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# The New Crusaders: Contemporary Extreme Right Symbolism and Rhetoric

by Ariel Koch

## Abstract

*A new right-wing extremism is on the rise in contemporary Europe and North America. Those who embrace this ideology articulate extreme hatred towards the left, which they consider “treacherous” or “disloyal”, and towards Muslims and immigrants, and eventually are prone to violence against them. In Europe, a new movement known as the Counter Jihad Movement has emerged. It is exploiting jihadi terrorism and immigration in order to gain more support, mobilize people and justify their struggle on the Internet, on the streets and even in war zones like Syria and Iraq. This article will examine one of this new movement’s main characteristics: the use of crusader symbolism as a source of inspiration, activism and even justification of violence as a religious duty in Europe and in the Middle East.*

**Keywords:** Right-Wing Extremism, Crusaders, Counter Jihad Movement, Jihadism, Political Violence

## Introduction

In recent years Europe and North America have been experiencing an increase in extreme right wing violence, and as it seems, this wave is not about to fade away any time soon. Although Jihadi terrorism is attracting most of public and media attention, right wing terrorism and violence has become an acute problem. According to Daniel Koehler, the founder and director of the Berlin based Institute on Radicalization and De-Radicalization Studies, “right-wing terrorism or racist political violence remains one of the most dangerous threats to Western democracies.”[1] As Koehler notes:

Although all available national and international statistics in Europe and North America show increasing trends in extreme right-wing violence/terrorism, the basic phenomenon is by no means new: both Europe and the United States have experienced significant extreme right-wing attacks and waves of violence during the past several decades.[2]

Nonetheless, according to Jacob Aasland Ravndal, a researcher at the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (FFI) and the Center for Extremism Research at the University of Oslo, since the 1990s, extreme right terrorism and violence “has declined,” and nowadays it is carried out mostly by “unorganized gangs and lone actors.”[3] However, in the last two years Europe and North America have been suffering from right wing violence that targets immigrants, Muslims, and leftists.[4] Moreover, it seems like right wing vigilantes are flourishing across Europe,[5] and they are involved in hostile and violent activity against immigrants and Muslims at home and abroad.[6]

This article aims to analyze modes of mobilization within the new extreme right,[7] while focusing on Christian crusader symbols and rhetoric, and its use as a tool to direct anti-Muslim sentiment for a fight against those who persecute Christians, mainly the Islamic State (formerly known as ISIS). What role does the Christian identity play in crystallizing the new extreme right? What symbols do right-wingers make use of and how do they see themselves? What characterizes the activity of these factors and what are the possible implications of this activity? In order to answer these questions, I will use textual, audio and video analysis of primary sources and I will rely on a variety of relevant studies, as well as on media reports.

One of the familiar and troubling phenomena of the war in Syria is that of foreign fighters leaving their countries and joining Islamist elements in the ranks of the rebels against the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. This phenomenon is troubling because in Syria these volunteer fighters absorb political-religious indoctrination, acquire practical knowledge in the use of weapons and gain combat experience. While most of the threat comes from Jihadists, in reality, it is not the only threat. Other extremist movements also motivate and mobilize volunteers for their struggle. Every movement has its specific reasons to fight against its enemies. And if foreign fighters from one extremist movement are capable of producing terror, as we saw in the Paris attacks in November 2015, surely militants from other movements can do the same.[8]

In regard to Jihadi terrorism and activity in the United States and Western Europe,[9] anti-Muslim sentiments (Islamophobia)—which embody a mixture of contemporary politics and medieval history[10]—have increased. In recent years, these sentiments were fueled by ISIS, whose persecution and murder of Christians in Syria and Iraq led to a phenomenon in which right wing elements use Christian symbolism and rhetoric to recruit and mobilize volunteers to fight against the “ancient enemy” of Christendom: The Muslims, and especially their Salafi-Jihadi representatives,[11] either in their homelands or abroad, in Syria and Iraq.

According to a research conducted by Tuck, Silverman and Smalley, some several hundreds of Anti-ISIS are fighting in Syria. The majority of them “did not self-identify a religious affiliation,” but “among those that did express religious sentiments there were a surprisingly large number of Christians [...] and a comparatively small number of Muslims.”[12] In other words, there is a movement of Christian volunteers to the battle-fronts of Syria and Iraq, and it is not baseless to assume that some of them are holding right wing stances. [13] Although Syria attracts the most attention, it is clear that the Ukrainian arena has long become a magnet for right wing extremists who can train, fight and acquire weapons for future assaults against their various enemies.[14] Both arenas require a separate in-depth studies.

### ***The Extreme Right Use of the Internet***

According to Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens and Nick Kaderbhai, “the Internet is seen as allowing for the creation of a virtual community for groups and movements that can support existing physical networks while disseminating different ideologies.”[15] In addition, the extreme right makes an extensive use of the Internet, which enables the formation of a transnational community. Many websites contain multimedia content (i.e. videos, pictures, etc.) and include the availability to purchase products such as military clothing online.[16] Furthermore, these sites include a fundraising appeal and the possibility to do so online. Thus, these sites serve as a tool to raise financial support and volunteers—doctors, media personnel, fighters and weapons experts. Other studies also indicate the extensive use of the Internet by religious fundamentalists.[17]

Gabriel Weimann explains Jihadist extremists use of online platforms – and we can project it on other (non-Muslim) extremists as well – “used for operational purposes such as instruction and training, data mining, coordination, and psychological warfare.”[18] Moreover, a study by J. M. Berger shows that neo-Nazis and white supremacists are more active on Twitter than the supporters and activists of ISIS.[19] In accordance, it is important to note “White supremacist groups are part of a rising specter of far-right extremism mobilization across the United States and Europe.”[20]

The extreme right, as well as other political violent extremists learned how to mobilize and motivate the masses through social networks, and how to spread hatred via these tools.[21] Examples of this can be found in the “Defense Leagues”, which have appeared in recent years throughout Europe. The first “Defense League” was the English Defence League (EDL), a single-issue street movement, which began operating in 2009.[22] Through their Facebook page, that gained tens of thousands “Likes”, the EDL succeeded in mobilizing thousands for what they see as a struggle to prevent the “Islamization” of the United Kingdom (and Europe in general), particularly against “radical Islam”, when it is clear that they spread hatred against all Muslims.

The EDL is linked to various European and non-European Islamophobic-hate groups and movements which

have been supported and reinforced by right-wing elements in Europe and the United States. After the EDL gained public attention, the group inspired smaller but identical groups—the “Defense Leagues”—that formed throughout Europe and which, like the English branch, tried to mobilize people through Facebook pages and to demonstrate and march against Islam, Muslims and immigration.

All these groups form a transnational network that researchers such as Matthew Goodwin, Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens and Hans Brun, and others, have described as the Counter Jihad Movement (CJM),[23] that is, in many aspects, echoing the “emerging pan-European extreme-right identity.”[24] The CJM was developed as a response to Jihadist terrorism and propaganda in the West,[25] where it continues to pose a significant threat, and which has led to the formation of a European Salafi-Jihadi groups that openly called to the Islamization of the West.[26] According to Roger Eatwell, this reflects the “cumulative extremism”, a process in which one type of extremism ignites other types of extremism.[27]

As Meleagrou-Hitchens and Brun noted, there are three “serious problems” with the CJM narrative. First, although “it does not specifically call for violence,” it “includes a paranoid tendency towards conspiracy-theory”—for example, the idea of “Islamization”—which can be used “as inspiration for violent terrorist attacks.” Second, the CJM “can serve to incubate, protect and add a veneer of plausibility and acceptability to traditional forms of far-right xenophobia and extremism.” Besides that, “its amorphous nature and ability to tap into popular concerns about immigration, religion, terrorism and the economy increases the likelihood of violent confrontation and jeopardises Europe’s social fabric.”[28] This article argues that in fact, the CJM does call for violence, but indirectly, with its crusader discourse.

### ***A New Christian Militancy in Europe?***

Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the UK, claimed that secularity is facing the growth of radical and extremist forms of religion, which became an important factor in the world and even within modern (and secular) Europe. He argues, “The twenty-first century will be the start of an age of de-secularization.”[29] One reason for this process is the demographic changes that occurred in Europe in recent years. Another reason is “the use of new electronic media” by “religious radicals.” A third reason is that religion, according to Sacks, offers a strong identity and sense of community: religion “offers meaning, direction, code of conduct and a set of rules for the moral and spiritual life,” which liberal democracies failed to supply.[30]

Contemporary extreme right in North America and Europe includes a variety of groups and movements. Some of them are religiously motivated, mainly by Christianity or paganism,[31] and all of them, nowadays, are sharing hatred to the “Muslim invaders.” Because of the religious nature of Salafi-Jihadism, we can assume that the answer to one’s religious extremism will be another’s religious extremism. This is the case of the CJM, that uses crusader symbols and rhetoric as an anti-thesis and reaction to Jihadism rhetoric and symbolism. Yet, it does not indicate that religion is the most prominent factor within the extreme right. Furthermore, as it seems, the real functions and purposes of the crusader symbolism are as a combination of motivation, religious awakening, and moral justification of violence, and, besides that, for propaganda, recruitment and mobilization.

According to Western right-wing extremists, Muslims nowadays try to conquer Europe as their ancestors did; for example, when they invaded the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and France, or when the Ottoman Turks occupied large parts of Eastern Europe and reached the “gates of Vienna.” In the end, it was always an alliance of Christians who fought the invaders and expelled them from Christian lands. Although in the past Muslims lived in Christian areas, or maintained trade relations with the Christians,[32] they never tried to reconquer those lands and did not challenge the authorities, until they could do so due to the freedom of expression given to the citizens of European liberal democracies.

These countries tried, in various ways, to integrate the Muslim communities among the (Christian) societies (for example, emphasizing what we know as “multiculturalism”).[33] According to research by the Migration

Policy Institute, “multiculturalism characterized as a feel-good celebration of ethno-cultural diversity, encouraging citizens to acknowledge and embrace the panoply of customs, traditions, music, and cuisine that exist in a multiethnic society.”[34] This multicultural approach, has “utterly failed,” as admitted by Angela Merkel, the German chancellor. Accordingly, senior politicians in France, England, the Netherlands and elsewhere have also expressed strong criticism against this approach.[35]

These politicians argued that multiculturalism allows separatism and lack of integration, which may eventually lead to religious extremism and hence to the rejection of the state, its institutions, symbols and laws; and even the willingness to use violence against its citizens. The failure to integrate Muslims into society led to unrest among many young Muslims, especially the second, third, and even fourth generation of immigrants. Many of these young Muslims, dubbed by Robert Leiken as Europe’s Angry Muslims, became the vanguards of Jihad within liberal European countries.[36]

These radical Muslim youths have united in various religious-political inter-connected groups and have begun to call publicly for an Islamic holy struggle (“Jihad”), using their right to demonstrate without fear of the authorities. Although this call was accepted by some European Muslims, it resonated also among their rivals. In this context, it should be noted that the idea of a Christian holy war (“crusade”), in response to the Jihad, is reverberating in the public discourse and is not alien to right wing circles in the West. “The idea that a war against infidels could be something sacred,” wrote one researcher, “in Christian history is clearly a Western development.”[37] One can discern such “holy” and militant currents in the Christian world that intensify whenever the real and imaginary conflict between the West and Islam continues; and so is the persecution of Christians in the Islamic world.

### ***Extreme Right use of Crusader Symbolism and Rhetoric***

Among the extreme right, the use of crusaders (and mainly the Templar Knights) motifs is not new. For example, the American white supremacist organization Ku Klux Klan (KKK) publishes a newspaper called The Crusader. In October 2016, three men were arrested in Kansas, USA, for planning attacks against Muslims. They called their group “The Crusaders.”[38] White supremacists are not the only ones in the extreme right who use Christian motifs as a source of justification for their struggle against Muslims. Similarly, individuals, groups and organizations identified with the CJM, which does not necessarily operate out of a racist view, also make use of crusader symbols and derive inspiration from those Christian knights.

Examples for this can be found with the “Defense Leagues,” whose symbol is the cross of Saint George, with the inscription “In Hoc Signo Vincens” (Under this sign we conquer), which used to be a Crusader slogan. In addition, in CJM circles, there is an extensive use of memes and photos of knights, many of whom are accompanied by a caption that threatens to execute a Crusade as a counter-response to Jihad, such as “Jihad Works Both Ways” or “I’ll See Your Jihad and I’ll Raise You One Crusade,” and others who call for a fight against the “Muslim invaders” as was done by their Christian ancestors.[39]

For example, on the Norwegian Defense League Facebook page there are many images of the crusaders. In a picture that was uploaded on July 18, 2015, a cross appears, and on its lower part a shield with crossed swords, and behind it, the inscription “Templar Knights D.K.”[40] Another example is in the Spanish Defense League (Liga de Defensa Española) Facebook page, in which many memes propagate militant Christian identity. One meme, uploaded on May 10, 2015, shows a Christian knight kneeling, with a sword in his hand, and supposedly saying: “I am not a racist, I am anti-Islam; There are Islamists from all races.”[41] The anti-Islamic crusade is necessary not only as a response to terrorism, but also in order to “preserve European Christian values, white Europeans need to gather forces to fight Islam and Muslims, instead of being fragmented across Europe.”[42]





**Figure 1:** “I am not racist, I am Anti-Islam,” from the Spanish Defence League Facebook page [screenshot]

In this context, it should be noted that Anders Behring Breivik, the Norwegian Pan-European nationalist who murdered seventy-seven people on July, 2011, defined himself as a “Justiciar Knight Commander for Knights Templar Europe and one of several leaders of the National and pan-European Patriotic Resistance Movement.”[43] Breivik, who for years absorbed anti-Islamic blogs and websites,[44] published a 1,500 page manifesto written in London, in which he expressed support and sympathy for the EDL and Western nationalists. Furthermore, he expounded his theory of Islam’s takeover of Europe, clarifying who are the “allies” of Islam (such as the European left, the elites), whom he accuses of treason, and therefore he condemns them to death. This is why among his victims were sixty-nine members of the Labor Party’s youth wing on the Utoya Island.

To what extent is militant Christianity, embodied in the glorification of the Knights Templar, expressed in Breivik’s manifesto? Beside the fact that the Manifesto binding is the Templar Cross on a white background, the word “Christian” was mentioned on 2,247 different occasions, the word “Crusade” appears 263 times, “Knights Templar” appears 195 times, and “Christendom” appears 119 times. Breivik hoped that this religious rhetoric, followed by his attacks, would lead to a civil war “which he thought was inevitable.”[45] Nevertheless, Breivik’s crusader discourse does not indicate that he was a religious fanatic nor that he was motivated by religion, but instead he should be viewed as a nationalist who thought he could inspire other Western nationalists with the use of crusaders slogans and symbols.

Contemporary extreme right violence, motivated nowadays mostly by Islamophobic hatred, either against the Left or against Muslims, continued after the Breivik’s attack.[46] In October 2015, a neo-Nazi stabbed and injured a German politician in Cologne for her support of allowing refugees to enter Germany,[47] and a few days later, in the city of Trollhattan, Sweden, a neo-Nazi and right wing sympathizer, which expressed hostility to immigrants, stabbed a teacher to death and injured several students in a city school.[48] On June 16, 2016, a British right wing extremist shot and killed Jo Cox, a Labor MP who was known for her support of allowing refugees to enter England.

According to media reports, Joe Cox’s murderer shouted “Britain First” before stabbing and shooting the Cox.[49] Britain First (BF) is the name of an anti-Islamic movement, founded in 2011, that clearly illustrates the term “counter-Jihad”, and defines itself as a “Christian crusader.”[50] This movement was established by well-known right wing activists in England, led by Paul Golding, who had previously been active in the British National Party (BNP), a party supported by white supremacists, neo-Nazis, fascists, and the like.[51] Golding understood that in order to obtain broader public legitimacy he should abandon the neo-Nazi scene and turn into what is known as the Counter-Jihad “new extreme right.”

Indeed, in response to the “Muslim patrol” that appeared in recent years in several Western European countries, including Britain, which enforces Sharia law (i.e. prevent gambling, prostitution, alcohol, immodest clothing or the presence of homosexuals on the streets),[52] BF launched the “Christian Patrol”, in which its members march on the streets with white crosses and even entering mosques, where they distributed copies of the New Testament.[53] White crosses, next to the Templar flags, are also seen at BF marches. Like the EDL, BF are using extensively the internet and especially the social networks.[54] For instance, its Facebook page has almost two million Likes.[55]

### *Manifestations of Crusader Symbolism and Rhetoric in the Syrian Context*

From the BF Facebook page, we learn about its worldview: its hostile attitude towards Muslims and immigrants, its call to join the struggle against ISIS, as well as the presence of right wing elements in Syria. For example, on June, 2016, BF Facebook page was uploaded a picture allegedly taken in Syria, where eight armed men are seen, one of them is flying the Templar Knights flag. According to the caption accompanying the picture, the eight are volunteers who came to Syria in order to fight ISIS. This picture has received about a hundred enthusiastic and supportive responses, more than 2,000 Likes and over 500 shares.[56]

Although we don't know what really motivated these armed men, the fact that they are waving this flag in Syria gave to extreme right-wing groups in Britain the opportunity to show how active and determined they are. Even though the photo has been used without the permission and approval of the men, we do know that at least one of them, the British veteran Timothy Scott, was the leader of the right-wing movement PEGIDA (“Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident”[57]) in the UK.[58] Although we don't know if these men were motivated by religion, we can notice how religious (and militant) symbolism is being used by Anti-Islamists who are willing to take arms and fight for their cause.



**Figure 2:** “Brave anti-ISIS volunteers flying the Templar flag in Syria”, From BF Facebook page [screenshot]

The Templar flag is also the flagship of the Knights Templar International (KTI), a British religious organization founded in 2015 in order to strengthen the Christian identity of the UK, and have links to BF and other extreme right-wing groups in Europe.[59] To promote its goals this organization uses a website and a Facebook page that has accumulated over half a million “Likes”.[60] The struggle of these self-proclaimed “modern Templars” is not limited to the Middle East. It is in Europe, too, which they claim to be under a double threat from Muslims in general and from radical Islam in particular: on one hand, a demographic threat that is intensified in light of the “immigration crisis,” and on the other, the threat of terrorism that continues to claim victims in Europe and exploits immigration in order to infiltrate the continent.

Therefore, these so called “modern Templars” help their European counterparts to stop the immigrants before they can cross the border between Turkey and Bulgaria. The KTI assistance, according to their website, is expressed in the dispatch of equipment such as tactical vests, winter clothes and communication equipment,

which are supposed to help a nationalist paramilitary group in Bulgaria to prevent Syrian immigrants from crossing into the country from Turkey.[61] In other words, “modern Templars” are involved in supplying equipment and volunteers to groups fighting against their Muslim enemy, both in Europe and in the Middle East.

Another example of Christian willingness to fight in Syria and Iraq is found on the “Apoyo Voluntarios Españoles Contra DAESH” (Spanish Volunteers Support Against ISIS) Facebook page, which calls on Christians in Spain (and Europe in general) to embark on a “crusade”, reach Syria-Iraq and protect the persecuted Christians from ISIS. This Facebook page began operating in January 2016 and by April 2017 had more than 25,000 “Likes”. The profile picture of the page shows a military beret, a hand grenade and a chain with a cross; the background picture shows the Spanish flag with the inscription “Long live King Jesus” (Viva Cristo Rey). On the flag, there are a Kalashnikov rifle, ammunition and a military helmet.[62]

On this page propaganda videos can be found calling for Christians to join the campaign against ISIS and Muslims in general; Media reports about European and Spanish fighters in Iraq and Syria (some of them veterans),[63] memes, photos and illustrations that show Jesus riding on a white horse, fighting against Muslims; crucifixes with guns attached to them, and alike. It should be added that not only Spaniards join the forces defending Christians in Syria and Iraq. Thus, for example, we can learn about the activities of a “Christian Falange” composed of French citizens.[64]



**Figure 3:** “Spanish Volunteers Support Against ISIS” Facebook page [screenshot]

There are other examples of the willingness to fight for the persecuted Christians in the Middle East and against ISIS, such as “The Veterans for the Protection of Christians Against ISIS International” Facebook page, which opened in early April 2015 and has accumulated over 1,700 Likes by April 2017.[65] This page is of a closed group, and most of its members are Americans and Canadians “with right-wing stances.”[66] The page, which has not been updated since June 2016, is intended to recruit volunteers, especially veterans, who will to defend the Christians in Iraq and the “Jews” (the State of Israel), both perceived as being persecuted and terrorized by Jihadists.

The page is accompanied by memes and illustrations of horrific Crusaders, and has links to the online purchase of clothing with various Crusader symbols and rhetoric. In this context, it should be noted that Christians who fled out of fear of the Jihadists in the Middle East, when arriving in Europe, found that also there, they were still threatened by jihadi sympathizers.[67] This strengthens not only the call for the protection of Christians in Muslim countries, but also within Europe. This understanding might lead to religious radical-



ization and the perception of violence as being capable of defending Christianity and Christians.

## Conclusion

For the extreme right wing (either the CJM or neo-Nazis and fascists) circles, Christianity is under a religious and demographic threat, posed by Muslims in general and by Jihadis in particular. In this context, we see how Christianity, and mainly the Templar flag, has become an inspirational and motivational source of empowerment for the extreme right in the Twenty-First Century. Right wing individuals, groups, movements, parties and organizations in Europe and North America use the same militant-religious symbols and rhetoric, whether they really mean it or not, in addition to provide an appropriate response to what they see as a threat posed by Muslims. Furthermore, it is being used not only as a motivational source (to protect Christianity and Western culture), but also for recruitment, mobilization and propaganda.

As we saw, contemporary right-wing extremists in Europe and the United States portray themselves as descendants of the crusaders and as those who are obligated to not only protect European and American Christians and Christendom from terrorism and invasion (by immigrants), but also to prevent the spread of Islam in Europe and elsewhere that according to them, will undermine the Christian identity of their nations and the core values and norms of the Western (-Christian) civilization. Furthermore, it seems that European extreme right, which used to be more pagan than its counterparts in North America, due to the “Jewish nature” of Christianity – nowadays share the same vision of Europe as a Christian space that is under threat posed by Muslims.

Crusader symbols and anti-Islamic rhetoric help to consolidate individuals, groups, organizations, parties and movements in Europe and in the United States (and elsewhere) under a transnational framework, by reviving the crusader heritage and presenting it as an appropriate response to Jihad, even though just for propaganda purposes. Thus, Christian symbols and rhetoric provide a religious justification and inspiration for a physical struggle against a religious enemy. This struggle has an internal aspect—reflected in protest activity on the streets, as well as online—as well as an external aspect, which is expressed by helping groups with a similar worldview who are fighting a common enemy, such as the assistance given by the Knights Templar International to nationalists in Bulgaria, and mobilizing volunteers to fight in the battlefields of Syria and Iraq.

The revitalization of the crusader heritage takes place primarily in the Internet, mainly through social networks. This enables the creation of a virtual community and connections with similar elements from different parts of the world that share the same world-view. This has been true since the EDL began to march in England, followed by a whole network of “Defense Leagues” that drew supporters and fans from Facebook to the streets, where they clashed with their various rivals: the left and Muslims. The same is true for Britain First and other extreme right groups in Europe and beyond, which use the new media for propaganda and as a recruitment tool of people and money; and exploit the immigration crisis and terrorism in addition to spreading lethal hatred.

An example of this was found in Breivik’s attack, in Jo Cox’s murder and in other cases, which demonstrated that those who portray themselves as the “new crusaders” would not hesitate to act violently against their own people, who allegedly collaborates with the “Muslim enemy,” and helped the “invaders” directly and indirectly. Indeed, more and more attacks against Muslims and against the Left occurred in Europe and North America in recent years, sparking fears of civic unrest and lack of security, which is intensified in light of right wing extremists’ involvement in the war in Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, it is questionable whether these volunteers will exploit their combat experience and continue their struggle against “Islamization” even after they return, or will they lay down their weapons? We will discover answers to these questions in the coming years.

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## Notes

[1] Daniel Koehler, "Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in Europe: Current Developments and Issues for the Future," *Prism: A Journal of the Center for Complex Operations*, July 2016: 84-104, p. 99. [http://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/prism/prism\\_6-2/Koehler.pdf?ver=2016-07-05-104619-213](http://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/prism/prism_6-2/Koehler.pdf?ver=2016-07-05-104619-213)

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

[3] Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence in Western Europe: Introducing the RTV Dataset," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 10, Issue 3, 2016: 2-15, p. 12. <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/508>

[4] See, for example: "Te-Sat: European Union Terrorism Situation & Trend Report 2017," Europol, The Hague: 2017, p. 10. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-te-sat-2017>

[5] Extreme right vigilantes in Western Europe include groups such as the French "Generation Identity" (Generation Identitaire), the Finnish "Soldiers of Odin" or "Britain First" in the United Kingdom.

[6] In the United States, where according to the Southern Poverty Law Center right wing extremists are on the rise, there are more than 900 hate-groups. See: Marc Potok, "The Number of Hate and Antigovernment 'Patriot' Groups Grew Last Year, and Terrorist Attacks and Radical Plots Proliferated," The Southern Poverty Law Center, February 17, 2016. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2016/year-hate-and-extremism>

[7] Anton Pelinka, "Right-Wing Populism: Concept and Typology," in: Ruth Wodak, Brigitte Mral and Majid Khosravinik (eds.), *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse* (UK, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013): 3-22, p. 10.

[8] See: Øyvind Strømme, "Assad's Far-Right Europe Corps?," *Hate Speech International*, November 25, 2013. <https://www.hate-speech.org/other-volunteers/>; and Lewis Barton, "Is Europe Overlooking the Far-Right 'Foreign Fighter' Issue in Ukraine?," *The Huffington Post*, January 23, 2015. [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/lewis-barton/ukraine-far-right\\_b\\_6531154.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/lewis-barton/ukraine-far-right_b_6531154.html)

[9] See: Rik Coolsaet (ed.), *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge in Europe* (UK, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008); Peter R. Neumann and Brooke Rogers, "Recruitment and Mobilisation for the Islamist Militant Movement in Europe," *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation*, December 2007. [http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1234516791ICSREURsearchReport\\_Proof1.pdf](http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1234516791ICSREURsearchReport_Proof1.pdf)

[10] See: S.N., "Medieval Memes: The Far Right's New Fascination with the Middle Ages," *The Economist*, January 2, 2017. Online at: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2017/01/medieval-memes>; and Paul B. Sturtevant, "Race, Racism, and the Middle Ages: Tearing Down the 'Whites Only' Medieval World," *The Public Medievalist*, February 7, 2017. <http://www.public-medievalist.com/race-racism-middle-ages-tearing-whites-medieval-world/>

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[35] "Nicolas Sarkozy Joins David Cameron and Angela Merkel View that Multiculturalism Has Failed," *The Daily Mail*, February 11, 2011. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1355961/Nicolas-Sarkozy-joins-David-Cameron-Angela-Merkel-view-multiculturalism-failed.html>

[36] Robert S. Leiken, *Europe's Angry Muslims* (USA, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012)

[37] Harry W. Hazzard, "Preface," in: Marshall W. Baldwin (ed.), *A History of the Crusades* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958), p. xix

[38] Mark Berman, Sarah Larimer and Cleve R. Wootson Jr., "Three Kansas Men Calling Themselves 'Crusaders' Charged in Terror Plot Targeting Muslim Immigrants," *The Washington Post*, October 15, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/10/14/three-kansas-men-calling-themselves-crusaders-charged-in-terror-plot-targeting-muslim-immigrants>

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[41] From the Spanish Defence League Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LigadeDefensa/photos/a.193934667287716.53961.189960594351790/1061503757197465/>. (Accessed: 20.05.2017). (Figure 1)

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[43] Anders Behring Breivik, "2083 – A European Declaration of Independence" (UK, London, 2011). The full manifesto was re-published by *The Washington Post*: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/r/2010-2019/WashingtonPost/2011/07/24/National-Politics/Graphics/2083+-+A+European+Declaration+of+Independence.pdf>. (Accessed: 20.05.2017).

[44] Neumann, 2016, pp. 30-31.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[46] January 29, 2017, Alexander Bissonnette shoot and killed six Muslims inside a mosque in Quebec, Canada. Five months later, during one week of June, there were two attacks that targeted Muslims, the first in Sweden and the second in England. In both cases the attackers used cars as weapon. These attacks occurred in light of several attacks in Europe, in which Jihadis used cars and trucks to mow down their victims.

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- Website: <https://www.britainfirst.org/>

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialBritainFirst/>

- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BritainFirstHQ>

- You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtEsYNHwF37lrd9IH7Tv-uA-->

[55] Paul Golding himself have two Facebook pages: one private (<https://www.facebook.com/people/Paul-Gold->



ing/100014186493099) and one public (<https://www.facebook.com/BFActivists>), both together have more than 150,000 Likes and Followers. (Accessed: 20.05.2017)

[56] Eight anti-ISIS volunteers, from Britain First Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialBritainFirst/photos/a.346633882148546.1073741826.300455573433044/1049392898539304/>. (Accessed: 20.05.2017) (Figure 2).

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