

Intolerance in Faith

*An Investigation of the Character of Wahhabism and
its Potential Role in the Radicalization of Muslim
Youth*



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Master Thesis in Religion and Society (RESA)

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Abstract

Islamic ideologies have been, in the recent decades, spread widely across the world, mainly by Muslim immigrants to the West. This has been achieved through means of scholars and preachers, books and mosques. Some individuals and groups have adopted worldviews and ideologies which have not always met eye to eye with their surrounding societies. We find in a very few, however increasing, situations that some individuals have attempted to aggravate any non-conformity that exists between their own ideology and that which surrounds them. In the most extreme cases, we have seen the use of violence and terror against innocent citizens. Research upon this phenomenon has been carried out mostly in Middle-Eastern countries or America, UK and France. Only in recent years do we find this same discussion within other countries and areas, such as Belgium, Germany and Scandinavia. This thesis has aimed to understand the concept of radicalization within the Muslim context, and thereby focused upon literature which is used and quoted by those who identify with a radical, extreme and even violent notion. The research has been carried out in three main stages. Firstly, understanding and identifying the concept of radicalization. Secondly, the existing literature was examined to determine whether any specific faith or ideology was mentioned. Lastly, the role of Wahhabism as a potentially radicalizing ideology was thoroughly explored. The main research tool for this thesis was books and articles written by established contemporary Wahhabi personalities which explain and expand the Wahhabi creed. The first step of this thesis recognized various shortcomings and problematic issues with the method of defining and applying the term 'radical'. Existing literature by prominent scholars and researchers did outline certain notions of faith which can be determined as radicalizing. These notions are specifically upheld and propagated by Wahhabi and Salafi groups, whom in certain cases also use them to justify the use of extremism and violence. Furthermore, the writings of contemporary Wahhabi scholars, widely available in European languages, seemed to allow, at the very least level, intolerance towards others and in some cases radical and extreme behavior and rhetoric.

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1.0 Introduction

There has been an increase in the attention directed to the issue of radicalization amongst Muslim Youth in western countries, which has caused many to ask why and how this situation has come to be. In the last fifty or so years, numerous Muslims have immigrated to Western countries, taking along their identity, culture and religion. A few Muslims propagated a worldview which was not consistent with Western and secular ideas. These individuals and groups became at fringe with their societies, and went into the process of radicalization. Existing research has mainly focused upon specific groups operating in Africa and Asia, or upon three key countries; America, UK and France. The reason for this seems to be the fact that the phenomenon of radicalization of Muslim youngsters as well as terrorist acts are much more common in these places than others. Despite this, there now seems to be a greater need for research in all areas and countries, due to various episodes of violence in Denmark, Belgium and Spain. There exists of course many aspects to the radicalization of Muslim youth, only a few of which are violent. However, we still seem to observe that those who adhere to radical notions are at tension with their surroundings. Researchers have identified several causes for radicalization, however, these are mainly general in nature, and may not identify specific movements. This thesis discusses the relationship between a specific Islamic creed and the radicalization of Muslim youth, a point already made by researchers, however expanding upon it. Analyses of the Wahhabi faith, both historical and contemporary, have revealed that there does seem to exist certain traits which are intolerant towards democracy and multi-cultural societies. We have sought to understand the implications of these basic traits, as well as their implementation, which are both methodical and practical.

Scholars such as Omar Ashour, Roel Meijer and Joas Wagemakers have already identified, within their research, that Salafism and Wahhabism occupy an active role in the radicalization of Muslims. There appears to be a common comprehension that Wahhabism aids the process of radicalization by its incorporation of intolerant tenets. It gives its adherents the justification for their enmity towards democracy, non-Muslims and freedom of speech. One such tenet is that of *al-wala wal-bara*, which is commonly translated and applied as "affection towards Muslims and disavowal of Non-Muslims". It should be noted

that only those Muslims who share the same understanding are allowed affection, while everyone else becomes a subject of resentment. With such notions, one who upholds such a faith can hardly exist peacefully with non-Muslims, nevertheless there appears to be an increase in both active and passive adherents of *wahhabi* and *salafi* ideologies in the West. Not all adherents choose an actively violent path of expression, most radicals are in fact passive when it comes to violence, and at most only support violence carried out by others in specific situations. Hence, most people who are deemed radical will find other methods of expression, for example at the academic scene, through demonstrations, organizations and/or seminars. It should be noted as a precaution that even non-violent adherents of the creed in question would be spreading and promoting the very same ideology, though most likely not to the same extent, however, maybe nevertheless cause others to become violent radicals.

We seek within this thesis to comprehend a number of key issues. Firstly, we attempt to grasp one of the major mediums for distribution and promotion of Wahhabi ideology, namely literature. We will focus on the literature published by a small number of leading Saudi Arabian scholars, whom are the primary promoters and caretakers of the Wahhabi faith. Secondly, we seek to understand the methodical application of intolerance within these publications, as an tool of indoctrination. We have also analyzed the written text of several books and articles in order that we can identify any possible prejudiced opinions and intolerant principles and crosschecked with other scholars in order to secure the discovery. These books and articles have now started to become digitalized which further causes a dilemma, as this creed may directly aid and justify radicalization of Muslim Youth. We will seek to systematically engage this research by first discussing solely the process of radicalization. We intend to understand both the various methods and motives for radicalization as well the various definitions which exist. After which we will seek to analyze the *wahhabi* faith and literature, as mentioned above.

1.1 Research Questions

The primary research question of this thesis is to investigate potential intolerant doctrines and principles upheld within the Wahhabi faith. I will seek to understand whether there exists the possibility that Wahhabism justifies radical thought and behavior amongst

Muslims living in the West. To fully comprehend such an extensive research, we are obliged to ask a number of correlating questions:

(1) How can we define the term "radical" in the context of Muslims? And what causes their radicalization?

A great amount of attention have been received by notions such as terrorism, extremism and radicalism, especially by the media. It is therefore vital to define and differentiate between these terms, in order to gain a proper understanding and avoid misconceptions. At the same time we can find many different governmental and independent researchers whom understand, apply and define "radicalism" in various forms. There is a need to fully comprehend these varieties as they may become problematic or cause issues if not completely examined. We will also need to identify the radicalization process, specifically amongst Muslim youth in the west. We will need to create an understanding of the various motives and motivations for radicalization, in order to recognize the potentially intolerant and unsafe role of faith.

(2) Have any faith(s) or ideologies been directly or indirectly associated with radicalization? If so, which one?

There is always a need to identify any and every threat towards the society that one is a part of. Hence, with the scope of this thesis we aim to clarify and expand upon the connection already made by current researchers, between radicalization of youth and the *wahhabi* ideology. We will seek to understand how various violent and non-violent radicals, who adhere to this ideology, are affected and may become a threat towards such principles as democracy, freedom of belief and freedom of speech. We will also seek to identify whether possible radical notions and tenets are upheld by other schools within Islam, and whether the majority of Muslims, especially those residing in the West, share the same interpretations and understanding.

(3) How do adherents of Wahhabism find justification for intolerance, in some cases violence, within their creed? To what extent does Wahhabism aid radicalization through publications?

I will attempt to comprehend any possible tenets, ideas and teachings within Wahhabism that may potentially be considered threatening towards other Muslims as well as Non-

Muslims. It is necessary to understand why hostility, and in some cases terror and violence, have been aimed towards Western societies in recent years. Books and articles, which are one of the primary tools for promoting Wahhabi ideas, will be carefully analyzed and interpreted in order to find any possible connection to radicalization. We also seek to comprehend the history and development of Wahhabism, as it will assist in identifying possible radical and violent justifications within this creed. This will aid us in comprehending what the various intolerant tenets are, and how they are applied. This is especially necessary as publications are now becoming digitalized and thereby accessible in a much larger extent.

These inquiries will assist in creating a much more accurate understanding of the subject at hand. Hopefully, they will also assist in uncovering vital information about a difficult political and social situation in many western countries. As both the number of adherents to radical ideologies and the level of threat have increased in recent years, it is necessary to understand how this situation has come to be, and how one can deal with it. Advancement in knowledge is the only manner to successfully combat a problem, and this is certainly the aim of this thesis.

1.2 Contemporary Importance

With such devastating terror attacks as 9/11 in New York and 7/7 in London, carried out by Wahhabi and Salafi influenced individuals, as we will later examine, it is vital to understand their situation so that any future violence can be dealt with accordingly. With this, we find a rise in the establishment and development of Wahhabi influenced youth groups all around the world. These groups of people are daily being instigated by "scholars", publications and online activities in a variety of ways. The publications of Wahhabi scholars are widely available throughout the west, with numerous bookshops in countries such as America, UK and France. In other countries we find that such written material is extensively being translated and distributed by local Muslim youth. It is important to establish whether these books and articles incite any type of intolerance and discrimination, as they influence many Muslims around the world today. I will also attempt to create an understanding of the potentially violent extent of these teachings, as it is vital for countering any future assaults. Likewise, if certain Muslim youth are applying the instructions and teachings derived from these publications for their worldview and common sense, they may become radicalized into intolerant actions and behavior towards everyone beside themselves. Hence, such a

situation may become problematic within multi-religious and multi-cultural societies, if not sought to understand. It seems as well that democracy and basic human rights, which is the foundation of so many Western countries, are opposed by such intolerance.

1.3 Methodology

Any research into text requires a carefully strategized methodology, in order that one achieves the most benefit. It is essential to understand the various hermeneutical theories of interpretation and thereby apply a methodology into the study which ideally will allow for a much more comprehensive analysis of the subject. It is essential to focus on the written text by keeping both the intended meaning of the author, as much as it is possible to reveal, in mind, as well as how the text can be perceived by the reader. This will permit for an unbiased analysis of the text, as our own ideas or thoughts about the text would be contained. A researcher may favor a text or author so that he may be influenced to "improve" the interpretation. However, by carefully applying interpretative theories, which explain the necessity of understanding the text from various angles (author - text - reader), one can reach a much more valid comprehension.

Hermeneutists debate over the best manner of interpretation; whether the intended meaning of the author is most essential, or the contemporary importance of the text itself, or rather the perceived understanding of a reader. From these theories we have sought to apply those which would benefit the aim of this study; namely, analyzing radicalism in relation to the Wahhabi faith. Friedrich Schleiermacher (d. 1834) proposed a theory of focusing on "understanding the author and his or her socio-historical context (...)" (Porter & Robinson, 2011, p. 7). This theory of interpretation will allow us to understand the situation of those who have authored the books we seek to analyze. If we are to find statements, which can be considered radical from a western viewpoint, we need to understand if these statements are part of Wahhabi thought and therefore intended by the author. Another beneficial theory for our study was presented by Hans-Georg Gadamer (d. 2002), in which he reminds us to focus on the reader, as the one who understands the text. He says that a reader is never objective, in the sense that he or she is always influenced by their culture, situation, beliefs, etc. Gadamer reminds us to know "our strengths and weaknesses, our strong points and our naïvetés" so we are aware of what interpretation we are giving to the text as readers (Jasper, 2004, p. 108). When having this in mind during our analysis of

contemporary Wahhabi publications, we aim to better understand the circumstances of a western Muslim reader, and potentially to comprehend if any statement would guide the reader towards radicalization. It is never the aim of a researcher to share false information, and for this reason it is essential to never "put words in the mouth" of someone else. Therefore, when analyzing the written text, we will firstly attempt at understanding the authors message as he intended. This will be of importance due to the basis that the Wahhabi scholars, who have authored these books, will be deemed as the guardians of the Wahhabi faith. This means that the Wahhabi Scholars represent the Wahhabi creed and thought, and therefore by understanding their intended meaning, one can understand the standard of the Wahhabi faith and how it is developing. Similarly, we aim to understand how various categories of people, specifically categories of radicalization which will be further studied, comprehend various principles. This may assist us when we attempt to understand the text from a readers perspective. It may very well be that most individuals do not necessarily develop a violent behavior pattern by reading and adopting various ideological principles.

There will also be a focus on linguistic interpretations as words and concepts can mean many things, which may potentially allow for a much more comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand. Paul Ricoeur (d. 2005) argued that we must differentiate between "language as a code and language as it is used" (Porter & Robinson, 2011, p. 12). Such a methodology would assist in creating an understanding around the usage of various words and concepts. This would be especially applicable when studying words such as *Jihad*, which can mean anything from "strive" to "holy war" based upon its usage, as well as identifying the *takfiri*-agenda, which aims at excommunicating Muslims from Islam. This is due to the methodology used in writing by the authors examined within this thesis. Much of the literature which has been examined, as we will later see, instructs the reader indirectly through the usage of selective words and expressions. Some would for example associate opposing groups or ideologies with evilness, mostly falsely, in order to create an acceptance of highly intolerant principles. Reinhart Koselleck, the German historian, underlines the necessity of such a study by explaining how a word becomes a concept:

[A] word becomes a concept when the plenitude of a polysocial context of meaning and experience in and for which a word is used can be condensed into one word. (Koselleck, 1985, p. 84)

This methodology will be especially important when studying the concept and process of radicalization, as it is understood in a variety of different manners in the contemporary world. Reinhart Koselleck argued the necessity of studying the history of a word. He upheld that by using conceptual history as a discipline one would seek to understand the actual effect of the language (Jordheim, 2001, p. 161-162). We will use such an analysis in order to understand the effect of the term "radicalization" upon those who use this term, as well as those who become identified by it. Radicalization is a concept which has in modern times been nearly identifiable with Muslim youth in the west, and therefore a careful analysis of its history and contemporary application will benefit the discussion at hand. At the same time we will analyze the weaknesses of various definitions of radicalization with such a methodology, by for example a historical and contemporary comparison of several explanations of radicalization.

2.0 Existing Theory and Research on Radicalism

The term 'radicalism' has a number of various understandings and definitions. One could find that anything which is not taken as a norm by some is defined as radical by them, while another group could have the complete opposite understanding of the issue. This is why there is a need to analyze the concept of 'radicalism' in depth. We will firstly look at who the definer is, in terms of governmental or independent researchers. Such a method can lead to a comprehension of defining radicalism by a certain method, as well as revealing specifically the methodology employed by various institutions. There is also a need to look at various understandings of radicalization, with special consideration of different types of radical behavior. This will allow one to deduce and bring forth a definition of radicalism for this thesis. This chapter will then go on to study the existing research in relation to the many factors, or motives, behind radicalism with an emphasis on the role of faith and belief. This will allow us to conclude this chapter by investigating whether or not any specific faith is

linked to radical behavior, and if so, we will study in the next part of this thesis, to which extent such a faith justifies radical thought and behavior.

2.1 History of the term 'Radical' ¹

The term 'radical' has changed immensely from its first recorded usage in the 14th century. It evolved from the Latin word *radix*, meaning 'root'. It is used with this meaning, from the 17th century, in mathematics, when using the *radical sign* ($\sqrt{\quad}$) to find the root of a number. The political term 'radical reformist', denoting a change from the roots, was in usage in the early 19th century. By the 1920s, the term radical, due to its application, became recognized as 'unconventional', meaning to move away from the accepted standards. In the 1980s, within the United States, we can even observe a positive application of 'radical', meaning 'good', as opposed to its much more negative contemporary usage, as someone opposed to standard values. The contemporary definition stated by the online Oxford dictionary defines the term 'radical' as "affecting the fundamental nature of something" (Radical, 2014).

2.2 Who defines 'Radicalization'?

Radical, in the context of Muslims in the west, offers quite a fresh scene for researchers, and therefore an increasing amount of attention and importance is given to its study, which both governmental institutions and independent researchers have sought to comprehend. Though the methodology often differs, all parties seem to be working towards a similar aim; revealing and clarifying the issue of radicalization amongst Muslim youth in the West. There are some significant variations between current researchers; however there is certainly common ground as well. One specific case where all researchers seem to agree is that not all radicals carry out violent attacks, in fact most of those who can be deemed radical, as fundamentally opposed to the social norm in a given society, would never carry out or support violence. A disagreement also rises from exactly this discussion and concerns

¹ Such a summary can be obtained by a comparison of various online dictionaries; "Radical". Oxford Dictionaries. Oxford University Press, n.d. Web. 04 May 2014. <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/radical>>.

"Radical". *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 04 May 2014. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/radical>>.

"Radical". Online Etymology Dictionary. Douglas Harper, n.d. Web. 04 May 2014. <<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=radical>>.

the understanding of radical, rather, who is and who is not radical? An essential question which we will seek to discuss later.

The most often accepted, and even referred to, definitions of radicalization have their origin amongst governmental institutions and security services. It seems that it is them who hold the "power of defining", and upon whom the public and the media rely. This can arguably be both positive and negative. It is positive in the sense that people can more easily detect violent radical behavior, by having a set definition. While on the other hand, it may also lead to inattention to types of radicalism other than those that the state has considered. At the same time one can also argue that due to governmental institutions defining radicalism in a selected manner, certain parts of the public can become victims of unintended discrimination. For the sake of illustration, an example could be taken from the Norwegian Security Services (PST). In their assessment of 2010, also published again in 2013, of the threat to national security they have written that "[e]xtreme Islamism still constitutes the most severe terror threat to Norway, and we expect that it will do so in 2013 also" (PST, 2013) Religious knowledge and understanding is not at its peak, and some, maybe even many, people will perhaps not be able to differentiate between extreme and/or violent Muslims and the general Muslim layman, when reading such a statement. Hence, this can lead to discrimination against Muslims unintentionally. At the same time PST admit that rightwing extremists also pose a threat, however they are adamant that "[t]he organized right- and leftist extreme environments appear less threatening to society than the extreme Islamist groups" (Ibid). Though the PST does not have any intention of discriminating any group, and claiming so would be nonsensical, there still exists the possibility that some Norwegians may misinterpret this as the state versus Islam/Islamism. A society with such an understanding is more likely to shun foreigners, or foreign-looking people, such as Muslims, rather than their own selves, even though rightwing extremists pose a threat as well. Another notable issue within the same discussion is that the only attack on Norwegian soil against Norwegian citizens which can be classified as "terror" was carried out by a person heavily linked to right wing ideologies as well as right wing forums online (Bangstad, 2014).

Another example of this issue can be found in an interesting definition of radicalization from the United States Code. Fenstermacher in her report for the US Air Force

has quoted Title 22, section 2656f, of the US Code. One finds that one of their understandings of radicalization is defined solely in regards to Muslims:

[R]adicalization is defined alternatively as 'internalization of a set of beliefs, militant mindset that embraces violent jihad'. (Fenstermacher, 2011, p. 1)

We see an interest in outlining the violent factor of radical behavior. Likewise, By presenting the research in such a manner that radicalization is firstly only discussed in the context of Muslims and Jihad, one is given the idea that Muslim radicals are the main, or even the only, cause of terror and violence. This in turn could be a cause of systematic discrimination. It has for example been mentioned in the research of Olivier Roy that the terminology of radicalism was also used in the context of political leftists in the 1970s (Roy, 2004, p. 43). It is therefore more befitting to have a general definition of radicalism, instead of focusing solely on Islamists. We can make an interesting comparison to an early research on radical faith by the recognized theologian Helmut Richard Niebuhr, in which there is little, or almost no, particular mention of Islamic faith (Niebuhr, 1960). This research was carried out in the late fifties and may therefore point towards the understanding that the large focus on Islamic faith which we see in contemporary reports, is a recent focus, while we also note that there exists other radical faiths which may not always receive appropriate attention in these contemporary reports, issued by security agencies and governmental institutions.

Another issue of concern which is raised is on the individual level. On the one hand, a person may define someone whom he regards as a threat as radical, while on the other hand, the one who is being defined as radical, and even self-proclaimed radicals, may regard it as an virtuous status (Mendel, 2009, p. 105-106). Being radical, primarily meant to seek the fundament of something or to go back to its roots, while the meaning has now changed to someone or something which seeks to change the traditional structure (Ibid, p. 103-105). One who attributes the term to himself or proudly wears it may have an understanding of wanting to go back to the roots or fundamental values which he adheres to. Whereas person X, who defines others as radical, may be using it in a negative sense, as referring to someone who wants to alter the values of person X. At the same time we find that the application of the term 'radical' on others is completely subjectively based upon the level of threat a

person feels. Two persons living in the same environment, but with differing ideologies, may not necessarily define the same things as radical. With this in mind, Mendel criticizes the definitions of the Dutch AIVD and Danish Ministry of Justice for being vague and creating such challenging issues (Ibid, p. 103-106).

2.2.1 The Media Conundrum

The usage of the terms 'radical', 'terrorism', and 'extremism' are so commonly used with such a wide definition by the media that it has created a difficulty when discussing and writing about these terms. It appears as if the media is now freely using these concepts in order to interest their readers, as these are issues which holds a great significance for many. A research done for a MA thesis at the University of Oslo (Kristiansen, 2010, p. 28-30) have identified the usage of the terms in the Norwegian media. The first period of analysis is 2001-2005, while the second period is from 2006-2010. One can find an astounding 250 % rise in the usage of the term 'radicalization' from one period to the other. The difficulty in analysis appears as the media uses these terms overlapping one another. Studying the usage of the term 'Terrorism' within the same periods, we find that there is a decrease of 5 %, while the application of the expression 'Extremism' increases intensively. The decrease in the usage of 'Terrorism', as opposed to the other terms, may very well be due to the interchanging usage of these term. The result is now that in common expressions hardly any differentiation between these terms is acknowledged, which can in turn lead to someone who is non-violently radical being assessed as a terrorist by the surrounding society. The media plays a major role in asserting and broadcasting various opinions and ideologies. They can however at times be criticized for only focusing on news that sell, rather than solving an issue. Individuals or groups which cause intolerance within the society are more likely to get the attention of the popular media, rather than those individuals that could possibly resolve such disputes. General Muslim communities and mosques are not distinguished in the same manner as those with an extremist agenda are. Muslims are constantly over-represented by extreme factions in the Media, when in reality they constitute a minute part of the Muslim world.

2.2.2 The Trinity of Extremism, Radicalism & Terrorism

These terms can also share meaning or application even in reports and studies. This is due to the wide definitions of all these terms, and in certain cases the common

understanding of them. The Oxford Dictionary defines "terrorism" as the "unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims" (Terrorism, 2014). Though this definition can be criticized for differentiating between "unauthorized" and "authorized" violence, it presents a valid idea of how this term is understood and applied today. This definition can also relate to religious aims, which is why "terrorism" intermingles with "extremism". In the field of security and terrorism, we find that some define "extremism" as those ideas which are related to violence, for example as the Norwegian PST. Also, The Norwegian government issued in 2010 a statement for the prevention of "radicalization and violent extremism" in which an extreme person is defined as one "who accepts the use of violence" (Norway, 2010, p. 7). As we will study later, amongst the categories of radicals are those who accept the use of violence for a religious or political aim. Hence, we find that "extreme Islamism" as used by the Norwegian PST, and quoted in the statement issued by the Norwegian government, constitutes those radicals who accept the usage of violence. As the lines between these terms are not clearly defined and therefore not clearly understood, it can lead to unintentional discrimination, as mentioned above. For the sake of clarity, there exists many categories and stages of radicalization, of which only a very few support or use violence. It is those who either support or use violence themselves who are then defined as extremists, according to the Norwegian state's definition. The act of violence itself, whether due to political or religious ambitions, is labeled 'terrorism'. Oddbjørn Leirvik, Professor of Inter-religious studies at the University of Oslo, has also noted that the term "extremism" is in fact relative. For example the Saudi state consider such actions as homosexuality as extreme, while upholders of human rights would rather deem the understanding of the Saudi government as extreme (Leirvik, 2014, 147). When a scenario, where these terms are overlapped, has become reality, it is essential to understand that we create such confusion ourselves, as well as create the high possibility of faulty categorization of people. The term 'radical', if commonly defined as ideas and behavior contrary to social norm, could in fact entail many people in one way or another. Therefore, it is necessary to be careful in the application of these three terms, as one would hardly wish to entertain the idea that innocent individuals suddenly are being defined as extremists and terrorist.

2.3 Definitions and Categories of Radicalization

A government oriented research, conducted by Tomas Precht for the Danish Ministry of Justice, defines radicalism “as a process of adopting an extremist belief system and the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence and fear, as a method of effecting changes in society” (Precht, 2007, p. 16). As we can see from this statement there is an interest in underlining the usage and/or support of violence when discussing radicalism. It should be noted, however, that this may not always be the case as Precht also admits in his research (Ibid). Veldhuis and Staun have written the following in their report for the Netherlands Institute of International Relations:

Definitions of radicalisation most often centre around two different foci: 1) on violent radicalisation, where emphasis is put on the active pursuit or acceptance of the use of violence to attain the stated goal; 2) on a broader sense of radicalisation, where emphasis is placed on the active pursuit or acceptance of far-reaching changes in society, which may or may not constitute a danger to democracy and may or may not involve the threat of or use of violence to attain the stated goals.

(Veldhuis & Staun, 2009, p. 4)

This statement clearly differentiates between two types of radicalization, violent and non-violent. These researchers seem to agree on the idea that radicals desire to create a fundamental change in the society, with or without violent tools. This view is also agreed upon by Randy Borum in his paper, published in *the Journal of Strategic Security* (by the Henley-Putnam University). He respectively states that radicalism is a process in which people adopt and develop extreme ideas, however it may not necessary involve violence (Borum, 2011, p. 9). Fenstermacher, in addition to her above-quoted definition of radicalization, also understands the concept in a more general sense:

[T]he active pursuit of and/or support for fundamental changes in society that may endanger the continued existence of the democratic order (aim), which may involve the use of undemocratic methods (means) that may harm the function of the democratic order (effect). (Fenstermacher, 2011, p. 1)

These definitions allow us to understand and define the concept of radicalism in the following manner. The concept is understood as wanting and bringing about a fundamental change in the society. This change can be of political, social and/or religious nature. As we have seen above, several researchers have defined radicalism at two levels, violent and non-violent. In this paper, however, there will be three stages to understanding radical behavior:

- (1) Violent: A person him/herself advocate and use violence to necessitate the change he/she wants. This would constitute the highest threat to the surrounding society.
- (2) Supporting Violence: a person does not use violence themselves, however, agree to and supports violent behavior by others in certain circumstances. This would entail direct and indirect influence and recognition towards those who actively use violence. These individuals could also influence those less radicalized into higher stages, as one is likely to accept similar ideas and principles.
- (3) Non-Violent: A person who does not believe in, or practice, violence in bringing about change in the society, while utilizing other methods, such as academia and political campaigns. Most radical people would fit into this category, even possibly those who may not be aware of their own radicalization, due to the minute influences they are experiencing.

Roel Meijer is a recognized researcher on Salafism and Wahhabism as possible radical ideologies. He has also presented a similar understanding in his focus on radicalism within Salafi and Wahhabi thought and practice. His contribution is vital for this study as it shares a similar aim. Meijer divides adherents of these potentially radical ideologies into three main categories; (1) quietist, (2) political, (3) violent. The "quietists" use the practice of *dawa*, i.e. inviting to Islam, by f.ex. going door to door, handing out leaflets, having seminars in the mosque, etc. Those who are politically oriented would use such means as protests, marches and petitions to achieve their goals. As for those who would tend to violence, they regard "the waging of *jihad* as the primary means of achieving its goal of a purified Islam" (Meijer, 2011, p. 44-45). Quintan Wiktorowicz, one of the respected researchers on Salafism, also shares such an idea and terms the three categories: "the purists, the politicos, and the jihadis" (Wiktorowicz, 2006, p. 208).

In the context of this paper, 'radical' will be comprehended as wanting to fundamentally change, through behavior, actions and/or words, the accepted norm of any society and democratic values. Violent radicalization would require that a person willingly would use violence to achieve a fundamental change in society, while the majority would in reality fall under the other two categories, also listed by Meijer and Wiktorowicz, meaning they would never practice violence themselves.

2.4 Motivators for Radical Behavior

One cannot generalize those who depict various types of radical behavior, and point to one specific explanation of the motivating factor. Hence, studies have been carried out and are still being carried out throughout the academic world, in order that the true circumstances are revealed. Present research give us a valid standing point, from which one can understand and learn a great amount, at times from the minds of the "terrorists" themselves. Many individuals whom are motivated towards radicalism, may become motivated by several reasons or only one. Recent episodes of violence, such as in France, Belgium and Boston, may also portray that lone individuals or "wolfs" are going through the process of radicalization. Several researchers, as we will see, favor the idea that radicals and terrorists are motivated by their social affiliation with other radicals. Expanded research upon these recent episodes may reveal the very opposite. Many motives have been discussed and favored in explaining radical behavior, and we will seek to comprehend the various ideas which are usually put forward. Randy Borum (2011) has quoted in his research the fact that there has been presented 16 theories to answer the "why?" question in relation to radicalization, however, he only discusses in detail three of them. This paper will not mention all theories, yet look to briefly study those who are considered most applicable by current researchers. Several factors at play within one case would not be considered very unlikely.

2.4.1 Social Movement Theory (SMT)

This theory is widely used by researchers on radicalism such as Randy Borum (2011) and Quintan Wiktorowicz (2006). It is used to explain the social behavior of particular

groups. The theory focuses on the relation between the society and the group, as well as the individual actors within the group. It upholds that certain people are radicalized because of the social activism of the group they are members of, even if only peripheral. In contemporary times, a lot of activity amongst social groups has been identified online. Social networks are heavily used as tools for expression and recruiting of member. There exists several sub theories to SMT, such as new social movement theory, framing theory and strain theory. One may for instance focus upon the role of identity and ideology upon a group or individual within the new social movement theory. As for framing theory, it seeks to examine the various frames, or mindsets, based upon culture, ideology, politics and religion which gives a group or an individual the motivation for their behavior. Lastly, the strain theory puts forward various factors to better understand a specific group movement, its direction and behavior.

2.4.2 Social Psychology Theories

"Social Psychology is a sub-discipline of psychology concerned primarily with relationships, influences, and transactions among people, and particularly group behavior" (Borum, 2011, p. 20). This theory concentrates upon discovering how a person or various groups behave in social interactions with others. Martha Crenshaw, John Horgan and Jerrold Post are amongst those who have contributed largely to this theory (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008, p. 12). Dalgaard-Nielsen have proposed three main sub-categories to this theory; sociological theories, individual level and group process (Ibid, p. 4-14). Sociological theories express how various factors such as politics, culture and economy can have a major influence on both individuals as well as groups. The second category explains how individuals are influenced by using "psychodynamic approaches, Identity Theory, and cognitive approaches". Group process explains how individual persons can do extraordinary things due to factors of groups dynamics and groups processes.

2.4.3 Conversion Theory

The conversion theory tries to identify the changes on a individual level, rather than a view of the community. It seeks to understand and explain the process of radicalization of those individuals who convert from one faith to another, thereby changing their beliefs and

ideology, which is a major change in a person's life. There exists much research and literature about studies on conversion, as Borum (2011, p. 22) writes, and therefore several theories and models can be found. Lewis Rambo, for instance, composed a seven stage model, in which the various stages represented phases experienced by an individual, which in turn would affect him/her in a variety of ways (Ibid, p. 23). Another different sub theory mentions two main categories of converts, the *passive* and the *active*. The first type, the *passive*, are regarded as those who undergo trauma or have emotional and/or intellectual need and thereby are brainwashed into accepting an ideology. While the other type, the *active* converts, are those who actively choose a set of beliefs based on their rationale. It should be noted that while the *passive* theory was highly regarded in the past, the *active* theory has gained favor in contemporary times as a much more valid understanding of converts.

2.4.4 Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

The social cognitive theory (ARTIS, 2009, p. 11-12) discusses that the moral standards or values of a person may alter throughout his life, in some cases towards radical attitudes. These changes may come from confusion in values because of clashing religions, cultures and practices. In search of answers and understanding, some confused minds may be picked up by groups or networks, which may seem to give them answers. However, these groups may also present a way of thinking and acting which is perceived as radical by the community at large. Marc Sageman, former CIA operative and current researcher of Terror Networks, are amongst the researchers who have applied this theory (Ibid).

2.4.5 Personal Incidents

Researchers have identified "personal incidents" as one of the major reasons for radical behavior (Borum, 2011). These incidents can in reality be anything from near-death experiences to discrimination at the work place. Such personal occurrences may trigger a variety of responses from the subject, in some cases towards what is defined as radical by the norm of the society. A death in near family or friends, or even a personal near-death experience may trigger a need or pursuit towards understanding afterlife and death. This may change the outlook one has, and by seeing imperfection in the society, one may result

to radical sayings and actions. In a completely different case, the subject might be discriminated at his/her work place because of race, nationality, language or religion. Such an incident may create hatred and hostility towards the West.

2.5 Radical Faith in Contemporary Research

Several researches and reports have discussed a link between faith and radical ideology. After examining Muslims radicals, certain identifiable factors have come to light. The same justifications are found time and time again in many similar cases of radical and even violent behavior. Some researchers have gone to the extent at which they specify the faith in question, while some have generalized the Muslim faith, when for instance defining extremism. There does also exist some researchers who do not necessarily give much attention or importance to faith in the question of radicalization and terrorism. Marc Sageman (2004; 2008) as well as Mehdi Hasan (2014) both maintain that faith is not the main motivator for most, or maybe even all, radicalized individuals. However, they do not completely reject the idea that faith may play some role alongside the process of radicalization, however not as a chief motivator. Nevertheless, In his research on the 7/7 London bombings, Kirby relates that all four terrorist were attracted towards “a global militant salafist vision” (2007, p. 424). Petter Nesser reports something similar about the 2004 Madrid bombers. He has written that when investigators recovered computer data from the terrorists, they found substantial ideological material which justified terrorism. Nesser continues to say that “[t]he material included classical theorists such as the medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyyah; the founder of Saudi Salafism/wahhabism, Mohammed Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (...)” (2011, p. 179). David Cameron, prime minister of the United Kingdom, also discussed this idea in one of his addresses, saying that “we need to be absolutely clear on where the origins of these terrorist attacks lie – and that is the existence of an ideology, ‘Islamist extremism’ ” (NewStatesman, 2011). These reports indicate that certain terrorists have links to the same faith, from which it seems they receive their mindset and justifications. A report by researchers such as Atran, Ginges and Sageman, which further clarifies this notion, mention that young Muslims felt a connection and acceptance in Salafi circles, and thereby joined them. The report says:

Although these Salafi preachers and proselytizing organizations were not able to attract first generation migrants, (...), they did resonate with a minority of young Muslims beset by social problems like unemployment, school dropouts, lack of opportunities, discrimination, and feeling of not belonging anywhere.

(ARTIS, 2009, p. 16)

All these studies present the justification for possible violent radicalization as stemming from the Wahhabi/Salafi faith. We find that some have concluded that from the Wahhabi faith, stemming from Saudi Arabia, alongside the Salafist notion, evolved a violent “jihadi” strain (Wiktorowicz, 2006, p. 235). A research paper on Al-Qaeda presents them as the biggest threat to the west and states that “[t]he movement is based on the ideology of ‘*Salafiya-Jihadia*’” (Guaratna & Oreg, 2011, p. 1047). We can even find in the independent work, *Contextualising Jihadi Thought*, that one of the main ideological elements of global jihadism was the Salafi/Wahhabi doctrine (Deol & Kazmi, 2012, p. 17). Roel Meijer, in line with what has been stated above, reports that:

Without arguing that Wahhabism itself is responsible for terrorism - which has a host of social, economic and political causes - it does provide the ideological preconditions for violence on account of its intolerant and absolutist claims (2012, p. 168)

The New York Police department (NYPD) issued a document identifying radicalization, in which the Salafi ideology is recognized as the justification of jihad, implying holy war (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 6). An individual would for example become upset with his society due to unemployment and discrimination issues, which in time would lead to the first steps of radicalization. Such an individual may try to alter his surrounding society either alone or with others. In some cases the Wahhabi and Salafi ideologies may become influential, due to exposure by group-member or due to similar visions. It is within these ideologies that certain principles may justify violent actions towards others. The report by NYPD further explains that Wahhabi scholars from modern-day Saudi Arabia issue indirect justification for violent behavior. They also preach intolerance towards other religions as well as fellow Muslims, which in turn leads to further radicalization in the West, as one is surrounded by other religions and ideologies (Ibid, p. 19). The Madrid Summit issued a policy document after a

seminar aimed at discussing terrorism in march 2005. They meet to discuss and organize work groups with experts, in order to clarify subjects surrounding democracy, terrorism and security. They assert their non-partisanship on their website and aim at finding measures for violence as "terrorism is a global phenomenon requiring a global response". It is identified within this paper that Muslims who experience "sense of loss, deprivation and alienation from the countries in which they live (...)" can be influenced by the Salafi-Jihadi ideology (Club de Madrid, 2005, p. 9). This policy document also recognizes that those who are violently motivated are not necessarily concerned with changing principles within the society, but rather at eradicating Western values, as they are deemed immoral and evil, a remarkable notion as we will examine later (Ibid, p. 10). A report presented by Homeland Security of U.S. also acknowledge the same identification of such ideologies. It also presents the same process of radicalization, by influence of intolerant principles and possible violence through Salafi ideologies (Lieberman & Collins, 2008).

These various studies seem to indicate that violent radical behavior amongst Muslims is justified by the application of specific principles from Wahhabi and Salafi ideologies. According to these researchers, as well as many other experts in this field, it appears as all those who have actually gone to the last stage and carried out an act of terror are linked directly to the Salafism and Wahhabism ideologies. It should be noted that in most cases faith does not necessarily seem to be the initial reason for radicalization, rather a major supporting asset, especially when looking at the justification aspect (YJB, 2012, p. 10-22). It seems as those who become radicalized, due to various reasons some of which are identifies above, are further influenced by intolerant notions, which justify violence. The next part of this paper will analyze this aspect in depth by researching the *Wahhabi* ideology, in order to examine such a claim.

2.6 The Process of Radicalization

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how faith operates within the discussion of radicalization, we will briefly examine the process of radicalization as explained by various researchers, such as Veldhuis and Staun (2009) as well as Silber and Bhatt (2007). A number of prominent researchers have identified various stages that a radicalized person or a terrorist journeys through. These identifications of the various phases of radicalization may present an indication on the role of faith in an individual context. These findings seem,

however, to have a few weaknesses. Firstly, only those individuals who already are radicalized would be studied, which does not necessarily offer any solution for the true motives behind radicalization. Secondly, these stages are set up in a linear model, which may make it easier to assume that all radicalized individuals will eventually perform a terror attack. Hence, there is no explanation as to why some would stop at various stages. There are two primary reasons for nevertheless applying such theories. It may identify the process of a already radicalized individual, as well as the specific role of faith within the stages of radicalization.

The NYPD report by Silber and Bhatt has identified the process of radicalization in the following four stages, "pre-radicalization, self-radicalization, indoctrination and jihadization" (2007, p. 21). Their theory solely revolves around Muslims, and may therefore not shed much light upon other cases. In the first stage, pre-radicalization, one seeks to identify the background of those who already are seen as radicals. Certain similar factors can be found in a number of cases, however they are mostly general information, such as religion, nationality and cultural background. A interesting observance may be that most radicals do not have a strong connection to their faith before the start of the process. Precht (2007, p. 38-39) recognizes only a few common factors during the last few years one of which is religion. We find that even though most radicalized individuals do not necessarily practice their religion before the change, they most certainly are vigorous in upholding their principles after. There may exist a number of common factors between Muslim radicals, however there is no certain identity patterns for which individual that may become radicalized. Those individuals that do however become radicalized, experience something which alters their views and opinions. This is the second stage, self-radicalization. They experience a change in their identity, and "begins to explore Salafi Islam, while slowly migrating away from their former identity" (Silber and Bhatt, 2007, p. 32). These individuals would now identify with several principles and values from the Salafi faith. Marc Sageman believed that those who became radicalized by Al-Qaeda did so due to a "moral outrage", which was caused by ill treatment and war against Muslims around the world (YJB, 2012, p. 13). After such an experience, the individual would seek to understand their surrounding situation, which in turn would lead them towards radicalized principles, as they would seem to support the same agenda. This change could also occur after personal incidents such as

death in the family or discrimination. The radicalized individual would experience their distress shared by others, which makes the transition easier, as one would now find support. The person, either alone or with others in a groups, would adopt principles and specific ideologies which would share their distress. In the empirical research by Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, they found that around 40 % of those who were examined only referred to religion as their motivation (Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, 2009, p. 55). The Salafi principles which these individuals adopt justify their views on the "enemies" of Islam, and hence they are more likely to accept intolerant behavior.

The next phase of such a model is recognized as "indoctrination". At this stage, the radicalized individual would whole-heartedly accept the extremist agenda. They would accept the Salafi principles as the only truth and in some cases legitimize the usage of violence (Silber and Bhatt, 2007, p. 38-45). We will later examine which specific principles are cause of intolerance and even sometimes violence. The acceptance and application of such principles can also be done in solitude by individuals and not necessarily as part of a group (Precht, 2007, p. 36-37). The individual or the group, would now begin to dissociate with other Muslims groups and the withdraw from the mosque, thereby creating their own private meetings (Silber and Bhatt, 2007, p. 38-45). All ideologies and other interpretations are viewed as opposition to their own understanding, and therefore they are more likely to act in a intolerant way towards others. Such principles are adopted through videos and literature from Salafi bookstores, as well as online. The radicalized individuals now move towards the implementation of their views, and according to the NYPD report, to *jihadization* (Ibid, p. 45-48). Those that reach this stage consider themselves guardians of the truth and believe they can legitimately fight those who oppose them. These individuals would now plan and train specifically for violence towards their enemies. Factors such as social movement and support from likeminded individuals becomes important and further aids the cause (Precht, 2007, p. 71). One could argue that the quantity of radicalized individuals whom reach this stage would not be as severe a threat to the west and democratic values, were it not for the doctrinal principles which can be found in Salafi circles.

3.0 Historical and Contemporary Analysis of the Wahhabi Character

Within this section we seek to apply the above understanding of radicalization amongst Muslim youth within the scope of the *wahhabi* faith. We will need to examine the historical legacy of the *wahhabi* ideology to comprehend the foundation for its traditions and principles. Before which we seek to understand exactly what, or rather whom, a *wahhabi* is, by looking at various aspects. We also need to gain comprehension of which principles that can possibly be understood and applied as justification for radicalization and violence. After which, we seek to examine such possibly radical notions within the writings and statements of recognized *wahhabi* scholars. Lastly, we will examine our findings within a case study of the situation of two *wahhabi* and *salafi* influenced groups within the Norwegian context.

3.1 - Defining Wahhabism

To define, or even apply, the word *Wahhabism* is a very interesting task. This is due to the fact that no person actually defines him/her-self as an *wahhabi* or as a follower of *Wahhabism* in religious terms. One may however find the term Wahhabi applied as a social identity, as we will see later. This is a term coined by outsiders, based upon their observational understanding of a group of people following vigorously the teachings of a specific person. This has also been discussed by Haneef Oliver in his book, *The 'Wahabi' Myth* (Oliver, 2002, p. 53). The person in this case is Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, whose teachings are referred to as *Wahhabism*, a derivative of his last name. Ibn Abdul Wahhab was a "back to the roots"-minded Muslim preacher in modern day Saudi Arabia, who operated throughout the majority of the 18th century. In Arabic, if one wishes to denote a single follower of something, one adds an "i" (ي) to the word, and hence a follower of Ibn Abdul Wahhab would be known as a *wahhabi*. On the completely other hand, the people who follow the teachings of this individual would never apply or refer to themselves as *wahhabi*. This is primarily due to two things; (1) The Wahhabism creed relentlessly underlines that one should return to the "original faith" by removing all sects and groupings. (2) The followers of these teachings, while upholding this creed, always prefer to call themselves "Muslims" before anything else, as other Muslims. It should however be noted that their concept of the "original faith" is only another interpretation of Islam alongside a variety of understandings, for instance the *Ashari*, *Maturidi*, and *Jafari* schools of thought,

which again are widely accepted among Sunnis and Shiites respectively. This issue creates a strange case when defining Wahhabism, since one would most likely never get "yes" to the question: Are you a *wahhabi*?

The term "*Salafi*" has recently become well-known and well-used, especially in the west, and has consequently allowed the followers of Abdul Wahhab to carefully become part of a worldwide Salafi following. This has arguably meant that the *wahhabi* ideology has veiled itself under the title of Salafism, thereby not only securing its own protection against outsiders, but also influencing many other Salafi groups who may not initially have shared the same ideas. Many followers of Abdul Wahhab now refer to themselves as Salafi, which is a very wide term. This has also caused some confusion to the process of defining Wahhabism, as many modern day Salafists do not particularly take their teachings from Ibn Abdul Wahhab. The term "Salafi" itself means, as a similar case was mentioned above, a follower of the *salaf*. The *salaf* are the righteous people in the first three generations of Muslims. The first generation, the *sahaba*, were the companions of the Prophet. The second, the *tabi'un*, were those who immediately followed after the companions, but never saw the prophet directly. The third generation were the *tabi-tabi'un*, who followed immediately after the second generation, but never saw any of the companions (al-Albaanee, 2009, p. 13). Within the school of Ahle Sunnah wa al-Jamah², the largest Muslim population, of which Salafism is a leaping branch, these first three generations are the best of people, and are commonly referred to as *Salaf*. The term is however very loose and does not offer a specific understanding of an individual's beliefs. Olivier Roy, the well-known professor and researcher of political Islam, have deemed the usage of the term "Salafi" as problematic and "historically misleading" (Roy, 2004, p. 233).

For instance, anyone can define for themselves whom and what they consider to be righteous people within the *Salaf* generations. Some may favor the caliphs, however some may neglect them completely, while a third group may have randomly chosen certain caliphs which they adhere to. Within Ahle Sunnah wa al-Jamah, and therefore also within Salafism, we find that both Aisha and Ali are respected and righteous personalities. Aisha for being the wife of the Prophet, and therefore "mother of the believers", and Ali for being the fourth

² Ahle Sunnah wa al-Jamah translates as "the people of the *Sunnah* (tradition) and the majority". This tradition is commonly known as Sunni Islam and constitutes approximately 80% of Muslims worldwide. It does however contain numerous smaller theological and juridical factions.

rightly guided caliph. Historical records show however that Aisha waged war against Ali while he was caliph (Kennedy, 2004, p. 76), a action normally considered heretical by the Salafis:

It is not allowed to disobey the ruler whatever he did, nor to rebel against him or fight him, whatever happened from him. Al-Bukhari narrated from 'Abdullah bin 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah said; "He who takes up arms against us is not one of us". (An-Nabhani, 1996, p. 280)

This saying of the Prophet Muhammad bin Abdullah is understood according to this salafi author as not allowing Muslims to question their leader, even if he would oppress or kill. Furthermore, this interpretation seems to claim that anyone who becomes a leader must involuntarily be obeyed. It may very well be that this notion is propagated by these circles only in order to ensure unquestioned authority for their belief tenets. This also gives us an understanding that those people who today are considered righteous did not even consider each other as righteous. Hence, we can witness another difficulty in understanding and defining the Wahhabism and Salafism terms, which in modern day context are very often interchangeably used. There do exist groups that maintain some Salafi principles, especially the idea of tracing ones roots back to the first three generations of Muslims, while also allowing political tools to further their mission. One such example could be taken from "The Muslim Brotherhood" of Egypt which was founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna. Such a combination of Salafism and politics is recognized as *haraki* Salafism (Mårtensson, 2014, p. 194). However, according the more traditional Salafi thinkers the followers of the brotherhood are deemed deviants and outside Salafism, i.e. the right path (Wiktorowicz, 2006, p. 220). Another group, specifically recognized as Salafists, has also entered the political scene in Egypt. They are known as the Nour party, and were once allied with "The Muslim Brotherhood" (McTighe, 2014). It seems as if this new party, which were promoting a stricter adherence to Salafi principles, had an ideological difference with the brotherhood, which caused them to come apart (Ibid). One can as well find Salafi preachers who claim politics have no place in Islam since they call for a return to the ancient *Salaf* traditions, and adherence to only the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*³. This idea comes forth in, for example, the talk of Sheikh Muhammad al-Anjaree called "The Legislated Islamic Politics", which has been

³ The *Sunnah* means the practices, statements and tacit approvals of Prophet Muhammad.

transcribed and is available on SalafiPublications.com. Hence, the methodology used by different groups would hardly assist us in defining whom and what Salafi specifically are. One could look for the common principles, however those would most likely in various forms be accepted by general Muslims as well. The Wahhabi sect is only one faction of the larger ambiguous Salafi group, and it is this faction that this study focuses on. There will be three main points of interest which will allow for a wider understanding in defining Wahhabism. These are the history and teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, as well as the legacy of classical scholars who influenced Wahhabism, and also the statements of modern-day scholars, such as Muhammad Ibn Uthaimin and Salih al-Fawzaan, all three of which we will study.

Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab created a notion, which his teachings carried forward, and with the addition of military power, created the first Saudi state in 1745. Hence, the official creed of the Saudi state is based upon the teachings of Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and is proclaimed by adherents of his message all over the world today. We can, with this, start to create a vague definition of a *Wahhabi* as being a person, specifically a Salafi, who also particularly follows the teachings of Ibn Abdul Wahhab. Additionally, in the modern context such a person would adhere to the interpretation of Islam as carried forth by scholars and preachers whom also adhere to *Wahhabi* teachings, and in fact defines it as the only acceptable interpretation of Islam. All other groups are consequently deemed heretical, as we will demonstrate. The Darussalam Publication⁴, known for publishing books by recognized Wahhabi scholars, has a "Dictionary of Islamic Words and Expressions" which include a definition of the term *Wahhabi*:

A Follower of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab of Najd, who was a Muslim revivalist that emphasized in his teachings the importance of fighting all sorts of 'shirk' (polytheistic practices), such as worshipping saints and building mosques over their tombs. (Saleh, 2011, p. 254)

This seems much more likely to be a social definition, than a religious one. There appears to be a historical underlining, as if Wahhabism only existed at one place at one specific time. Likewise, there is no theological or contemporary clarification, in order to fully identify the

⁴ The Darussalam Publications main office is situated in Riyadh. They are the largest publisher and distributor of Salafi items, especially books and articles.

term. Lastly, as one can analyze, this definition seems to portray a purely positive glance of the Wahhabi movement as the "exterminator of evil".

3.1.1 Characteristics of the Wahhabi Faith according to Contemporary Research

Several researchers have attempted to comprehend both the practice and creed of the Salafi and Wahhabi movements. Numerous specific ideas have been studied, which has unveiled vital information regarding these ideologies. The traits and tenets which will be mentioned here are only those that have a direct link with the theme of this study, and can arguably lead to radical behavior and thought amongst their adherents. It may be that other Muslim schools of thought and practice adhere to similar principles, however their understanding is quite different from those belonging to *wahhabi* and *salafi* schools. The principles discussed in the following sections can possibly lead a radicalized individual to violent actions, within the proper circumstances.

3.1.1.1 "Loyalty to Muslims and Disavowal of Non-Muslims"

The first tenet in question is recognized as *al-wala wal-bara* in the Arabic language. Traditionally this term is recognized as meaning to have affection (*wala*) for the sake of God, and to disassociate (*bara*) for the sake of God. In much simpler terms this tenet entails that a person loves or hates someone or something due to their own understanding of God's love and hate. Roel Meijer have comprehended an evolved definition of this tenet amongst modern day Salafi and Wahhabi circles. The traditional value still stands within the new understanding, however it now comes with a puritanical aspect, i.e. as "the principle of loyalty to Muslims and disavowal of non-Muslims" (Meijer, 2011, p.37). This would entail that the adherents of this lastly-mentioned aspect would both practically and theoretically create a separation between them and everyone they consider a threat to their doctrine. As Meijer notes, "Salafism can therefore be aggressive towards other Muslims if they are lax according to Salafi standards" (Ibid, p.39). This tenet is applied extensively in the works of Wahhabi and Salafi scholars as a methodology aimed as disassociating from every school, sect, religion and ideology other than themselves. This will be studied in detail later, when analyzing the works published in the West by prominent Wahhabi scholars. It has already been argued by researchers that this specific tenet fuels radicalization of individuals. Joas Wagemakers, researcher on Islamism and Salafism for Netherlands Institute of International Relations, have reported:

The Salafi concept of *al-wala' wa-l-bara'*, roughly translatable as "loyalty and disavowal," has come to be considered by some as a recipe for extremism. Adherents to the idea that all Muslims should show loyalty to God, Islam and Muslims and that everything else should be disavowed are deemed inherently radical by some observers. (Wagemakers, 2009, p.81)

The reason for this understanding is that the Wahhabi and Salafi application of the tenet of *al-wala wa-l-bara'* would lead to a immediate physical and mental separation between people living in the same society. An example of this tenet applied as an methodology of writing can be found in the book titled; *Explanation of the Aqeedah of the Imaam, the Reformer, Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab* by the Saudi Arabian scholar Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan. Upon commenting on "boycotting the people of innovation", which would mean all Muslims except the *Wahhabi*, with special consideration to Sufis and Shiites, we find the following statement:

We must not sit with them and we must not befriend them (...) we must abandon sitting with them and we must abandon befriending them (...). However, if there was leniency with the innovators, they would start wreaking havoc upon the earth and spreading innovations. (...) Boycotting (al-hajr) is abandonment. Meaning, abandoning them, not sitting with them and not befriending them.

(Fawzaan, 2010, p. 212-213)

"Lessons" and "guidelines" such as these are repetitively found in many *Wahhabi* books, aimed at some sort of indoctrination to cause separation from everyone. These statements would also mean that those who are disavowed would be judged as evildoers. The three categories of radical thought has already been discussed earlier, and highlighting those who actively participate in violence, as well as those who support violence, we could argue that everyone who is considered evil or an enemy would be subject of that violence. It should be noted that in most cases, those who are becoming radicalized and adhere to the tenet of *al-wala wa-l-bara'*, would not engage in violence, but find other ways of expression. They would however still practice intolerance towards other ideologies. Nevertheless, those who deem hostility acceptable would find a justification for their actions within this creed, as long as this tenet is interpreted as "disavowal of non-Muslims".

Sulayman ibn Abdullah AaL al-Sheikh, the grandson of Ibn Abdul Wahhab, would inherit the religious authority formed by his grandfather and be responsible for the progress of Wahhabism. It is reported regarding him that he developed the concept of *al-wala' wa-l-bara'* "by using it not just as a means to fight *bid'a* [innovation] but as a tool against *kufir* (unbelief)." It should constantly be kept in mind that the Wahhabi doctrine considers the majority of Islamic schools of thought as heretical and disbelief (Ibid, p.87). Omar Ashour, a specialist in security and terrorism studies, have noted:

More directly relevant to violence in Western countries are the seventh and eight pillars [of Jihadi ideology] (...). The eight pillar, *al-wala' wa al-bara'*, is a more modern concept which stresses that loyalty and friendship should be a function of religiosity or ideological commitment. In other words, the love and loyalty or hate and animosity felt towards a person should be based not on personal traits but on the individual's degree of commitment to Islam or Islamist ideology.

(Ashour, 2012, p. 133-134)

An individual influenced by such principles would show affection towards anyone even slightly in line with the same agenda, however the same person would show disavowal towards everyone, even Muslims, if they do not share the same views. Hence, such tenets are likely to cause intolerance towards the society, which in turn can lead to radicalization and in the most severe circumstances, possible violence.

3.1.1.2 "Excommunication"

Analyzing further, one finds that the concept of *takfir*, meaning excommunication from Islam or the right path, is as well upheld within Wahhabi circles. This practice is used to categorize other schools of thought within Islam as heretics, and thereby unbelievers. Olivier Roy (2004, p. 244) when discussing Neofundamentalism, a term which includes the Salafi and Wahhabi trends (Ibid, p. 234), says that *takfir* [excommunicating other Muslims] is a tool used by supporters of *Jihad*. This practice is very likely to be used as a justification for radical behavior against other Muslims as well as Non-Muslims. Such a tenet is highly intolerant and narrow-minded, as one would never seek to understand other view-points, rather one would seek to separate from everyone. As the abovementioned principle, the practice of excommunicating others is also used as a methodology in modern *wahhabi* publications. It

is also mentioned as an practical notion, and even considered a legal ruling according to Islamic law (Philips, 2003, p.19). Roel Meijer has expertly noted that:

On the one hand the tension finds expression in a zealous, missionary activism that is led by religious goals of spreading its [Wahhabism] doctrine of tawhid [oneness of Allah] based on such potentially radical concepts as *al-wala' wa-l-bara'* (loyalty to Muslims and disavowal of non-believers), combating innovation (*bid'a*), *takfir* (excommunication of Muslims if they do not adhere to Wahhabi doctrine) and the waging on jihad against these so-called non-believers, regarding themselves as the 'victorious' sect (*al-firqa al-mansura*). (2012, p. 169-170)

If any person do not meet the *wahhabi* standard they are deemed outside the right path, and referred to as *kafir*, meaning unbeliever, thereby excommunicated. Many Muslims, such as Sufi and Shiites, are subject of this type of intolerant behavior. Some radicalized individuals may even take action against those who are excommunicated, due to the mind-set that they would be a threat towards the right path. These groups are constantly referred to, in the literature examined, as heretics as well as deviators. Most authors do not necessarily outwardly excommunicate Muslims, however their method of writing reveals such an agenda, when one is constantly reminded to boycott nearly all groups.

3.1.1.3 "Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil"

Yet another principle that should receive attention is that of *al-amr bil-maruf wa nahy anil-munkar*, meaning to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. This expression has been used in numerous cases in the Quran, and is upheld by all Muslims, however with varying interpretations (Cook, 2003, p. 3). In its early usage we find that it was applied solely to guard Muslims to their religious practice, such as prayer or prophetic traditions (Ibid, p. 4-5). We can also observe within the recognized translation of Yusuf Ali, chapter 3 verse 104, that the concept is understood as right/wrong:

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.

It is, however, especially interesting to note its usage within the *wahhabi* sect. With the above mentioned traits of *al-wala wa-l-bara* and the *takfir*-agenda, they already have a comprehensive understanding of "evil" or "wrongdoing". Hence, they actively enjoin

"good", in other words their own version of the truth, as well as stop other from acting "evil", which means any practice according to another faith/religion/ideology. If we focus on those who would use violent tools to achieve this goal, we find that their surrounding would be under immediate threat. Most radicals would however exercise this principle by means of disassociating with their surrounding society, by deeming them factors of evilness. The society would be subject of intolerance as these radicals would expressively state their opinions. Flagg Miller, an associate professor of religious studies, have written:

Salafism has been defined through legal vocabularies, including discussions about the legitimate use of violence configured within discourses of 'commanding right and forbidding wrong' (al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-l-nahy 'an al-munkar). (2012, p. 73)

Those who upholds such an ideology are told to actively stop evil, which could entail physical power. They are likewise told to enjoin goodness, which would mean a vigorous stand for their principles, which are highly intolerant towards Muslims as well as Non-Muslims. Authors of Wahhabi literature, which have been examined within this thesis, have revealed both a direct command in their writings to follow this notion, as well as an indirect methodology within those writings. The methodology seems to be aimed at influencing readers to automatically accept the given version within the literature, even though it may be that they are with the truth and everything else is evil, which then needs to be stopped. Another essential discovery, which identifies the methodology and agenda applied within this literature, is the usage of the term "evil" rather than "wrong". We have seen above, in the research of Michael Cook, how in the beginning of Islam this principle was understood as forbidding wrongs actions, which is also evident from the quote of Flagg Miller as well as the translation of the Quran. However, upon examination of the literature at hand, we found that the author focus on applying the much more emotive term of "evil". This is specifically evident from both scholars examined within this thesis, namely Ibn Uthaimin and Al-Fawzaan, whom will be studied later. In the commentary of Ibn Uthaimin on the creed of Wasitiyyah, the very last section is titled: "Regarding the *Manhaj* (Method) of the People of the Sunnah and the *Jam'ah* [majority] Regarding Commanding Good and Prohibiting Evil, and Other Qualities" (Al-Uthaimin, 2010, Vol 2, p. 467). Likewise, such is also evident from Saalih al-Fawzan, whom in his book on answers to "innovated methodologies" states that "everyone should command good and forbid evil" (2004, p.48). Hence, we witness the usage

of a term which implies a narrow worldview, of defining everything either as good or evil. There is also more significance to the application of "evil", as it arguably would give the reader a proposed direction of thought, as well as stricter intolerance towards everything evil, than would have been in the case of applying "wrong". Juergensmeyer has suggested in his research that religious extremism must necessarily demonize opposing factors, in order to create a vision of the enemy, which one can unite against (2003, p. 174). He goes further on to discuss and explain how America is demonized and viewed as an enemy, by for instance Al-Qaeda, in order to more easily induce intolerance and violence (Ibid, p. 181-185). This may very well be the reason for actively applying the word "evil" as an identification for opposing parties.

These three principles, which have been discussed above and are found within the Wahhabi ideology, offer the most basic version of their faith. They are expressed and followed by the most prominent Wahhabi preachers and authors, some of whom are subject of examination within this thesis. They are viewed as essential to their belief and practice as well as necessary for their further development. It is however alarming to note that the advancement of these tenets would mean the suppression of everyone else, be they Muslims or Non-Muslims. Most individuals would seek non-violent measures, however they would still behave intolerant and opposed to other ideologies. Some would go to the extent at which they stop the evil which surrounds them by utilizing violence as a necessary means. In order to further investigate the usage of these principles, I now seek to understand how such potentially radical principles are used in the literature from Wahhabi scholars and publicist. These doctrines find their way to passive and violent adherents through books of creed, belief and general guidance.

3.2 - Founding Father: Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab

In the 17th and 18th century, Arabia was controlled by the Ottomans, and constituted of various small towns and settlements. A large part of the population were Bedouins, and the Arabs were left to rule their own areas without direct influence from the Ottoman empire. Muhammad Ibn⁵ Abdul Wahhab was born in such circumstances in the region called Najd, in the town of al-Uyaynah around 1703 AD. He died 89 years later in 1792, before which he changed the future of Arabia forever. He was born into a family of

⁵ "Ibn" translates as "son of".

several recognized religious scholars. Sulayman Ibn Ali, the grandfather of Ibn Abdul Wahhab, was for instance "a judge (*qadi*) and was recognized as the greatest scholar and authority on Hanbali jurisprudence⁶ in Najd during his lifetime". Likewise, it has been reported that also his father, Abdul Wahhab, was a judge in Hanbali jurisprudence and later became his son's first teacher (DeLong-Bas, 2007, p. 17-18). Ibn Abdul Wahhab displayed great learning skills in his youth, as well as quite a strong resilience. He learned the Qur'an by heart from a very young age, and commenced in his early teens with studies of traditional Islamic sciences. Ibn Abdul Wahhab started memorizing Islamic traditions, *ahadeeth*, and learned Hanbali *Fiqh*, Islamic Jurisprudence. He also completed the Islamic *Hajj* Pilgrimage in his early teens. Not only this, his studies also extended to classes of *tafsir* (exegeses) of the Qur'an and study of "various *ulama* [scholars] about the fundamental principles of Islam" (Ibid). Being well versed in these sciences before his twenties, we find both mentioned in reports and in his own works that he favored one specific scholar, namely Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyyah (Cajar, 2009, p. 26).

His strong resilience is displayed when his opinions conflict with those of his father, and consequently "a dispute arose between Mohammad and his father on the issue of *aqeedah* or beliefs" (Ibid, p. 27). This created a strife between Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and the rest of his family to the extent that people were told not to listen to his opinions. Nevertheless, even as a young fellow, Ibn Abdul Wahhab kept spreading his thoughts and beliefs. It has been reported regarding his early preaching days:

[W]hen Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab began preaching about *tawhid* in his hometown of al-Uyaynah, he started by engaging the townspeople in a series of discussions about what *tawhid* is and how people violate this principle, often unintentionally.
(DeLong-Bas, 2007, p. 19)

Two major points have been derived from his early discussions. Firstly, Ibn Abdul Wahhab did not use tactics of accusation, as is evident from his later works. He did not point fingers and claim people to be heretics if they differed from him, rather he posed questions and made people contemplate about their existing beliefs and practices. On the second level it is

⁶ There exists within Islam a number of jurisprudential schools. Currently, only five schools have been accepted as a valid interpretation of Islam, by the Islamic authority of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. The Hanbali school is the last to have been established and falls within the category of Ahle Sunnah wa al-Jamah.

important to remember that there is no evidence of violence in these early debates, rather people seem to have some level of acceptance to these teachings. This idea comes forth when remembering that Ibn Abdul Wahhab did not have any political support or guardian, and it would have been easy to shut him down (Ibid).

After a failed assassination attempt on his life, Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab returned to his hometown al-Uyaynah, which was now ruled by Ibn Muammar. The two met several times, and their relationship strengthened considerably. Ibn Abdul Wahhab married the aunt of Ibn Muammar, after which a deal was made between them. Ibn Muammar would unconditionally support the teachings of Ibn Abdul Wahhab with his political power, while Ibn Abdul Wahhab on the other hand would legitimize his rule with religious support (Ibid, p. 23). With such support, Ibn Abdul Wahhab instantly took to lecture the masses on the reality of the Islamic Faith, as opposed to all the "innovations" people were busy with. Now, it seems, the tactic changed towards hostility. "Ibn Abd al-Wahhab set out to destroy objects of veneration, such as the sacred trees and the tombs of saints". It is also reported that during one such incident, Ibn Abdul Wahhab was accompanied by six hundred armed men, whom were ordered into "combat formation upon arrival at the location of the tomb" (Cajar, 2009, p. 31). It seems as if Ibn Abdul Wahhab now could force his views onto people with the threat of violence. Ibn Muammar broke his ties with Ibn Abdul Wahhab due to political tensions created by his teaching and behavior. In 1744 Ibn Abdul Wahhab arrived in the town of al-Diriyah, which was ruled by Muhammad ibn Saud. This led to an agreement between the two, similar to the one mentioned above. Ibn Abdul Wahhab now had the support of Ibn Saud, to further spread his ideology. Though Ibn Abdul Wahhab did not always justify and support the military campaigns by Ibn Saud, he seems to always have justified the so-called "necessary" violence in order to spread his teachings. This cooperation would result in the origin of the first Saudi state which lasted between 1745-1811 (Lee, 2014, p. 221). It was the first time since the collapse of the Islamic Caliphate that the Arabian peninsula was united under a single authority. Ibn Abdul Wahhab and Ibn Saud, with religious and political justification, deployed armed forces to subdue the peninsula. It has been noted that the "scale of violence in the fighting was small in comparison to wars fought between the Ottomans and the Persians (...)" (Commins, 2009, 19). However, it necessary to note that the unification of Arabia seems to be a one-sided combat for the removal of all

interpretations and ideologies other than Wahhabism, as opposed to two major empires waging a war.

Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab was candidly criticized by two main personalities, Ibn Suhaym (d. 1767), and unexpectedly his own brother, Sulayman, whom was then due to his open critique deemed as an atheist and antagonist of Islam. Sulayman was not as famous as his brother Muhammad, who is now seen as the founder and essence of the Saudi state, and perhaps this is why we do not even know if he was older or younger than Muhammad (Ibid, p. 22). He was placed in house arrest where he died in 1793. The critique against Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab was multifaceted, in that it covered several aspects of his teachings and actions. He was blamed for demolishing the grave of a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, and also for burning books which contained different interpretations than his own. The gravesite was used by many Muslims as a place for inspiration and prayer, a practice which was and still is deemed heretical by the Wahhabi ideology. One example could be taken from the current state of the *al-Baqi* gravesite in Medina. It is the site for many revered Islamic personalities, such as the wives of the Prophet, the first grandson of the Prophet, Jafar as-Sadiq and Malik ibn Anas, the two revered jurists and scholars, however it is now completely unrecognizable. He was also criticized for adhering to and spreading an extreme agenda, destroying Muslim unity and falsely excommunicating traditional Muslim scholars and thoughts. It seems as if Wahhabism was only identified as a faith of purity by those adhering to it and not forced to accept it as the only true interpretation of Islam.

Ibn Abdul Wahhab withdrew from his position as a spiritual leader of the country in 1773. He then only focused on teaching and worship, and after his death in 1791/1792, his four sons, who also were religious leaders, and students continued his teachings. His mission seems to have been mostly motivated by a religious reform, as the "Wahhabi-Saudi" pact only rose to its political peak after the death of ibn Abdul Wahhab (DeLong-Bas, 2007, p. 39-40). This first Saudi state was demolished and conquered by the Ottomans in 1811, however they again rose to power for a short period between 1843 to 1865. The Wahhabi-Saudi cooperation was opposed by a rivaling family, and they did not come back to rule before Abd al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Saud "launched the third Saudi state by retaking Riyadh (1902) and proceeding with British support to take back the whole of Najd (...)". Among the first

actions of the newly established state was to recruit about 150,000 Bedouins as "fierce warriors for the faith", with help from Wahhabi scholars (Lee, 2014, p. 222). This led on to become the modern Saudi State with Wahhabism as its cornerstone. As we can witness, the early Wahhabi did not seem shy of violence, and even saw it as a necessity in some cases. Such behavior and practice by the founders of Wahhabism may have been a contributing notion to justification for violence by possible radicalized extremists sharing the same ideology. If those personalities which one holds revered and as prominent indulge in violence, one may be more likely to accept the usage of violence either by other or by oneself.

3.3 - Lasting Legacy: Taqiuddin Ahmed Ibn Taymiyyah

There are two main personalities whose opinions on belief have been vital in establishing the *Wahhabi* doctrine. The main individual is, as we have seen, Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab. He was however heavily influenced by another personality known as Ibn Taymiyyah. This well-known personality was born in northern Iraq, 1263 A.C., in a family of renowned Hanbali scholars. Ibn Taymiyyah left a legacy, upheld till this day, in the sciences of jurisprudence, *hadith* (prophetic traditions) and Quran. Ibn Abdul Wahhab frequently mention and quote the 14-15th century scholar in his teachings. Hence, also contemporary scholars, who preach the same ideology, have been influenced and made use of Ibn Taymiyyah's works. One such work is the creed known as *Wasitiyyah*, and its commentary by Al-Uthaimin, both available in the English language. Here we will offer a study of these works.

The creed written by Ibn Taymiyyah offers only Islamic traditions as explanation for his own beliefs. It is written in the introduction of this work that a traveler once visited Ibn Taymiyyah, from whom he wanted a written belief so he could return and spread the message in his hometown. Hence, Ibn Taymiyyah quickly wrote down a short treatise which was then recognized as his belief and the creed of *Wasitiyyah* (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2009, p.13). Though we will present this creed, there will be put a larger emphasis on its contemporary understanding and application in form of a in-depth study of the *Commentary On Shaikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah's Al-Aqidah al-Wasitiyyah* by Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaimin. Which, when one reads, displays instantly a specific aim in the method of writing. There is a constant reminder of the deviated and heretical behavior and beliefs of all other sects, be

they Muslim or not. With an explanation of every tenet there is also mention of how others have corrupted this tenet and one is recommended to keep away, even from discussions, with such people. This method goes to the extent, as it obviously gives the impression of, that even violence can be used against those who do not accept their true faith:

The Prophet came and invited people saying: 'Whoever obeys me, shall enter into Jannah (Paradise), and whoever disobeys me, shall enter into the Fire.' **Also, he was saying in the language which speaks for itself: 'Whoever obeys me, I shall keep peace with, and whoever disobeys me, I shall wage war against.'** He waged wars against people because of this religion, and made their blood, wealth, women and offspring lawful, and he was supported in that and became victorious.

(Al-Uthaimin, 2010, Vol 1, p. 54)

Here, as seems evident from the above quote, scholars following this doctrine have gone harshly out against those who do not accept their interpretation of Islam. The wording of the text, unfortunately, also makes it seem as if violence is allowed against not only those who actively fight against Islam, but also against those who disobey their understanding of Islam, which in fact is everyone else but them. This is evident in the highlighted section above. Here we can see the methodological usage "disavowal of Non-Muslims" as well as "forbidding evil". Those who do not accept Islam are deemed enemies and in order to stop their evilness one can actively wage war against them. Those who are violently radicalized would be likely to find justification for their actions within such writings.

There is a section in which the commentator Muhammad Al-Uthaimin discusses, rather states, the validity of various Muslims schools of thought. The majority of Muslims are written off as deviators from the true path, and solely the Salafi are recognized as true followers of Islam.

So the Ash'aris, for example, and the Maturidis are not included among People of the Sunnah and Jama'ah (...). The Salaf are the People of the Sunnah and the Jama'ah, and this description will never be true about other than them (...). (Ibid, p. 70-71)

The majority of Muslims today either follow the *Ashari* or *Maturidi* theological schools of thought. These fall under the larger, Sunni Muslim, denomination, and are also recognized

by the Shiite school of thought as valid Muslims. The above statement however regards them as having gone astray, even though these Muslims share much of the same elementary creed and practices with the Salafi. Such statements within their books of creed only portray the intolerant nature of the Salafi and especially Wahhabi schools. This intolerance results in not even allowing for discussion and/or debates as we will analyze later. Such writing could be a theoretical application of the *takfir* principle, which excommunicates Muslims if they do not follow the same Wahhabi ideology.

In volume two of the commentary on the creed of *Wasitiyyah*, the last chapter discusses specifically the duty of *amr bil maroof wa nahy anil munkar*, known in English as "enjoining good and prohibiting evil". Al-Uthaimin, the commentator, acknowledges that such a duty can even become "jihad", in order to defeat the 'people of innovation'. He writes that it becomes "obligatory to make the *Sunnah* apparent, and clarify the innovation, because this is part of *Jihad* in the Cause of Allah (...)" (Ibid, Vol 2, p. 472). Analyzing the text further, we find that when explicitly discussing "jihad", one is order to participate in war even if the leader is wicked (Ibid, p. 479). This is also evident in the writings of the *Wahhabi* Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, specifically in a chapter named "Jihaad is Performed with the Rulers, Whether They are Righteous or Sinful". Al-Fawzan explains the creed of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, and notes that if the disbelievers are left alone, they would spread their ideology and it is therefore incumbent to fight them (Al-Fawzan, 2010, p. 194-195). This becomes especially interesting when noting that "spreading disbelief" would mean the spread of any non-Muslim, rather non-Salafi, ideology. When studying this in relation to the categories of radicalization, one realizes that the interpretations of such tenets are completely in hands of those who read these statements. Those who would agree to use violence are likely to use this aspect of the *Wahhabi* faith as an justification, especially due to the wording of the text and apparent legitimizing of "jihad".

Ibn Abdul Wahhab created a puritanical understanding of Islam with his great emphasis on the "Oneness of God". Several contemporary writers have focused greatly at this aspect of Ibn Abdul Wahhab's life and theology, and it seems his belief in *Tawheed*⁷ was his justification for rejecting the entirety of Islamic theological schools. A specific aspect of Ibn Abdul Wahhab's theology which did not agree with the majority of Muslims was his

⁷ *Tawheed* is translated as "Oneness of God"

hatred of grave visitation. There is an accepted tradition amongst both the majority of Ahle Sunnah and all of the *Imamiyyah* Shia that visiting and even praying near gravesite is allowed. We can even find that Sunni scholars, such as Tahir ul-Qadri from Pakistan and leader of Minhaj ul-Quran International, and Shia scholars, such as Ali al-Sistani from Iraq with millions of followers worldwide, highly recommend the visitation of saintly and prophetic gravesites. Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and scholars following his doctrine, strictly forbid any interaction with graves, to the extent that those who practice such traditions are deemed outside the realm of Islam. We can point to two citations from the writings of Ibn Abdul Wahhab for the sake of reference. Firstly, when discussing the characteristics of people of ignorance, and how Muslims have gone back to ignorance (meaning left Islam), he says that these people take "the graves of their Prophets and righteous as masjids⁸" (Ibn Abdul Wahhab, 2010, p. 67). Also, in a treatise of ten things that breach Islam, Ibn Abdul Wahhab has included having "intermediaries between him and Allah" and "requesting intercession from them (intermediaries)" (Ibid, p. 83). This would forbid practices such as praying to God through help of holy personalities and even placing trust in a teacher such as the *Sufi* do. Yearly, millions of Muslims visit gravesites around the middle east, for instance the grave of Prophet Muhammad in Medina and the grave of Hussein Ibn Ali in Kerbala, because they deem it a recommended tradition and so does their creed. Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, on the other hand, interpreted his comprehension of the Almighty God to such a length that he would allow the destruction of saintly shrines upheld by Shiites and the *Sufis*, as we will research later. Here we can witness a strict disassociation with those whom are considered outside the teaching of Ibn Abdul Wahhab, while there is also evident the application of "forbidding evil", by stopping grave-visitation and destroying gravesites.

3.4 - Contemporary Publications by Wahhabi Scholars

This section will mainly focus on the writings of two Saudi Arabian scholars, Muhammad Ibn Uthaimin (d. 2001) and Salih al-Fawzan (b.1933). They have both held high religious positions in Saudi Arabia, and operated as guardians and developers of the Wahhabi faith. They are also respected and followed by millions of Muslims worldwide, and their publications are widely available in several languages, including English and French. There will also be analysis of books written by various scholars and their students, regarding

⁸ *Masjid* literally means place of worship.

the explanation and contemporary understanding of traditional scholars, such as Ibn Abdul Wahhab and Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, in order to ensure the result from the two abovementioned scholars. The primary reason for selecting Ibn Uthaimin and al-Fawzaan within the analysis of this thesis is simply put that they are "unknown" to the West. Both these scholars, as mentioned, are highly regarded within Saudi Arabia, as well as by several Muslims living in the West. They occupy the daily lives of many, in that millions of Wahhabi Muslims uphold their teachings on a daily basis. We find at the same time that the bookshops, where the literature at hand was collected, contain numerous publications from these specific scholars. In some bookshops we found that these scholars are among the most published and available authors, reflecting possibly the large request for the teachings and opinions of these personalities. However, to the general Muslim or Non-Muslim living in the West, these Wahhabi scholars are mostly strangers, whom one has never heard of before. Only researchers and those occupied with religious studies are amongst those certain to have knowledge of them. There is a much larger focus on other personalities within the West, such as Ibn Baaz and Albani, which arguably removes some attention from statements made by other scholars. Hence, this thesis focuses on Ibn Uthaimin and al-Fawzaan in order to comprehend and analyze their opinions and writings.

3.4.1 SalafiPublications

SalafiPublications are among the largest distributors of Salafi and Wahhabi material, both online and in Islamic bookstores worldwide. They write, translate and publish hundreds of articles and books aimed as guidelines towards the youth. They operate mainly from their website, which contains writings from personalities such as Ibn Baaz, Albani, Ibn Uthaimin and al-Fawzaan. The welcome page begins with a categorization of religious standing, for instance such as "I am a non-Muslim and wish to understand Islam....[enter here]", from where one is giving the "appropriate" information according to one's religious status. They also operate an online bookstore, called SalafiBookstore.com, aimed primarily at distributing Salafi material. The people behind SalafiPublications seem in fact to be based in the UK, in Birmingham. Both the website as well as the bookstore officially linked to SalafiPublications are stated online with their full address. At the same time, their effort seems to have reached all over the world, especially as they are praised by Muqbil bin Hadi. He was a prominent Wahhabi scholar, on the level of those examined within this thesis, until his death

in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia in 2001, however his works and teachings are still applied and upheld today. His praise towards those behind Salafi Publications is quoted under the bookmark; About Salafi Publication, and may reveal financial support as the link between these Salafi agencies:

Our Brothers for the sake of Allaah, the Salafees, the brothers at the 'Salafi Bookstore and the Islamic Centre' in the city of Birmingham in Britain are mentioned with righteousness and love for the Sunnah and calling to it and making war against innovations and hizbiyyah (partisanship)....I hope that our brothers from Ahl us-Sunnah agree to co-operate with them financially and spiritually for they are deserving of that (...) (Ibn Hadi, 1998)

Salafi Publications have, amongst their large collection of English literature, a book of "guidance" named *Foundations of the Sunnah by the Imaam of Ahlus-Sunnah, the Great Scholar of Hadeeth & Fiqh, the Subduer of Innovations Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal (Rafiq, 2003)*. This is a book containing the rulings and life-lessons of Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, whom is regarded as the founder of one of the four Sunni schools of Law. Ibn Hanbal is a revered personality by all Salafi as he was one of the early scholars who raised the notion of following the early generations. He is especially regarded by the *Wahhabi* not only because of the above stated fact, but also because they are followers of his school of Law. In fact, all official institutions, state scholars and educational facilities in Saudi Arabia adhere to the Hanbali school of Law (Zuhur, 2011, p. 176). There is an extensively used methodology within this book which aims at invalidating other beliefs. As a matter of fact eight out of ten chapters of this book contains refutation of other creeds. Chapter Eight, maybe the most eye-catching, is named "on the Prohibition of Sitting with the People of Innovation; Listening to them, Arguing with them, To Abandon them and those who Associate with them". This chapter contains instructions and opinions of scholars which cause intolerance towards those who are deemed as innovators, which in reality would mean any school beside those adhering to a Salafi or Wahhabi creed. The instructions go as far as saying that "If you meet a person of innovation along the path, then take a path other than it" (Rafiq, 2003, p. 167). Within the chapter, the opinion of a scholar is quoted, saying:

The Salaf used to forbid sitting with the people of Innovations, looking into their books and listening to their words. (Ibid, p. 165)

This would for example mean that Shiites, whom follow the *Jafari* school of law and thought, would not receive the respect of discussion, debate or even walking alongside those who adhere to such notions. Shiites are in fact considered Muslims by both the recognized Islamic University of Al-Azhar⁹ and the Amman Message¹⁰. The University of Al-Azhar is perhaps amongst the most, if not the most, prominent Islamic University. It is recognized due to both its advanced classes within Islamic sciences, as well as educating and preparing leading scholars for centuries. Likewise, the Amman Message is a collaboration instigated by King Abdullah II of Jordan, whom sent three questions to the most prominent Muslims leaders of contemporary times. The King asked the following, "(1) *Who is a Muslim?* (2) *Is it permissible to declare someone an apostate (takfir)?* (3) *Who has the right to undertake issuing fatwas (legal rulings)?*". Upon receiving the answers from the various scholars, it was concluded that all major and minor schools of thought and law within Islam are recognized as Muslims. Their statement read:

1.They specifically recognized the validity of all 8 *Mathhabs* (legal schools) of *Sunni*, *Shi'a* and *Ibadhi* Islam; of traditional Islamic Theology (*Ash'arism*); of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism), and of true *Salafi* thought, and came to a precise definition of who is a Muslim. (The Amman Message, 2007)

Now looking back at the prohibition against people of innovation, if Muslims adhering to another school of thought are managed in this manner, then one can only imagine what kind of mindset people following these instructions have in regards to the West and non-Muslims. It has been argued that some groups within Wahhabi and Salafi circles have adopted a lenient way towards Non-Muslims, as opposed to Muslims (Shavit, 2014, p. 78-80). However, one can argue that such an approach is simply due to the desire to convert (Ibid, p. 74), and as the study will investigate, the notion of "disavowal of Non-Muslims" is repeated throughout the literature. Such instructions seems to be motivated by the possibly

⁹ The verdict from Al-Azhar University is currently available at this site: <http://www.al-islam.org/shiite-encyclopedia-ahlul-bayt-dilp-team/al-azhar-verdict-on-shia>

¹⁰ The verdict from the scholars of the Amman Message is available here: http://ammanmessage.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=91&Itemid=74

radical notion of "disavowal of Non-Muslims", or rather "disavowal" of all factors opposing their strict understanding. Likewise, those who adhere to these writings may also attempt to stop the evilness of these "deviant" groups, by actively forbidding any interaction.

3.4.2 Muslims

We have divided the research on Salih Al-Fawzan and Ibn al-Uthaimin into categories of Muslim and Non-Muslim in order to highlight that all levels of society may be subject to intolerant principles. We find that according to core principles within the Wahhabi ideology, only themselves are regarded as the "saved" group of people, even amongst fellow Muslims. This may also reveal the possibility that adherents of such an ideology may only exist in a community by themselves in peaceful manners, as they actively instruct and seek to oppose all ideologies and religions. We have already analyzed, within the *wasitiyyah* creed, how the majority of Muslims who adhere to the *ashari* and *maturidi* schools of thought and follow many of the same principles, are deemed outside the right path. Hence, we shall first examine statements which seem to be aimed towards Muslims of other schools of thought, and thereby encourage intolerance. After which, we seek to study remarks made against Non-Muslims, especially Christians and Jews, which oppose such principles as freedom of belief and religious tolerance. Lastly, we discuss if there exists any possibility of support or promotion of violence amongst these scholars.

Sheikh Salih al-Fawzan is a member of the "Council of Senior Scholars" in Saudi Arabia. He holds a doctorate in Islamic laws (*fiqh*), and has obtained the seniority to issue *fatawa* (religious rulings). He has written many books, and numerous articles of his are available on the website, www.fawzan.co.uk, managed by SalafiPublications. A book titled "Beneficial Answers to Questions on Innovated Methodologies" is aimed at the Muslim youth for their guidance in practical life. Several topics included are eye raising to say the least, as normal actions are deemed forbidden and rigorous guidelines are set on interactions with other groups. One of the first point of interest are raised in the forbidding of religious hymns for spiritual gain (Al-Fawzan, 2004, p. 28-29). More than an entire page of footnotes are written forbidding religious hymns. Many Muslims worldwide, especially the Sufi and Shiites, use hymns, known as *anasheed*. These are aimed at expanding ones spiritual awareness and understanding of religious traditions. One can easily argue that *anasheed* are the most religious form of music and song which exists and it is therefore particularly

interesting that *wahhabi* scholars have forbidden it. Music is an extremely important part of many peoples' lives and religious traditions, and it is simultaneously widely used by Christians and Muslims for their religious ceremonies. Hence, outright forbiddance of such an widely accepted practice can be said to bring about social tension amongst individuals and hatred against normal behavior. It is written:

As for anaasheed, then they are from the ways of the innovating Sufis, those who take their religion as play and amusement. Furthermore, taking anaasheed as part of the religion contains in it imitation of the disbelievers. (Ibid)

Here we witness again the adoption and application of intolerant principles. Firstly, one is strictly reminded to keep away from the evil of others, and thereby creating an enemy of a regular practice such as hymns. The groups and individuals who exercise these principles would most likely have a hard time cooperating and co-existing with such "evil" practices. One can also derive the idea of excommunicating other Muslims, as they are compared to disbelievers if they practice religious hymns. Such an action as hymns does not negate or violate any Islamic fundamental teaching, and it is therefore alarming to see the unsympathetic and intolerant behavior by Wahhabi oriented individuals.

An introductory and explanatory book, named *Be a Serious Salafi*, has been published under the supervision of Saalih Al-Fawzaan. Consisting of only 110 small pages, and rather than focusing on an explanation of their faith, it contains several instructions against "the people of innovation", meaning all Muslims besides themselves. There are even a number of chapters which specifically aims at identifying the innovators, such as the chapter, "The position of the Salaf towards the Innovators". As the *Wahhabi* interpretation focuses on a strict literal reading of the text, we find that those who "rely on their intellect" are amongst those deemed innovators (As-Sihaymi, 2011, p. 64). There also exists a number of "guidelines" on excommunicating (*takfir*) people from Islam, if their ideology and practices oppose that of the Salafis (Ibid, p. 88). This is based upon the belief of *al-bara*, to categorically separate from Non-Muslims, which has been discussed. However, it is widely used against fellow Muslims in order to justify their own actions and creed as correct. This minute text also takes time to discuss the tenet of "prohibiting evil", which is considered as "all acts of disobedience and innovations", and entails all ideologies and thoughts outside

Salafism and Wahhabism. With such an understanding, one recognizes all ideas as evil, and in the need of prohibiting evil and disassociating from Non-Muslims, it might seem that one adopts an exceedingly intolerant state of mind. Hence, it seems highly possible that such tenets would result in further radicalization of Muslims. One is likely to even shun fellow Muslims, solely due to their acceptance of another creed. The Salafi and Wahhabi ideologies allow an active opposition to such accepted Muslim schools as the Shiites, the "Asha'irah, Maturidiyyah and Sufiyyah" (Ibid, p. 103). This furthermore portrays that some *wahhabi* and *salafi* individuals would even consider other Muslims as disavowed and enemies to their tradition. This is at the least level intolerant, as there is no basis for respect or mutual accordance with any other group, sect or religious tradition.

In a two volume book, explaining the Prophetic traditions, al-Fawzaan has attempted at explaining various religious traditions which are necessary for the Muslims. Among these instructions one can find a number of intolerant commandments, which cannot co-exist within western societies, due to their endorsement of human rights. Saalih al-Fawzan writes:

This contains the obligation of refuting the one who opposes the truth. It is contrary to what those people say: 'stop refutation, leave the people, everyone is entitled to his opinions and should be respected - freedom of opinion and freedom of speech'. With this, the Ummah [Muslims nation] will be destroyed. The righteous predecessors were not silent about the likes of these individuals; rather, they exposed them and refuted them due to their knowledge of their danger to the Ummah. (al-Fawzan, 2012, p. 99).

With this understanding an individual can hardly co-exist in a western, democratic society which strongly upholds human rights as a necessity. This instruction is based upon the active prevention of those ideas which are deemed evil. This is the application of the already examined possible radical principles which are upheld in Wahhabi circles. It seems as if there is an interest of containing and limiting people in order that they do not question their intolerant ideology. One is reminded to not exercise freedom of opinion and freedom of speech unless one would wish to destroy Muslims. Such intolerant principles restrict the development of thoughts and ideas, as one cannot hold or express various opinions. The possibility of co-existence and cooperation is completely removed, and rather one seeks to

identify all surrounding factors as enemies and the opposition. This statement seems to be especially targeting the western society as well as Muslims who live peacefully and cooperate with western ideals. A reader may see this as an instruction to stop freedom of speech, opinion and belief, in some cases actively. This may also signify that certain readers would see this as justification to apply force in prevention of such principles. Those who do practice freedom of speech and freedom of opinion may consequently be deemed as enemies of Islam, even though they are Muslims themselves. There is little possibility of peaceful co-existence with those one deem enemies. However, those individuals who are not violently motivated would seek other means of propagation, such as talking with other individuals in the streets, and thereby exposing others to radicalization. Freedom of belief and opinion are highly regarded principles within most countries and even amongst the majority of Muslim scholars. We find that based upon the verse "there is no compulsion in religion" of the Quran (2:256), prominent commentators of the Quran, such as Ibn Kathir (d.1373) and Allamah Tabatabai (d. 1981), have underlined the importance of freedom of belief. Ibn Kathir is a classical scholar widely upheld amongst Sunni Muslims, while Allamah Tabatabai is a prominent Shia scholar. Tabatabai, whom is a contemporary scholar of the 20th century, has stated:

One may force someone to do a certain physical action against his will, but he cannot be forced to believe against his will. Belief follows reason and understanding; and nothing but reason and understanding can create it. (Tabatabai, 1982, p. 171)

Likewise, Ibn Kathir concludes that a Muslim can "not force anyone to embrace Islam" (Ibn Kathir, 1999, p. 37). This seems to be a much more agreeable statement and understanding of this issue for Muslims, especially those who reside in the West. However, *wahhabi* and *salafi* influenced individuals and groups seem to favor a more intolerant and radical understanding.

Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab wrote a small treatise, regarding his belief about polytheistic practices (*shirk*), which has been commented upon by many. The recognized *Wahhabi* scholar, Abdul-Aziz Bin Baaz, is one of those who have offered their explanatory marks on these beliefs. He was member of several religious committees in Saudi Arabia and the country's Grand Mufti until his death in 1999. The primary text written by Ibn Abdul

Wahhab records "that the polytheists of our time are more engrossed in Shirk than those in the era of the Prophet" (Bin Baaz, 2011, p. 39). Commenting upon this, Bin Baaz wrote that those who practice polytheism in present time "have no insight" (Ibid, p. 56) and are deemed void of understanding. The problematic issue is that ordinary Muslims practices are regarded as polytheistic, and those who practice them are thereby outside the realm of Islam. These practices are outlined from the very beginning as "worshipping graves, those whom inhabit those graves, the *Awliyaah* (saints) of Allah (...)" (Ibid, p.4). No Muslim seek to worship such things willingly, as the Wahhabi scholars seemingly describe, but rather visit them for spiritual reasons. However, due to the strict literal and puritanical understanding offered by the Wahhabi creed, all other Muslims face the threat of excommunication, and in the worst case become victim of *Jihad*. This causes tension among various Muslim groups and at the same time create a severely un-friendly image of Muslims outwardly. Without the consideration of cooperation and mutual development, Wahhabi influenced individuals divide from their Muslim communities as well as surrounding society. They do not consider discussion or debates in order to create common ground, however rather strictly express their intolerant views. Muslims are daily subject of excommunication and disavowal as they are deemed outside the realm of Islam, if they practice such "horrendous" duties. In some cases, the holy sites venerated by millions of Muslims worldwide, have been destroyed by the use of violence in order to properly dispose of evil influence.

Shaykh Fawzee Al-Atharee, a student of Ibn Al-Uthaimin, has outright deemed Shiites and Sufis as innovators and professed hatred for them (Al-Atharee, 2003. p. 18). He states the following:

(...) the affair reaches the extent of their hatred for the people of innovation, such as the Raafidah [Shiites], the Ibaadiyyah, the Soofiyyah [Sufi] (...)

We can witness that this line of thought is shared amongst *wahhabi* scholars, and one could even argue that it is very common and highly upheld. It is quite often repeated, and one must acknowledge the adverse effect this may have upon a reader whom daily interact with Shiites, Sufis and also Non-Muslims. This may also reveal the high level of intolerance, as compared to democratic Western societies, which is deemed normal and necessary by these scholars and their followers. It also seems as if religious discussion and debate within

these circles is only consider a means of conversion and therefore harsh language and methods are used to explain and directly affect the reader or listener. This is a illustration of disavowing the "enemies" and "corruptors" of Islam. In most cases of radicalization such text and statements would most likely only lead to resentment within oneself and possibly certain minute public outrage. However, in a few cases those who become influenced by such intolerant thinking may act violently against the "innovators". This fact may be underlined by the mass participation of European Muslim youth in Syria, in war against Shiite Muslims (Randall, 2014).

3.4.3 Non-Muslims

Muhammad ibn Uthaymin is recognized as one of leading Saudi Arabian scholars of his time. He has influenced many Salafi and Wahhabi circles and was a member of the "council of senior scholars". He has written numerous books and articles on faith, jurisprudence and ethics. He died in 2001 at the age of 75. On the website of Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Uthaymin one can find an article by the name of "*Shaik Ibn Uthaimen on Interacting With Non-Muslims in Western Countries*". The article is based upon a lecture, and contains statements such as this:

[T]here is a general forbiddance of taking any disbeliever, any mushrik¹¹, as a friend. And there is a particular forbiddance for taking the Christian and the Jew as a friend and having any type of loyalty or friendship or love for those individuals.
(Al-Uthaimin, n.d., [online])

Here, we again see the usage of the concept of *al-bara*, to disavow from Non-Muslims. However, by applying this in modern day context, one would not be able to socially interact normally with fellow citizens. One is straightforward forbidden to intermingle with anyone else than those adhering to the same faith. Muslims, adhering to such tenets and living in the west, would be forced to practice intolerance and thereby move away from the norm of the society towards radicalization. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are traditions with many similarities and instead of the essential call for unity, one is rather commanded to separate by the Wahhabi ideology. Islam recognizes both the Jews and the Christians as holders of the

¹¹ The term *mushrik* refers to a person who worships or acknowledges other deities than Allah.

divine message before the advent of Prophet Muhammad in Arabia. The Quran even states at one point in chapter 5, al-maidah, verse 69:

Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians and the Christians, whoever believed in God and the last day and does good, they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

As is implied by the inclusion of this verse, there exists other possibilities for Muslims in their interactions with other religions. Some may even recognize Jews and Christians as fellow believers, however this is not evidently the case within Wahhabi circles. This creates a situation where those who adhere to such intolerant principles form a opposing group to all other factions. One is even recommended to discriminate against other religions, as one cannot even accept their friendship. To preach and practice intolerant principles such as these may lead to several problematic issues, especially if some are willing to use violence to further their views. Muhammad ibn al-Uthaimin, discusses further on, in a book of guidance for Muslims, named *Upright Moral Character*. Interestingly enough, in this book, having less than 100 pages, an entire chapter seems to be specifically dedicated towards diminishing and generalizing Non-Muslims. Excerpts from the chapter (Al-Uthaimin, 2008):

- The bad manner they [western people] have are known to anyone who goes to them and observes them. (p.67-68)
- Many young men who traveled to the West have narrated to me accounts of the worst kinds of manners. (p.68)
- And their good dealings in business are not done because of them being people of good manners, rather it is only on account of the being worshippers of material things. (p.68)

Instead of discussing tolerance, respect or unity in the short chapter dedicated to Non-Muslims, the author decided to generalize all Non-Muslims, be they Christians, Jews or Atheist, in an exceptionally negative manner. All societies contain some sort of immoral actions, and by singling out this aspect in order to define a society would be highly unjust. This is however exactly what Ibn Al-Uthaimin has done in order to disavow from all Non-Muslims, which may cause radical tension amongst Muslims living in the west. There seems

to be an interesting in branding all Non-Muslims as spiritually dead, without any moral code. There exists numerous moral and ethical philosophies followed throughout the world, and the author has deliberately ignored all of them by generalizing everyone who is not Muslim as immoral. Likewise, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, being connected traditions, may share many moral values, which the author again has not considered, and instead only spoken ill of Non-Muslims. If one is constantly reminded of the evils which surrounds us, while at the same time one is indoctrinated with intolerant principles, it will eventually cause great distress within the society. The influenced youth will arguably stop their interactions with fellow citizens and forbid any co-existence, which cannot comply with democratic values, as one cannot de-humanize opposing groups. We will briefly analyze the above quote through the lens of Veldhuis and Staun's primary definition of radicalization:

Definitions of radicalisation most often centre around two different foci: 1) on violent radicalisation, where emphasis is put on the active pursuit or acceptance of the use of violence to attain the stated goal; 2) on a broader sense of radicalisation, where emphasis is placed on the active pursuit or acceptance of far-reaching changes in society, which may or may not constitute a danger to democracy and may or may not involve the threat of or use of violence to attain the stated goals.

(Veldhuis & Staun, 2009, p. 4)

The above quote would most likely be seen as a mindset which befits the second category of Veldhuis and Staun. Such a person would resent certain things, ideas and/or principles which are against his own beliefs. This individual would find such measures as writing or publicly disagreeing with the set standards. However, one who reads these statements and ideas may deem westerners as outward enemies of Islam and may therefore fall into the first category, as set by Veldhuis and Staun.

In a question asking directly the religious ruling on association with Jews, Salih al-Fawzaan harshly answers that they are considered disbelievers, to the extent that he considers them to be cursed. Instead of putting weight on religious tolerance and cooperation, we find here the very opposite, i.e. outward hatred. The *Sheikh* clearly writes that "our enmity with them is based on the religion. It is not permissible for us to have mutual accord and love for them" (Al-Fawzan, 2004, p. 72). Muslims living in the west, who follow the same creed, would have an extremely difficult time adapting to society and

being an active member of it. This idea is even more strengthened when reading statements which equals ideas and traditions from foreign countries to misguidance:

[T]he youth adopted these ideas and as a result there occurred division, since these youth turned away from the Salafi methodology in calling were affected by these ideologies that originated from abroad (Ibid, p. 81)

We are repeatedly reminded of how other groups have deviated from the one true path of Salafism and maybe more disturbing, how all talk and discussion of other ideas and ideologies leads one astray. Since this seems to be a repetitive case one is almost obliged to ascertain that this faith is highly intolerant towards other. Nevertheless, al-Fawzaan goes on to instruct and guide the youth whom are starting their education from "destructive ideas and deviant beliefs" (Ibid, p. 139-130), which in reality means all non-Salafi ideas. One is strictly advised, to the point of obligation, to stay away from other ideologies as well as refraining from reading their books. Likewise, this form of intolerance is also shown towards fellow Muslims, with whom *Sheikh* al-Fawzaan deems no possibility of unity except if they accept the way of the Salafi (Ibid, p. 137). We observe a outright separation from Non-Muslims, as is one of their intolerant and possibly radical principles. Jews are recognized within the Quranic scripture as people who received divine grace, in form of a book of guidance, namely the Torah. They certainly share several commandments and principles with Muslims, and it is especially for this reason that the highly intolerant nature of Wahhabism can be destructive for democratic values. The youth, who is the aim of these instruction are likewise told to separate and distance themselves from other ideologies and principles, for example those of western values. An individual, who is becoming radicalized, and begin to accept such standards will certainly have difficulty in balancing the multi-religious and multi-cultural society with surrounds them.

Al-Fawzan has commented upon a treatise of Ibn Abdul Wahhab which specifically aims to practice the principle of *al-wala wal-bara*, especially disavowal of Non-Muslims. Shaykh Salih Al-Fawzan comments upon this principle:

The matter is clear on this issue. It is obligatory to disassociate and absolve oneself from the disbelievers and their religion. The issue of *al-Walaa wal-Baraa* is from among the greatest obligations in Islaam. (Al-Fawzan, 2005, p. 308)

Western Muslims are openly instructed to be intolerant towards Non-Muslims, as well as those Muslims whom are considered "innovators". There is as well a quite interesting usage of the word absolve, which seems much more loaded with meaning than disavowal. With applying the term 'absolve', the author may give the reader justification to rid himself or absolve himself from everything associated with Non-Muslims. Some readers may even understand this as a necessity for action, unless they themselves become sinful. Hence, the author, with applying certain terms and expressions, directly influence the mindset of the reader. Al-Fawzan continues along these lines also when discussing the concept of unity between Muslims. He strictly commands that there is no such thing as unity with the Sufi and the Shiites (Ibid, p. 130-131). He is adamant that the only way unity will and can happen is if the other Muslims agree to the same creed and beliefs as that of Wahhabism. This may give adherent of this message justification for active invitation (*dawa*) to Islam and their interpretation of it. In most cases this will of course imply peaceful methods.

3.4.4 Violence

According to articles written by both Saalih al-Fawzan as well as Ibn Uthaymin, available at salafipublications on the web, they both detach themselves from violent terror, such as suicide bombings. They outwardly uphold that such actions would cause evil, and are not among righteous actions. Muhammad ibn al-Uthaimin even states that a person who would kill others along with himself has only "killed himself and not benefitted Islam" (Al-Uthaimin, 2014). However, while presenting such an important issue, Ibn al-Uthaimin also states that such actions in fact are from the practice of the Jews. The discussion becomes underlined with intolerance towards Jews, as they are deemed responsible for Muslims individuals who blow themselves up, killing and injuring civilians. It seems as the condemnation of terror is an apparently superficial expression, due to perhaps the religious position held by these scholars. Throughout their books and interpretations, however, we have found constant prevention of all other ideologies as destructive. Several statements and principles have been found to be highly intolerant for any society. A number of injunctions may even be considered to legalize violence in order to achieve their aims. Even though these scholars have attempted to display a much more lenient understanding, their writing and instructions seemingly cause radicalization of Muslim youth, in some cases even extreme violent radicalization. This argument can be underlined when applying the

discussion from section 1.3, where the reader and his/her understanding becomes the focus. We have seen how Gadamer instruct to keep in mind the readers perspective, as it may be the most essential outcome of any written text. These scholar may not outwardly express any intent or accept of violence, however as a reader one is constantly influenced by several radical and highly intolerant principles. One could argue that constant reminder of the surrounding society as enemies and "evil", would cause these individual to take actions. These intolerant teachings are raised to the degree where co-existence is deemed impossible, as one must oppose all other parties. One would possibly understand these injunctions as a combat against the surrounding society, for which some would use violence to remove others. We must therefore necessarily ask the question, whether the readers of the literature examined within this thesis are subject to indirect legitimacy of violence? One could at the same time argue that such statements, as the following, directly justify violent *jihad* against Non-Muslims:

' Also, he was saying in the language which speaks for itself: 'Whoever obeys me, I shall keep peace with, and whoever disobeys me, I shall wage war against.' He waged wars against people because of this religion, and made their blood, wealth, women and offspring lawful, and he was supported in that and became victorious. (Al-Uthaimin, 2008, p. 54)

Here we witness instructions from one of the most respected scholars of Saudi Arabia, which can be understood from a readers perspective, to legitimize violence and wage war against those of other religions. One seem to be further instructed to even seize everything belonging to "ones enemies". Readers who actively adhere to the same creed may find their necessary justifications for violence in precisely such statements and "religious" instructions. The reader's response to such expressions and words may in most cases only trigger disavowal and intolerance of all other ideologies and beliefs, however it may in some cases result in an opposing and violent mindset.

We will briefly seek to correlate this section with the set definition of radicalization for this paper:

- (1) Violent: A person him/herself advocate and use violence to necessitate the change he/she wants. This would constitute the highest threat to the surrounding society.

- (2) Supporting Violence: a person does not use violence themselves, however, agree to and supports violent behavior by others in certain circumstances. This would entail direct and indirect influence and recognition towards those who actively use violence. These individuals could also influence those less radicalized into higher stages, as one is likely to accept similar ideas and principles.
- (3) Non-Violent: A person who does not believe in, or practice, violence in bringing about change in the society, while utilizing other methods, such as academia and political campaigns. Most radical people would fit into this category, even possibly those who may not be aware of their own radicalization, due to the minute influences they are experiencing.

The first type of reader, which researchers agree are the most uncommon, would read these outright intolerant principles, which we have repeatedly examined and seek to actively change their surroundings by using the only tool they deem effective, violence. Hence, the author's of these numerous books and articles are somewhat responsible as they do not seek to clarify or give another understanding. On the other hand, there are some readers in the West who would as well seek to change the what they deem as evil, by for instance supporting ISIS, the terrorist group, in the Middle East, or publicly supports terrorist acts in the West. Lastly, most readers would adopt these intolerant views and principles then seek to influence other individuals in order to create a wider following. It may be that most readers would never use violence themselves, or even support any type of violence in order to achieve their goals. However, they would still oppose rights and principles which are considered necessary and basic in democratic and secular societies.

3.5 The Norwegian Context

We have now studied the theoretical aspect of the Wahhabi ideology, and identified a number of theological features which may be, and have in the past been, applied as a justification for intolerance and possibly violent behavior. Even with or without the threat of violence, this creed seem to advocate a highly intolerant worldview, which in multicultural and multi-religious societies is bound to create tensions. To be able to understand, although it is not the main aim of this thesis, the practical application of Wahhabi tenets in a multifaceted society, we will look to the landscape of Norway, specifically Oslo and its immediate surroundings. We seek to understand how various fractions of the Norwegian

society have sought to deal with the increase in Wahhabi and Salafi ideological views amongst Muslim youth. There are two major motives for specifically including the Norwegian context in a higher degree within this thesis. Firstly, the emergence of possible radicalization of Muslim youth from Wahhabi principles has only recently, meaning in the past few years, come to play in Norway compared to other European countries such as France and Britain. Secondly, the research material on this topic within the Norwegian context is accessible to a greater extent for the researcher, and hence a much more comprehensive analysis can be made.

The most significant cooperation between two religious institutions within Norway is arguably the contact group between the Church of Norway and the Islamic Council (IRN). Berit Hagen Agøy, the General Secretary of the Church of Norway's Council on Ecumenical and International Relations, along with Mehtab Afsar, the General Secretary of the Islamic Council of Norway, signed a joint statement in November 2011 "Opposing Religious Extremism". This was documented due to several terror attacks around the globe, and especially due to 22nd July 2011 in Norway. The cause of many such tragedies was arguably extremism, in many cases religious extremism, and hence the "joint statement" would act as an identification as well as a denunciation. Within this document a number of characteristics of religious extremism have been mentioned, which also aims to identify possible roads to violent extremism. Several of these characteristics, might seem to illustrate the teachings and principles we have analyzed within Wahhabi publications. Here follows the complete list of extreme characteristics as can be found in the document (Afsar & Agøy, 2011):

Religious extremism has many characteristics. We mention especially these:

- Extremists believe that they are alone in interpreting their own religion correctly, so that they cannot cooperate with others who think differently, even though these belong to the same religious tradition.
- Extremists are convinced that there are groups of people that it is impossible to coexist with, and which they must therefore oppose or remove, either from society as a whole or from certain places or areas.
- Extremists reduce human dignity for groups that they oppose, and reject the idea that human rights apply to these groups.

- Extremists accuse those who think differently of having certain political, ethical or religious opinions, without allowing them to define for themselves who they are or what they believe.
- Extremists use gender-based hierarchies and power structures in which women are denied human rights and human dignity on the same level as men.
- Extremists use a language of hate, inciting to conflict with certain groups of people and with those who disagree with their convictions.
- Extremists are willing to use terror, violence or other forms of compulsion in order to enforce the consequences of their religious views on others.

Hence, as a closer look reveals, this statement seems to consequently condemn some aspects of Wahhabi and Salafi ideologies, which we already have analyzed, and seems to be specifically intended against those with an agenda of intolerance and violence. We have already seen how, within Wahhabi circles, there exists a high number of "religious" instructions intended to separate from all other Muslim schools of thought. These instructions even go to the extent that debates and sitting with others is forbidden. Such an agenda is identified as belonging to religious extremists, within the joint statement, due to its recognition that extremists "cannot cooperate with other who think differently, even though these belong to the same religious tradition". We have also examined within several publications the comprehensive use of hate language, against other beliefs and groups of people, which is another trait identified as extreme within the statement. It is not necessarily negative to have diverse or opposing views, however when such differences become subject of hatred, one must critically assess the situation. Further reading clarifies that the "Joint Statement Opposing Religious Extremism" upholds that:

The more of these characteristics that are present in a specific case, the more serious it is. (...) We therefore believe that it is important to identify and oppose tendencies to religious extremism as early as possible (Afsar & Agøy, 2011)

This would decidedly be accepted understanding of extremism by the community at large, and it would certainly be most beneficial to identify religious extremism at the earliest stage possible. This statement appears to purposely portray a general identification of extremists, which can then be analyzed in reference to any group or ideology. We could also detect

what tenets, principles and teachings can be recognized as radical according to the religious majority in Norway, by assessing whether they result in these tendencies of extremism. We will apply this characteristic identification when examining the profile of two groups in Norway, which seems to have been influenced by Wahhabi ideology. The two groups are known as IslamNet and Profetens Ummah. The Wahhabi ideology has only in the past few years entered the Norwegian society, in terms of influence and effect. We have studied that with this creed comes several principles which may cause intolerance and may lead to radicalization. Hence, there exist several Wahhabi and Salafi circles throughout Norway which have received attention for their statements and actions. In this thesis we seek to analyze the two groups, which are considered the largest players within Oslo and its immediate surrounding area, however they have influenced and effected both Muslims and Non-Muslims in larger parts of the country. Research on these groups has been made available by Sindre Bangstad, a social anthropologist with a PhD from Radboud University, and Marius Linge, who holds a Master in History and International Relations from Saint Joseph de Beyrouth University. Ulrika Mårtensson, Professor in Religious Studies in Trondheim, has also published an interesting view on one of these Wahhabi influenced groups, in the journal, *Tidsskrift for Islamforskning*.

The largest group of the two, IslamNet, is also the most active Muslim youth organization in Norway. It was established in 2008 as a student association at the University College of Applied Sciences in Oslo. Yet after controversy surrounding their gender segregation and suspension as a student society (Lie, 2013), they developed into a youth organization aimed at both Muslims and non-Muslims. Their main purpose, according to their own statements, is to remove misconceptions about Islam. By analysis of their views and statements they have been largely identified as a non-violent faction, accused by some of certain intolerant and possible radical notions. Though IslamNet has, according to self-published numbers, 2000 paying members, only a few core constituents are seen as devoted adherents of the Wahhabi ideology (Bangstad & Linge, 2013, p. 258). They average hundreds of people on their events and seminars, and had more than 12 000 Facebook-fellows in 2012 (Ibid). There are no certain numbers of active participants, and therefore possible subjects of radicalization. However, IslamNet, as well as those who are invited as lecturers by them, have made several intolerant statements against other Muslims as well as certain groups of

people, in addition to maintaining a number of counter-cultural and possibly undemocratic viewpoints, such as gender-segregation and homophobia (Linge, 2013). Despite this, they do not seem to have lost participants. It has also been argued that they are especially considerate about Non-Muslims in their statements and dealings as opposed to the way they speak of other Muslims, which is unlike Wahhabi and Salafi teachings (Mårtensson, 2014, p. 191). We have already discussed the principle of *al-wala wal bara* and how it necessitates denunciation of Non-Muslims, in the writings of a number of noticeable Wahhabi and Salafi circles and authors, such as Ibn Uthaimin and al-Fawzan. Mårtensson however argues that this principle is understood as political relations, within IslamNet, and not personal relations (Ibid, 210). She discusses that IslamNet teaches to hug infidels and create personal connections. They also seem more likely to "participate in politics and socialize outside of the purified community", portraying *haraki* Salafism (Ibid, 204). Mårtensson furthermore seems to describe IslamNet as a group with the intent to harmonize with Norwegian law, and therefore do not depict them necessarily as a radical threat (Ibid, 216). This view has been contested as a method for conversion and therefore possibly a tool for Islamizing the surrounding society, and eventually state law. Uriya Shavit, PhD from Tel Aviv University and lecturer in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies, may have shed vital light upon this issue when discussing in an article for the journal, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*:

While salafīs stress that Muslims are not to show affection to or befriend non-Muslims, they categorically emphasize that Muslims must never treat unjustly or aggressively infidels who have not harmed them, and allow for cordial communication with infidels if such communication is intended to convert them (Shavit, 2014, p. 74)

This may possibly reveal the purpose of IslamNet, in that the real intent is conversion, and it is for this reason that they practice *hugging the infidels*, as discussed by Mårtensson. However, it may also be that they simply maintain justice in their dealings, be it with Muslims or Non-Muslims, and hence have made such statements. Only further research can give any indication on how to judge this specific situation. On the other hand, other researchers have argued that IslamNet in fact do adhere to certain intolerant and possibly radical principles (Bangstad & Linge, 2013). They do not seem to advocate violence, however

still create tensions with others due to intolerant remarks against homosexuals and freedom of belief. Bangstad and Linge have identified as well the application of several "demonizing" terms by IslamNet towards its critics. These terms include *kafir* (infidel), *jahili* (ignorant) and *mushrik* (idolater) (Ibid, p. 266-267). It can hence be argued that IslamNet has in fact propagated intolerant views and statements, which cause them to at least mentally separate from the surrounding society. The research of Bangstad and Linge seem to be oriented around the radicalization perspective and seek to understand the influences on IslamNet, as well as its role in advocating intolerant and radical principles.

The second group examined within this discussion is named "Profetens Ummah" (PU). They are considered an underground group, with unknown number of adherents and key players. Only a couple of their members are known to the general public due to intense media attention. They started to receive attention when they in 2012 demonstrated outside the US embassy in Oslo, and reportedly shouted: "Viva Osama, Viva Osama", in praise to the al-Qaeda leader (Larsen, 2012). They seem to adhere to numerous highly radical notions, as identified earlier, as we will see. They preach open hate towards Non-Muslims due to the principle of *al-wala wal-bara*, as stated on their website (which has been unavailable from february 2015) (PU, 2010), and also call for jihad as a tool for achieving their aims (PU, 2010). Despite the fact that jihad in many instances could refer to striving and pursuing a completely non-violent objective, it seems as if according to PU that there is an emphasis on holy war. Several outspoken as well as unidentified members of this group have actively participated in the war currently ongoing in Syria, against fellow Muslims (Sveen & Wigen, 2013, p. 278). Hence PST has stated their concern about the actions and behavior of PU member against Non-Muslims when they return to Norway (Hirsti, 2013). It does not seem farfetched to assume that the core members of PU legitimize the use of violence in order to achieve their goals.

In the following section, we will seek to analyze the principles, as outwardly upheld by IslamNet and PU, in accordance with the joint statement issued by the Church of Norway and IRN, whom are considered to represent the largest religious communities. The first characteristic mentioned by the joint statement underlines that extremists deem themselves as the only correct interpreters of their religion. Other are hence deemed as heretics and

even excommunicated. IslamNet has at several instances made the point that whomever does not agree with their statements or values are outside the fold of Islam. Bilal Philips, a highly revered lecturer amongst IslamNet, was invited by them in 2010. He is also listed on their website as an reliable source for Non-Muslims as well as Muslims for their information on Islam (IslamNet, 2013). Bilal Philips have publically stated that Shiites are outside the realm of Islam, excommunicating them (*takfir*), even when they in fact are a recognized faction by the majority of Muslims, and are considered one of the oldest Islamic traditions. This lecture of his is widely available on the internet¹² and largely quoted by adherents of the same message on numerous internet forums. This characteristic would also include PU, as they vigorously hold on to their views as the only valid interpretation. They also quote and revere several Salafi preacher on their website, especially Jihadi-Salafists, such as Anwar al-Awlaki. PU's inclusion in the Syria civil-unrest also further underlines their position against fellow Muslims, as their aim is to fight the Shiites. The Islamic Council of Norway, which operates as an umbrella corporation above Muslim mosques and communities, has not included neither IslamNet nor PU among their constituents. Hence, due to their intolerance against fellow Muslims, both these groups are apparently shunned by the larger Muslim community as an counter-reaction.

The second identification of extremists establishes that certain groups of people are deemed impossible to exist with, and the aim therefore becomes to oppose and remove them. Such an ideology seems evident in the maintaining of *al-wala wal-bara* by PU. They have stated when defining *bara*, or hate, that "Allah has divided us into two camps, namely the camps of Imaan (belief) and the camp of Kufr (unbelief). It is important that Muslims maintain these principles in their belief and actions at all times." (PU, 2010). Such a statement is highly generalizing and intolerant, as it holds everyone besides themselves as subjects of hatred. Likewise, within their instructions on supporting *jihad* we find that upholding hatred against disbelievers is believed to be a major principle (PU, 2010). These views are hazardous in a democratic and multi-religious society, and are applied to directly justify their process of radicalization, ending in possible usage of violence. Both Muslims as well as Non-Muslims would be deemed impossible to co-exist with by PU, due to their ideology. Consequently, by fulfilling this characteristic, they are considered extremists by the

¹² This video can for example be found on the following website: <http://vimeo.com/56079107>

surrounding community. One could also argue whether IslamNet may possibly fall into this category due to their leader's comments against homosexuals. However, it may be more befitting to discuss it under the following characteristic, as we will see, which one could then apply here as well.

The next characteristic of extremists, as identified by the joint statement, is that they do not apply human rights values to certain groups whom they oppose. The most important human rights principle is definitely the right to live. IslamNet, as well as lecturers linked to them, have reiterated their staunch belief in capital punishment for homosexual practices. Haitham al-Haddad, a British-Muslim invited in the past by IslamNet, upholds the punishment of death for homosexuals (Webb, 2014). He also upholds capital punishment for leaving Islam, which entails no tolerance for freedom of belief (Haddad, 2012). The leader of IslamNet made a comparison between homosexuality and incest on their website and also upheld it as a criminal act (Bangstad & Linge, 2013, p. 267). Such beliefs seem to be shared by PU as well, when around 300 people joined their Facebook-rally, "Stop Homosexuals in Oslo's streets". They explained their motives on the group description by stating: "homosexuality, which is a disgusting and awful disease, must be defeated and stopped" (Kalstad & Arnesen, 2014, p. 4). IslamNet's leader has also maintained, to the distress of many Muslims and Non-Muslims alike, that one who does not believe in capital punishment for such cases cannot be considered to be within the fold of Islam (Færaas, 2011). There are still a number of discussions between Muslims on these sensitive issues, and there certainly does not exist an unanimous opinion. Regardless, the leader of IslamNet has adopted the intolerant Wahabi tenet, also identified earlier as possible extremist traits, of only accepting their own interpretation of religious issues. Hence, he also put in practice the, very probable, radical notion of *takfir*, or excommunicating Muslims. Such statements are highly unproductive and especially intolerant in a society based upon human rights and freedom of choice, where several religions, cultures and ideologies co-exist. Upholding such beliefs conveys an attitude of not caring for fellow human beings, be it their ideologies or feelings, and therefore cannot subsist within a democratic society. The result could possibly be quite dangerous, as is evident from other countries, if not dealt with appropriately. The extremist characteristic of not applying human rights to certain groups could also be applied upon the following case. The next trait of extremists is, according to the Church of Norway and IRN,

the "power structures in which women are denied human rights and human dignity on the same level as men". One could argue, based upon the rejection for student society from both the University of Oslo as well as the Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, that IslamNet could fall into this category. Both these institutions of higher education denied IslamNet to function on their premises due to their strict separation between men and women in their programs and seminars. According to the joint statement, we also find that among extremist tendencies is the use of compulsion. The University College of Applied Sciences has recognized that IslamNet impose gender segregation (Lie, 2013), by for example using security guards posted at the entrances. Hence, one could argue that there does exist some sort of discrimination against women, or at least the potential for it. To deny women the same rights as men, or treat them in any way unequally, is a direct violation of the largely accepted human rights declaration of the United Nations. An unjust society, which is created by maintaining such principles, cannot become a common ground for various religions and ideologies. The Norwegian society takes pride in its commitment to a tolerant worldview, however these state of affair could be, and arguably already are, under immediate threat. Such an understanding is further fueled when one of the main lecturers invited by IslamNet, namely Hussan Yee, has advocated the beating of women. At a conference organized by IslamNet and attended by hundreds, Yee was asked a question regarding the legitimacy of beating ones wife amongst Muslims. The answer was given that such an action is only allowed if it is done due to love and consideration. He further explained that the beating should be done at a place on the body which remains out of sight (VG, 2010).

The last identification of extremism, within this proposed incomplete list of the most important extremists characteristics, is the approval of the usage of "terror, violence or other forms of compulsion". A number of members of PU, if not all in some extent, would fall into this category. Their media statements, website, as well as actions show that the members of PU would themselves participate in violent behavior, or at the least support it in various circumstances. Bangstad and Linge describe them as "violence romanticists" due to their active participation in warfare in the Middle East, as well as their outspoken fondness of violence (2013, p. 259). This is certainly a major issue of concern for a democratic and, popularly known as, non-violent society of Norway. PU seems to present an immediate

threat to all citizens surrounding them, and advocate an intolerant worldview, which cannot co-exist with others. Though, the members of PU till now only are known to have fought Muslims, one must consider that violence is a language of hatred which can be turned against anyone, as we have seen from this analysis. Violence and terror cannot be the answer to a situation of religious and cultural tolerance, such as is the case in Norway, and it is most appropriate to address this condition. IslamNet, however, does not seem to have reached such extents, nevertheless it does indeed entertain several intolerant injunctions, which are certain to cause problems for a multi-religious, human rights adhering, and democratic society. Both IslamNet and PU maintain several doctrinal principles which have been identified as radical, of which some are even extreme, and in some cases violent. These two groups would also, as we have examined, fall into several categories of extremism, according to the joint statement by the Church of Norway and IRN. It should be alarming to witness the extensive influence of two groups which can be linked with several radical and extreme notions, while operating in the Norwegian society. PST, when referring to extreme Muslims as the most severe threat facing Norway, seems to have been considering PU. One could argue that PU has raised the highest cry of intolerance and threat of violence in the Norwegian society, while IslamNet could influence individuals towards such a mind-set, without carrying out violence themselves. We have mentioned above how the terms radical, extreme and terrorist are applied with combined connotations, which causes further confusion for such a subject. IslamNet could for instance become victims of such categorization, even though they do not practice violence or support it outwardly. They may still become identified as extremists and violent, as the surrounding society may merge these terms. We have as well seen that even the Norwegian government have intertwined the meaning of extremism and violence, such that if IslamNet could be identified as extreme for instance according to the "joint statement", some could even understand this as a violent threat. This can arguably cause unintentional discrimination, which further causes radicalization, as we have seen.

IslamNet appears to actively adhere to the scholars, Ibn al-Uthaimin and al-Fawzaan, whom were examined above. They have for instance had several lectures and seminars with one of the students of Ibn al-Uthaimin, namely Haitham al-Haddad, whom have already been mention for his views against homosexuals. He has also held private lectures only for

registered members at a classified venue, according to the website of IslamNet. Similarly, the leader of IslamNet has published views of both Ibn al-Uthaimin and Salih al-Fawzaan as authoritative on discussions on their online forum (IslamNet, 2013a). This may in fact demonstrate a direct link between the principles derived from the teachings of these scholars and IslamNet, or at least its core constituents. If this is the case, then we might find that the chief individuals behind IslamNet adhere to and advocate several intolerant principles, which to some readers may even justify violence in certain circumstances. Profetens Ummah may possibly be precisely such a case, of individuals as the readers of intolerant principles advocated by Wahhabi and Salafi scholars, which then justify the violent statements and actions portrayed candidly by its members.

4.0 Conclusion

We have sought to understand how the term "radical" is used by different researchers and its implication by the various applications. Likewise, we have sought to understand the process of radicalization and various primary motives as identified by current researchers. This thesis then aimed to establish the purpose represented by faith within radicalization of Muslim youth. We revealed that faith may justify radicalization, while not necessarily being its primary motive. When discussing Muslim radicalization, we found that specifically the Wahhabi ideology comes in focus. This ideology includes several principles which at the least level causes intolerance and disrespect towards everyone besides adherents of Wahhabism. The many forms of literature published extensively worldwide contains these principles both as a method of writing, as well as direct practical guidelines. We have found that readers may become influenced to believe that friendship with Christians and Jews is forbidden, discussions with Sufis and Shiites are dangerous and freedom of speech corrupts the Islamic religion. Hence, coexistence and multi-cultural societies would be under immediate threat, as there does not seem to be much support of others in their publications.

We have not been able to fully analyze the written material from all Wahabi scholars, as the scope of this thesis was limited. We therefore concentrated on a few major scholars and their publications, as well as a few others in order to cross-examine the findings. Those

principles which may support radicals are unanimously upheld in all publications, however in various extent. There also exist a separate world of literature online, especially on social media, which is extensively available for everyone. This thesis did not engage that field, as there is some existing research available, which specifically investigate for example Facebook. We also focused on literature published in the English language, as it is the most easily available for youth and often English has become the primary language of many Muslim youth in the west. This thesis has specifically sought to unveil possible radical doctrines and principles within books and articles available both online and by hand, and therefore has not considered other mediums. We have likewise limited ourselves to examine this situation in the West, and not the entire world, as it is in the west these potentially radical notions pose a greater threat to everyone, considering the number of religions and cultures at play. This is due to their intolerance towards foreign ideas, democracy and basic human rights. We have examined how various individuals, who experience or due to some reason move towards radicalization, are influenced by certain intolerant principles, stemming from *wahhabi* and *salafi* circles. These individuals would separate themselves from the surrounding society, by recognizing others as evildoers and enemies of their "true" religion. In turn, this may lead to further radicalization as the individual might experience additional disconnection and discrimination from his or hers surrounding society. This might not necessarily be the case, however due to the intolerant principles which have been adopted, it seems as if everyone is an enemy. Such mental and physical distress may cause further intolerance between various groups, and in the worst case result in violence, so that the "corrupt" ideologies can be stopped.

We hope this research has brought to light how *wahhabi* publications influence Muslim youth, by creating intolerant ideas, which cannot exist in multi-cultural and multi-religious societies. At the least level one would be advocating disrespect and intolerance, while on a higher level, violent actions would not be unimaginable. One could seek to educate the masses on basic human rights, as well as how these rights are abused. As a cautionary measure it may also be favorable to control various publications so that intolerant and radical ideas may not become widespread. This thesis can further assist researchers in identifying potential threats, as well as potentially dangerous ideas and literature. We have also detected which contemporary Wahhabi personalities are spreading

such ideas, and how they are doing so. This will hopefully assist in comprehending how we can engage in decreasing potential radicalism.

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