a subculture is a reaction to this process of social strain.

Albert Cohen's (1955), *'Delinquent boys: culture of the gang',* is reckoned to be one of the most influential contributions in American subculture theory. His work outlines how working-class boys who are not able to achieve middle-class aspirations experience strain or

status frustration, which makes them form subcultures with their own set of norms and values. He drew this conclusion after seeing how young boys from working class backgrounds were often described as lacking the discipline needed to succeed, in which made them experience status frustration. To solve this frustration the boys collectively reacted against the middle-class standards they could not measure up to, which led to the development of delinquent gangs that valued danger, physical toughness and short term pleasure seeking. Since the frame of reference as to what it meant to be successful was brand new; also the groups of people who "occupied a constant position as folk devils" (Cohen, S., 1972:2), were able to be successful within a subculture. A subculture is therefore to be considered as a "collective solution to a structurally imposed problem" (Cohen, P., 1997:1), and not a coincidental act.

Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) '*Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs*' can be seen as a development of A. Cohen's (1955) work. Similar to A. Cohen (1955) they explore the combination of strain and subcultural theory, but they argue that the "strain theory was incomplete without a systematic explanation of why people solve their problems in one way and not another" (Lilly, Cullen and Ball, 2002: 57), which is why their focus was predominantly on how *access to opportunities* shaped life chances and influenced the degree to which young people end up committing delinquencies. While A. Cohen (1955) explored how working-class boys who failed at school turned to delinquency, Cloward and Ohlin (1960) found that even working-class boys who are successful at school turn to delinquency because despite being qualified they experience failure in the job market simply because there are not enough jobs. The reason as to why people turn to delinquency, they argue, is because they have been boxed out of more legitimate opportunities. Cloward and Ohlin (1960) identifies three types of subcultures that are available for those who in one way or another have been denied access to opportunities; the criminal, conflict and retratist. Which subculture one engage in depends upon the cultural transmission of delinquent values. The criminal subcultures which predominantly exercised in property crimes, were found to evolve in stable working-class areas. The conflict subcultures on the other hand, where activities often were related to high levels of violence, emerged in areas with 'less stable' working-class environments. Lastly, the retreatist subcultures were formed by people who had failed in the criminal subculture, who subsequently turned to drugs and alcohol to mute the feelings of having failed twice.

For this study subcultural insight from the Chicago School might contribute to an understanding of how participating extremist subcultures act as a way for marginalised groups and individuals to feel some sort of belonging in a society they feel excluded from, and that subcultures act as an alternative and a solution to a situation of strain.

2.4.2 Birmingham School

The post war British approach to subculture stems mainly from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham, as well as more recent postmodern approaches to the concept of delinquency. CCCS expands on Chicago School's concepts on deviance and social strain, but adds on a cultural perspective and the concepts of *resistance* seen through homology and bricolage. The CCCS approach sees delinquent behaviour as a means to critique society (see Cohen, 1972; Hebdige, 1979). As Pisoiu (2015) notes, "subcultural participants do define *themselves* in opposition to a mainstream which, however vague, is real to them" (p. 11). Therefore, the assumption is not that young people formed subcultures because they were unable to achieve middle-class aspirations, rather, subcultures emerged because individuals did *not want to* adjust to the mainstream, indeed they *resisted* it.

It is worth mentioning that scholars belonging to this school of research tend to omit and exclude categories of youth from their analysis. Despite resistance, being one of the CCCS' main concepts, they produced little research on feminism and antiracism despite the two being large cultural movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Men and masculine activities has however been the main focus (Naegler and Salman, 2016). Females in subcultural studies have to some extent been viewed as a 'mean' and 'activity' for men to promote their masculine identity, rather than viewing females as active agents. The same thing applies when studying black youth, as they are often placed within the category 'race'. McRobbie and Garber's (1977) *Girls and subcultures* and CCCS' (2004) *The Empire Strikes Back* are however an exception to this criticism.

Style

In his infamous book S*ubculture: The meaning of style,* Hebdige (1979) notes how style, expressed through attire, music and speech, performs as a symbolic form of resistance, acting as both a contestation and disruption against the mainstream. His notion of style is therefore to be considered as rather superficial, but in addition to being visible for bystanders, the stylistic expression also contributes in creating a shared identity among the members within a subculture. The subcultural style, he argues, is constructed through the way in which a subculture adopts everyday objects that are "made to mean and mean again" (ibid., 1979:3). "The way in which prominent forms of discourse (particularly fashion) are radically adapted, subverted and extended" (ibid., 1979: 104) was conceptualised as 'bricolage'. When the object's 'new' meaning symbolise what the group actually *resists,* it becomes a part of the subculture's 'homology' which is "the symbolic fit between the values and life styles of a group, its

subjective experience and the musical forms it uses to express or reinforce its focal concerns" (ibid., 1979:113). Further, in a true CCCS approach; Hebdige (1979) points at the importance of viewing the subcultural style in context of culture. He exemplifies how the punk and the reggae subculture "connect on a deep constructional level" (ibid., 1979:29) because they both were placed within the same mainstream. Despite how their views and values seemingly contradict each other, both styles are built upon their rejection of British national symbolism. It should however be mentioned how resistance through fashion is rather weak in the sense that it does not constitute any particular difference and only empowers the subculture in a limited period of time. Mainstream society will in many cases label the groups as radicals and in many cases fear them, but eventually the style will be commodified and available to the mainstream – leading to the death of the style's power (ibid., 1979).

Hebdige's (1979) concept of style was as mentioned predominantly superficial, as the primary focus was on fashion. Ferrell (1995) did however redefine the concept of style to be more all-encompassing. Style, he argues is;

> a concrete element of personal and group identity, grounded in everyday practices of social life. *Style* is in this sense embedded in haircuts, posture, clothing, automobiles, music, and the many other avenues through which people present themselves publicly. But it is also located *between* people, and among groups; it constitutes an essential element in collective behavior, an element whose meaning is constructed through the nuances of social interaction. When this interaction emerges within a criminalized subculture, or between its members and legal authorities, personal and collective style emerges as an essential link between cultural meaning and cultural identity (Ferrell 1995:169-170, original emphasis).

For this project, Ferrell's (1995) definition of style will be utilised as both the Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement's collective identity consists of much more than the most obvious visible elements as clothing and symbols. Their group identity is also formed by their masculine appearance, acts of violence and thrill-seeking behaviour.

Masculinity and violence
The hegemonic masculinity is defined as a set of normative ideas as to how a man should behave, regardless if this behaviour is representative for most men in the society in question. In our historical time period, the hegemonic masculinity is that of the stereotypical Western heterosexual and dominant masculinity which is associated with independence, control, competitiveness and a muscular body (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

Mikkelsen and Søgaard (2015) points at how much research shows a link between masculinity and violence; since violence to some extent is embedded in traditional male roles in a variety of societies. The latter is reflected in statistics showing that men are the perpetrators of most public and domestic violence, suggesting that there is a strong correlation between the two. Boys are from a young age socialised into being tough and dominant, and these characteristics are then internalised through adolescence, making some young boys more susceptible to delinquency than others. It has also been suggested that through subcultural youth gangs, the boys learn toughness and dominance as important aspects of a masculine reputation from older males (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960; Talcott Parsons, 1964). Connell (1998) states that during the last couple of decades, social science researchers have discovered an emerging change where a plurality of understandings of masculinities and gender practices is more apparent. In this sense, masculine identities are described more as collective and dynamic rather than fixed. Even so, the concept of the hegemonic masculinity is integrated in most societies and their depiction of manliness and masculine roles, and violence is considered as something men "'do' because 'doing' allows them to construct and confirm their masculine identities" (Donald and MacDonald, 2011: 96). The construction of masculinity is often made from the idea of muscular male bodies, or narratives of violent practices. In this way, the potential for violent acts continues to be associated with the masculine identity (Mikkelsen and Søgaard, 2015).

It is then clear that the potential for violent acts is not only connected to masculinity in extremist subcultures, as it is part of mainstream society as well. If a person is about to hit another person in the face, but stops before the impact, then "the completion of the act exists as a potential with possible effects on future social relations and the masculine status of individuals" (ibid., 2015: 281). Interestingly enough, violent acts are on one side increasingly frowned upon by society, while at the same time promoted as masculine through entertainment and expectations. Men will thus be caught in a situation where they are supposed to abstain from violent acts, while at the same time not reject them completely, in order not to be seen as either violent deviants, or completely feminised. This potentiality of violence is widespread and exists in everyday social relations otherwise characterised by gender equality. Even in Western cultures where violence is generally condemned, the traditional hegemonic and potentially violent masculinity is present, for example through popular media. The mere underlying threat of potential use of violence in an interaction is just as important as the violent acts themselves.

Edgework

When speaking of crime and deviance, rational choice theorists are interested in looking at what people will gain from committing an offence, while scholars from the Chicago School focus on the background factors and how social strain and status frustration leads to deviance. Cultural criminologists, on the other hand, are interested in the emotions that comes with deviancy, and how some individuals commit crimes based on the thrill – "its adrenaline, its pleasure and panic, its excitement, and its anger, rage and humiliation, its desperation" (Hayward and Young, 2004:13). This thrill seeking behaviour is conceptualised as 'edgework' (Lyng, 1990) and is considered as one of the explanations as to why so many people took part in the London Riots in 2011.

The theory of edgework rejects the typical 'poverty thesis', and as Albert Cohen (1955) argues, the act of stealing is not motivated by the fact that people are hungry or cannot afford certain material possessions, the activity itself is what is of value. The concept of edgework sees deviance as having a purpose, other than economic gain, "it is deliberate – a gesture of action, rather than mere reaction" (MacDonald, 2001:126). A. Cohen (1955) does for instance point at how gang members steal for the hell of it because it comes with pleasure and satisfaction and they find "enjoyment in the discomfort of others, a delight in the defiance of taboos" (ibid., 1955: 27). In simple terms, edgework focuses on the enjoyable and sensational emotions related to crime (Lyng, 1990; Hall and Jefferson, 1993; Katz, 1988).

For many subcultures, illegality does to some extent serve as the subculture's backbone. The reason for this is that without illegality, the danger, the challenge and the threat, its members lose the opportunity to show off that they possess the necessary set skills to overcome such challenges. 'Dangerous' actions can therefore be considered to acts as a way of building and defending their honour, respect, reputation and, in most cases, their masculine identity (MacDonald, 2001; Polk, 1994).

2.4.3 Extremism and subculture theory

Criminology in increasingly popular in order to understand extremism in light of deviancy and resistance. It has emerged quite a few extensive subcultural studies of radicalisation and different extremist groups in the recent years, and while we will not be able do justice to the field of research in this thesis, there are some contributions we wish to highlight as they are particularly interesting for this study in particular.

Cottee (2011) applies A. Cohen's theory to third wave Al Qaeda members and points at how these young men are mainly of lower class, second- and third generation Muslims living

in Europe, and arguably fit Cohen's model of status frustration. He argues that third wave jihadism could be interpreted as a collective solution to the problems of status frustration as well as identity confusion to some Westernised young Muslim men. Cottee (2011) describes how the jihadist solution is compelling and severe two key purposes: to establish different forms of status criteria in order for its members to succeed, as well as provide them with values and subcultural style in order for them to express and justify their rejection of Western society. With this he poses the hypothesis that social strain, represented by both class background and cultural strain, paired with a postmodern perspective of individual opportunity to construct their identity on a local and global level, contributes in explaining the emergence of these deviant lifestyles.

Mark Hamm (1993) and his study *American Skinheads* is probably one of the biggest contributions to the field, in which he presents a theory of modern hate crime through his field work on American Skinheads. His research covers socio-economic backgrounds, masculinity, the role of female members, violence, guns and drugs, as well as different ideological links between neo-Nazism, neo-Fascism and Satanism. Hamm analyse these factors through well established subcultural perspectives of both strain, bricolage and homology, finding most resonance with the two latter perspectives, which also seem to be the views of several other researchers in the field. He followed up with an extensive analysis of the link between terrorism and crime (2007), as well as a study on the radicalisation processes of Muslims in prison (2013), to mention a few.

Hegghammer (2017) explores the rich aesthetic jihadist culture consisting of music, poetry, symbols and dream interpretation and elaborates on how jihadists are only fighting a fraction of their time. Exploring cultural practices, he argues, is essential for understanding the jihadist world view and points at how taking culture into consideration is important when aiming to understand the recruitment processes in extremist groups (ibid., 2017), and Daniela Pisoiu (2015) applies subcultural theories to individual cases of jihadi and right-wing radicals in Germany where she explores various background factors and motivation for taking part in such groups. Similar to various research, Pisoiu (2015) finds little support for the 'poverty thesis' (see Krueger and Malečková, 2003; Lia and Skjølberg, 2004; Veldhuis and Staun, 2009; Rabasa and Bernad, 2014) and points at how neither of those interviewed consider themselves as failures. She does however find support of CCCS' concept of resistance, bricolage and homology by pointing at how their subcultural style is constructed out of mundane mainstream objects.

2.5   The theoretical synthesis

This study utilises a theoretical synthesis consisting of collective action framing, narrative criminology and subcultural theory. The analysis is to be understood as a whole, rather than independent sequences. Here, narrative criminology underlines which stories that are important to the actors, both through the stories they tell, and also those only hinted at. Collective action framing primarily focus on the groups' collectively agreed upon problems in society and suggested solutions, as well as the motivational appeal of their rhetoric. Both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are arguably marginal phenomenon, and we will utilise subcultural theory in order to analyse their bricolage, homology and constructed masculine identities. These are factors that are not necessarily communicated through words alone, but are highly relevant when exploring the respective organisational cultures.

Much of the text produced by both PU and NRM have an explicit political content, and is aimed at promoting their views and suggested solutions, which makes framing theory a viable theoretical option. Collective action frames provide the researcher with three clearly defined categories; a diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frame, which aid in mapping out the argumentation and motivational appeal of a collective group, and work as a building block for a thorough narrative analysis in this study. PU and NRM's controversial and violent approach cannot be said to appeal to the great masses, hence it could be argued that they are not to be categorised as social movements at all, but rather should be considered as marginal subcultural phenomenon. Still, NRM has been described as the Scandinavian right-wing extremist group of today with the most successful transnational organisational skills (NRK, 2017b). Aspects of their rhetoric are also shared by several right-wing organisations, and since PU have claimed loyalty to IS, they too are a part of a broader, international movement. We would therefore argue that both groups' motivational appeal reaches a broader spectre of sympathisers than solely the members of the organisations, and thus can be categorised as branches of transnational social movements.

We would argue that paying attention to the master narratives presented through framing would reveal how transhistorical tales are incorporated into extremist ideologies. In this way, the master narratives provide the actors with a collectively agreed upon world view, which ties them to similar organisations as well as unite these environments of like minded people against a common enemy. In addition, collective action frames and master narratives supplement each other well in providing comprehensible answers to complex societal issues. Where the frames point to the more tangible issues of everyday society and ways to go about to fix them, we use the narratives capture the more underlying sublime doxa. In other words,

the stories the organisations tell and hint at, reveal the hegemonic story of their existence. These stories provide them with a higher purpose of life and place their struggles in a shared historical setting.

Both narrative criminology and social movement theory have gained criticism for not taking into account how socio-economic factors influence their research subjects, and thus miss out on the important role societal mechanisms constitute. The way people tell a story does not necessarily have real impact on their everyday lives, nor does it motivate to action without other elements playing their part. Subcultural theory, on the other hand, has gained criticism for actually alienating the subculture in question, making them seem far more deviant than they might actually be, as well as present these milieus as something completely detached from mainstream culture. In order to get a more nuanced impression of extremist ideologies and subcultural traits, our aim is for these perspectives to complement each other and fill out the blanks. Benford (1997) points to how various concepts such as culture versus structure have had a tendency to constrain theoretical and empirical development in studying social movements, and how we need more comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate social structure, culture, and human agency in a constructive way.

We would argue that this is something to be considered when studying social phenomenon in general, and therefore we wish to present a thorough analysis of PU and NRM based on this threefold theoretical synthesis. We argue that the complexity and nuances of the extremist groups will be more realistically described when utilising more than one theoretical approach. Especially regarding how these kinds of environments attract a variety of different recruits, which in turn could be motivated by fundamentalist views, the thrill of being part of an extremist environment, or because they find pleasure in violence; to mention a few. The comparative analysis provides us with an insight on how limited extremist environments can have certain crucial similarities, despite prominent ideological differences. Studying their rhetoric and seeing this in light of a transnational, ideological environment gives us valuable information about the underlying sublime doxa of extremist environments, while adding a subcultural perspective will also take into account traits such as appearance, excitement, identity and action.

3. METHODOLOGY

This thesis is a qualitative study mainly based on sources published by The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement, which aim is to highlight the narratives and subcultural traits that characterise extremist ideologies. The following chapter will present the study's data, research method and process, as well as reflect on strengths, weaknesses and ethical considerations.

3.1 Dataset

The dataset consists of 28 different elements, of which 22 are primary sources and 6 being secondary sources. The primary sources are a mix of press releases, political platforms, ideological manifestos and YouTube clips posted by the groups themselves, while the secondary sources are NRK documentaries and public interviews with members of each organisation. All together this constitutes 66.066 words and 174 minutes of video, whereas 40.558 words and 97 minutes of video are related to The Nordic Resistance Movement and 25.508 words and 77 minutes of video are related to The Prophet's Ummah. Most of the data is publicly available on the Internet as of today, while certain parts, especially related to The Prophet's Ummah, have been taken down. However, these are accessible through web archives. The entire dataset is presented in Table 3.1 below, presenting each individual element; numbered and arranged by the group of its belonging. When referring to specific parts of data, the group's initials followed by the material's number will be presented. E.g. 'NRM1' when referring to The Nordic Resistance Movement's publication 'Our Path – New Politics for a New Time'.

Importantly, this study is not a content analysis per se, as the focus is on the presentation of narratives and subcultural trait, meaning that the data will not be broken down and analysed separately. Some of the material might not be referenced in the final version of this thesis, but have still contributed to our understanding of the separate groups and helped create a holistic image of PU and NRM.

#:	Name:	Type:	Length:	Published by:	Date of publication:
	The Nordic Resistance Movement				
NRM1	*Our Path - New Politics for a New Time*	Primary source	13152 words	frihetskamp.net	April 2016
NRM2	*National Socialism - The Biological World View*	Primary source	8349 words	frihetskamp.net	August 2016
NRM3	*Handbook for Activists*	Primary source	14000 words	Nordfront Förlag	January 2016
NRM4	*The Fight for a Greater Cause*	Primary source	1511 words	frihetskamp.net	September 2015
NRM5	*The radical and uncompromised fight - the path to victory*	Primary source	1246 ord	frihetskamp.net	April 2015
NRM6	*Battle year 2017*	Primary source	11 minutes	Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen	12th January 2018
NRM7	*Right wing extremists to TV2 - Ready to take power over the Nordic region.*	Secondary source	7 min / 615 words	TV2	October 2016
NRM8	*Det Hvite Raseriet: Nordens Farligste*	Secondary source	2300 words	VG+	March. 2017
NRM9	*Race warriors*	Secondary source	1 hour, 19 minutes	NRK Brennpunkt	6th Desember 2017
	The Prophet's Ummah				
PU1	*Invaders terrorists abducted 3 innocent civilians during the night raid.*	Primary source	92 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU2	*Martyrdom attacks hits local spy agency in Nangarhar.*	Primary source	115 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU3	*20 policemen killed in martyrdom attacks in Logar.*	Primary source	90 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU4	*8 puppets killed when the enemy's vehicle struck a landmine explosion.*	Primary source	64 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU5	*Withdraw from our country*	Primary source	362 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU6	*44 ways to support jihad*	Primary source	9033 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU7	*About The Prophet's Ummah*	Primary source	358 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU8	*The Islamic social system*	Primary source	1344 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU9	*Sharia - Islamic juristiction*	Primary source	914 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU10	*Foreign policies*	Primary source	626 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU11	*In Allah's Name, the most merciful, most gracious*	Primary source	345 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU12	*Our beloved brother - Arfan Bhatti*	Primary source	840 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU13	*Western education system*	Primary source	760 wrods	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU14	*The truth about Islam*	Primary source	503 words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU15	*Conditions in Kalimah - Shahada*	Primary source	1017words	profetensummah.com	Downloaded: 5th July 2013
PU16	*Mohyeldeen Mohammad – Message from Syria*	Primary source	11 minutes	Profetens Ummah	12th November 2012
PU17	*The Islamist*	Secondary source	1669 words	Morgenbladet	October 2012
PU18	*Ubaydullah Hussain on Norwegian Women: They Suppress Themselves*	Secondary source	7376 words	VGTV	August 2014
PU19	*The Norwegian Islamist*	Secondary source	1 hour, 6 minutes	NRK TV	15th April 2017

Table 3.1 – Dataset overview

3.2 Data collection

Collecting data for the purpose of this research has been relatively straightforward, as we have only used material that is easily accessible. Conducting interviews with group members was never an option, mainly because the aim of this study is to analyse their ideologies, and we could get the material needed without interviewing members. It has been important to us to view the groups from an 'outside' perspective and focus on the way in which the groups *themselves* communicate their ideological views to their own members, without the interference of a researcher. As this study involves two separate groups, the collection process has differed depending on which groups we have collected data from, as we are to elaborate on in detail later on in this chapter. In spite of this, our collection approach has been similar for both; focusing on data *selection*, instead of data collection Bowen (2009).

Our research question and aim of research in mind, the main body of data utilised in this study are primary data, stemming directly from our research objects in the form of publications from their own websites.

For the purpose of getting a holistic understanding of the organisations, we did however decide to supplement the primary sources with three rather similar secondary sources for each

group, as we wanted to see if what they express in writing is also observable through their public appearance. The secondary data have been processed and edited by a journalist or filmmaker before being published, but have in spite of this been considered as valuable for this study. The combination of primary and secondary data has given us an insight into how deep certain stories and rhetoric are embedded, as well as provided a better acumen of their subcultural style and non-verbal expression.

The pictures used for this thesis have predominantly been gathered from the groups' own websites, as well as online newspapers to illustrate and give the reader a sense of PU and NRM's subcultural appearance.

3.2.1   The Nordic Resistance Movement

To find data on the Nordic Resistance Movement, we simply visited the group's own website www.frihetskamp.net, which is updated daily with news about upcoming demonstrations, critics, opinions and the group's achievements, in addition to information about the group's history, ideology and presentation of their political platform. In the case of NRM, it was thus almost 'too much' material to choose from, which meant that the collection process focused primarily on finding and sorting out text and images that we found to be relevant to our particular research question. Our starting point was to explore the website in detail, which led us to quickly discover that the first three sources related to NRM, presented in Table 3.1 above, were central publications on the website. The reason for us referring to them 'central' is because they are the only publications with their own 'tabs' on the website and are often referred to within other publications on the site, e.g. "If you still have not read our political platform *Our Path – New Politics for a New Time*, click HERE". These particular sources consist of a wide range of information about the group's ideology, world view and future plans, which we found interesting in light of our theoretical framework.

As previously mentioned, we spent much time getting an overview of the group's website, reading many of the articles published. The other primary sources we have collected are those we considered to stand out, in the sense that they were articles that rather explicitly encouraged the use of violence as a political tool, or in which problematised the legitimacy of the Holocaust. These also consisted of several narrative tropes in which we wanted to further explore.

NRM was widely featured in the media at the time we started this project, and both NRK Brennpunkt and VG+ published comprehensive documentaries and reports about them. As argued, we found these secondary sources useful for this study as they underpinned much of

the ideological views the groups front on their website, but also because we were able to get an idea of their subcultural style and traits, while at the same time remembering that this material was processed by the journalists in order to present a certain picture.

The YouTube clip published by NRM was added to the dataset quite late in the analytical process, as it was not posted before the beginning of January 2018. A considerable amount of the analysis had already been written at the time, but we saw the video to be interesting in the way the group portrayed themselves and how they glorified what they had accomplished in 2017.

Screenshot of The Nordic Resistance Movement's website; www.frihetskamp.net on 12th January 2018.

3.2.2 The Prophet's Ummah

Collecting data related to the Prophet's Ummah was, compared to NRM, somewhat more complicated. The group became less visible in social media when the group's website www.profetensummah.com, their YouTube-channel and Facebook page were all taken down in 2014 The Facebook page as a result of being reported as a violation of Facebook regulations, while PU's other social media outlets were taken down by the group itself, presumably because they did not want to post anything that was not consistent with the Islamic State (IS), to whom PU expressed their support the same year.

In order to collect data on PU, we reached out to Stian Michalsen, who previously had written both his master thesis and a book chapter about PU, and asked whether he had stored any of the material he had used. Luckily, he had created a database with samples of PU's online publications. After skimming through the database, we selected those texts which were found

suitable for this study, in the sense that they said something about the group's beliefs, perception of themselves and perception of others; those suitable for collective action framing in particular. Data that did not conform to this requirement were simply omitted, as for example the thorough description of central members and explanations about certain Quranic characters.

Fairly late in the writing process we managed to get access to The Prophet's Ummah's original website through www.archive.org and their special search engine *internet archive - wayback machine*. This website stores all public Internet sites, even after they have been removed, and made it possible for us to browse the group's website, similar as one could at the time it was available to the public. Even though, the official website was discovered late in the writing process, it was useful in the sense that it confirmed that the material we possessed was written by The Prophet's Ummah, but it also provided us with new data that underpinned several of our findings. Additionally, to someone who had never seen the website while it was available to the public, it was interesting to observe how it flourished with pictures of terror attacks, displayed the black flag extensively, and the way it mixed 'the Norwegian' with 'the Islamic'.

Screenshot of The Prophet's Ummah's website. Visible through www.archive.org.

Similar to NRM, The Prophet's Ummah has been often featured in the Norwegian press. Several members have expressed themselves in the media and participated in both in-depth interviews and documentaries for the public to view. For the same reasons as with NRM we

have chosen to utilise three secondary sources in our analysis of The Prophet's Ummah. These were considered to be of high value in the sense that they gave us insight to the group's subcultural features, but also because they illustrated that the ideological perspective and tropes referred to in their online publications were consistent with those expressed to the media.

3.3   Qualitative Research

Language and action both have a dimension of meaning that requires interpretation. As our aim has been to explore how the groups interpret and express their social reality (Bryman, 2012), qualitative research was considered the most suitable research method. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) points out how qualitative research is "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible" (p. 3). This is the reason why qualitative research aims at providing detailed descriptions and interpretations of a social phenomenon in their natural setting in order to make sense of it (Ritchie, 2013).

Qualitative research is often judged through the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability, the equivalent to the quantitative validity, reliability and objectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Credibility is to some extent the most important criteria, because it establishes whether the findings are trustworthy, and in a sense if they are applicable to reality. Triangulation of sources, multiple theoretical perspectives and there being two researchers have hopefully contributed to illuminate possible blind spots and give this study a high rate of credibility.

Transferability can be translated to external validity and is established by providing evidence of how the findings could be applicable to other contexts and situations. It is however considered difficult for the researcher to do just this, as one in most cases will think that one's findings are transferable either way. Lincoln and Guba (1985) notes that "it is, in summary, not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability, it is his or her responsibility to provide the database that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers" (p. 316). However, this study is a comparative analysis and one could therefore argue that the criteria of transferability is already in process, as the findings apply not only to one, but two social phenomena.

Dependability is based on whether the research, if repeated by others, would present the same findings (ibid., 1985). We have therefore grounded our study in previous conducted and accepted research and concepts in order to achieve the criteria of dependability.

The last criteria for qualitative research is conformability, an aspect which is often judged by the degree of neutrality in the findings. The latter is somewhat impossible when following a social-constructivist episteme. Bryman (2012) therefore encouraged to "act in good faith; in other words, it should be apparent that he or she has not overtly allowed personal or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of researcher and the finding deriving from it" (pp. 392-393). As this study is a document analysis, which we are to explore the significance of later in this chapter, we have not been able to influence the data in any way. We have however paid plenty attention in contextualising the data by focusing on what intention the material has, who it was written by and who it was written for, in order to accurately portray the narratives and subcultural features found in our material. The combination of this approach and the data not being influenced by a researcher, we believe has enabled us to establish as much conformability as we possibly could for this study.

3.3.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is the selected qualitative approach for this study – an approach in which first and foremost involves the study of existing documents that have not been generated by a researcher's efforts (Grønmo, 2004). In contrast to for example interviews or ethnographic fieldwork, where the material is often interpreted or affected by the researcher during the collection process, documents are untouched by the researcher (Bowen, 2009; Merriam, 1988). As the aim of this research has been to study how the separate groups collectively present their convictions through narratives and style, it was essential that most of the data came directly from the groups themselves. Additionally, document analysis is useful because of its availability, efficiency and since the documents are predominantly free from a third party's interpretation. Studying documents has also made it possible for us to 'follow' both groups over a longer time span, through several events and different settings (Yin, 1994). This has made it possible for us to explore how certain narratives and styles are referred to in many different situations, instead of it being a one-time occurrence.

Similar to other analytical methods within qualitative research, document analysis requires the researcher to examine and interpreted the data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007). As briefly mentioned above, it is important when studying documents to consider that they always

are constructed in a context (Prior, 2003). When examining and interpreting documents, it is therefore important to take into consideration the purpose of the document, who it was written by and who it was written for. For example, when the intended recipient is already part of the group; certain words and phrases may not be elaborated on because the writer assumes the recipient already knows the story. The stories untold, or tropes within documents, are therefore as interesting as the actual written words (Sandberg, 2016). The latter is something we have paid great attention to in this study as these small details say lot about the groups' political opinions and framework for action.

3.3.2 Comparative analysis

The second qualitative approach utilised in this study is the comparative approach. A comparative study within qualitative research focuses on the variation without exploring statistical probability measures. In other words, the aim is to point at differences, but also explore whether there are any similarities (Bukve, 2016). Collier (1993) argues that comparison is a fundamental analytical tool as it sharpens our power of description and contributes to both concept improvement and formation. By comparing two groups, one will strengthen the qualitative criteria of transferability and hopefully participate in the development of typologies and models, strengthen or develop hypotheses and contribute to theory building (Boje, 2017). The groups we study are for example fighting two completely different causes, but nevertheless they share the perception that violence is a legitimate mean of achieving what they want, and the manners in which they express their views are somewhat similar. By comparing the methods in which the two groups legitimate violence and extremist opinions in forms of narratives and subcultural features, one might discover that the extremist views are similar in spite of their ideological differences.

In order for something to be compared, one relies on the comparative elements being roughly similar to not giving a distorted picture of reality and prevent wrongful findings. Our data is not 100% identical, simply because it is provided by two separate groups. NRM's publications are lengthy and extremely detailed, while PU express much with fewer words. Their different ways of communication could be seen as a part of their subcultural expression, and is in itself something to keep in mind. As an example, The Prophet's Ummah will rely more heavily on Quran verses and short articles written by internationally acknowledged jihadists, while The Nordic Resistance Movement produce more text of their own, with lengthy descriptions and thorough elaborations on their views and opinions. This has led to that it might seem as if there is more data related to PU than NRM, while in reality there is actually more

data related to NRM. In spite of this we do believe that we have managed to find material that resembles each other in terms of content, which we have considered to be of higher importance than having data with similar word count.

3.4   Analytical procedure

For this study we have used Bowen's (2009) approach on how to use documents in research; which "involves skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation" (p. 32).

In line with Bowen, the first step was for both of us to read through all the data in order to get a certain overview over the content and themes. This step also involved transcribing the material which was in video format. Additionally, attention was paid towards the intention of the documents, the author and intended recipient, as these factors, as mentioned, could affect the way in which documents should be read and analysed.

The next step consisted of reading the material once more, this time with "a careful, more focused rereading and review of the data" (Bowen 2009: 32). As there are two researchers undertaking the study, we decided to increase the efficiency of this step by dividing the material equally between us. While skimming through the material during the previous step, we had already gotten a certain idea of which themes and patterns in which we thought would become the categories for the analysis.

First, we decided to code the linguistics in line with framing theory, in order to get the best possible understanding of our study objects. I.e. code the 'diagnostic', 'prognostic' and 'motivational' frames. After revealing the different frames, we went on to a more detailed coding, where themes such as violence, conspiracy theories, tropes, perception of self and perception of others were coded. In order to ensure that no details were overlooked, and because it was necessary for both of us to have a thorough knowledge of the data, we went through the coding process a second time; this time coding the documents the other person already had coded. Clearly, people perceive things differently, and despite thinking that everything had been encoded the first time around, the other person always found something between the lines which had been overlooked. When all the data had been encoded by both of us, the different codes were sorted into different documents, which made it easier to detect similarities and differences in addition to get a good overview. The amount of effort we put into the encoding most definitely benefited us in terms of writing the analysis, and possibly the comparative part in particular, as the analytical process had already begun before we started writing.

The last step, which was also the most comprehensive, was to interpret the actual data in light of theory (Bulmer, 1982), which in our case is subcultural theory and the combination of narrative criminology and collective action framing. As Silverman (2000) puts it: "Without theory, research is impossibly narrow. Without research, theory is mere armchair contemplation" (p.86). Because of the magnitude of this project we chose to divide the study in two main parts, where one part was assigned language and narratives and the other subculture. These main categories were yet again divided in two; with one chapter assigned to PU and one assigned to NRM. The same structure also applies for the subcultural analysis. The structure is as following:

Chapter 4: Language and ideology - The Prophet's Ummah
Chapter 5: Language and ideology - The Nordic Resistance Movement
Chapter 6: Subculture - The Prophet's Ummah
Chapter 7: Subculture - The Nordic Resistance Movement
Chapter 8: Conclusion

Our theoretical synthesis in mind, dividing the verbally articulated and the unspoken is not to make a distinction between these aspects of the organisations, but work as a way to first present and analyse the prominent tales and beliefs, and then show how these aspects are also shown through subcultural style. In other words, this study is not to be seen as fragmented and divided, rather the chapters are supposed to be seen as different parts of a whole, underlining how they are intertwined and complement each other, and together form the organisation's group identity and culture.

The way we have deconstructed the material into separate entities, is due to how Bukve (2016) argues that in a comparative study one must first analyse each part separately, before having a comparative chapter at the end. There are however sequences in chapter four to six where we point at certain similarities.

3.5 Limitations

As documents are produced for a purpose other than research, the consequence is that they usually do not provide sufficient detail to answer a research question, in addition to having low retrievability (Bowen, 2009). For this study we have selectively picked the publications which we believe are able to answer our research question. Yin (1994) points out the danger of biased selectivity and how an incomplete collection of documents can give a false representation of

the research subject, which might contribute to further stigmatisation. However, we do believe that by utilising what the groups themselves have published, paying attention to the context of these publications and combining primary sources with secondary sources we have managed find material that represents the groups as a whole, as accurate as possible.

Finding data which resembles each other well enough to be compared has been one of our biggest concerns for this study, but as elaborated on above, it was no longer seen to be an issue when we were able to find material that resembled each other in terms of content in spite of the differences in form of word count. The way in which we have decided to use more sources for PU than NRM might however lead to the PU-data being more representative because of more publications, or under-representative in terms of the publications being shorter and less extensive than the NRM-data.

As will be discussed further in the chapter on ethics and philosophical considerations, it is important to consider how "sampling usually targets the more visible activists" (Pisoiu, 2014:20). There are therefore fall pits of analysing a group narrative, as it might not be applicable to all members. The latter being of high importance when studying groups or organisations with controversial opinions, who already are a subject of stigmatisation by society at large. These possible concerns addressed above have however been accounted for the best ways possible, and we choose to see these limitations as potential flaws rather than major disadvantages. Given its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in particular, document analysis offers advantages that clearly outweigh the limitations (Bowen, 2009:32).

3.6   Ethical and Philosophical Considerations

There are some ethical concerns which must be addressed in regard to the groups included in this study. Bjørgo (2015) initiates that studying extremism is an ethics minefield of research, and that researchers need a high level of ethical awareness. First and foremost, when studying a heated topic, it is important that the research project ought not to have a negative impact on the groups involved (Vestel, 2016). Especially when studying the radical branch of a bigger political environment, it is important not to contribute to, or give the impression that, extremist groups such as The Prophet's Ummah is representative for Islam and Muslims, or that NRM are not representative for right-wing activists as a whole. The research should not in any way contribute to further stigmatisation of neither group members, nor 'regular Muslims' or right-wing sympathisers. Additionally, in relation to both PU and NRM, it needs to be clarified that

there is a significant difference between having extremist *views* and actually *committing* terror or violent offences (Leuprecht et al., 2009), and that expressing extremist views could simply be a way of practicing one's freedom of speech. The debate on to which degree one should be able to express one's controversial opinions, will not be elaborated on here.

Privacy, anonymity and consent are often of concern when speaking of ethics. For this project we therefore do not go into details of individuals, and we have chosen to anonymise general statements, as the aim of this study focuses on the group as a whole rather than individuals. Additionally, is should be said that we do not refer to any statements in which the public does not have, or have had, access to. As the documents predominantly are available online for everyone to see, we have presumed that there will not be any ethical contradictions in terms of consent.

Yet another ethical consideration which needed to be addressed is that what we refer to as a collective attitude or narrative does not necessarily apply to all group members and sympathisers of PU and NRM. As already stated, Pisoiu (2015) claims that sampling often targets the most visible activists, and we cannot guarantee that all of the members agree with everything the group supposedly stands for. In terms of credibility it might therefore be possible for some individuals not to recognise the picture drawn of the group in this study. This also applies when referring to the group's subcultural features as something quite abstract, as it can undermine the individual agency behind a certain way of being and their preferred style.

A document analysis will not run the risk of the data being influenced by the presence of the researcher. However, when dealing with material which contains controversial opinions and large amounts of hate speech, there has been a risk of the data influencing the researchers. One could run the risk of getting used to this rhetoric and not consider it as extreme after being exposed to it regularly, or one could be emotionally affected, even repulsed, by some of the more controversial statements. We therefore decided to read through the material in short intervals and remember to take moments to debrief. This was done for us to maintain the somewhat distanced analytical perspective needed for this study.

Lastly, when doing research on extremist groups and their narratives, it is of great importance that the project does not contribute to the broadcasting and reproducing of controversial opinions, especially regarding a justification for violent acts. During this process we have therefore aimed to look for central themes which are of relevance to our research question, rather than including only the most extreme and controversial statements.

Despite there being ethical considerations, we do believe that the advantages of studying extremism outweighs much of the ethical concerns. With this project, we hope to contribute to

a larger understanding of how these groups perceive their role in society, what narratives they build their argumentation on, and what subcultural features Norwegian extremist groups possess. This information might contribute to a further development in understanding the motivational appeal of such groups, and how their depiction of self and their perceived enemies constitute a narrative framework in which might apply to a broader network of extremist milieus.

4.   THE PROPHET'S UMMAH – LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY

"The central utility of collective action frames is their ability to sort and categorize how organizations employ different ideas, beliefs, myths, and traditions to mobilize movement adherents" (Page et al., 2011:154). In the following chapter we combine framing theory with narrative criminology in order to explore how The Prophet's Ummah presents their religionised politics and mobilise people to action.

Gamson (1988) argues that effective frames are salient to its audience, meaning that frames need to call on beliefs that are already strongly held. As this chapter will explore, PU incorporate well-known Quranic tales when presenting what they consider to be problematic, how the problem is to be solved and when motivating people to action. The jihadi master narratives presented throughout this chapter all build on long traditions, and have a distinct storyline ending in victorious Muslim. These tales might explain why they are heavily incorporated in PU's presentation of their views, in addition to acting as a verification and proof as of why their world view is the legitimate truth. These are also considered of high importance to Muslims across the globe, making them transhistorical in both context and content, even outside the extremist sphere.

Table 4.1 below outlines in short the four transhistorical narratives The Prophet's Ummah consistently utilise to underpin the importance and magnitude of what they consider to be the most problematic aspect of today; *The war against Islam*. In the following chapter, we will explore how PU incorporates this world view into different aspects of their political and religious views.

Narrative	Background	In extremist discourse
Crusaders	Crusaders invaded the holy city of Jerusalem, slaughtering men, women and children in the name of Christ.	A way of characterising everything perceived as hostile towards Islam. Offers an essential framework for the depiction of violent acts as part of a defensive struggle for the liberation of a people or land from an aggressive occupier.
Tatar	Ghazan Khan converted to Sunni-Islam for political reasons, undermining Islamic faith and Sharia jurisdiction.	Denouncing regimes as insufficiently Islamic
Pharaoh	The story of Pharaoh and *Musa* and how Pharaoh's arrogance and self-deification made him ignore the signs that Allah exists. He ruled his nation by being authoritarian and militant, disillusioned by the lust for power and wealth rather than living in accordance with Allah.	Presenting struggles against rules and state regimes deemed to be irreligious, anti-Islamic, or even atheistic.
The Great Battle	An upcoming apocalyptic fight taking place in al-Sham before the world ends. At this day Allah will retaliate on the people who have not fought for him and reward the ones who has.	Motivates people to travel to Syria and take part of fulfilling the prophecy. Plays a central part in the construction of presenting Syria warriors as 'the chosen few' fighting Allah's cause.

Table 4.1. Overview of master narratives The Prophet's Ummah utilise. Based on the book *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism* by Halverson, et al. (2011).

4.1   The problem: 'The war against Islam'

A more or less shared understanding of what is considered problematic; diagnosing the condition, is highly necessary when creating a common framework for action (Benford and Snow, 2000). In the case of The Prophet's Ummah it is evident that their biggest concern, and the cornerstone in their collective action frames, is their belief of there being a global 'war against Islam'. This narrative is not unique to PU, as it is often conceptualised as the master narrative of jihadism (e.g. Sageman. 2008; Leuprecht et al., 2009; Al-Raffie, 2012; Holtmann, 2013) and is according to Halverson et al. (2011) "deeply embedded in culture and provides a pattern for cultural life and social structure and creates a framework for communication about what people are expected to do in certain situations" (p.7). The narrative presents a world divided between the righteous believers – *al-ummah* and non-believers – *al-kuffar,* and the ongoing war between the two. Importantly, it outlines how the West is perpetrating the war, and how Muslims simply are victims of it. This is certainly creating a clear 'we' – those whom the injustice is done, and an obvious 'they' – who are responsible for the injustice (Gamson 1992; Stoecker 1995). The Prophet's Ummah make it perfectly clear throughout their propaganda that if it was not for the Western oppressors, Muslims and non-Muslims would live together in peace, as they used to be before the war.

We could have lived well together if one party had not conducted war (PU17:6).

According to Sayyid Qutb (1964), the reason why the West is perpetrating this war against Islam is because they consider Islam to be a threat against Western rule. Qutb was a highly acclaimed Salafi theorist, and his book "Milestones" (1964) has been one of the most influential ideological sources to the modern militant Salafi movement, and the idea of a Western war against Islam is also widespread in Muslim communities who are not otherwise affiliated with militant Salafism. In relation to this narrative, Leuprecht et al. (2010) found that as many as 80% of Muslims in the United Kingdom do to some extent believe or approve of this view, meaning that despite being presented as the master narrative of jihadism, it certainly is of cultural resonance among regular Muslims as well, and it certainly lies the foundation for what Gamson (1988) refers to as an effective framework for mobilisation.

Bjørgo's (1997) argue in his stuies of right-wing extremism, that they havie a twofold depiction of their enemy. We would argue that this understanding could be applied to PU as well. They too present their opposition as being twofold, and describe how the war against Islam is perpetrated by an 'external enemy' – the West; who are responsible for invading countries practicing Islam, in addition to killing innocent Muslims and suppress their religion. 'The enemy within' on the other hand, are the Muslims who practice Islam wrong in any way, and thus support the external enemy. Together the twofold enemy constructs what PU argues to be "a global system of kuffar [...]" (PU6:3), who they believe conspire against them.

4.1.1 The external enemy

The Prophet's Ummah's main antagonist and external enemy, is the West – consisting of USA and all countries supporting them or who are adopting the Western ways of living, PU argue that these are fighting both a physical and an ideological war against Islam. In short, all acts that have a direct impact on Muslims, such as warfare and discrimination, are considered as part of the 'physical warfare', while the 'ideological warfare' indirectly affects Muslims and deprives them of their identity.

Being based in Norway, The Prophet's Ummah is particularly concerned with Norway's role as one of their prominent external enemies. In spite of this, the group has never explicitly encouraged any violent acts to be committed on Norwegian ground. Their focus has instead been on foreign fighter recruitment. The reluctance of directly supporting an attack on Norwegian soil might stem from a fear of legal prosecution, but on a more ideological note, the

stories of the Great Battle and the Caliphate, as we are to explore later in this chapter, might seem more alluring than carrying out attacks in their own neighbourhoods.

The infidel invaders and systematic oppression of Muslims

Armed conflicts taking place in several Islamic countries, resulting in the death of thousands is considered the biggest evidence of there being a physical war against Islam. PU problematise how Muslim countries are invaded by foreign troops, and how Muslims suffer as victims of massacres and torture.

> Worldwide, Muslim lands are occupied, Muslims are massacred, imprisoned, tortured without trial in several countries. It is a global warfare against Muslims. We see in China where the Chinese are fighting against the Muslims, we see in Chechnya where the communists are fighting against the Muslims, we see in Burma where the Buddhists are fighting against the Muslims, we see in Palestine where the Jews are fighting the Muslims, we see in Iraq and Kashmir where the Hindus are fighting Muslims, and we also see this crusade against Islam and Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Not to mention the drone attacks as about daily happen in Northern Pakistan, Yemen and other Muslim countries (PU17:6).

When taking a closer look at this specific quotation, we can observe how the invasions and atrocities inflicted on Muslims are referred to as a crusade. As briefly mentioned, a frame's effectiveness is based on their 'narrative fidelity' or 'cultural resonance' (Gamson, 1988) and whether they "accord with familiar stories, myths and folktales" (Benford and Snow, 1992: 2010). The Crusaders narrative certainly ticks all these boxes through the way it has several historical associations of how Christian forces tried to overtake Muslim territory during the Middle Ages, slaughtering men, women and children in the name of Christ. Qutb considered the crusaders as "an expression of unbridled hatred, motivated not by penance, pilgrimage, or the promise of earthly or otherworldly rewards, but by an insatiable hatred of Islam and a thirst for its destruction among the Europeans." (Halverson et al., 2011:114). He did not consider Europe as Christian, but rather inspired by the Romans, concerned about materialistic and economic advantage and thus free from absolute norms and values. The so-called 'crusading spirit' has since then been laying latent in the minds of the Europeans and is considered the reason as to why the West is still attacking Islam today.

The Prophet's Ummah links these medieval events to modern times, which consequently participates in transforming all of their violent acts as "part of a defensive struggle for the liberation of a people or land from an aggressive occupier" (Halverson et al., 2011:109). Furthermore, it provides them with a way to describe their perception of the current situation

as an attack on Islam. The ongoing chaotic and violent situation in the Middle East thus creates the perfect framework for incorporating the Crusaders narrative with contemporary events, as it provides them with a well-known Islamic storyline.

In addition to armed conflicts, PU points at the West's systematic differential treatment of Muslims as yet another evidence of there being a physical war against Islam. Aas (2007) describe how the terror attacks 11th September 2001, leading to President Bush's launch of the 'war on terror', consequently caused uncertainty and suspicion towards foreign populations in the Western world. This is reflected in The Prophet's Ummah's arguments concerning how Muslims are targeted at Norwegian airports and how their passports are withdrawn if they are suspected of going to Syria. Norwegian Muslims are in other words not allowed to leave the country as they wish, but are also constantly being subjected to hostile remarks such as "go back where you came from" by society at large (PU18:3). The oppression of Muslims is also visible through the way certain countries have banned religious garments like the niqab and the hijab, for what they argue to be because of safety reasons and women's rights. The West's somewhat exaggerated precautions to prevent further Islamic terror attacks can therefore be considered as contributing to, and to some extent even confirming, the notion of there being an ongoing war against Islam (Sageman, 2008).

> [...] so-called human rights or the Geneva Convention, does not apply to Muslims, as has been revealed in Abu Ghraib, and continues today at Guantanamo Bay (PU10:1).

The way Muslims are treated at Guantanamo Bay as well as the revealing of the atrocities committed in Abu Ghraib, is to PU evidence of how legislation to ensure human rights does not apply to Muslims in the same way it does to Western citizens, and how Muslims are being targeted by Western governments. The first is however rather paradoxical in the sense that The Prophet's Ummah discard human rights, and they have publicly announced to not comply to any 'human made' laws because these are not being in accordance with Allah's will (PU20).

Despite discarding national and international legislations, PU are concerned with how Muslims are not treated equally to other citizens in Norway, and as an example they heavily criticised the government for not making an effort to get a central member of their organisation back home when he was held captive in Pakistan in 2013, despite him being a Norwegian citizen.

That Pakistan would capture a Norwegian citizen for months without the Norwegian authorities being told? No way (PU12:1).

They compare this with the treatment others get in a similar situation, and problematise how there was laid down intense efforts to free a Norwegian woman captured in Egypt, while in the case with their member, the Norwegian authorities supposedly claimed they did not have valid information that confirmed him being captured.

> In relation to the abduction of a Norwegian woman in Egypt a short while ago, it was reported that the Foreign Ministry's crisis stall was working around the clock, and the Ministry sent five additional staff members to the embassy in Cairo. When the woman was released after five days, Dagbladet noted that it, "probably was much thanks to heavy pressure from the Norwegian authorities" (PU12:1).

PU believe that the authorities did know the whereabouts of their member, and these examples, and even more importantly, PU's recollection and understanding of the incidents, proves to them how their Muslim brothers and sisters are treated as second-rate citizens in their own countries.

False portrayal of Islam

The Crusaders narrative is not only applied when speaking of invasion, despite this being its original message. Halverson et al. (2011), note that in extremist discourse, the word 'crusade' is often used as a collective term to characterise everything perceived as hostile towards Islam. In light of this, both the Western educational system and the media are accused of participating in the crusade against Muslims.

> The word Islam seems to send fear through so many people. This is not surprising as Islam is often misrepresented and distorted in the media and the true message is hidden (PU14).

> We cannot expect anything else since they [the education system and media] are a part of this crusade against Islam and Muslims (PU11).

In line with the thoughts of Qutb, PU argue that the West constructs lies and distortions about Islam, with the purpose to demonise the religion. PU claim that the West does this in order to justify their violent attacks on Muslims. The West's systematic misrepresentation of Islam is considered as part of their ideological warfare, because it *indirectly* eradicates the religion by

diluting it with non-Muslim traditions and philosophies, and is reviewed by PU as an attempt to brainwash the population.

Both the educational system and Western media are accused of providing misleading information about Islam, Sharia and Muslims, with the purpose of not only making the infidels more suspicious of the religion, but also to distort Western Muslim's view of Islam. The educational system is argued to be in direct opposition to Allah's teaching about evolution and natural science, in addition to teaching that Islam is equal to other religions; subsequently neglecting the uniqueness of the Islamic faith. Children are additionally taught in school that Islam is a "religion that degrades and suppresses innocents" (PU13:1). PU argues that this is not due to a lack of knowledge about Islam, but that this is done purposely in order to distort reality.

> The problem is, however, that information that goes around often is both vicious, erroneous or completely fictitious. This is not due to the fact that there is little knowledge about sharia, but rather a blatant attack from both the media and politicians, with the purpose of deterring people away from the teachings of Islam or Sharia as a solution to their problems (PU9:1).

Western media is similarly accused of being misleading by consequently discarding Muslim's suffering, portraying a world where violent Islamic terror attacks seemingly are committed unprovoked. When PU speaks of Western media they often demonstrate their discontent by using tropes, especially the trope referring to the jihadi master narrative of 'the Pharaoh'.

> Can you not see that the West's media is constantly trying to undermine the cruelty committed by the West's ravages while exaggerating when they are beaten back by Muslims? Do you not see how the West's media managed to present Awlyaa (friends) of Allah (swt), those who fight in His case (fi sabeelillah), as followers of evil, presenting today's Pharaoh and his army as good? The West's media are so good at deceiving that their lies are now scattered throughout large parts of the Muslim Ummah (PU6:1).

Similar to the Crusaders narrative, the tale of the Pharaoh is applied to give certain historical associations and underpin urgency and seriousness of a problem. The tale of Pharaoh and Moses, or *Musa*, is probably one of the most prominent narrative archetypes in the Quran (Halverson et al., 2011). It depicts how the Pharaoh ruled his nation by being authoritarian and disillusioned by the lust for power and wealth rather than living in accordance with Allah. The narrative describes how the Pharaoh's arrogance and self-deification made him ignore the signs

that God exists, even though Musa showed him again and again. The story infamously ends with Pharaoh being drowned in the sea as punishment from Allah.

In a contemporary context, the leadership of the West is often interpreted as situated in the role of the Pharaoh. As we will show in the motivational frame, this narrative is important when creating a depiction of being the 'chosen few' fighting Allah's cause, as PU are able to portray themselves as the Musa of today, battling atheistic nations and wrongful Muslim regimes. At the same time, the role of the Pharaoh is repeatedly used by PU when referring to the enemy, both external enemies such as the American president, as well as enemies within like the Muslim Brotherhood.

4.1.2   The enemy within – 'the war of ideas'

So far, we have explored how non-Muslims, or so-called infidel invaders, participate in the war against Islam in the forms of invasions, systematic oppression of Muslims and a false portrayal of Islam through media and the educational system. *The enemy within*, on the other hand, is a war between Muslims. Sayyid Qutb (1989) presented in one of his major pamphlets; *Our Battle with the Jews*, what he called 'The War of Ideas' which is the fight between iman (belief) and kuffar (unbelief). The term kuffar has since been used as a label for excluding anything that is seen not to be proper Islamic (Halverson et al., 2011). Similar to Qutb, The Prophet's Ummah claims that there is only one correct interpretation of Islam, the Salafi interpretation, which is not up for discussion. Those who share the same understanding are the true believers, while those who oppose this view stand against the true Islam and are regarded as the traitorous false Muslims, or kuffar.

Qutb's arguments regarding false Muslims are undoubtedly reflected in the Tatar master narrative. In short, it describes how the Mongol leader Ghazan Khan led an invasion on a number of Muslim areas, including Baghdad, Palestine and Jerusalem. Like the crusaders, the Tatars were brutal and relentless, but the stories differ in how the crusaders invaded areas in the name of Christ, while Ghazan Khan, who had earlier bonds to Christianity and Buddhism, converted to Sunni Islam, which made a number of his followers do the same. The tale does however claim that people were questioning if the reason behind the conversion was merely political, as Khan did not judge according to the Quran and Sharia, and his followers regarded the famous Genghis Khan as greater than the Prophet Muhammad (Halverson et al., 2011).

Ghazan Khan's conversion was met with scepticism by several Muslim academics, especially by the great Syrian Hanbalite scholar Ahmed Ibn Taymiyyah, whose texts later inspired the Salafi movement. Taymiyyah declared Ghazan Khan to be an imposter and infidel

based on his refusal to implement Islamic law (ibid., 2011), and argued that the unbelievers should be fought against through jihad. Ibn Taymiyyah is said to have exposed Ghazan Khan for his hypocrisy, and this story has later proven very popular among extremist Islamists who want to fight and denounce all regimes they see as "insufficiently Islamic" (ibid., 2011:121).

As explored, PU considers a number of Western values and ideas to contradict Islam, such as human rights and democracy. Social problems, they argue, come as a direct consequence of human rule, and PU considers the Western laws as part of a non-functional system on the verge of collapse. PU sees it as alarming that Muslims are accepting and implementing new and modern ways of practicing Islam, as these values do not conform to the Quran or Allah. The group problematises the fact that Muslims accept living under a democracy, and as a consequence deprives Allah the sole right as legislator. This being referred to as *shirk* by PU, which is the unforgivable sin of practicing idolatry or polytheism. The group points out that it has become increasingly common among Muslims to accept democracy and to implement Westernised laws that are incompatible with Sharia. As an example, they believe that the individual Muslim, by participating in democratic elections, aids in undermining the true way of practicing Islam.

> I will tell you one thing: In the world today, there are two groups of people. We have the Muslims, who submit themselves to Allah, and believe that authority/sovereignty belongs only to Allah, and we have the infidels, be they Yezidis, or whatever religion they have; who believes that authority/sovereignty belongs to man and man-made laws (PU18:4).

PU refers to everybody who do not share their militant Salafi views, as infidels. Muslims who do not follow this interpretation of Islam, are also seen as part of the enemy within. With this said, PU has also heavily criticised IslamNet, another radical Norwegian Salafi group, when the latter invited a speaker who PU argued 'denied the obligation of jihad', to a conference:

> "Enthusiasts of IslamNet; What good has your despicable fitna-sect done for Ummat Muhammad […]? Your cult destroyed Khalifah, your cult split the Muslims, your cult spreads fitnah and hatred between Muslims, your cult is a messenger for kuffar and wants to see all Muslims subdue themselves for kuffar. I wonder how the followers of this jadidiyyah-cult will answer for themselves on the Final Day" (IslamNet, 2013).

Both PU and IslamNet are Salafi organisations, which share a common goal to establish an Islamic State, but disagree on the means to do so. Tibi (2012) notes that within Islamism there is a distinction between institutional Islamists and jihadists, in the sense that Islamists will

only resort to violence to pursuit the goal of establishing the sharia state, while jihadists also justify the use of violent jihad against non-state actors in form of terrorism in the West or towards Western targets. The accusations made in the email PU sent to IslamNet, makes it evident that people who do not acknowledge PU's exact religious view, are considered as kuffar and an enemy of Islam, regardless of their Salafi belonging. This way of accusing other Muslims of kuffar, is called *takfiri* (Tibi, 2012), and is rather common in jihadist environments.

Stories about the infidel invaders, depicted through the narratives of the Crusader and the Tatar, are of high importance in the narrative of the war against Islam, and receive widespread resonance among jihadists who frequently incorporate the invasion stories in their rhetoric. As previously stated, Halverson, et al. (2011) argues that such invasion stories "offer an essential framework for the depiction of violent acts as part of a defensive struggle for the liberation of a people or land from an aggressive occupier" (p. 109). Therefore, both the Crusader narrative and the story of the Tatar are often applied to make sense of why the U.S. Military activity was initiated in the Middle East, British colonialism in Egypt, as well as in relation to Zionism and the Israel/Palestine conflict (ibid., 2011).

The Crusader and the Tatar narratives differ in historical settings, as well as in archetypal characters, even though both stories depict some form of foreign invasion with a mission to destroy Muslim land and slaughter the population. Regardless of this, both narratives speak of how the invaders are at last conquered by a Muslim hero who liberates the people from the occupation and reintegrate true Islam. These narratives might have influenced and inspired jihadi organisations such as The Prophet's Ummah in perceiving themselves as Allah's chosen few, through providing a distinct storyline combined with an understanding of their role as being the predicted Muslim heroes in the Great Battle to come.

4.2 The solution: Holy war against the infidels

A collective action framework involves an articulation of possible solutions and strategies for dealing with issues that are perceived as problematic, or alternately, procedures and strategies for implementing the plan (Benford and Snow, 2000; Cottee, 2011). In relation to PU, and similar to their diagnostic frame, the prognostic frame is also clearly shaped by the group's religious belief. The solution introduces the Sharia state (the Caliphate) as their ideological goal, and jihad as the main means in achieving this.

Establishing the Caliphate

The Prophet's Ummah believes that a violent revolution, one which subsequently will lead to the establishment of a new state, is the only way in which they will be able to save their people, culture and religion. The Caliphate, the ideal way to govern the Islamic state, is to be led by a Khalif who, with Allah's blessing, enforces Sharia. The Caliphate PU envisions is in other words a state that is united with religion. The reason for governing the state through religion is because Allah is infallible, which makes the social system He has provided mankind perfect. This is why it is considered as the only legitimate way to organise society.

> Shariah offers free health services, free gas and electricity, prohibits adultery, prohibits alcohol, prohibits the practice of homosexuality and prohibits anything that may end in corruption or cause corruption. Loans are allowed but interest are prohibited. Shariah has an option and solution to all problems. These were just a few examples of what Shariah has to offer the West (PU9:2).

> Shariah is the only solution to the injustice that has hit the world because this is a system that gets rid of the problems from the root of (PU9:2).

PU is under the perception that by creating an Islamic State and enforcing Sharia, all problems will be solved. This could be understood as a simplified answer to all their problems, seen as the group never speaks of how the Sharia laws as well as the welfare system are actually to be implemented or carried out. At the same time, it seems as if they believe that as soon as Sharia is enforced, their problems will simply disappear, and the Caliphate thus becomes a metaphor of the classical story of a promised happy ending.

While PU believe the political order to emanate from Allah, Tibi (2012) argues that the establishment of a Caliphate is to be considered as religionised politics, arguing that Islam does not require a particular form of government. He argues that Hakimiyyat Allah (God's rule), which is the imagined system of divine governance, has never existed in its true form. If this is the case, the hope of returning to the romanticised past, prior to Western imperialism and corrupted leaders, can be considered as an 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm, 1983). Either way, PU seems to be convinced that the only way to achieve the goal of restoring the Caliphate is through jihad.

Jihad

Similar to other jihadi groups, The Prophet's Ummah promotes violent jihad against the West and alleged apostate regimes, as well as non-state actors in form of terrorism in the West as the only way of achieving their political goals (Wiktorowicz, 2006). The term jihad could be translated into "to struggle", and in classical and traditional Islam, jihad can mean either self-exertion *(jihad al-nafs)* or physical fighting *(qital)*, defending the Muslim communities against enemies (Tibi, 2012). According to many Islamists, jihad is Allah's will the same way as the Caliphate, and thus engaging in jihad should be seen as being part of a just and holy war. We argue that the jihadist interpretation is a form of 'reinvention' of the term, as to them jihad has become the symbol of violent means for establishing an Islamic world order, while the inner struggle against evil has been completely deprived.

> It is compulsory for every Muslim to support jihad. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said that a Muslim who dies without the intention of carrying out jihad, dies in a state of hypocrisy. Therefore, every Muslim is obliged to support jihad, whether it is militarily, whether it is verbal; by speaking against those who suppress Muslims, or economically; through welfare, strategy, and so on (Ubaydullah Hussain, cited in Holmer 2016:4).

Jihad is considered by PU as an external form of activism that is mandatory for any Muslim, and this substantiates the impression that everyone can contribute. This way of engaging in jihad could be understood as a way of gaining political power through a violent revolution, and is a prerequisite for gaining control of the government and establishing the Caliphate.

> Hadith about fitnah (ordeals) clearly show us that the ascension to victory for this Ummah before doomsday will not be that of a political election or peaceful Dawah, but the victory will come through fighting (physically) for Allah (PU6).

> In times like these, when the Muslim countries are occupied by the disbelieving kuffar and mushrikeen, when the tyrant's prisons are filled with Muslim mujahideen, when Allah's law is absent from this world and when Islam is attacked in an attempt to destroy it, then jihad becomes mandatory to every Muslim. Jihad must be practiced by the child, even if his parents refuse, by the wife, even if her husband refuse, and by the one in debt, even if the loaner does not accept it (PU6).

Egerton (2011) point to how militant Salafis find inspiration and motivation to partake in violent jihad in religious texts, and as seen in our data, PU presents several Quranic verses when they refer to the Caliphate, Sharia and jihad. In a sense, by doing so, they 'prove' how it is their religious obligation to use violent force against enemies of Islam. Consequently, they believe

that they are "living, killing and dying in accordance with the teachings of Islam" (Holmer, 2016:5). In the same way as Ahmed Ibn Taymiyyah urged his followers to fight Ghazan Khan with physical jihad, PU urges all Muslims to do the same when facing present crusaders, today's Pharaoh and the modern Tatars, because the Quran tells them to.

By referring to the Quranic verses, stories of insult, tyranny and injustice inflicted on Muslims in the war against Islam, jihad is transformed into an obligation and a defensive struggle for liberation. Since the West is the only side attacking, all counteracts made in the name of Islam are simply seen as self-defence, which to some extent neutralises all forms of violence and work as a way of denying the victim their victimhood (Sykes and Matza, 1957).

4.3 Motivation: The victorious Muslim

While the diagnostic and prognostic frames are straightforward and rational, the motivational frames aim at appealing to a recipient's emotions on multiple levels, before building on these emotions in order to mobilise people into action (Benford and Snow, 2000). Gamson's (1995) identity frame, similar to Benford and Snow's motivational frame, provides us with a way of understanding the mechanisms that creates a collective 'we' – those to whom the injustice is done, and an obvious 'they', who are responsible for the injustice inflicted (Gamson 1992; Stoecker, 1995).

Rhetoric such as 'war against terror' and President Bush's infamous quote after 9/11; 'either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists' has undoubtedly contributed to a political imagery of a war, thus creating a distinct polarised division between the 'us' and 'them' on each side of the spectre. By constructing their framing practices on the foundations of a commonly accepted narrative (see Leuprecht et al., 2010), jihadi groups might appear credible and authentic to some individuals, as what they present as societal problems resonates with the narratives in which people are already familiar with.

To further distinguish between 'us' against a 'them', PU describe their opponents in explicit and degrading language. According to Sandberg and Berntzen (2014), these dehumanising depictions of the other, plays a central part in the process of legitimising violent acts against them. Through such narrative frames, the distance between 'us' and 'them' increases, and by interpreting this in relation to a metaphor of being at war, this becomes part of their neutralisation of violent acts. In a YouTube film posted by the Prophet's Ummah 12th

November 2012, a member of the group, who at the time was located in Syria, made this clear in his description of the Western society:

> It is not us Muslims who are the uncivilised barbaric terrorist, but yourselves who are barbarians, unclean, uncivilized and godless creatures, who together with your allies have terrorised and oppressed innocent Muslims since the fall of the Islamic Khilafah. You are infidel kuffar, the worst of all creatures who walk this earth. (PU16:1).

The group's way of describing 'the others' gains its emotional component from linking the undeserved suffering of Muslims to what they perceive as the selfish acts of Western governments, thus creating a strong motivational narrative of being victims of brutal attacks and suffering. By allocating the blame for this injustice to Western governments, combined with the dehumanising language as seen in the quote above, amplifies the legitimation of violence as part of a retaliation against the infidel West for the undeserved suffering they bring upon Muslims. This specific quote also holds an element of denying the victims their victimhood (Sykes and Matza, 1957), by pointing to how the others have caused more anguish, and that the jihadi attacks they are experiencing are nothing but retaliation.

When outlining both their problems and solutions, PU continuously refer to transhistorical narratives, such as the stories about the infidel invaders, the Crusaders and the Tatar, as well as the narrative of Pharaoh, all of which outline the clear division between the chosen few victorious Muslims, and their infidel enemies. Further, these narratives do not only lead to increased group identification (Leuprecht et al., 2010; Gamson 1995), but also act as a motivational tool. Narratives such as the Crusaders is often used to frame contemporary events, locate and allocate blame on their enemies, and remind Muslims to look at det past in order to understand the present. Further, as all the master narratives presented here have a distinct and well-known storyline ending with Muslim's victory, these stories are also presumed to substantiate the self depiction of being Allah's soldiers on earth, the chosen few who will fight the infidels in The Great Battle. This has also been the case in Hamm's (2013) study of prison radicalisation, where members of both Christian White Supremacy groups and radical Islamists claim to be God's chosen people, and therefore their actions are permissible.

Doomsday prophecies

A tale that is incorporated into the perception of a war against Islam, is the old Islamic story of the last battle before the world ends; The Great Battle. It is supposed to take place in al-Sham, today's Syria and Iraq, where a hostile invasion will mark the beginning of an apocalyptic fight

before doomsday (Halverson et al., 2011). Those who choose to fight and be the true soldiers of Allah, will receive their rewards in heaven, while the infidels will suffer for eternity.

> Your actions in this life will determine your destiny in the next life, so it's also right to say that this life is a test for us. If we take part, the reward in Paradise awaits and if we wander the punishment is waiting in hell (PU14).

McCants (2015) summarises the apocalyptic narrative as following: "The Caliphate shall be re-established, and soon after the world will end" (p. 115). Similar to the transhistorical narratives we have explored earlier in this chapter, the story of the Great Battle also ends with victorious Muslim (ibid., 2015).

> Interviewee: [...] The Prophet said, fourteen hundred years ago, that there will be a time where my people stray far from the religion, and one group will remain to fight God's cause.
> Interviewer: And that is where you are?
> Interviewee: I hope so, *insh'Allah* (PU17).

The PU member cited in the quote above seems to assume a role in this classic tale. The narrative of the Great Battle was revived in jihadi environments as a consequence of the Arab spring and the armed conflicts that followed, and many foreign fighters who go to Syria to participate do so because they believe the Syrian war marks the start of the apocalypse (Halverson et.al., 2011). In a sense, the current armed conflicts in the Middle East, from the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan to the present war in Syria, fits almost too perfectly into this narrative, creating the impression that 'this is it, it is happening now', and thus a sense of urgency. For some, as the PU member states above, the motivation behind travelling to Syria is rooted in the hope to contribute in fulfilling the prophecy and be part of the chosen few fighting God's cause.

> The infidels conspire against us today, as never before. Could it be that we are moving towards the great battle between the Romans and the Muslims – Al-Malhamah – that the Prophet (Sall Allahu Alayhi wa Sallam) talked about? (PU6:3).

> In times like these, when the Muslim countries are occupied by the disbelieving kuffar and mushrikeen, when the tyrant's prisons are filled with muslim mujahideen, when Allah's law is absent from this world and when Islam is attacked in an attempt to destroy it, then Jihad becomes mandatory to every Muslim (PU6:2).

References to 'in times like these' are continuous through the data when convincing the reader why they should engage in jihad, and why they have to do so right away. Those who choose to refrain, are, as seen in the diagnostic frame, reckoned to be false Muslims – the enemy within, and will be excluded from the collective 'us' and rather become part of the hostile 'them'. Building on the Islamic narrative of the Great Battle, there is an underlying understanding in the jihadi motivational frame that every rightful Muslim has to participate in any way possible to fulfil the prophecy and restore the Caliphate, and then earn their place in Paradise when the world comes to an end.

Within these apocalyptic narrative lies the expectation that all 'true believers' will be victorious against the infidels (McCants, 2015). Holmer (2016) notes after speaking with Norwegian Islamists, that they all believe they are the 'true' Muslims – the chosen few fighting Allah's cause against the infidels and also against the false Muslims, the so-called fight between the Ummah and the infidel invaders and Tatar.

> […] and let it be known, that the Islamic ummah is an ummah of victory and honour. An ummah of jihad and martyrdom, who will never bow or give in to your evil, unfairness, and falseness. There are no compromises between us and you. Your barbarian civilization and democracy have no place on this earth (PU16:1).

In the self-depiction of being victorious champions in the struggle against the infidels, PU construct a prophetic role for themselves as Allah's chosen loyal soldiers. This is regardless of whether they win the battle or not, because they have chosen to sacrifice their lives for Him, and for that they will receive their reward in the afterlife. As earlier stated, Halverson et al. (2011) describes how jihadists usually depict themselves as a modern day Moses, in opposition against a Pharaoh. Through these stories, violent attacks in Allah's name become justified, by depicting themselves as Allah's chosen few who will create fear and desperation as part of His retaliation against mankind for trying to rule without His guidance.

Martyrdom

Leuprecht et al. (2009) identifies martyrdom as one out of three mechanisms that can move mass public to support political violence. A martyr is someone who suffers death on behalf of their faith, even if it means dying on behalf of someone who is suffering undeservingly. In Greek, the word martyr means 'witness', and "a martyr is the ultimate witness because the sunk costs are all-encompassing" (ibid., 2009:32). Originally, martyrdom was used to describe Christians who died for their religion, but in the 21st century, martyrdom is however often

associated with Islam because of the frequency of suicide bombings and martyr operations. Despite how Sure 4:29 in the Quran forbids suicide in Islam, jihadists have redefined suicide attacks into a legitimate and heroic act of war.

Martyrdom has been turned into the ultimate reward for sacrificing one's life for Allah's cause. This is exactly why being a martyr is one of the most important things to strive for, as well as feeling proud of the brothers and sisters killed during battle, instead of mourning their death. Martyrdom is not the end of life, but the beginning of the eternal afterlife with Allah in *Jannah* (Paradise). Death should therefore not be dreaded, but rather strived for, in which the Quranic quote published on PU's webpage below clearly encourages.

> Do not consider those killed fighting Allah's cause as dead. No, they are alive with the Lord and are receiving his gifts (Quran Al-Imran 3:169).

Simultaneously they highlight that he who truthfully strives for martyrdom will be rewarded, even if he never gets to participate in battle;

> The Prophet (Sall Allahu Alayhi wa Sallam) said: "He who asks Allah truthfully for martyrdom will be rewarded as martyr, even if he should die in his bed" (PU4:3).

> Our culture of martyrdom needs a revival, because Allah's enemies fear nothing more than our love of death. (PU6:1)

Romanticising the use of violence becomes a natural part of the depiction of themselves as being the oppressed battling the oppressor. By legitimising their violent ways as it being Allah's retaliation against the infidels, they give a purpose for those who have died during battle, as well as a self-perception as Allah's chosen few. This might be part of the explanation for their romanticising ways of describing violent acts conducted in Allah's name (Bangstad and Linge, 2013).

As mentioned earlier, PU deny those experiencing jihadi terror attacks their victimhood. They believe there to be no innocent victims from an attack on a Western democracy, as the people have elected their leaders who are responsible for the wrongdoings against Muslims, and therefore need to be prepared for the consequences. They describe the importance and beauty of sacrificing one's life, and consider this to be the ultimate way to show their devotion to Allah. Being those who willingly seek death in His name, becomes part of a self-depiction as the chosen loyal and humble servants of Allah's will.

4.5   Concluding remarks

Diagnostic frame (The problem)	Prognostic frame (The solution)	Motivational frame (Emotional appeal)
Western societies, the external enemy, is perpetrating an ideological and physical war against Islam. They do this because Islam is considered the biggest threat against Western rule.	It must be established a rightful Caliphate ruled by a Khalif who with Allah's blessing enforces Sharia law, in order to create a world wide balance to society.	Muslims must act now and join the chosen few in The Great Battle against the infidels, and restore the Caliphate before the apocalypse.
The internal enemies, the false Muslims, are aiding the West in destroying the true Islamic way of living, by incorporating Western values, such as democracy and materialism into their daily lives.	All humans must follow Sharia, as they are made for all mankind, not just Muslims. It is an infallible system, created by Allah. All societal issues will then perish.	When doomsday arrive, those who fought to promote Allah's will on Earth will receive eternal life in *Jannah* – Paradise.

Table 4.2 Summary of The Prophet's Ummah's collective action frames.

The Prophet's Ummah's collective action frames are highly influenced by the group's religious beliefs, which might be related to how the entire Salafist ideology and mindset is built upon an authoritative interpretation of the Quran. This interpretation is further developed and put in a contemporary context through several well-established Islamic tales.

The Prophet's Ummah's biggest concern is what they refer to as the war against Islam, which is made evident through Muslims worldwide being subjected to armed conflicts and discrimination on a daily basis by the West. Despite being considered as the master narrative of jihadism, the notion of there being a war against Islam is an idea that resonates well with large parts of the Muslim population (Leuprecht et al, 2010). In accordance with how frames are often characterised by narrative fidelity or cultural resonance, all of The Prophet's Ummah's collective action frames, in one way or another, circulate around this metaphor of war.

In terms of collective action frames it is interesting to observe how The Prophet's Ummah make use of transhistorical Quranic narratives, and how they are drawing distinct lines between themselves - the chosen few - and their twofold enemy, consisting of the external infidel Western societies and the internal enemies of false Muslims. They link their perception of current events to well-established jihadi master narratives by equating the ongoing situation in the Middle East with the Crusaders, and by portraying Western leaders as today's Pharaohs. Many Muslims has some form of association with these master narratives, and therefore PU is able to refer to them through tropes. These master narratives offer several archetypal characteristics in which make them useful in framing, as they can be applied to make sense of

a wide range of circumstances and events. The latter ensures their longevity in the extremist jihadi storytelling culture as a way of persuading other Muslims to join their cause.

By constantly referring to these narratives, PU is able to portray just how seriously devastating the war against Islam is, creating a sense of urgency and motivating people to act, as the application of these tropes do not only give people associations to the past, but more importantly stipulates that history is repeating itself. As mentioned, these Islamic master narratives all have a distinct storyline ending with Muslim victory, and when retold and intertwined with contemporary events, they might reveal a great deal about how members perceive their cultural legacy, but also how they envision the way forward – where they are to retaliate against the invaders and their crusade against Islam – and thus take the role as Allah's chosen few.

One way of looking at The Prophet's Ummah, or other groups acknowledging themselves as militant Salafis, is to perceive their literal interpretation of the Quran and the goal of establishing a worthy caliphate as either a simple solution to a wide range of complex problems, or as an excuse for exercising violent acts, which will be further examined in the subcultural analysis. It is however important to recognise that members of groups like PU believe so strongly in their cause that they are willing to sacrifice their life for it, making these convictions seemingly more complex. Using acts of force against enemies of Islam is believed to be a religious obligation, which, if refrained from before doomsday, leads to the person burning in hell. This view of jihad, rooted in a religious ideology, provides a fertile ground for acceptance of violence. Portraying a war against Islam and viewing violence as a religious obligation, does to some degree neutralise and also legitimise violent acts. Equally important, this notion of being at war contributes to the self-perception as one being one of Allah's chosen few. Also, the way PU continuously points at how the West is attacking Muslim land, increasingly neutralises their actions, as these are seemingly considered as self-defence. By constantly juxtapose their own actions to what is being done to Muslims in a 'what we do to you, is nothing compared to what you are doing to us' argumentation, they consequently deny victims of Islamist terror attacks their victimhood.

To some, this narrative framework might be a way of legitimising violent inclinations, while others might see violence as viable means through a consequence of a gradual religious and political radicalisation process. Mapping out reasons for radicalisation is however not the aim of this study. The portrayal of war and themselves as the chosen few have most definitely contributed to the construction of the 'jihadi cool' style, which is built on the depiction of the

masculine Muslim warrior. Therefore, as we are to explore in chapter 6, it is important to recognise the strong correlation between language, ideology and subcultural style.

5.   THE NORDIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT – LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY

The far-right spectre in Europe is characterised by being fragmented and multifaceted, but the different groups all have some key components in common (Bjørgo, 2012). They are usually sceptical of the government and the immigration policies, concerned with the future of the traditional nuclear family, resent feminists and bureaucracy, as well as being hostile towards Muslims in the aftermaths of 9/11 and they support the war on terror. In this context, the neo-Nazis, with their explicit violent rhetoric and belief that there is an ongoing race war between the Aryans and the Zionists, are in the extreme end of this spectre (ibid., 2012). While the more mainstream right-wing organisations are concerned with the cultural challenges that presumably follows mass immigration, as well as a fear of Islamist terror attacks, The Nordic Resistance Movement's violent profile has more in common with international White Supremacy groups. Our perception is that their world view is characterised by conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, and an ideology heavily based on racial hygiene, combined with the Nationalist narrative of the heroic and strong Scandinavian man who fearlessly fights the foreign occupation in order to save his nation and his people.

Narrative	Background	In extremist discourse
The Zionist Occupation Government (The ZOG discourse)	There exist an international elite of Zionists, who already has gained control of several governments and international power institutions. Their main goal is to achieve world domination. The Zionists are aided by academics, state leaders and corporation owners in order to achieve this goal.	Variations of the ZOG discourse have been utilised by National Socialists as well as other anti-Semitic groups for decades. Some Muslim communities, White Power movements and neo-Nazis all have incorporated variations of this narrative into their world view.

Table 5.1 Overview of The Nordic Resistance Movement's master narrative. Based on *Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia: patterns, perpetrators and responses* by Tore Bjørgo, 1997.

5.1   The problem: The Zionist Power Elite

According to social movement theory, a movement constructs frames that diagnose a condition that needs to be corrected, including ascribing responsibility and allocating blame (Benford and Snow, 2000). Through their propaganda, several societal issues that The Nordic Resistance Movement identify as in desperate need of change become apparent. Most of these seem to be rooted in an overlying notion that the Aryan/Nordic race, referred to by NRM as the supreme race, is constantly threatened by the 'Zionist Power Elite'. This elite is considered as the

external enemy, and consist of Jewish agents whom secretly try to control the governments of Western states in order to achieve world domination.

> Today's goal of the global Zionists, is not just promoting the state of Israel, but also working at long-term destabilisation in nations that potentially could threaten their power structure. This naturally includes ethnic homogenous Western nations. All globalist Zionists will therefore work to promote multiculturalism and mass immigration, but also to support other ideas that could destroy societies and cultures, like liberalism and morally degrading cultural Marxism (NRM2:14).

Despite how the Zionists are pointed out as the main protagonist, the depiction of their enemy is twofold. The Zionist Elite are aided by academics, politicians and mass media – the enemy within, who knowingly or unconsciously make way for Zionist occupation, thus being complicit in the genocide on the Aryan race (Bjørgo, 1997). This is the reason as to why they are often referred to as traitors ('*landsforrædere*') or cultural Marxists. The term cultural Marxists has become a way for several radical right-wing sympathisers to delegitimise political correctness, by claiming this to be evidence of how people are brainwashed into believing in the multicultural society, and how they further shame everyone who does not comply to what should be allowed to discuss, as well as which terms and definitions that are considered not offensive. Before we analyse the problems related to NRM's twofold enemies, a description of the historical roots of the idea of a Zionist elite will be presented.

The *Zionist Occupation Government* discourse, also known as the ZOG discourse, is a well-established narrative among neo-Nazi activists and white supremacy groups. The discourse contains some obvious similarities to the documents called "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion", which allegedly mapped out Jewish leaders' plan for world domination. Despite the documents proven to be false (Eisner, 2005), they were translated into several languages in the early 20th century. Even though proven fictitious, the narrative of the Jewish conspiracy for world domination was extremely influential at the time, and to some extent still is today. For instance, NRM consider immigration to Europe is as one of the many strategic weapons the Zionist's use to destroy the white race from within as immigration leads to race-mixing and an unstable society. Sending a "wave of immigrants" to Europe, spreading the misleading idea of there being just one human race and promoting tolerance and multicultural societies, is, according to the discourse, part of the Zionist plan to eradicate the white race. They argue that the motivation behind this attack lies in how the white race is considered the most prominent threat against achieving their mission for Zionist world domination. In contrast to other right-wing environments, those who have incorporated the ZOG discourse do not

explicitly blame the immigrants themselves, and the ZOG discourse encourages to rather focus on fighting those who make it possible for this wave of immigrants to come to Europe in the first place, the political environment that stands behind today's immigration policies.

In spite of how the ZOG discourse in modern times is usually applied by National Socialist thinkers and organisations, the resentment towards Jews is also apparent among some radical Leftist groups, as well as in some Muslim communities. A study conducted by the 'Norwegian Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities' shows that resentment towards Jews, although not necessarily related to conspiracy theories, is more common in certain Muslim milieus regarding the Israel Palestine conflict, than found in the overall Norwegian population (HL-senteret, 2017). As a matter of fact, the Zionist elite is considered a common enemy to Islamist groups (Tibi, 2012), and their narrative about the Zionists have much in common with the ZOG discourse. It is therefore worth mentioning that blaming social and economic issues on the Zionists, or Jews in general, is a well-established transhistorical narrative, and the ZOG discourse is only a fragment of its extent (SNL, 2015).

Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories like this are considered to be essential traits of right-wing extremism, and as mentioned; the most common form of conspiracy theory in neo-Nazi environments is the ZOG discourse (Bjørgo, 1989; Billig, 1989). In the same category we find the "Eurabia" theory of several far-right and alt-right organisations, where they believe that European governments are working together with the Muslim Brotherhood to convert Europe into Muslim territory (Ye'or, 2005). These conspiracy theories have in common that they are based on the notion that there exists an evil group who conspire to achieve world domination. The people behind this plot are corrupting the minds of ordinary people, making them aid them in their plans.

If someone is convinced by a conspiracy theory, it will make sense in almost any event, and it cannot be disproved with empirical facts (Bjørgo, 1989, Jupskås 2012). These empirical facts might actually be transformed into evidence which substantiates and validates the conspiracy they were supposed to disprove, and the more evidence brought to the table, the more convinced the believers of the conspiracy become that they have revealed 'the legitimate truth'. The Nordic Resistance Movement's ideology and language is rather heavily influenced by the ZOG discourse, which is certainly reflected in the group's world view. The appeal of conspiracy theories and the feeling of being the ones to disclose the 'real' truth, as well as it being almost impossible to fully disprove, might be one of the strong motivational aspects of the ZOG discourse. We are now to explore how NRM incorporate the ZOG discourse into a

Scandinavian context, and how also they, like The Prophet's Ummah, perceive their enemy as twofold, divided between the external enemy and the enemy within.

5.1.1 The external enemy

NRM consider every threat to the Nordic race and Nordic state as external enemies. The main protagonist is however the Zionist elite, who are considered to be responsible for a variety of societal issues, such as the concept of materialism and an evolving consumer society. The Zionist elite are, in accordance with the ZOG discourse, believed to have extensive power and influence, in addition to a great combat potential. These are means they will use to accomplish one of their foremost purposes, eradicating the 'white race' and its culture, which is seen as the biggest threat to their power. Similar to other neo-Nazi organisations, NRM see multiculturalism and mass immigration as being a deliberate move from the Zionists, in order to create instability in Scandinavian societies.

> The whole monetary infrastructure of the world is today controlled by a few people. These are by no means elected, but their power is inherited, and they ensure to keep it within their own sphere of power at any cost. One could easily say that our world to a large extent is controlled by hidden rulers (NRM1:10).

NRM does not go into detail of how this Zionist elite operate, or the exact aspects of their doings in which are considered to be harmful. Even though they address the Zionist Elite on many occasions, but its historical origins or the details of the narrative are not elaborated on beyond being called out as the reason for societal issues. Their focus in the diagnostic framing is on abstract concepts such as accusing the Zionists of "destabilising society" or of "the extinction of the Nordic race", but there is little to none description of how they actually proceed on this in other ways than being responsible for mass immigration.

The Zionist Power Elite could appear as a scapegoat and a simplified explanation to problems in society. Research suggests that the European populist as well as far right environments are characterised by resentment towards elitist politicians, as well as a distaste for bureaucracy and political correctness. In an increasingly globalised modern society they seek simple answers to complex societal issues. This does to a large extent capture the public moods, and thus "right-wing and extreme right-wing populists are fuelling and exploiting xenophobia and anti-immigration attitudes to bring in authoritarian nativist policies based on strong nationalist and/or local identities" (Balfour, 2016:14). The latter also being applicable to how NRM utilise the ZOG discourse as a way of simplifying and polarising the complex

political imagery that is the Western society of today. NRM's propaganda clearly aim towards an audience of like-minded people, and this might be part of the explanation as to why it could be that the ZOG discourse has become such a commonly used trope for them, and not a concept they spend too much time elaborating on.

Sandberg (2016) explains tropes as "agreed-upon stories referred to in words or phrases through commonly recurring literary and rhetorical devices" (p. 155). Paying attention to the tropes presented during storytelling can be crucial in understanding which narrative is attributed with the hegemonic discourse. This is not only apparent in society at large, but also within subcultural groups, communicating what they consider to be the collective understanding of the situation in question, especially where everybody agrees on the world view presented. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) pose the claim that the narrative that is taken for granted, is the indicator of a hegemonic discourse, and Sandberg (2016) suggests that the most central stories are the ones only indicated, making those stories never fully told the most important ones. To NRM, the ZOG discourse acts as the baseline of their collective world view, and one of the stories that they all have a common understanding of, which is why it does not need a further explanation.

To many National Socialists, especially the young potential recruits, the variations of the ZOG discourse might seem far fetched and not something they literally believe in, but they adopt the discourse as a way of showing solidarity with the group and its members (Bjørgo, 1997). One could say that the Zionists become the symbol of the alienated and hostile 'other', more than an actual enemy in the traditional sense of the word. Other factors, such as having a violent and intimidating profile, or a fundamental resentment towards immigration and a globalised society, offers a narrative frame of explanation and understanding. The sense of belonging and seeking out environments that are avoided by general society might be another motivator, which will be further elaborated on in the subcultural chapter.

5.1.2 The enemy within

Bjørgo (1997) explains the neo-Nazi depiction of their enemies within as individuals and groups who turn against their own people to aid foreign enemies in taking over the country. This is something NRM criticise most aspects of public instances in the contemporary Scandinavian societies of doing. The group's view resonates well with Bjørgo's theory, claiming that their internal enemies are people who have turned against them and who knowingly or not, aid the Zionists in gaining control over the Nordic countries. They accuse these people and instances of high treason.

To NRM, The Zionist elite is also presumably behind the ideologies of Liberalism and the Scandinavian Social Democracy. The latter they refer to as 'cultural Marxism', which in modern times is commonly used by right-wing sympathisers to describe political correctness and people speaking in favour of multiculturalism. It has been argued that the term is also anti-Semitic, and the 'cultural Marxists' is understood as the term for the internal enemies who aid the Zionists in their attempt at destabilising society. Interestingly, this is the same attitude The Prophet's Ummah has towards Muslims who are not supporting their cause, and PU have no problems labelling their perceived enemies, Western or Muslims, as infidels, arguing that they are unbelievers or false Muslims.

The deceitful press

The media is considered to be one of the main tools for the Zionist Elite, and is used to control people's mindset in favour of the Zionists' interests. In other words, by supporting the Liberal democracy, a person also supports the Zionist Elite and its 'genocidal politics'. The media, which they refer to as 'løgnpressen' (the deceitful press), is controlled by the Zionists and their aim is to constantly undermine the Nordic Resistance Movement and their like-minded allies by demonising everything they stand for.

> The established hostile media in the North and throughout all Western societies are owned and controlled by almost solely Jews, who are hostile towards our cause (NRM3:51).

Similar to PU, NRM consider mainstream media to exploit their role as the fourth estate. They accuse them of constantly brainwashing people into believing in a multicultural society by saying that it only will take small adjustments to solve societal issues in its wake. NRM consider this approach to be wrongful and deceiving, and they point out how there is an extensive amount of news articles written to undermine their cause, as a consequence of how the Zionists does not want the truth about them to come out to the general public. This belief that the media is hiding the truth from the public, is almost identical to The Prophet's Ummah's argument concerning how Western media only publishes misleading information about Islam and discard their own role in Muslim suffering.

> The established media works directly in hostile ways against the people, causing catastrophic consequences. Ethnic, cultural and racial. Hostile propaganda will be illegal and punishable in the forthcoming National Socialist regime (NRM1:23).

To NRM, the media is considered to be one of the main reasons why people actually support multiculturalism, sexual minorities and today's democracy, which is why the group argues that it is extremely important to have a governmentally monitored national media that has to abide strict rules to ensure that they do not propagate harmful Zionist ideas. Both NRM and PU have in common to consider the media and educational system as a threat, and NRM additionally claim it to be harmful to future generations' abilities of critical thinking and information evaluation because the media restricts their freedom of speech.

Deviant groups in society

The feminists and the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) community are also subject of NRM's distrust. Holding conservative and patriarchal views on gender roles, family structure and sexuality, NRM argue that there are some fundamental biological differences between the sexes, and therefore also different biological roles ascribed to men and women. Gender roles, they argue, are part of a person's nature, and when disrupted, the societal structure that the nuclear family model provides is destabilised. These opinions are however not unique to NRM, and are clearly present in a wide range of groups from the conservative right and parts of the alt-right movement, including the so-called manosphere (Jupskås 2012, Lyons 2017, Balfour et.al, 2016).

> Naturally, the feminists claim that it should be natural for the man to watch the kids and for the woman to work. Fact is that if this should be just as natural, the man would have the ability to give birth. On the contrary, the female biology will always entail that the woman is in a weaker position in the labour market, because she is less stable than a man. Especially regarding work that requires an element of a certain physical strength (NRM2:19).

NRM reflects the misogynist and sociobiological views that is commonly shared by the groups mentioned above. A woman's primary task is to give birth and raise children, but feminism and consumerism has led women to rather pursue a career and focus on self-realisation, and in this way they disrupt the natural balance between the sexes. In turn, this will lead to the eradication of the Nordic breed, especially since non-Nordic women on average give birth to more children than what Scandinavians do.

In addition to the disruption of the balance between the sexes, NRM consider it problematic how minority groups such as immigrants and so-called "sexually deviant people" (NRM1:18), are constantly being protected by the law. The Government is criticised for being in favour of certain types of people, for example sexual- and ethnic or religious minorities, even

when its primary task is protecting its own people against external threats. Special treatment of such groups will, according to The Nordic Resistance Movement, inevitably be at the expense of the Nordic people.

> Another weapon in the arsenal of the cultural Marxist hostility against the people and families are the homosexual lobbyists and their struggle to crush the so called heteronormativity – which in other words means the natural structure in any healthy society (NRM1:36).

The supposed *'Homolobby'*, which is NRM's name of the LGBTQ community, are considered to be a major societal problem, and NRM gained much attention when they demonstrated against them in the town of Kristiansand in Southern Norway in 2017. The group argue that the Norwegian annual Pride festival is 'orgie-like' and claim that homosexuality promotes perverted values, which in turn becomes normalised, even cheered upon, in the cultural Marxist society. This normalisation is visible through legalisation of gay marriage, and through the fact that gay couples can adopt children, which according to NRM, should be reserved the traditional family constellation only. The nuclear family and traditional gender roles are both central concepts in NRM's politics, and gender equality and homosexuality are considered especially problematic, as it is understood as a threat against their core values and the mere existence of a well-functioning society. This perceived hypocrisy in how the government protect what NRM considers to be deviant groups, they perceive their own members as being constantly exposed to systematic discrimination. This lack of equal treatment is understood as part of the Zionist conspiracy in how they attack the resistance groups in society in order to gain control over the Scandinavian countries.

Multiculturalism
In line with the ZOG discourse and the National Socialist ideology, NRM argue that humans are divided into races and that each race holds different abilities, such as intelligence level, cooperation skills, courage and strength. Based on this view, they argue that each race has evolved according to their natural habitat, and it will therefore disrupt the natural balance when people establish new homes too far away from where they come from. The group believe that the different races represent the human aspect of nature's biological diversity, and therefore multicultural societies pose a threat to preserving this.

> Mass immigration, multiculture and forced integration must be crushed in order for the diversity on earth to survive. The Nordic Resistance Movement takes such invasions of strange species that in unnatural ways have established themselves in the Nordic nature very seriously, because these pose a formidable threat to both the population, as well as the ecosystem and the biological diversity (NRM1:28).

Dividing people into races could, as seen in the quote above, also be a way of alienating 'the others' and making these differences and the dangers they pose a biological 'fact', rather than a topic of discussion. A multicultural society is not natural, and race-mixing is a threat to the specific abilities inherited in each race, and since there are so few Scandinavians, the consequences of mass immigration will be the extinction of the Nordic race.

NRM refer to multiculturalism and mass immigration as an intended Zionist genocide on the Nordic people, which as already stated, is a way for the Zionists to over time create destabilisation and destruction from within. The way NRM speaks of a genocide is very much similar to PU's use of the word 'crusade', but NRM's use of this trope is rather paradoxical in light of their rejection of the Holocaust. They consider that forcing different races together will lead to inevitable societal conflicts due to racial and cultural differences, as it is not natural for them to share the same area. In other words, if mass immigration continues, the biological diversity will continue to suffer from race-mixing, and the natural balance in the world will be disrupted beyond recovery. NRM usually refer to what other National Socialists call the Aryan race as the *Nordic Master Race*, arguing that the 'true' Scandinavians are of a superior kind. The supreme genes the Nordic race possess needs to be protected in order to make the race survive, as well as for its further development. If nothing is done about the Zionist attempt at world domination, the future Nordic race will "live as slaves under Zion" (NRM3:19) and ultimately be completely eradicated.

Neo-Nazi environmentalism
Being environmentally conscious has gained more popularity among several different groups in society, and one could think that a neo-Nazi involvement in this subject might stem from these mainstream influences. The green political parties in Scandinavia gain increasing support and is no longer as heavily associated with the radical left as it has been in the past. An example of this could be the recent talk of a 'green right' in Norwegian politics (Aftenposten, 2018). In Germany there is even a movement of environmentally conscious neo-Nazis, referred to as 'the nipsters', which shows that even though it might be a surprising part of NRM's politics, it is not unique (Agenda Magasin, 2017; The Rolling Stone Magazine, 2014; Deutsche Welle,

2015). The cultural aspects of this phenomena will be examined more thoroughly in the subcultural chapter, while the ideological building blocks and context will be presented here.

NRM blame exploitation of natural resources on Western consumerism, and they link biological diversity to racial hygiene in a similar way as one would do when breeding dogs or cattle. Their views on sustainable development and biological diversity constitute parts of the explanation behind their resentment towards materialism and modern Western society.

> In the age of the liberal democracy, humans have transformed into a parasitic creature, that sucks the resources out of the earth and ruthlessly treat it in order to either satisfy their own lifestyle or to make rich people even more wealthy (NRM1:25).

The group believe materialism and Liberal Democracy to be a central part of the Zionist world conspiracy as it makes people lust for power and become selfish and indifferent to the consequences of their excessive exploitation of the natural resources. Materialism is blamed for making people become distant from healthy values of austerity and physical fitness, and instead transformed into "thoughtless zombies that dampen their fears with material abundance" (NRM2:11). As mentioned, NRM see materialism as one of the reasons why Scandinavian women give birth to fewer children – because they would prefer to live a life of luxury and personal success rather than protect and carry forward their race and culture. In a sense, materialism is believed to thus threaten the mere existence of the Nordic race.

As other environmentalists, they argue that materialism, global transportation of goods and people, as well as the ruthless exploitation of natural resources will inevitably lead to a global catastrophe. Still, the way they intertwine this with their conspiracy of consumerism being yet another plan for world domination from the Zionists, makes them unique in a Scandinavian context regarding this issue.

> In a National Socialist society, it is unacceptable that hunger for profit and stingy materialism allow poisonous and artificial additives in food and clothing, unhealthy synthetical materials in our homes and in public buildings, and the increasing poisoning of the earth, air and the water - not to speak of the deadly radioactive pollution that will persist for hundreds of thousands of years (NRM2:18).

A cornerstone in NRM's environmental platform is the focus on sustainable development, which we will further elaborate on in the prognostic frame. The importance of preserving natural resources is intertwined with their view on how biological diversity is also applicable to human races. This they also use as the main explanation to why and how people should strive to be conscious consumers and travel less, because the import and export of goods and people

is harmful to the environment. Their focus on preserving nature is also consistent with their Nationalist romanticising of Northern nature.

5.2   The solution: Joining the Resistance

In social movement theory, the prognostic frame explores the group's proposed solutions to the problems articulated in the diagnostic frame, making these two frames closely linked (Benford and Snow, 2000). NRM want to be on the front line of a National Socialist revolution in the Nordic countries, in order to re-establish healthy core values in the new society, and to preserve racial diversity.

Establishing the Nordic State

Despite the Zionists being NRM's biggest concern, the group seldom speaks of a concrete plan to defeat them. Instead, their focus is on how to conquer the enemies within and protect the Nordic people through constructing an envisioned state, the new North. By making sure to establish a strong and racially homogenous military state, the new North will be powerful enough to challenge the Zionist elite in their quest for world domination. In order to do so, the group plan to drastically expand the military by imposing obligatory military service for all citizens, so that the Nordic State will be able to protect itself from both internal and external enemies.

> A state must be adapted to its racial characteristics and culture. A well-functioning Nordic state is not necessarily suitable for China, Somalia or Brazil (NRM2:17).

Every society is considered to preferably be developed as suitable for the respective race living in the area, and this is part of their sociobiological view of racial differences as a source of potential issues in a multicultural society. They envision the new '*Norden*' (the new North) to consist of Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, arguing that the rightful populations in these countries are of the same racial and cultural heritage. In their envisioned new state, every individual should distance themselves from the 'Jewish Capitalist system' and try to live a simple life in harmony with nature, not giving in to the deceitful forces of materialism, and the future North will be an environmentally sustainable and self-sufficient state. No matter the concerns, the Government's primary goal will be to ensure the survival of its people and work for the Nordic development and welfare.

NRM see it as important to invest time and energy on the enlightening and educating the people, who until now have been fed wrongful information from Zionist propaganda. They wish to reveal the true purpose of the Zionists to ensure that people understand the ways in which they operate, and thus can resist and retaliate. Simultaneously, they wish to establish and strengthen alternatives to Zionist transnational companies, such as cultural institutions, transnational infrastructure, media houses and so on, in order to reduce the international influence that the Zionist elite holds.

Biological diversity

As we explored in the diagnostic frame, NRM are extremely focused on race, and they refer to the perceived ongoing war as a 'war between the races'. Among National Socialists this is a common theme, and they often see it as their role to resistant and promote a revolution against the national traitors and the foreign invaders (Bjørgo, 1997). Through the ZOG discourse they portray a world in need of separate forms of government, adjusted to racial characteristics and their specific needs and abilities. By combining the idea of the Zionist elite with their own sociobiological interpretation of natural laws, and how the Zionists are constantly counteracting 'the laws of nature' in order to destabilise Nordic societies from within, they are able to explain why their future State is to be 'race-loyal' instead of 'class-loyal', which they perceive the current situation to be.

> In summary, the so-called 'multiculture' and mass immigration implies a physical displacement of, and a genocide on, the Nordic population (NRM1:5).

More important than the argument of different races having different needs, is their main concern on how immigration is the most severe threat to the Nordic race. Therefore, they want to immediately stop all immigration to the Nordic areas to prevent multiculturalism and race-mixing from increasing and do further damage. They call this process of returning people to their country of origin as 'repatriering', and argue that they want to do this the most humane way possible. They believe that if the immigrants are explained why it is better for them to return to their 'natural habitat', they will go voluntarily. If not, they will however be deported with any means necessary. This could be a way of neutralising a possible use of force through argumentation of necessity, and how more humane approaches will be tried before escalating into violence. The exception from this 'repatriering' practice would be if an individual had excelled in favour of the Nordic race, who then could be granted an honorary citizenship.

In line with their environmental politics, NRM envisions the new North to be a green state with a strong emphasis on sustainability, and they pose suggestions to radical environmental changes to make sure the Nordic society is environmentally conscious. NRM points at how people have an anthropocentric view on animals as inferior to humans, and that their only purpose is to provide us with food or company. In their view humans do have a unique responsibility for animal well-being, but still they do not consider humans to be superior to other species.

> Through acknowledging that humans are part of nature, we also have to realise that the humans can not be an exception what regards the natural laws of biological diversity. No green party could support multiculture, as this genocidal ideology is the mere opposite to biological diversity and evolutionary development (NRM1:28).

> The Nordic Resistance Movement is the only political alternative in the North that really protect nature – also when it comes to human biological diversity. National Socialist promotion of nature must be spread across the world and replace the current parasitic view on nature. Without the national socialist view on the human as part of nature, with a unique responsibility to take care of it, mankind will perish in the end (NRM1:25).

These environmentalist ideas fit with their understanding of humans as part of a natural order and how Liberal Democracies do not accept the notion that all races and species have different abilities that should be taken into account. They want to make sure that people start respecting animals and nature by taking properly care of them. This follows their argumentation of how they do not perceive some races as more *important* than others, but how they *accept their differences* and therefore want every species to develop in its natural habitat.

NRM argue that they represent the only valid political alternative for those looking for a party that truly respects the laws of nature. In their opinion, no authentic green party would support a multicultural society, because the idea itself goes against the principles of evolutionary development and their interpretation of the concept of biological diversity. NRM point at how they will make sure that geoscience is highly prioritised, and they aim at being the pioneers regarding the development of renewable energy sources and push forward for a better international cooperation with other sovereign states on these topics (NRM1). The new North shall implement severe punishment for animal abuse, and animal testing and ritual slaughtering methods, such as Halal and Kosher, will be forbidden. Only organic farming will be allowed as well as a reasonable fishing and hunting policy, taking the dangers of overexploitation of natural resources into account. One of the radical solutions they suggest, is a restrictive housing policy that will make more people live in proximity of natural resources and with the possibility to

grow their own food, thus making the cities mainly for politics, trading companies and finance. In this area, they seem to share the apocalyptic view of many environmental organisations that a radical change is due in order to turn around a negative trend that eventually will destroy the Earth as we know it.

Some might argue that this environmentalist standpoint is a way for the group to portray themselves and their beliefs as more mainstream, but will then be in danger of overlooking the notion that sustainability is a crucial part of National Socialism (Musser, 2010), and the so-called "Volkgeist" (National Spirit) was a central part of the Nazi narrative in Germany during the 1930's. In a historical perspective, even the Holocaust was carried out disguised as a green initiative, and the whole idea of the Nazi anti-Semitism is rooted in the Social Darwinism, which also was the beginning of today's environmentalism (ibid., 2010). They celebrated agriculture and nature, while people living in the cities were seen as Jewish capitalists, destroying the country by exploiting its resources. The farmers were those who belonged in German nature, and the alienated people in the cities were depicted as parasites needed to get rid of (Agenda Magasin, 2017). This rhetoric was especially apparent during the 19th century in conceptualising Judaism or Jews as "unnatural" and to "exist outside the realm of healthy nature" (Bratton, 1999:4).

With this background in mind, it is clear that the environmentalist profile that NRM invoke upon themselves has a solid historical grounding in National Socialism, and that it politically supplies their ideology with 'the laws of nature', defending a hierarchy that opened for some species or races to have a 'truer' sense of belonging in a geographical area than others. This explanation of what is natural and what is unnatural also plays a role in legitimising their views on gender and sexuality, and it gives their anti-Semitism and violent demeanour a 'biological' explanation, in which, from a superficial point of view, could seem hard to argue against. This sociobiological view is easy to sell, as the rhetoric is straightforward and provides people with the division of people into 'natural' and 'unnatural'. It should then be noted that NRM's environmental profile has more depths to it than just trying to appeal to a mainstream audience.

5.3   Motivation: The survival of the Nordic race

The motivational frame aims at appealing to a recipient's emotions on multiple levels, subsequently building on these emotions in order to mobilise people into action (Benford and Snow, 2000). Further, an important part of the motivational frame is how it substantiates the

profound notion of there being an 'us' against a 'them' (Gamson 1992; Stoecker 1995), which is crucial for mobilisation.

Organisations that incorporate the ZOG discourse are usually looking for an "elite" group of members (Bjørgo, 1997). The explicit racism and anti-Semitism in these types of discourses do not serve as a call for the great masses, but it works wonders when making a statement with the intent of dissociating oneself from society at large. Therefore, it has been suggested that people incorporate the ZOG discourse as a way of showing their support for the group, rather than actually believing in the conspiratory narratives that follows. The reactions of disgust and resentment which they receive from society at large might even contribute to increasing their sense of comradery and solidarity (ibid., 1997).

Similar to The Prophet's Ummah, The Nordic Resistance Movement believe that they are a part of the chosen few that will rise against the occupation and rescue their people at the verge of the apocalypse. Their violent and emotional rhetoric regarding their wish to protect 'their people' against the Zionists is thereby not an exclusive trait of their organisation.

> If the world does not accept National Socialism as its only hope for the future, humanity
> will cease to exist (NRM2:26).

NRM claim that they need to turn society around within the next decade if there is going to be any chance of reversing the catastrophic path the cultural Marxists have staked out to aid the Zionists and their quest of world domination. The group's propaganda clearly states that without intervention, the Zionists will complete their mission to exterminate the Nordic race and subsequently humanity as a whole will go under – either as a result of mass consumption followed by an environmental collapse, or through a nuclear war that will exterminate all biological life on earth.

The notion of how the ongoing racial war will lead to a *final* confrontation between the Nordic race and the Zionists proves that NRM's ideology is of a strong apocalyptic character. The idea about the Nordic race being threatened with eradication because of immigration and multicultural societies, create a strong feeling among activists that their homeland is heading towards disaster, and idea that not only appeals to already sworn National Socialists, but to some degree also to a larger community of right-wing sympathisers (Bjørgo, 1997). This sense of urgency is to a high degree evident in NRM's publications, where they constantly point at how it will be too late to save the Nordic race if nothing is done within the next decade.

> I know that we will conquer the evil enemy we stand up against! We will win! Do you want to participate in liberating the North? GOOD! I'll see you on the barricades! (NRM9).

NRM's way preparing their activists for struggles and suffering they will need to go through in order to free the Nordic people from the Zionists is clearly on an emotional level. Contemporary society is clearly a sinister one, as they tell the tale of a world on the breach of collapse. In this narrative they depict themselves as brave soldiers ready to fight until death for their cause, which to some extent resonates with PU's view on martyrdom. This apocalyptic world view definitely contains elements of the classic tales of heroism and the war between good and evil.

NRM utilises the tale of doomsday, which they refer to as Ragnarok when motivating its members to participate in the upcoming battle. Usually, the idea of an apocalypse is closely related to religious forces, as described in the case of the Prophet's Ummah and other Islamist organisations. NRM on the other hand, who strongly reject religion, does instead refer to the forces of nature and the heritage from their ancestors as the almighty power. This they describe in a very emotive language when urging people to join their struggle;

> The voice you hear inside belongs to your ancestors. Listen to how they whisper to you. How they urge you to fight. To fight for what is good, and to fight against what is evil. Feel the holy wrath that fills you and let their wisdom guide you. Listen to how your ancestors' voices urge you to fight for your blood and your land! Nordic man and woman, this is your duty! (NRM7:7).

For NRM the heritage of the Nordic people is clearly a motivator to encourage people to fight for their race and preserve their ancestry in this particular example, they play on the classic tale of good against evil, as well as the appeal to their Nationalist consciousness and to listen to the wisdom of their ancestors. Perceiving themselves as the only ones who have understood this 'real' truth about the race war and the Zionist elite, creates a sense of importance regarding having no other choice but to act immediately if they are to save the Nordic race from extinction. This is also an element underlining the idea of how violence is the last resort in order to stand up for their people and nation.

The chosen few

When NRM speak of their enemies they often refer to them via metaphors of war such as 'invaders' and 'traitors', which clearly substantiates the feeling of there being a clear division between 'us' and 'them' (Gamson, 1995). This division is clearly apparent in a speech held by NRM's leader:

Those of you who listen to this and who sit here today actually know that our race is the most magnificent that have ever existed. You know how the majority of the world's inventions and discoveries, as well as most healthy high culture and a lot of other things, is created by men and women of our blood. It is important that everybody knows and understand that it is we that are right, and everybody else is wrong! (NRM9)

When preaching to his followers, NRM's leader certainly underpins there being a clear division between themselves and every person or institution who disagree with their world view. His way of unconditionally questioning everyone else's liability while at the same time praise the uniqueness of the Nordic race, clearly substantiate the group's feeling of having a shared identity. This, in combination with the degrading words the group often use when speaking of their opponents, help underpin their self-perception of being the chosen few – an elected elite force of soldiers, who have come to realise how the Zionists are conspiring for world domination. As the ZOG conspiracy is somewhat impossible to disprove, every argument against this is seen as either people being wrong, or as part of an attempt from the Zionist elite to shut them down before they can expose them to the world. The conspiracy theory does therefore not only play an essential role in the diagnostic frame, but is also a key element in NRM's motivational frame.

As argued, NRM view themselves as an 'elite force' of soldiers who, with any means necessary, are willing to fight for the survival of their people. The aspect of the organisational structure where the focus on representing an elite force becomes most apparent, is through their election of so-called 'activists'. These are selected through a physical test, and the ways in which these elected activists communicate masculinity and potential for violence through their appearance and rituals, will be further elaborated on in the subcultural analysis.

In the guidelines for how they expect their activists to behave, there is an emphasis on being loyal, honest and humble, to show discipline, work out regularly and be able to keep the organisation's secrets (NRM3). These are all traits in which could be seen as suiting for the classic masculine soldier, and the requirements and tests contribute to the sense of exclusiveness and prestige that lies implicit in the understanding of being the chosen few.

Different conspiracy theories concerned with foreign invaders and internal traitors, does according to Bjørgo (1997) act as both a convenient and powerful imagery for militant nationalists and racists, as such conspiracy theories provide them with "with a sense of legitimacy for the use of violence" (p. 311). This legitimation of violence is apparent through their denial of the victim (Sykes and Matza, 1957), as NRM claim they are the ones being

attacked and therefore their own actions are mere retributions. This becomes apparent through the way they perceive their situations as being in the midst of a war, which makes the need for an elite force of soldiers seem necessary in order to protect themselves from the enemy. The self-imagery of being a strong and assertive special force, fits into their war narrative, where they play the role of the heroic chosen few, saving their people from extermination. This heroic narrative, with the neutralisation of violence that follows, is strikingly similar to that of The Prophet's Ummah.

5.4   Concluding remarks

Diagnostic frame (The problem)	Prognostic frame (The solution)	Motivational frame (Emotional appeal)
The Zionist Elite, the external enemy, is aiming for world domination. They want to destroy the Nordic race (the biggest threat to a Zionist world domination) in order to make sure they reach their goal.	It must be established a homogenous Nordic state consisting of the Scandinavian countries, in order to fight the Zionists.	People must act now, if not it is too late and the Nordic societies, and maybe even Earth as we know it, will not survive.
The internal enemies are aiding the Zionists in destabilising Scandinavian countries from within through materialism, immigration and the idea of a liberal multicultural society.	Immigration and race-mixing must end, as well as the consumer society and materialism – because it is a danger to the environment.	The Nordic people must stand up and fight against the evil, and they will succeed. They should listen to their ancestors, and fight for their families and their people.

Table 5.2 – Overview of The Nordic Resistance Movement's collective action frames

The Nordic Resistance Movement's political opinions are heavily influenced by the transhistorical narrative of the Zionist Occupation Government. This tale is intertwined with a sociobiological approach of dividing people into separate races, each with its own strengths and abilities; Scandinavians being superior in intelligence and adaptability. Their superiority is, according to NRM, the reason why the Zionists want to destroy them, as a strong Scandinavian society threatens their quest of world domination. This is exactly why it is so important to NRM to establish a new state consisting of several Nordic countries, as the new North is the only viable measure that will be able to resist the Zionists.

Seen in the context of Nationalism, as this is traditionally associated with established state borders, the new North is quite interesting in how it is envisioned to combine the Nordic

countries. The Nordic Resistance Movement is envisioning the new Nordic collaboration as a strong state bound by the Scandinavian race, rather than by their current division based on nationality. In countries like Norway and Denmark, which were occupied by the Germans through the Second World War, and Norway especially, with an additional history of being occupied by both the Swedes and the Danes, the Nationalist tradition has more commonly been linked to the resistance against their various oppressors. It is also associated with the liberation of the Norwegian state in 1814. Therefore, the National Anthem and celebrating the Constitution Day is an integrated part of the Norwegian identity, and is not necessarily associated with right-wing extremism. In Sweden, on the other hand, there has never been a settlement distancing the country from affiliation with National Socialist views after World War II, and the traditions of patriotism and Nationalist belief is more or less left for the far-right to claim, as the main society distance themselves from even singing the National Anthem and other traditions because the associations might feel uncomfortable (Bjørgo, 1997).

In a report about radicalisation from 2015, Bjørgo and Gjeldsvik point to some common traits among several right-wing extremist groups – they usually perceive types of people as fundamentally different – and will also perceive these groups as having a different value based on race, culture, religion, nationality or sexual orientation. Many of them also share a conspiratory world view, and their perceived enemy is twofold; internal and external. These traits will be more or less explicitly communicated; depending on which group one is looking into (Bjørgo and Gjeldsvik, 2015). NRM is similar to other neo-Nazi organisations in how they stress the urgency of saving their own race before it is too late, as they perceive the current situation to be a battle between the races. Their rhetoric is conspiratory and contains extreme anti-Semitic and racist views that do not appeal to the great masses. It is however apparent that accomplishing broad support in society is not what they strive for, as their goal is to establish an "elite force" of loyal members (NRM3). We have however chosen to analyse the data through social movement theory, and collective action frames in particular, as these frames help us determine NRM's view on societal issues. It also makes it clearer to distinguish what their proposed solutions to these issues are, as well as how their rhetoric aims to motivate and appeal to the emotions of their supporters, and how they intertwine this with more commonly known conspiratory narratives.

It has been suggested that this form of extremist ideology plays an important role in the radicalisation process towards accepting the use of violence as political means. Hamm (1993) describes the American Skinheads as people believing in "vengeance, selective compassion, and they often look on other men as animals. They worship Nazis and are devoted to the vitriolic

hatred of black males, gays, and Jewish institutions. Their souls are full of chaos. Their morality requires violence, and violence is delivered." (p. 205). Many of the traits in which Hamm describes, are also applicable to NRM members. Their ideology is mainly characterised by antipathy to the Zionists, immigrants, women, the government and several other groups and institutions. At the same time they proclaim a devotion and love for their own people, and consider themselves to be the chosen few that have revealed the truth about the Zionist elite, and thus have the responsibility to fight back in order to save their people before it is too late. This rhetoric forms the ideological reasoning for the organisation's potential for violence. A common trait amongst neo-Nazis is that their rhetoric is often more violent and hateful than their actions (Bjørgo, 1997). However, several members of NRM are convicted of violence (PST, 2018), and, in a historical context, neo-Nazis have been responsible for multiple violent incidents and terror attacks in Scandinavia for decades (Bjørgo, 1997). It should be emphasised that some of these have occurred in demonstrations and counter-demonstrations against militant anti-racists, and thus it could be argued that some of the violent acts might have been considered retaliation rather than fuelled by racist views.

Another common explanation for Nationalist motivated violence is the so-called pressure cooker effect; racists and neo-Nazis do not experience having a possible outlet for their opinions through the ordinary channels of the political system, which, for some, will lead to aggression and violent acts (ibid., 1997). This is a possible explanation that is presented by both actors and bystanders, but we would argue that this could be an oversimplification of the issue at hand. Bjørgo (1997) suggests the possibility of a combination of different factors; a specific violent act could be a counter-reaction, and part of an increasing spiral of violence, which in turn is reinforced and legitimised by an extremely violent ideology. This shows the complexity that represents extremist violence.

The conspiratory narratives and the way NRM perceives the current situation as a war might make violence seem like a legitimate means in order to save the Scandinavian people from an oncoming genocide. Still, it is important not to reduce their political opinions as only a mean or excuse for delinquent young people to commit violent acts. Hannah Arendt (1970) said:

> Racism, as distinguished from race, is not a fact of life, but an ideology, and the deeds it leads to are not reflexive actions, but deliberate acts based on pseudo-scientific theories. Violence in interracial struggle is always murderous, but it is not "irrational"; it is the logical and rational consequence of racism (p. 76).

With this in mind, we would argue that it could give the wrong impression to disparage The Nordic Resistance Movement's members as just another group of deviant and thrill-seeking young men, and not take into consideration their political views as an equally important factor. The political platform presented through our data is comprehensive and consistent, and provide a suggested solution to everything from economy and environmental concerns, to educational politics or immigration. By writing off the political views that groups such as NRM promotes as just a product of angry, white men who dislike change and a multicultural society, one might actually contribute to their sense of solidarity and comradery, as well as their feeling of alienation towards society at large.

6. THE PROPHET'S UMMAH – SUBCULTURAL TRAITS

Through the language analysis it became clear that PU's values and interests are non-normative and marginal, especially seen in the context of a Western society. Following Gelder's (2005) definition of subculture, this chapter aims to explore how the group's particular interests are practiced and how they are not only labelled as marginal by others, but also by themselves. In the words of Pisoiu (2014) they "define themselves in opposition to a mainstream which, however, vague, is real to them" (p.11). The Prophet's Ummah clearly embrace and cultivate their otherness in the sense that they present themselves as part of the chosen few, provided with the divine insight of how to solve all of the world's problems.

In light of subcultural theory rooted in the Birmingham School, this chapter aims to highlight how The Prophet's Ummah, similar to IS and other international jihadi networks, constructs their particular style consisting of attire, symbolism, rituals, cultural material, masculinity and edgework, to communicate their ideology and construct a collective identity (Ferrell, 1999; Polletta and Jasper, 2001). Our aim is to analyse how non-verbal subcultural traits in combination with collectively agreed upon stories could work in order to underpin their collective sense of a "we", as well as communicate their ties to international networks of violent jihadist groups such as IS.

Since our data consist mainly of documents, we will not go into depths of the individual agency or feelings of PU members. What we wish to elaborate on, are the general subcultural tendencies regarding their bricolage and homology (Hebdige, 1979), in the way they combine different elements from both Salafi traditions and contemporary society and street culture in order to express a violent potential and heroic badassery. By exploring the group's subcultural expression and practices we want to give further insight to the apparent senselessness (Presser, 2013) connected to PU's explicit support of terrorist acts. In order to do so, we will analyse their appearance and subcultural traits, and explore how The Prophet's Ummah make use of use different symbols and stylistic expressions – ascribed with a new meaning – and make them a part of their subcultural bricolage (Hebdige, 1979). An example might be how PU associate themselves with the IS flag, which originally has little to do with jihadism, but through the last few years has become the mere symbol of it.

Jihadism cannot solely be understood as a "political project, a religious interpretation and something justifying the use of violence, [as it also is] a social phenomenon, an identity, a subculture, a rebellion against restricting traditions and norms, and much more" (Hemmingsen, 2015:1). The Prophet's Ummah is part of the new generation of European jihadists who, despite

possessing a rather marginal ideology and world view, should be considered a product of modern time in the sense that their subcultural style does not only consist of Islamic fundamentalism, but also Western contemporary street culture. We argue that one cannot simply view jihadism solely as a religious and political counterculture, as there are so many other aspects to it that attracts seemingly well-adjusted individuals, and maybe even people on the complete opposite side of the political spectrum.

6.1   Jihadi cool – the supreme jihadist style

Participating in a terrorist subculture is indisputably a political act. However, studies suggest that individuals supportive of jihadism are not only radicalised because of politics, but also because imitating terrorists has increasingly become fashionable (Crone, M., 2014; Sageman, 2008). In order to understand the appeal of jihadism, it is therefore necessary to explore how being part of a "clandestine undertaking" (Sageman, 2008), for some, is considered cool and exciting.

The jihadist style is conceptualised as 'jihadi cool', a subcultural style consisting of a variety of cultural products that have been given new meaning (Huey, 2015). This meaning is expressed through a badass look built around the masculine Muslim warrior who fights in jihad – a *mujahideen*. They are "caliphate-invoking, kafir-hating sword-wielding men in black of Islamic State" (Cottee, 2014:1) and do, according to Ostavar (2017), "symbolize certain attributes such as bravery, strength and religious devotion" (p. 93). Despite how Salafism fronts the traditional aspect of Islam, the subcultural style represented in jihadi cool consists of a strong undercurrent of postmodern 'cool' with influences from hip hop, the military and various street cultures. In a sense, jihadi cool can therefore be considered as a hybrid that mixes street-culture, violent behaviour, nihilism and Islamist fundamentalism (Vildino, 2007).

The jihadi style and its following lifestyle has extensively been portrayed in jihadi social media, music and counter culture magazines such as IS' *Dabiq,* and it has become an appealing and hip subculture people want to be a part of (Huey, 2015; Sageman, 2008). The fact that jihadi cool is a subcultural hybrid, might act as an explanatory frame as to why jihadism recently has expanded its number of followers; precisely because it builds on an expression and style that targets a variety of people – culture and continent disregarded. Therefore, jihadi cool should be considered an effective form of communication that not only resonates with the inner circle of jihadists, but also those who are not part of it.

Elements constructing the jihadist style have not originally had an Islamic meaning, but have been *given* an Islamic meaning (Pisoiu, 2015; Matusitz, 2015). Therefore, jihadi cool should be considered a result of the set of bricolage in which jihadists have used to construct the 'masculine Muslim warrior', where non-Islamic objects, symbols and rituals have been "radically adapted, subverted and extended" (Hebdige, 1979:104) into what is now the 'new look' of jihadist resistance (Ilan, 2003). In spite of this, jihadi cool does not only consist of attire, symbols and rituals, but also voluntary risk seeking behaviour such as combat and an exciting lifestyle. The style does not only act as a cool look, as central aspects of the style is rooted in violence, criminal behaviour and terrorism.

6.1.1 Attire

Similar to that portrayed in Dabiq, and very much identical to the attire worn by several radical Islamist movements around Europe, members of The Prophet's Ummah are often to be seen in a combination of Middle Eastern or Pakistani clothing, functional footwear, such as sneakers, and a combat jacket. Most members of The Prophet's Ummah have a rather "gangstah or thuggish" (Cottee, 2014) appeal consisting of jeans or big sweatpants, large hoodies and caps, thus stepping away from Salafism's hardcore fundamentalist guidelines. Regardless of this, many of the members are believed to still follow Salafi etiquette to some degree by avoiding gold jewellery, they use perfume without alcohol as well as carrying a tooth-cleaning twig known as a 'miswak', which they believe the Prophet used to wear (Hegghammer, 2015).

The frequent use of for example military clothes, does according to Hamm (2004) act as a direct way of expressing masculinity and violent potential, while Hegghammer (2015) point to how the attire might reflect on their "urban roots, Muslim identity and militant sympathies" (p. 1). This military style is also visible through how The Prophet's Ummah dress in camouflage patterned pants and military boots, as well as how they are covering their faces with scarves, and waving the IS flag. This could also be seen as a reflection of a combination of backgrounds from violent street gangs, while some are foreign fighters returning from the battle fields in Syria, where the same militaristic elements are a recognisable part of the visible elements of their identities.

The Prophet's Ummah has publicly announced their support for The Islamic State, which is not only reflected through the way in which PU and IS share a common ideology and world view, but also through the way they front the same stylistic expression. When looking at how many of the group members dress, it can be rather difficult to understand how they belong in a fundamentalistic jihadi environment, and not just a 'regular' street gang simply by the look

of them. The latter could indicate that the reasoning behind joining a jihadist group is not purely based on conservative religious views or political convictions, but rather because jihadists are considered the most 'badass' groups of this decade. This complies with Katz's (1988) argument of how people are seduced by certain subcultures simply because they wish to appear dangerous or 'badass'.

Photography by Bjørge, Stein J. (2013) on behalf of Aftenposten. Available from: https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/i/43EV/Dette-er-Profetens-Ummah-i-Norge

6.1.2 Symbols and rituals

Symbols and rituals are probably the elements within a subculture which have been adapted, subverted and extended the most. The Prophet's Ummah's appearance could be said to come across as quite random. However, when the group's mixed attire is combined with knowledge of the symbols related to their ideological views, their expression could seem quite intimidating.

In addition to attire, symbols and rituals are to be considered as a powerful tool in the way they enable movements to communicate ideas and showcase association to an organisation. Ostovar (2017) notes how "basic symbolism and visual techniques, such as markers of armed resistance, ideological affiliation, or even color choice, can communicate or at least suggest meaning over time and place" (p. 84). As the jihadist environment is transnationally connected, and not all sympathisers and potential recruits speak Arabic, symbols and rituals act as an elementary form of language that communicates views and affiliation across the environments linguistic barriers (ibid., 2017).

As we are to explore, symbols and rituals are important in the construction of a visual identity consequently being yet another way for subcultures to represent *themselves* as non-

normative or marginal (Gelder, 2005). The visual identity does however not only have an effect on members within the group; in the sense that they give the members an increased sense of belonging thus creating or strengthening the shared 'we', but is equally important in the construction of 'they', as also outsiders attach meanings to symbols despite them not being their own (ibid., 2005).

Symbols and rituals can in other words underpin others' perception of difference and might even create a larger distance between the subculture and the dominant culture. For example, as of 2018 everybody knows that the black flag shows affiliation to IS, which immediately will make many people react with disgust or fear, and as we explored in the language and ideology chapter, much of PU's rhetoric aims at underlining the 'us' versus 'them' mentality.

The Black Standard

Unlike many military organisations, The Prophet's Ummah, similar to for example al-Qaeda, does not have an organisational emblem. Variations of the Black Standard has therefore been used in different situations. In almost any context, whether it is during demonstrations or in published propaganda, The Prophet's Ummah showcases a black flag with the *first kalima* – the Arabic proclamation of faith ('There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet'), written in white. The flag does not represent jihadism on its own, but has however become one of its most prominent and important symbols. The Islamic State's visual profile and identity is very much characterised by a black flag, and similar to PU, they make sure to display it in all their propaganda. IS additionally showcases the black flag to show that they have control of a territory.
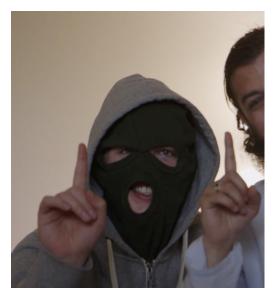

Photography by Sørbø, Krister (2012) on behalf of Dagsavisen: Available from:
https://www.dagsavisen.no/innenriks/ekstreme-islamister-tar-jegerkurs-1.474833

Al-rayah, which is the flag PU often has been associated with, is one of many versions of the so-called Black Standard. As the word suggests, the flag supposedly represents the battle standards, or war flags, carried out by Muslim forces in some of the earliest armed conflicts in Islamic history. The Hadith does for example tell stories of how Muslims carried black standards during the Abbasid Revolution when Muslims defeated the corrupt Umayyad clan and created a new Caliphate in Iraq in year 747 CE. As seen in the language and ideology chapter, PU refers to the narrative of the crusaders to remind Muslims of the cruelty they were exposed to, frame contemporary events, as well as to promote a storyline ending with victorious Muslims. Like the word crusader, the Black Standard is also to be considered a trope, as it is yet another way in which jihadists evoke Islamic history and tell stories about the battles fought by the first generations of Muslims, who "succeeded in transforming the Islamic community into a powerful, expansive empire and transnational religious community" (Ostovar, 2017:88) without having to elaborate. As the Black Standard indirectly symbolise Islam in its purest stage and how Muslims fought and conquered their opponents, the flag has come to represent righteous and legitimate jihad (ibid., 2017).

Pointing towards Allah

Yet another form of PU's nonverbal communication, similar to IS, is pointing the index finger to the sky. Similar to the Nazi salute, pointing the index finger in the sky has become a rather big part of jihadi propaganda and is probably one of the symbols used the most aside the Black Standard. It can to some extent be referred to as a jihadi 'gang sign' (Zelinksy, 2014), that is part of IS' (and subsequently PU's) visual identity, which helps them distinguish themselves from competing jihadi groups, even on a transnational level (Crone, M., 2014). Similar to the Black Standard, pointing the index finger to the sky is not a jihadist symbol on its own as it can be used in any context, by anybody, when for example one wishes to prove a point. It might even be a way for children to add one plus one, most definitely indicating that the gesture in itself necessarily has nothing to with jihad. The fact that this simple gesture has actually become a part of the expression of IS, and therefore indirectly PU's propaganda, is a perfect example of how jihadists act as bricoleurs.

Screenshot from NRK Brennpunkt documentary: *Den Norske Islamisten*. Picturing two members of The Prophet's Ummah.

Photography by Dairieh, Medyan (2015). Published in Vice News. Avaliable from: https://news.vice.com/article/my-journey-inside-the-islamic-state

The use of the index finger has to some extent 'escaped' much research. This is not much of a surprise, as the gesture often is made simultaneously as someone has a severed head in the other hand, during battle, or prior to a Shaheed – when a suicide bombing is conducted and the person becomes a martyr. The gesture does however originally refer to the first half of the Muslim affirmation of faith – 'There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet', which is said before every prayer. In other words, it indicates one's belief in the oneness of Allah – tawhid (Hemmingsen, 2015). However, to jihadists, the raised index finger does not only have religious meaning but is also representing a political message. As mentioned, Salafis believe in the literal interpretation of Islam. In their case, the literal understanding of tawhid means that God is one, rejecting any other view and form of government as idolatrous. This also underpins the idea of there only being one rightful Caliphate that will stretch across the whole globe. The concept of tawhid, expressed by pointing the index finger in the air, is therefore to be considered essential in jihadists' legitimisation of violence against their enemies (Foreign Affairs, 2014).

6.1.3 Masculinity and violence

Much research confirms the close relationship between masculinity, men and violence, and statistics show, as mentioned, how men are perpetrators of the majority of both domestic and public violent offences (DeKeseredy and Schwartz, 2005). The hegemonic masculine identity is considered to be a social construction defined by strength, control and power, and is formed

within a patriarchal structure (Messerschmidt and Connell, 2005). Violence is therefore to be considered as deeply embedded in the traditional male sex role (Ramphele, 2000). When exploring masculinity in relation to PU, we do however find the need to go further than simply viewing masculinity as a social construction with a set of societal 'rules' prescribed to one's gender. Instead, violent masculinity should be viewed as a way of articulating an identity, in this case the jihadist identity, and is therefore yet another attribute to the bricolage in which constructs The Prophet's Ummah's subcultural style.

Being a jihadist is not simply about ideology, but also about confirming one's status as a man. As mentioned, jihadi cool builds upon the masculine warrior – the *mujahideen* – and one can easily establish that violence plays a major role, and is to some extent, the *signature* of their subcultural style. Multiple times The Prophet's Ummah refer to themselves as 'warriors of Allah' and 'at war', which substantiate the notion that "of all the sites where masculinities are constructed, reproduced, and deployed, those associated with war and the military are some of the most direct. [. . .] The warrior still seems to be a key symbol of masculinity" (Morgan, 1994:165). As elaborated on in the language analysis, referring to themselves as soldiers of war indirectly legitimises the use of violence, since violence is socially accepted within warfare. By doing this, PU transform their subculture into a militaristic world, in which the culture of masculinity, per se, is celebrated. Cottee (2010) confirms how, within the jihadi Salafi movement, violence is not only justified, but also enthusiastically celebrated, as one can clearly see in the following extract from PU's website;

> Martyrdom attacks hit local spy agency in Nangarhar.
>
> **In this amazing attack, which was carried out on 24.02.2013, 14 local spy agents were killed. May Allah swt punish them hard for helping enemies of Islam. Amiina** [original emphasis]**.**
>
> It has been reported from Nangarhar Province that a heroic mujahid from the Islamic Emirate conducted a martyrdom attack at the main local spy agency in Nangarhar Province on Saturday morning around 0700 local time. A total of 14 local spy agents were killed and another dozen were injured. The martyr attacker, Saqib, living in the Sarubi district of Kabul, drove his explosively-filled car into the location where about 50 local spies were said to be stationary, blowing it up and ruining the car in the facility to the agency [sic] (PU2).

This is one of many examples where the Prophet's Ummah glorifies violent attacks. Despite appearing horrid to most, when taking the group's religious beliefs into consideration, glorification of violence becomes neutralised, and to some extent seemingly even unavoidable

within jihadism. As mentioned, in PU's view, violent jihad is considered a religious obligation, and dying for Allah is the greatest and most precious act a Muslims can perform. Therefore, one is reliant on an ideological perspective, also when understanding these subcultural traits, as all factors are intertwined.

Despite repeatedly glorifying, celebrating and urging violent means, The Prophet's Ummah as a group has not been held accountable for any forms of political violence in Norway, even though several individuals have participated in violence as foreign fighters in Syria. However, they do have a history of threatening Norway's Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Crown Prince and several journalists. They are also known for encouraging violent acts against the West, publicly supporting the Islamic State's use of violence, and have repeatedly praised and glorified the terror attacks carried out towards 'infidels'.

Christensen and Rasmussen (2015) note how physical violence has been, and to some extent still is, integral to masculine dominance in society. Regardless of this, in contemporary societies such as Norway, violence is regulated and restricted by public authorities in addition to being informally policed by local communities. "As a consequence, the significance of violence for men's power today rests on the potential of violence, realised through unspoken threats or through symbolic acts" (p. 190-191). As opposed to IS, who physically commits and broadcasts violent acts, PU constructs and develops the masculine identity that is glorified in the jihadi cool style, simply by communicating, in a variety of non-violent ways, that they possess the desired qualities for committing violence.

Situational performances of violent potential can take many forms, and aids in the construction of a masculine identity (Mikkelsen and Søgaard, 2015:284), and similar to other street cultures, PU's 'reputation for violence' is an important asset in building street capital (Sandberg, 2008). Several of the members' backgrounds include criminal convictions for threats against dignitaries, fraud, violence or drug-related crimes (PST, 2018), and as an organisation they construct their masculine jihadi identity through posting pictures of guns, as well as through body language, and the way they present their attire, symbols and rituals. Colin and Knox and Monaghan (2003) points out that to several subcultural groups, such a display of muscular aesthetics act as a direct way of promoting a violent potential.

Sandberg, Tutenges, and Copes (2015) point at how actual episodes of violence in street gangs usually are rare, and that many of the people who present personal narratives about violence have never been part of any violent encounters. Even the most hardcore jihadists are not fighting more than a fraction of their time (Hegghammer, 2015), and "there is a great deal more "talk" about gang violence than actual violence and a lot more talk about "being hard"

and riding "missions' for the gang than occur (i.e., "I'm down for a Jihad")" (Decker and Pyrooz, 2015: 106). Mikkelsen and Søgaard (2015) notes, in line with Sandberg, Tutenges, and Copes (2015), that stories about fights and previous violent encounters, even though they are not their own, are "crucial to how some men construct present-day masculine identities and obtain recognition from peers" (p. 285). This might explain why PU speaks of IS' violent terror attacks and the amount of people who were killed as a result with a sense of pride, since this also boosts how others perceive their own violent potential. It is therefore important to note that language, and the way in which jihadists portray their stories, are an important part of jihadi subcultures.

Either way, committing violence or simply creating a reputation for violence serves as a way for members of The Prophet's Ummah to conform and even amplify their masculine identities. "It has means to an end – especially a masculine end" (MacDonald, 2001:125). Therefore, violence in relation to jihadi cool should not be considered as a mindless act, but rather an act of purpose.

6.1.4 Jihadi edgework

Cottee and Hayward (2011) describe how taking part in a terrorist subculture, no matter which, is first and foremost to be considered a political act. At the same time, it also involves a high level of violence and emotions. The concept of *edgework*, which seeks to capture the "various emotional or sensual attractions associated with doing violent acts. Preeminent among these is excitement" (Cottee and Hayward, 2011:996). Instead of crime and deviance being a reaction to social strain, it is suggested to rather be a deliberate action committed because of the thrill. The data we have access to does not by any means give grounds to conclude whether edgework is applicable to PU members, but we choose to discuss the matter, as there are several studies suggesting that edgework is an important perspective on jihadism and homegrown terrorists.

Due to this, edgework has been used as an explanatory framework to discover the motivation behind committing crimes, or in the case of jihadism, join a jihadist subculture to fight for the Caliphate. Silke (2008) did however find that "the propaganda material developed by jihadi groups often attempts to portray the jihadi lifestyle as an exciting, dangerous and meaningful one" (p. 116), which correlates with how the mujahideen is portrayed as a warrior who fights the infidels and risks his life in the name of Islam. In this sense, the jihadist identity is very much constructed around dangerousness, being 'badass' and living on the edge, which is the reason as to why thrill-seeking behaviour should be considered as yet another jihadi cool attribute.

The Prophet's Ummah seldom commit any acts in Norway in which could be described through the edgework perspective, at least not in comparison to what members of IS does. However, simply being part of a radical jihadist group that has several marginal and contested opinions, waving the black flag on the streets of Oslo and saying that it would be understandable if a terror attack happened here; could all be acts of edgework when seen in a cultural context where such actions achieve massive attention and condemnation from society at large. This said, members of PU are most likely not able to truly live the exciting, dangerous and meaningful life in which a jihadi cool portrays, unless they leave for Syria and take part of the "clandestine undertaking" of the Caliphate (Sageman, 2008).

By viewing the insurgent identity and the edgework experiences as an attribute of the jihadist subcultural style, one will also get a greater understanding of the why certain people are so attracted to jihadism. Bartlett and Miller (2012) discovered that several homegrown terrorists have found jihad attractive for a number of non-religious reasons - one being the way in which violent jihad is marketed as cool and exciting. This is also confirmed by Pisoiu (2014) who argues that the lifestyle, experience and self-performance often surpass the political, or even religious, reasons for joining. Thus, the idea of the Caliphate in itself might not be attractive to all recruits, but rather the violent ways of establishing it.

Jihadism is very much portrayed as dangerous, and this might attract people who are looking for an adventure or who get some sort of pleasure out of violent or thrill-seeking behaviour. As jihadism is considered to be a high-profile threat to security (Hemmingsen, 2015), it might actually contribute in making the jihadist subculture even more attractive to those individuals searching for a way to live on the edge instead of living in an organised, and to some even boring, society.

Many subcultures are believed to emerge because of social strain, but in relation to jihadism this has been rejected by several studies showing how also educated people wishes to take part in this theatre of war (e.g. Kreuger and Malečková, 2003; Lia and Skjølberg, 2004; Veldhuis and Staun, 2009; Rabasa and Bernad, 2014; Pisoiu, 2015). Wilkins (2013) propose the hypothesis that to some, deviancy and being an outlaw might actually be the whole point of joining a subculture to begin with, as initially explored, violence might be pleasurable for some. Pisoiu (2015) argues that "not unlike other scenes of extreme political activism, the jihadi scene will also attract individuals who are not only prone to violence, but also who genuinely enjoy committing it" (p. 170). For individuals who obviously enjoy committing violence, "the Syrian jihad is the ideal place to go on rampage, play with guns and commit all sorts of crimes with impunity, and in fact even enjoy recognition and fame for them" (Pisoiu, 2015:170). While

there is no evidence to conclude on this matter in relation to our data on PU, the topic could arguably be seen as an additional aspect and possible appealing part of the jihadi life, which would be interesting for further research. NRK published in 2017 an article about Oleg Neganov (28), who went from being a dedicated neo-Nazi in Norway, to become one of the IS foreign fighters (NRK, 2017e). This case could indicate that if a person's goal is to use violence, the distance between Hitler and IS is not that big. Both neo-Nazi and jihadi groups provide their members with a narrative framework and a subcultural style in which amplifies a violent potential, and applies violent acts with a higher purpose and recognition.

If one is to look at jihadism as a religio political phenomenon alone, these kinds of shifts might seem inexplicable, but seeing jihadism as part of a broader environment of different violent countercultures, the characteristics of the groups, ideology aside, are not that different. Travelling to Syria to partake in the battles of IS might even be a more available way to live out this enjoyment of violence than the neo-Nazi lifestyle, and thus providing such individuals with what they are searching for (Kaplan and Lööw, 2002; Hemmingsen, 2015). The latter is supported by one of the main findings in the so-called 'IS Files', which outlines how most of the individuals who signed up for joining The Islamic State primarily wanted to fight in the war rather than die as a martyr (Dodwell, et al, 2016). This is interesting in the sense that martyrdom is articulated as the ultimate reward for sacrificing one's life for Allah's cause, and is considered one of the most important things a true Muslim can strive for. These finding might indicate that some of the individuals fighting for IS do so primarily because they want to exercise violence, and not necessarily for the religious purposes alone.

Christine Fair, who specialises in counter terrorism, said in an interview that "We have ethnographies where they actually ask militants what drew you to this movement […] The top three were motorcycles, guns, and access to women. You had to go pretty far down the list to get to religious motivation" (Temple-Raston, 2010). The list of motivators is complex and might include a fascination of the violent culture of the organisation, their narrative repertoire, or the mere experience of fighting a war. Pisoiu (2015) argues that the violent subculture in itself might seem appealing through its production and reproduction of excitement and adventure. Based on the data we have access to through this study, it is not scientific grounds to prove that the members of The Prophet's Ummah travel to Syria because they want the jihadi edgework experience. Still, by looking at some of the member's backgrounds in crime and other street cultures, such as Young Guns, and see this in context of what studies of similar groups have indicated, it might however be of interest for future research to find out if some of the

motivation for joining does not necessarily lie solely within the importance of what they are fighting *for,* but rather lies in the *participation* in itself (Vildino, 2007).

Despite the strain perspective being somewhat rejected by several scholars in relation to jihadism, we do however argue that it should not necessarily be completely depreciated. In some instances, edgework might correlate with strain, when the actors through participating in jihadi subcultures, experience a higher status and to a certain degree a sense of control over their own lives in a lifestyle which is otherwise characterised by feelings of worthlessness and alienation (Cottee, 2011). The CCCS-oriented theorists build on strain theory in how they focus a great deal on how style and culture play an important role in how delinquent groups express themselves and how they can utilise this as a way of gaining capital, when other, more plausible ways of expressing oneself is restrained by social factors.

 When speaking of jihadism, it is important to recognise how there are different and complex reasons as to why individuals join a violent subculture, and to people with a history of criminal acts, jihadism could be considered as a way to start over (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010). In terms of 'street capital' (Sandberg, 2008), these individuals might have acquired violent competence through their lived experiences that they want to use in order to make a difference. Risking or sacrificing one's life for a greater cause, as well as surrender themselves to a pure and divine God, may in other words give life some sort of new meaning. In our data, the main focus among members is on how the organisation, and striving to live true to the Quran, is a way for them to figure out the meaning of life (PU8; PU11; PU14), rather than explicitly saying that they were drawn to the organisation due to a fascination for guns or because of the jihadi cool style. The combination of a desire for excitement, finding an ultimate purpose of life and achieving some sort of glory, would be a more accurate frame of understanding terrorism, than it emerging from political convictions alone (Cottee and Hayward, 2011). One can argue that to some, travelling to Syria has become the ultimate test of manhood, and as argued by one of PU's members; the partaking in such travels "comes with much respect" (PU18).

In her study of the graffiti subculture, MacDonald (2001) notes how "the greater the danger and risk and thus necessary daring and machismo, the greater the respect, the greater the status, the greater the man" (p. 105). Extreme political ideologies often broadcast their message and market their lifestyle in a way that romanticise their violent ways as a revolutionary adventure. Cottee and Hayward (2011) therefore argue that it is important to understand extremists not only as political actors, but independently of this, also violent ones. This is one of the reasons why the focus on ideological motivation, without a cultural aspect to the analysis, might not capture the complexity associated with extremist groups and their appeal

to a broad variation of potential recruits. Additionally, it is worth noticing how jihadism, in opposition to many other violent subcultures, promote themselves as the good (the mujahideen) fighting the forces of evil (the infidel invaders). This exact combination of badassery and heroism gives jihadi cool such a strong power of attraction "especially for Western gang members in search of redemption and ever more spectacular forms of violence and excitement" (Cottee, 2014), and the nexus between the machismo of street culture and behaviour associated with violent extremism, is increasingly recognised (Picart, 2015).

6.2 Concluding remarks

The jihadist style conceptualised as jihadi cool is a mix of traditional Muslim attire, military outfits, streetwear, weaponry, symbols and rituals. A style is not only based on looks, but actions as well, and is therefore performed through showing off a violent potential, masculinity and edgework activities. This combination of products and practises, when put together with ideology, amounts to a lifestyle and a shared identity which builds upon the image of the masculine Muslim warrior – the mujahideen.

Several of the attributes that play a part in constructing the jihadist style, have not had an Islamic meaning to begin with. It has been adapted, subverted and extended into representing Islam. Jihadi cool is therefore a result of the bricolage that jihadism has used in order to construct their style. Despite how they explicitly draw on Salafism and the literal interpretation of the Quran, one can clearly see how jihadi cool is as much built on the postmodern cool, as it is the traditional. Therefore, jihadi cool should be viewed as a subcultural hybrid, which becomes clear through the way The Prophet's Ummah mixes traditional Muslim attire with hoodies, sneakers and bling. In addition to how they spread most of their propaganda material through the Internet, which to some extent can be seen as the symbol of modern. In as sense, the members of PU are deeply conflicted modern males who approves the adoption of scientific and technological tools, while at the same time rejecting the cultural values that gave rise to them, a concept Tibi (2012) coined as 'semimodernity'.

The bricolage constituting jihadi cool might seem chaotic, but when taking a closer look at how the objects, symbols and gestures get assigned a new Islamic meaning, what first seemed to be rather senseless about this hybrid, start making sense. I.e. how pointing the index finger to the sky has become a way of underpinning the concept of tawhid, and thus

legitimising violence when viewed through the Salafi interpretation of Islam. Jihadi cool could therefore be viewed as a way for jihadi organisations to express their ideology through style. As mentioned, the products and practices are a big part in the construction of a lifestyle and identity that subsequently contributes to extend the division between 'us' and 'them', which PU's collective action frames clearly promotes by portraying how there is an ongoing war against Islam.

In the case of PU, the majority of members have a history of mental challenges, low levels of education and unemployment (PST, 2018). This does not necessarily mean that the members automatically consider themselves as failures or mechanically radicalised by situational circumstances (Pisoiu, 2015), and a focus on edgework and other subcultural elements will also include the individual agency to the understanding of the organisation and its members.

Jihadi cool should be considered as much more than just a stylistic expression, as it also reflects ideology, unity, desired qualities and a collectively agreed upon world view, in which together constitutes the organisation's homology. The way the jihadist style is a collection of several elements, could make it appealing to a broad and diverse audience; from devoted Salafists to young outlaws searching for an edgework experience. To some, jihadism might seem like the perfect answer to a complex postmodern reality (Hemmingsen, 2015). Jihadism provides their audience with simple explanations and guidelines for most aspects of life, as well as being unshakable in their conviction that they know the only true path to Paradise. PU portray themselves as the chosen few, the pure and true followers of Allah, while at the same time their hypermasculine style and appearance express a potential for violence. Picart (2015) views thrill, excitement and coolness as some of the most important elements that aid in the escalation of violent behaviour. Style could therefore be seen as yet another way of constructing a frame of resistance, and a way of motivating people into action. While jihadism might provide certain individuals with an ideological and political framework, participation should however not only be considered as an instrumental act aiming for political purposes, as people might as well participate for the thrill of it, or because they are searching for a higher purpose in life.

7. THE NORDIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT – SUBCULTURAL TRAITS

In the following chapter, we will analyse the subcultural traits of The Nordic Resistance Movement in line with Gelder's (2005) definition of a subculture and Hebdige's (1979) concepts of bricolage and homology. The group has recently gained a lot of public attention in Scandinavia due to their demonstrations against homosexuality, promotion of violence and anti-immigration protests, but their influence is however to be characterised as marginal considering their explicit racist and anti-Semitic profile (Bjørgo, 1997).

The focus of this subcultural analysis will be based on NRM's own publications, media coverage and information from the Norwegian Security Police's Threat Assessment of 2018. Previous research on neo-Nazi environments in Norway suggest that members of these groups predominantly are of a working-class background and point at how social exclusion and alienation are strong motivating factors for joining a National Socialist organisation (Bjørgo, 1997; Fangen, 2001). With the material we have access to, primarily consisting of documents, defining individual agency and motivation might prove hard to answer. However, The Nordic Resistance Movement are under close supervision from the security police in all countries where they are present, and the collected information from these institutions, in combination with extensive newspaper coverage, provide us with an understanding – even though a generalised and superficial one – of who their typical members and sympathisers are in relation to socio-economic factors such as previous affiliation with violent crimes, degree of education, unemployment rate and so on. This background information in mind, seen in relation to NRM's appearance at public events and their grandiose depiction of self, constitutes the baseline for this analysis.

While the language analysis provides insight to the collective stories and the ideological roots the organisation has developed from, an additional subcultural approach focusing on non-verbal communication might provide us with a broader understanding of extremist groups. Hamm (1993) claims that the key for understanding terrorism and extremist groups is through their subcultural style, because the style is yet another way for such groups to express themselves. Our aim for this analysis is to elaborate on how NRM act as bricoleurs (Hebdige, 1979), by expressing their opinions through the use of symbols, rituals and attire, in addition to expressions of masculinity and edgework experiences. The way they incorporate this with their narratives of a conspiratory world view, constitutes their National Socialist homology.

7.1 Neo-Nazi subcultural style

The contemporary neo-Nazi subcultural style is complex and consist of elements from several different trends. The skinhead style came to Europe during the 1980's and early 1990's, and was characterised by Nationalism and National chauvinism, combined with the ideology and political mindset of white pride and racism (Johansson, et al., 2017). The British skinheads integrated the working-class clothing and shaved heads with old Norse mythology, artefacts from Nazi-Germany such as SS-badges and swastikas, doc Marten boots and elements from punk culture. They altered all of this into their own, now highly recognisable, skinhead expressions of Nationalism and racism.

Similarly, The Nordic Resistance Movement utilise elements from mainstream society and applies them with new meaning, consequently creating an identity that combines symbolism from Vikings, Nordic runes, military style and wholesome, outdoorsy Nordic youth. At the same time, their appearance might look more like some leftist radical groups; wearing black hoodies, sneakers, as well as covering their faces with scarves against tear gas, and carrying shields with their webpage printed on them. In this sense they act as bricoleurs (Hebdige, 1979) in how they tinker with details from other cultures and societies, and make them their own. Through maintaining and reinforcing this new meaning and implementing it until it is a recognisable part of their identity, it becomes part of their subcultural homology (ibid., 1979).

According to Hamm (1993), the traditional skinhead traits are fading among contemporary American skinheads, and they now look more like regular "blue-collar workers" and students, rather than obvious representatives of a violent subculture. Hamm (1993) introduce a discussion of whether this is because they are too busy with their regular lives to be overly concerned about style, or maybe if it is because they want to tone down the neo-Nazi look, as the associations that follow have become suspicious and draws too much attention to their activities, and thus they have "collectively decided to clean up their act" (p. 130). In comparison, members of The Nordic Resistance Movement could still be argued to represent elements of the style their skinhead predecessors were known for. NRM developed from the first wave of the Swedish White Power movement, in which their founder was heavily involved with (Johansson et. al., 2017). With this historical background in mind, one could say that the NRM style is a combination of elements from traditional neo-Nazis and skinheads, as well as being influenced by American white supremacy movements and contemporary mainstream society all at once.

The Nordic Resistance Movement have a solid foundation with many of the same leading figures in the neo-Nazi environment from the 90's and, as opposed to other skinhead and right-wing subcultures, the average age of NRM members is about 30 years (Sveriges Radio, 2018), and the organisation is in this sense not a youth subculture. This might be part of the explanation as to why their stylistic expression is more down played and neutral than skinhead youths. Regarding their style, NRM are closer to the old school depiction of neo-Nazis as "angry white men", with tattooed arms, shaved heads and military boots, than the traditional edgy British skinhead look. They are arguably also influenced by a romanticisation of descending from the Vikings, growing long beards, and utilising ancient symbols from Norse mythology such as runes, wolves and ravens. There is also an explicit disapproval of what they call "subcultural clothing" in their *Handbook for activists* (NRM3). Part of the reason for this distaste might be that the punk style, which is closely related to the skinhead style, could be argued to mainly have been occupied by the radical left and anti-racist movements in Scandinavian youth subcultures over the past years.

7.1.1 Attire

In The Nordic Resistance Movement's activist handbook there are clear guidelines as of how their activists are supposed to act and dress. On the book's cover is a variety of pictures that reflects different sides of the organisation; both the militant demonstrations as well as the depiction of a Nordic, masculine young man surrounded by lush, Nordic nature. As briefly mentioned in the language analysis, the 'activists' are those members who supposedly construct the somewhat military elite of the organisation. They are not allowed to get tattoos on their neck, head or hands, and it is clearly stated that people having such tattoos before joining will not achieve a high-ranked public position in the organisational structure. Neither are they allowed to wear visible piercings, and women are encouraged to only wear discrete jewelry, if any at all. Men are not allowed to wear any form of accessory all together. In addition, the organisation is clear on a no-drug policy, including anabolic steroids and psychofarmaca, and they need to show moderation in regards to alcohol (NRM3).

Some of the activists, usually the ones placed to fight off opponents and police, wear all black with their logo printed on their backs, while holding shields and posing for pictures with expressionless faces. Some of them have indeed the shaved heads and tattoos associated with the skinheads, but this could not be said to be the organisation's overall collective expression. They appear intimidating masculine and potentially violent, and this set-up of a group of strong and angry looking men has a long tradition in Swedish right-wing extremist environments

(Johansson et.al., 2017). Initially the skinheads were used as 'muscle' during far-right public events during the 90's, mainly to fight off opponents and police, and protect the parliamentary wing against attacks. The latter were the predecessors to today's Sverigedemokraterna, as the skinheads were predecessor to today's NRM, and it seems like NRM has kept this traditional set-up for their current demonstrations.

Photography by unknown. Collected from www.frihetskamp.net

In most media outlets The Nordic Resistance Movement is depicted as in the picture above. This unison look certainly express an element of militaristic masculinity, and during demonstrations and other official events NRM appear strikingly homogeneous. In these settings they dress up in white shirts, black trousers and tucked ties in their characteristic dark green colour. The tie seems to be a trademark of their uniform, and it is worn by men and women alike, with the tip tucked into their shirt. Women dress somewhat similar, with white shirts, black skirts, and braided long hair.

Simultaneously, the pull towards a more mainstream appearance could be observed in more informal settings. During interviews they are usually seen wearing windstopper jackets and anonymous clothing, and there is nothing in their appearance that would immediately give away their extremist beliefs. Their appearance would seem more like that of people who frequently go on mountain hikes, hunting trips and spend hours outside, which might correlate well with their green politics and the wish to live a simple life in accordance with nature.

Among European right-wing activists, it seems like the traditional skinhead look is no longer the desired cultural expression, and young Nationalists and neo-Nazis appear more influenced by the mainstream (Agenda Magasin, 2017). In Germany, the Nationalist party ANP openly wish to appear less intimidating and be a place where people with different styles can come together through shared opinions and politics, rather than as a stigmatised subculture (The Rolling Stone, 2014). In this way it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between mainstream youth and right-wing radicals based on their appearance alone. This emerging stylistic expression of neo-Nazi fashionistas has been referred to as the 'nipsters'; the Nazi-hipsters or Nationalist-hipsters.

Photography by unknown. Picturing 'nipsters'. Collected from: http://kindstattgross.tumblr.com

The nipsters dress in skinny jeans and sneakers, t-shirts with printed slogans, use environmentally conscious cotton bags, beanies, have well-trimmed beards, tattoos and piercings. They even have designated clothing lines which produce seemingly mainstream looking gear with subtle National Socialist symbols such as the double eight symbolising the 'Heil Hitler', Nordic runes and Viking-inspired motives, wolves and eagles. They also publish vegan cooking programmes on YouTube, as well as creating Tumblr-pages and hashtags on Instagram, and are definitely confident in using contemporary mainstream social arenas in order to express their ways (Agenda Magasin, 2017). This way of creating their own arenas in society at large, and tinker with elements of the contemporary youth culture in order to make them their own, is recognised as a common trait among counter cultures (Hebdige, 1979), but the ways in which they tone down their otherness and present it as part of the mainstream, could be argued to be a new turn in Nationalist environments.

The Nordic Resistance Movement does not really assemble the nipster profile, but it could be argued that they, when changing the shaved heads for man-buns and more mainstream clothing, might have been influenced by some of the same impulses. NRM's style appear more militarised and traditional than the younger nipsters, and when not dressed for demonstrations or other events, their style is, as mentioned, toned down and laid-back. This might reflect their ideal of living sober and simple lives close to nature, rather than being part of a new-wave Nazi fashion statement. The difference in style from other European Nationalist groups could also be partly explained by the age difference. The common traits they do share, which comprises European Nationalist youth, American skinheads, and to a certain degree also The Nordic Resistance Movement, might be the reflection of a gradual turn towards a more mainstream profile, with rhetoric alone as the chosen way of expressing their extremist views.

To summarise, one could say that NRM's style is twofold, and that their militaristic and homogenous style during official events seems engineered to appear intimidating and to get massive media attention, especially seen in contrast to a rather anonymous and neutral everyday look, which is more toned down and casual than the traditional depiction of neo-Nazis. Both sides of this spectre become part of the bricolage in which constitutes their stylistic expression, and the overall impression is that they are both active and outdoorsy, as well as masculine, homogenous and intimidating, promoting an apparent potential for violence. This expression seems to be in accordance with their ideological profile of militaristic masculinity and austerity, and thus also arguably a natural part of their National Socialist homology.
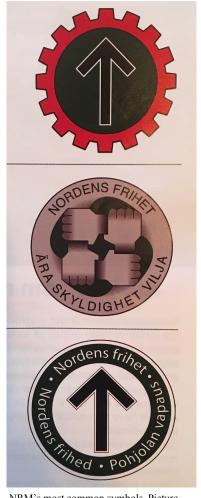
7.1.2   Symbols and rituals

As seen with the first generation of London's skinheads (Hamm, 1993; Hebdige, 1979), members of The Nordic Resistance Movement are bricoleurs by nature in the sense that they take neutral objects from mainstream culture, and then apply these with an alternate meaning. Below are a few examples of their most commonly used symbols, which are a central part of their subcultural expression.

Their most common trademark is the Tiwaz rune, an ancient sign of resistance, symbolising the Norse god Tyr. In NRM's emblem the rune is encircled by a sprocket in red, and the group explain how this is supposed to represent fellowship and the idea that all people of the North should grow up with equal rights and opportunities, while the red symbolises National Socialism (NRM3:7). The Tiwaz rune was also used by Adolf Hitler as the emblem on the award for graduates from his Nazi leadership school (Daily Mail, 2017), so the way the rune combines both Norse mythology and Hitler's Germany, makes it a suitable symbol for

NRM. Prints of the Tiwaz rune is found on their flags, flyers, home page, hoodies and other items that in some way are associated with the organisation.

The groups Swedish website has a symbol of its own, which is four joint hands encircled by the text "honor, commitment and will". They say the hands are supposed to symbolise a union between the Nordic people, and the text represents some of the core values that are highly appreciated among the members. The website itself is filled with illustration photos of old-fashioned, Nazi-Germany inspired drawings of strong, Aryan men, which clearly reflects how they portray the Nordic man as hard working, strong and masculine, and the Nordic race as a proud and superior kind.

The last symbol is another version of the Tiwaz rune. NRM describes this as their "activist symbol", and it is only supposed to be worn by those who have achieved the activist status within the organisation. The activist symbol differs from NRM's official logo in how the Tiwaz rune is encircled by text, which can be translated into "Liberation of the North" written in Danish, Finnish and Swedish/Norwegian.

NRM's most common symbols. Picture collected from NRM's *Handbook for activists* (NRM3).

The way in which the activist symbol is something to be achieved through the recognition of being one of their finest and most capable members, further amplifies the association with Hitler's leadership school, and the exclusiveness underlines the depiction of self as the chosen few.

In a video summary published by The Nordic Resistance Movement, named "Battle Year 2017", shows 11 minutes and 2 seconds of different clips from events that took place throughout the last year. The video portrays several violent clashes between The Nordic Resistance Movement's members and opponents or police, as well as hand-held camera footage of different local wings burning Pride flags, or vandalising public property, combat training and speeches during their political summer camp. They have also documented forest walks, outside bonfires and members drinking from waterfalls. The clips are accompanied by dramatic and grandiose music. At the end, two central members deliver this message:

2018 will be the worst year ever for our enemies, but the absolute best year for our comrades. (...) The people will see a ferocious and fanatical National Socialism, that won't leave anyone unaffected (NRM6).

This video is another suiting example of NRM's creative staging of themselves. On screen they first of all appear aggressive, violent and masculine. The summary is quite extensive, and gives the impression that the organisation has been extremely relevant and active during the past year, in addition to make it appear as if they have an extensive amount of followers. The message at the end, combined with the music and the violence depicted earlier in the video, is intimidating and has a threatening subtext. This video not only sums up what they apparently perceive as the highlights of the year, but it also reflects all the most prominent aspects of their subculture; violence and thrill-seeking, masculinity, militarised style, a love of Nordic nature, camaraderie and political activism. This grandiose self-perception does not necessarily correlate with the impression people not associated with the organisation have, as The Nordic Resistance Movement are usually described as a marginal phenomenon, despite their increased activity and the following media attention. Through combining style, symbols, music and rituals associated with both Vikings, skinheads, Nazi Germany, outdoor activities and masculinity, their style correlates with their ideology in several ways. Moreover, this is tying them to a broader historical and geographical network of like-minded people, arguably making their subcultural style part of a broader National Socialist homology.

7.1.3   Masculinity and violence

NRM's expression of violence explicitly comes to show through the extensive list of physical prerequisites in order to become one of their activists, and they need to pass a test that seems to have certain similarities to those required in order to join the army or the police academy (NRM3). This exclusiveness of being recognised as one of the organisation's most capable members is clearly substantiating the self-imagery of being the elite force of the Nordic race, further building on their idea of taking the role as the heroic resistance, and fulfilling their role as the chosen few who are to sacrifice themselves in order to save their people from the Zionists. As argued regarding the group's style, it appears as if the status of becoming one of their activists, and thus part of their military elite, is high. In their *'Handbook for Activists'* they pose a number of physical and mental abilities which is acquired to become an activist. During a maximum of 45 minutes, they are tested in endurance, speed and strength through various exercises. It is emphasised how those committed to become activists will have to adjust their way of living in several ways in order to achieve the spartan, sober lifestyle that is acquired.

The rules they need to comply with are summed up as follows: Be quiet, be loyal, be humble, be a comrade, show discipline, be truthful and work out (NRM3). All of the mentioned characteristics are closely associated with a hegemonic masculinity. In addition, they are, as mentioned, to fully abstain from drugs, including psychofarmaca and anabolic steroids, and they are not allowed to drink an indecent amount of alcohol (NRM3).

In a male-dominated subculture like the Nordic Resistance Movement, the violent potential and the dominant male becomes apparent in how they construct their own masculine identity as militarised, strong and assertive. This militarised masculinity (Barrett, 2001; Hutchings, 2008; Kronsell, 2012; Morgan, 1994; Grønnerød et al., 2008; Woodward and Jenkings, 2011) is also frequently seen in some branches of the military, the police and other male-dominated institutions, where physical strength and toughness is part of their construction of self. Despite militarised men often rejecting everything perceived as feminine, one can actually discover some traditional feminine traits among most soldiers, such as "total obedience and submission to authority, the attention to dress detail, and the endless repetition of mundane tasks that enlisted men as opposed to officers are expected to perform" (Hooper, 2001:47-48). These traits are however never classified or emphasised on when looking at the representation of the soldierly men, but the hierarchical structure and focus on loyal and obedient members within NRM clearly demands these traits in addition to the classic notion of the masculine soldier. It is however important to note that despite NRM portraying *themselves* as soldiers and as part of an army, it does not mean that military research is applicable to them, as the group is not close to being as structured as military institutions normally are. Still, their hierarchical structure, as well as their focus on discipline, purity and physical strength has certain similarity with such militant groups.

Yet another example of how neo-Nazi subcultures and masculinity are connected, is through the way 'Skinheadism' is said to have followed as a counter reaction to the social movements of feminism and gay rights in 1969 (Ware and Back, 2002). The skinheads were characterised by their masculine, working-class, heterosexual and aggressive appearance, in which came to show through violent street fights and harassment of people of colour. Sociologist Mike Brake (1974) points to four core values found within the first wave of London skinhead subculture; toughness, violence, football and ethnocentrism. The skinheads constructed their masculine identity through fighting and drinking, combined with supporting their National team, as well as being hostile towards other ethnicities. This form of hypermasculinity is preserved in radical groups like NRM, while it has been downplayed in

more populist political parties like Sverigedemokraterna, regardless of how both organisations have the same subcultural historical roots (Johansson et.al., 2017).

On their webpage, NRM regularly report on several of the violent incidents their members have conducted, and the video made to summarise the year 2017 was filled with recordings of a variety of violent confrontations between members and police or political opponents, accompanied by dramatic music (NRM6). They communicate the underlying threat of violent clashes through a potentiality for violence (Mikkelsen and Søgaard, 2015), which might be an important aspect to take into consideration when assessing the dangers such subcultural groups pose to the general public. The way they present this potentiality through a hypermasculine and threatening construction of self, can influence how we perceive them as violent, and even capable of committing terrorist attacks. On the other hand, as a consequence of their obvious affiliation with violence, mainstream society possibly perceive this as a downgraded and pathological masculinity (Boon, 2003), and underestimate their appeal to a broader spectre, or the actual threat they might pose to the public in terms of potential violent attacks.

It could seem like NRM have difficulties accepting how society and traditional gender roles are constantly changing. Perhaps could their anti-feminist views be understood as a reaction of resistance to the recent plurality and continuum of both masculine and feminine identities that is part of modern society. As the hegemonic masculinity most likely is an implemented part of their own identity, they might feel threatened or alienated from these changes, and a hypermasculine approach might be a way of reacting to this. Kimmel (2017) refers to what he calls "aggrieved entitlement" when describing how American white men react to the increasing focus on gender and racial equality and argues that this rage stems from a feeling of being emasculated and humiliated, as well as being betrayed by their own country through economic and cultural shifts they do not want to adjust to. They are worried that American manhood is lost, and they do not recognise the "white man privilege", and then again feel that minorities and women are getting special treatment as a consequence of how measures are taken to ensure equality in society.

In a Nordic context, Kimmel's (2017) aggrieved entitlement could be part of the explanation for NRM's aversion towards feminists and the LGBTQ community. This anti-feminist standpoint is part of a broader environment of men's rights activists, the Manosphere and other parts of the radical right-wing tendencies. What Kimmel (2017) fails to recognise, is the importance the socio-economic background of his research subjects might hold. The fact that these groups do not recognise "white man privilege" might also have to do with coming

from a working-class background, and the status frustration that comes with high unemployment rates and the feeling of being left out of society. With these experiences, being categorised as especially privileged might seem unfitting to the subjects. When examining groups like NRM, it could therefore be fruitful to also take into consideration their lived experiences of being left out and how their own role in society is down played as a consequence of the multicultural societies' increasing focus on facilitation in favour of minority groups and women.

7.1.4 Violence as thrill-seeking behaviour

Earlier convictions of known members of the organisation are well documented. Swedish Radio has identified 178 of the most active members of 2017. Half of them have a criminal record, and one out of four are convicted of violence, which also includes murder and gross violence. A former Finnish member said in an interview that members who commit violent acts in accordance with the ideology of the group obtain some sort of heroic status (P1 Dokumentär, 2018). For the Norwegian members, almost 100 active members and supporters have been identified. About half of them have a criminal record, many of these are offences of gross violence. The Norwegian News Agency VG checked 30 activists against registered convictions over the past 10 years, and they found that 17 of these members had been charged 24 times. This included six convictions for violence, three for breaking weapons legislations, as well as stabbings, use of explosives, robberies and drug convictions, in addition to less serious offences (VG+, 2017).

According to the Norwegian Security Police's most recent threat assessment (PST, 2018), NRM is the main security threat in the Norwegian right-wing environment. Violent acts from right-wing activists are normally carried out with knife and other "simple" weapons, and much of this violence is characterised as hate crimes. In regards to right-wing terrorist attacks, the preferred method so far has been explosives, with a referral to the bombings of refugee camps in Sweden in 2016 and 2017, followed by attacks with firearms or knives. Still, PST conclude that there is no reason to believe that the group will have increased capacity in 2018, nor that there will be major changes in the right-wing extremist environment as a whole. NRM have however had increased activity in 2017, but PST still see it as unlikely that they will commit any terrorist acts during 2018. They do however assume the possibility that even though the organisation has not officially urged for terrorist acts, some of the peripheral individuals with associations to NRM might carry out an attack on their own, with the group's ideology as the overarching political motivation. They see these individuals as those with the highest

potential of carrying out such an attack, and describe the neo-Nazi rhetoric as hardening and increasingly threatening. They also describe how individuals in the group seem to have a fascination with guns, and point to several sequestrations of both legal and illegal guns during 2017. With this in mind, Katz (1988) posed the theory that people are seduced by criminal acts, and that thrill-seeking could be a motivation for joining subcultural groups. Katz draws the picture of the appeal of the badass, and by looking at NRM's intimidating appearance, militant style and uncompromising racist rhetoric, this could be a possible way of understanding how people are drawn into this extremist subculture to begin with, if not for the anti-Semitic world view.

As discussed in relation to PU, NRM might as well offer solidarity and a feeling of belonging, in addition to provide consistency with strict rules to follow. This could attract potential recruits with a criminal record, who want to pursue a lifestyle that gives them a sense of meaning or a higher purpose, and start a new life free from drugs and other damaging practices. Joining NRM might seem like a possible fresh start, while at the same time joining the group not deprive potential new activists with a previous criminal record of the edgework and the thrill-seeking behaviours in which they have learnt to enjoy.

7.2   Concluding remarks

The Nordic Resistance Movement constructs a contemporary Scandinavian neo-Nazi homology through a masculine expression with elements from mainstream society, traditional skinheads and military style, all at once. Their appearance during events and demonstrations could be described as intimidating, and they seemingly hold an apparent potential for violent acts. On the other hand, while observed one-on-one their attire would not necessarily give away their extremist beliefs. In these situations, they might seem like the regular family man, dressed in downplayed and neutral everyday outfits and appearing more in line with the mainstream look, at least at first glance. The same ambiguity regarding the more traditional aspects of extremist style is observed in other radical-right environments as well (Hamm, 1993; Agenda Magasin, 2017), and the traditional characteristics of the skinheads now seem to be replaced by a more anonymous look. This way The Nordic Resistance Movement might appear more approachable to possible new recruits, but it could also be a way of not drawing unnecessary attention to themselves from the police or other governmental institutions. NRM's ideology and appearance is substantiated by their apparent potential for ideologically justified violence,

which make them stand out from the rest of the Scandinavian political spectre. Additionally, their militant traits and similarities with both skinheads and the American White Power movements make them stand out from the rest of the far-right spectre as well.

The way male members of The Nordic Resistance Movement seem to have a hard time accepting the change in society and traditional gender roles, could in many ways fit Kimmel's (2017) description of angry, white men and their so-called "aggrieved entitlement". At the same time, this frustration might come from poor socio-economic backgrounds or be fuelled by growing up in a turbulent family environment. No matter the reason, the anger NRM directs at minority groups is shared by numerous organisations and individuals, from the far-right to fundamentalist religious groups, such as The Prophet's Ummah. NRM supports a patriarchal structure of both the household and society at large, and they argue how men and women have different biologically ascribed roles. heir patriarchal depiction of the male role as strong, assertive and able to protect his family and his nation, is reflected through their hypermasculine, and at times even militaristic, appearance.

The masculine and dangerous style of a group like The Nordic Resistance Movement might attract people who are not necessarily too concerned with the ideological aspects of the organisation – people who find these types of environments exciting and who adapts the National Socialist views from solidarity with the group. In addition to offer opportunities for continued criminal acts, violence and excitement, NRM could also be an alternative clean slate for people who may want to quit a former life of drug abuse and find a higher purpose, but who do not want to disregard other violent and thrilling aspects of their lives in order to do so. The Nordic Resistance Movement could offer these people a new beginning, with the combination of strict rules, a no-drug policy as well as a promise of providing answers to every existential question, in addition to provide their lives with a higher purpose.

8.   CONCLUSION

The identity of an organisation is complex, and consists of an intertwined combination of political opinions, a shared world view and collectively agreed upon stories. In addition comes solidarity between members, constituted through different rituals, symbols and appearances that together form a collective 'us' in an opposition to a perceived 'them'.

Our aim for this study has been to offer insight into the ways Norwegian extremist groups communicate their ideological conviction through both language and subcultural traits. Although The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement's political standpoints have many differences, they also share a selection of master narratives that make them have more in common with each other than with the mainstream. The latter could of course have something to do with both groups being part of a Scandinavian society, and thus their similarities could be seen as a countercultural reaction to the society they live in. However, the groups share fundamental narrative frames with other international extremist organisations, which gives us a reason to believe that many of the narratives and subcultural traits The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement have in common, are not solely Scandinavian phenomenon.

In this final chapter we will present the four main stories we found that the groups share: being at war, fighting against a twofold enemy, being the chosen few and the goal to establish an utopian state. Despite of how the content of these narratives differ, the framework and the communicated message are still the same, suggesting that these particular stories might have a broader appeal than just the reach of the extremist group in which they exist. We would argue that these stories reveal elements of the sublime underlying doxa of extremist discourse, and provide insight into the hegemonic consensus within each subcultural sphere.

1.   Metaphors of war

The most striking similarity between The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement is their perception of being at war. This narrative is consistently referred to by both groups through their propaganda and also reflected in their subcultural style. In a sense, the narrative acts as the cornerstone of PU and NRM's collective action frames and subcultural traits, as most of their reasoning falls back on the notion of being at war.

The Prophet's Ummah argue that the West is perpetrating a 'war against Islam' and The Nordic Resistance Movement depicts how a Zionist Power Elite is aiming to exterminate the Nordic race in their quest for world domination. While their perceived enemies differ, the

mechanisms used to construct and substantiate the perception of war are very much similar. Words like 'occupation', 'assault', 'massacre', 'tyranny', 'slavery' and 'traitors'; in combination with well-established master narratives about invasion and genocide, are frequently used by both groups and does, in our comprehension, serve two main purposes. First and foremost, these metaphors verify that there is an ongoing conflict, but more importantly they offer the perception of constantly being under attack by an existential threat. The use of metaphors does in other words provide the groups with an understanding of their experiences, and thus also their responses of retaliation. Since the narrative frame is conceptualised as a war, it also provides the actors with legitimation to commit violence, as warfare is an arena where violence is socially accepted, appreciated and even considered natural.

Secondly, the use of metaphors when describing the perceived situation contributes in creating a distinct collective 'us' – those to whom the injustice is done, and an obvious 'them' – those responsible for the injustice inflicted (Gamson, 1992; Stoecker, 1995). By giving the situation a fairy tale structure; characterised by a villain, a victim and a hero, The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are even able to make sense of the war and justify their violent behaviour on moral grounds. In their propaganda, both groups present themselves as the brave, moral and rational hero, while the villain is described as amoral and vicious. According to Sandberg and Berntzen (2014) "us/them narratives that dehumanize the other make it easier to take life and metaphors such as "civil war," "occupation," and "traitors" help justify the use of violence" (p. 772). Furthermore, the described fundamental differences in character of the heroes and the villains, also contribute in excluding the possibility of solving their problems in non-violent ways. Both PU and NRM characterise their opponents as irrational and someone who cannot be reasoned with, and therefore the only option to solve the conflict at hand is by defeating them with any means necessary.

Utilising master narratives, metaphors and conspiracy theories to frame contemporary events is not something that is unique to neither PU nor NRM. Neither are the apocalyptic stories of doomsday the groups consequently refer to, which according to Smith (2005) is namely one out of the four classical categories of storytelling. The Prophet's Ummah's apocalyptic narrative of the Great Battle and The Nordic Resistance Movements equivalent narrative of an imminent catastrophe both outline a world on the verge of collapse, and portray how the upcoming battle will determine the destiny of both heroes and enemies, once and for all. The apocalyptic stories thus create a sense of urgency and transforms violence into the only viable solution, as the costs of *not* fulfilling their duty by going to war would lead to tragic consequences, not only for themselves, but also their people. This same mindset is further

reflected in their perception of being the chosen few, those that are willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good.

"What metaphor does is limit what we notice, highlight what we do see, and provide part of inferential structure that we reason with" (Lakoff, 1991:26). It becomes evident that for both PU and NRM, complex situations are often understood via metaphors and they contribute in the construction of a shared identity and a world view that is collectively agreed upon. In a sense, the metaphors become a bridge between the rest of the world and PU and NRM's extreme views, as the metaphors enable the groups to place themselves in a larger context and consequently help them make sense of *their* reality and *their* emotions. The way the groups position themselves as the heroes, willing to sacrifice themselves on behalf of their people, both justify and neutralise their violent approach. Metaphors of war should be considered as one of the mechanisms that provide the groups with the opportunity of committing violence, as the construction of warfare consequently depicts an arena where violence is accepted as well as appreciated. More importantly such metaphors, combined with the depiction of their opponent as irrational, completely exclude other forms of problem resolution. The way the metaphors leave The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement with the perception that the values and culture of their people are at stake, and that violence is the only solution, indicates the importance metaphors of war have for extremist mobilisation.

2. A twofold enemy

In order to divide society into groups of allies and enemies, Bjørgo (1997) describes how the far-right depiction of their antagonist is characterised by being twofold, divided between external and internal enemies. This depiction allocates blame for societal issues (the external enemy) and provides the actors with a clear image of who is a threat to society. Simultaneously, they create a division between those who, knowingly or not, aid the enemy in their quest (the internal enemy), and those who oppose the enemy and are willing to fight for their people (their perception of self). As argued, war metaphors construct a society consisting of conflicting parties and give room for violence to be committed. We suggest that depicting their enemy as twofold is a mechanism that creates a clearer picture of whom they are actually fighting, and provide the group with an understanding as to why even their own people are siding with their oppressors. Also, having a clear depiction of the enemy help underline the distance between society at large and themselves.

It has been suggested that some individuals might get drawn to a violent organisation because they do not agree with the dominant culture's values (Holmer, 2016). Personal

discontent and disagreement with societal norms and values could stem from experiencing discrimination or feeling targeted by society for holding deviant beliefs (Mythen et. al, 2017). Even though these studies have been applied to Islamist groups and young Muslim men such as The Prophet's Ummah, we would argue that a similar tendency to some degree could be observed regarding The Nordic Resistance Movement, as they experience how being a National Socialist makes it difficult to have meaningful conversations with people of different beliefs (NRM2). They describe a feeling of being incriminated on the basis of their political opinions and experience being censored in the public debate, as well as being subject to surveillance and home visits from the police, even though their organisation is still legal in Norway.

Regardless of reasons, members of both groups clearly disagree with common beliefs and societal norms. They also share a feeling of alienation and discrimination, which in turn further amplifies their view of there being a clearly defined distance between themselves and a hostile main society. To PU, the Norwegian society is a symbol of their external enemy of Western values. While to NRM, mainstream society embodies the idea of the enemy within, members of their own community and race who have chosen to side with the Zionist elite. Combined with a conspiratory world view of being at war, their differences in opinion from the mainstream becomes interpreted into an understanding of a clear disconnection and alienation between themselves and society at large.

Despite how the division between an external and internal enemy mostly has been applied to far-right groups, we would argue that this duality is equally applicable to groups such as The Prophet's Ummah. Both groups in this study have in common how they are building their world view on the assumption that there is an external evil force who wish to convert the majority of either Muslims or Scandinavians into believing in Materialist Liberalist ideas. From PU and NRM's point of view, this is in reality a calculated element in the external enemy's plan to destabilise either Muslim or Scandinavian societies from within, in order to take them down. The enemy within – the people of their own kind – who believe in these ideas, contribute to the destruction by supporting the external enemies on their quest, which is why they are often referred to as traitors. Both groups seem to consider treason to be a disgrace against their own most treasured values of cultural/religious belonging and identity. In their world view there is however hardly room for differences in opinions before someone is considered a traitor. The clear detachment between themselves and society at large, as well   as the "all or nothing" attitude might be a consequence of their conspiratory world view; portraying a war transpiring in all layers of society, consequently making it difficult to know who they can really trust.

Either way, those who do not share the groups' exact world view are at risk of being labelled as yet another game piece in their enemies' global conspiracy.

Both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement have a clear perception of their enemy being twofold. In a world view that portrays warfare, establishing the main perpetrator and the external enemy is easy. On the other hand, the process of disclosing enemies within is seemingly more difficult, which might explain PU and NRM's suspiciousness towards society in general. It might be the case that these blurred lines reinforce their view of the necessity of an 'all or nothing' attitude, and their narrow view on what is considered acceptable leaves little room for political or religious differences in opinion. In comparison, a regular mosque or right-wing political party would have a certain degree of tolerance regarding some political or religious differences. When being a sympathiser to NRM or PU, the distance between being an accepted member of the group and becoming a traitor is short if one does not comply with the collective consensus, as the lines between right and wrong need to be strictly defined in order to reveal who their enemies within really are. A viable example is how PU considers IslamNet, which is also a Norwegian Salafi group, for being kuffar because they refuse to actively support violent jihad against non-state actors. This limited acceptance for difference of opinion might be part of the explanation as to why both groups appear so homogenous in opinions and to a certain degree also in appearance.

3.   The Chosen Few

As argued, The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement present a clear division between their perceived in- and out groups, which is also the baseline of their metaphors of war and the depiction of their enemies. This division substantiates their collective self-imagery of being the chosen few fighting a twofold enemy of foreign invaders and internal traitors. They are constructing a staging of themselves as the heroic soldiers who have 'seen the light', and who are willing to defend their people with their own life if necessary. This collective sense of belonging and camaraderie is further reinforced through the use of different rituals, symbols and appearance, which underpin the importance of viewing both the subcultural and ideological aspect as a unity.

Our comprehension is that several actors are seemingly all-consumed with the ideological aspects of their respective organisations. Their world view and argumentation is usually quite consistent with these claimed values, as well as being attentive to the narratives they communicate. In a way, it could be argued that these groups provide their members with a form of *fundamentalist ideological stringency*, where their beliefs become an all-

encompassing explanation for their own experiences, as well as their perception of mainstream society. What might be an important factor, especially for young Muslims, is how they experience discrimination and targeting from governmental institutions and from other members of society as well. Society's hostility towards them might influence the way they see themselves as fundamentally different. Governmental strategy plans has gained critique for not taking into account how these experiences could work as motivational factors for joining extremist milieus (Mythen et.al., 2017).

NRM also problematises what they consider to be discrimination and surveillance from governmental institutions, as well as pointing at the alienation and exclusion they experience at social arenas by the mainstream. Bjørgo (1997) underlines how negative reactions from other members of society might actually strengthen the subcultural group's feeling of solidarity and companionship. Experiencing discrimination and alienation all become interpreted in their world view as evidence of being different, which could be a powerful motivator when seen in combination with the groups' offered solidarity and the thrill of their dangerous, masculine image. This self-imagery of being different, combined with narratives of heroic resistance, underlines their understanding of being the chosen few who understands what others fail to see.

Colvin and Pisoiu (2018) argue that deviance in the form of violent extremism seems to be neutralised through their depiction of self as heroes acting on behalf of the greater good. This narrative framework is also established and commonly used in mainstream society. Colvin and Pisoiu (2018) argue that the narratives of heroic resistance and masculine badassery are also clearly demonstrated through popular culture. They point at the parallels regarding the subcultural masculine ideal of solidarity and camaraderie in comparison to idealised violence and male bonding in mainstream society; through depiction of action movies, online gaming and popular music, to mention a few. This also underlines Mikkelsen and Søgaard's (2015) theory of how violent potential also exist in hegemonic masculinity of seemingly non-violent cultures, and this might be part of the explanation as of why being the chosen few fighting to save the world has such a powerful appeal.

Through neutralisation techniques such as 'condemnation of the condemners', 'denial of the victim' and a 'claim to a higher loyalty' (Sykes and Matza, 1957), PU and NRM's views and actions become part of a narrative of acting on behalf of the greater good. They are in fact on the verge of doomsday and they need to act now in order to save their people and their culture from disaster. Similar to the interviewees in Colvin and Pisoiu's (2018) study, The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement justify, but also neutralise acts, based on how *it was the right thing to do* according to their ideological standpoint. They take the role

of "the hero – who always acts honorably [and who] has proven his manhood and achieved his glory" (Lakoff, 1991:6). With this form of neutralisation incorporated into their narratives, their self-perception is not deviant at all, as they are heroes fighting for liberation and who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good.

Both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement underline the importance of truly committing to their cause, and while PU praise the martyrs who give their lives for Allah, NRM's motivational framing emphasise the importance of being prepared to fight and die for their cause if necessary. Even the actors who do not sacrifice themselves are expected to let go of a what others consider to be a 'normal life', in order to play an active role in the organisations. NRM's elected activists are for example expected to not engage in other work than that of the organisation, and publicly known members of both groups are told to be prepared to experience exclusion from social networks and other societal arenas as a direct consequence of being part of, according to the public, deviant and violent organisations. Additionally, they are at risk of facing governmental surveillance, possible prison sentences and a criminal record if they partake in illegal activities. We would argue that it is worth paying attention to the extent in which these individuals are willing to sacrifice "everything" for the cause, and how political conviction and idealism are important aspects of the group dynamic.

Our understanding is that, in many ways, both PU and NRM have a somewhat sectarian character, represented by their thoughts of themselves being chosen and superior, through strict guidelines and narrow norms of acceptable views and opinions. The way in which conspiracy theories are almost impossible to disprove, and how every contradiction to their beliefs are integrated into their understanding of being under attack, further amplifies their self perception as the chosen ones, giving them divine insight into either to Allah's will or the laws of nature. Because they have understood how the world really works, they do not need to listen to different opinions, as they are provided with divine insight and they answer to a higher loyalty, whether this is Allah or the laws of nature.

4.   Utopia

Rhetoric of war, the twofold depiction of their enemies and perceiving themselves as the chosen few are all mechanisms that revolves around the construction of an identity. This constructed sense of belonging and unity acts as a cornerstone in what both groups consider as their idealist goal; establishing a new state. As The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement both believe that they are partaking in an ongoing war determining their destiny; a violent

revolution, one which subsequently will lead to the establishment of a new state, is the *only* way they will be able to save their people and culture and/or religion.

The Prophet's Ummah are aiming for what they argue to be the reestablishment of the Caliphate, a state governed through Allah's infallible social system; Sharia. The Nordic Resistance Movement on the other hand aim at creating a state which unites all Nordics countries and the Nordic race. The new North is the only viable resistance against the Zionist Elite, and since governed through National Socialism and in accordance with the laws of nature; the new North is the perfect state and holds an answer to any problem. Both groups are clearly under the perception that the state they are envisioning is the perfect solution, and none of them are modest when speaking of everything the state will provide its people. The idea of a new state does however come across as a simplified answer to all their problems. For instance, both PU and NRM argue that capitalism, bank loans and credit cards are ruining people's lives and that bank interests need to be prohibited, but none of the groups mention how they will have a sustainable economic system after the prohibition of bank interests, or how the state will be capable of providing its citizens with their every need. The states envisioned are clearly somewhat Utopian ideas, where certain ideals are unrealistic or unrealisable. However, being the chosen few also provides them with divine insight, which makes them certain that as soon as the new social system is implemented, the problems will simply disappear as a consequence of its infallibility.

Similar to how the apocalyptic narratives are crucial for mobilisation, they are also closely intertwined with the reasoning for establishing a new state and why it must happen immediately. Both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement are certain that the war they partake in is a sign of the upcoming apocalypse, and are under the perception that a new state is the only solution to the potential hell that awaits them, which clearly creates a sense of urgency around the establishment of a new state. What surprised us is however each state's perceived role in relation to the apocalypse. While NRM depicts how the new and free North will be established through a violent revolution, and subsequently will cause the apocalypse to subside, PU wish to establish the state for the sole purpose that the apocalypse *will* occur. Islamists believe that the Great Battle is to be recognised by an infidel invasion on Muslim territory. The true believers, the chosen few, will finally conquer the enemy and reestablish the Caliphate. At last, the world will end, and those who truly committed to Allah's cause during the battle will go to paradise, while their enemies will be tormented in hell (McCants, 2015). It is only when Muslims win the Great Battle that the chosen few will receive their reward from Allah and go to heaven, while their enemies will suffer in hell. Between NRM

and PU, the role of the state in relation to the apocalypse is in other words quite dissimilar, but they do share the belief that the establishment of the state will lead to an eternal life and martyrdom; by either going to heaven or through the Nordic race's survival. In this sense, both the utopian states symbolise hope of being rewarded with a better future for those who follow the right path.

When exploring groups such as The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement, we urge the importance of recognising the motivational appeal of the utopian state. Research suggest that it is the narrative of the Great Battle that acts as the greatest mobilising power among foreign fighters (McCants, 2015), not only because they want to be part of a clandestine undertaking, but also because of the belief that those who do not participate will go to hell; while those who do participate will become martyrs. The same mindset is what made tens of thousands of Westerners take part in the crusades and invade 'the Holy Land', precisely because the Pope at the time promised that all of those who died for the cause would go straight to Heaven as martyrs (ibid., 2015). The phenomenon is therefore not particularly Islamic, nor something new.

The attractiveness and reasoning behind establishing a new state is certainly different from one group to another. However, they both consider the utopian state to act as both a socio-political solution and a cultural salvation, and since the consequences of refraining are so severe; fighting for a new state has become both group's number one priority and ideological goal. For most people, us included, both states the groups portray are of a utopian character and the promises related to the establishment come across as simplified answers to complex societal issues. Nevertheless, when taking into account how perceive the consequence of not participating might lead to severe consequences; either going to hell or the extermination of the world, one might get an idea of why the fight for the utopian state has become so attractive for many. This is not to say that all members of PU and NRM literally believe in these tales, but even as a metaphor, they arguably have a strong motivational character. The religious belief in the afterlife, and how your deeds on earth decide whether you go to heaven or hell, is definitely not a exclusive trait of extremism, but rather to be reckoned a well-known transnational religious tale.

8.1   Final remarks

We would argue that Norwegian extremist groups are a product of the contemporary society they are a part of, and that their views are reflected through narrative frames and subcultural expressions. Violent extremism in Norway is indeed a marginal phenomenon, but regardless of this it does not occur in a vacuum. Through this study, our aim has been to capture the complexity that constitutes extremist groups such as The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement. There are several underlying ways of communicating an idea and mobilise support, and our understanding is that it is crucial to explore how political and religious ideas are validated and communicated through both master narratives and subcultural style. Through a comparative analysis we highlight how, even if the content of these tales differ between the organisations, both the narrative framework and the communicated message are still strikingly similar, suggesting that these particular stories might have a broader appeal than the extremist consensus in which they exist. Even though both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement arguably have a marginal reach within the mainstream, their affiliation with international extremist environments could indicate that these stories also resonate with a broader transnational milieu. We would argue that these particular stories reveal elements of the sublime underlying doxa of extremist discourse, and provide insight into the hegemonic consensus within each subcultural sphere.

The narratives portraying a global war between the chosen few and a twofold enemy, and the story of how creating a new state will act as a solution to all their problems, provide the actors with several neutralisation techniques that help them construct a reality where their violent views and actions are not considered to be deviant. A war is commonly agreed upon to be a state of emergency and they see themselves as fighting for survival. Their violent acts are therefore understood and justified from this context and is explained through arguments of self-defence, and how the atrocities they are victimised by are more severe than their own retaliations. We suggest that a comparative approach has shown to be useful in revealing how many of the mechanisms used to promote extremist world views are not necessarily exclusive traits of Islamism or National Socialism, but are instead approaches used by extremist groups in general.

Collective action frames and extremist narratives might not necessarily have a strong appeal on their own, as they are reliant on the entirety which includes subcultural elements and the solidarity of being part of a 'us' against 'them' in order to gain resonance, as well as keeping sympathisers together through a commonly shared identity. Likewise, ideological narratives are crucial elements in extremist subcultures, and Colvin and Pisoiu (2018) argue that they can not

be seen as subcultural groups only, as they do have a distinct socio-political aspect to them, and are usually characterised by a vision of how their now deviant standpoints will ultimately become the mainstream consensus. The combination of narratives and subcultural theoretical perspectives work together through providing a cultural foundation to the collective stories within each subculture, while the narratives simultaneously provide the subcultural expressions of style, excitement and deviant behaviour with an idealistic higher purpose. In other words, in order to constitute a nuanced understanding, it needs to be taken into account that both ideological and subcultural traits are mutually reinforcing and reliant on each other in order to make sense.

When looking at The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement, it could be valuable to study if, in addition to provide their members with a strong sense of solidarity, their promise of a higher purpose and strict rules and regulations might also attract people with a previous criminal record and a history with violent street gangs. Organisations such as PU or NRM might provide these individuals with an arena where they can benefit from their street capital and additionally grant them an opportunity of not giving up on the badassery and thrills of violent street cultures, which would otherwise be expected if they wanted to partake in mainstream society. In a sense, by allowing them to pursue violent behaviour, while at the same time offer them strict guidelines and a meaningful life, these organisations might appeal to people who originally do not believe in the power of Allah or forces of nature.

Both The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement offer their members a clearly defined depiction of the enemy as twofold; the external enemies are described as the main protagonists, whose aim is world domination, while the enemies within constitute a more emotional and personal threat. The external enemy act as the scapegoat for all the suffering PU and NRM are experiencing, but what makes locating the internal enemies so important to our subjects could be the notion that the external enemy would be harmless as long as either Muslims or the Nordic people would resist them as a unified force. The traitors enable the external enemies in weakening them from within and they make it impossible to stand united against the external enemy. According to PU and NRM this is why they are to be held responsible for the destruction of their own people. The element of betrayal adds a personal component to the conflict between the chosen few and the enemies within, as the latter choose to abandon 'their own, and give up the chance to play a role in their struggle for victory and a united, new state.

In a war there will always be an external enemy, while it could be harder to accept how representatives of your own betray the cause and join the enemy. It is a possibility that betrayal

is part of the legitimation of violent acts against the enemies within. Attacks on supposed traitors have been demonstrated in several incidents of right-wing violence in Scandinavia over the past years (Bjørgo, 1997), the most recent example being Breivik's attack on the government headquarters and the Labour party's youth camp on the 22nd July 2011. In line with the Eurabia conspiracy – where Western governments are believed to be conspiring with the Muslim Brotherhood in order to make Europe into an Islamic continent – Breiviks attack was based on the perception that immigrants are part of an Islamic invasion. He did not attack a mosque or an asylum centre, even though he believed Muslim immigration to be the greatest threat against his nation. Instead, he targeted those of 'his own' who he claimed responsible for enabling the multicultural society. In court he spoke of how he perceived all political activists in favour of multiculturalism as legitimate targets because they contributed to the invasion, and, similar to PU and NRM, how his actions were a sacrifice for the greater good.

By characterising the appeal of extremist narratives and subcultures as solely deviant, one might run the risk of alienating what in reality is quite similar to the regular mechanisms and motivational appeal of social movements and political organisations at large. When reducing members of groups like The Prophet's Ummah and The Nordic Resistance Movement into primarily vulnerable, deviant young men, there is a danger of overlooking the strong motivational aspect of the stories of masculine, heroic badassery. Tales like these might reach and seduce a broad variety of possible recruits, which is why not paying attention to them might downplay or alienate their appeal among even 'regular people'.

While providing the actors with answers to societal issues, the four narratives; being at war, a twofold enemy, the chosen few and the utopian state, also provide them with hope for a better future. By constructing a depiction of themselves as the infallible chosen few, with divine insight of the world, they cannot fail. They are answering to a higher loyalty, whether this loyalty is to Allah or the laws of nature. The depiction of self as heroic soldiers is further emphasised by their conspiratory narratives and metaphors of war, which are seemingly proven right by (their paranoia of) constantly being under surveillance and attacked by both external and internal enemies. Such conspiratory narratives provide the actors with a powerful imagery of being part of a heroic resistance. The world view and the stories intertwined, are believed to heavily influence the way subcultural groups perceive both themselves and society at large, and more importantly how they substantiate, and also appreciate, their sense of otherness as this is what makes them part of a superior kind. The superiority is further underlined in their envisioned utopian state, the land of the chosen few.

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