

# Mapping the sacred

Understanding the move to violence in religious and non religious groups

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真理子と恵美へ捧ぐ

## Abstract

This research explores how groups make the transition from having strongly held beliefs, to having strongly held beliefs that legitimate violent action: the move to violence. Working from a number of case studies, I have produced a matrix of markers that helps us theorise about the causes of violent potentialities within groups. The case studies include Aum Shinrikyo, al Qaeda, the Red Army Faction as well as some non-violent counter-examples: Agonshu, Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Through analysis of their statements, I have coded data into a number of markers that aim to capture information about the sacred boundaries of these groups. These boundaries refer to the non-negotiable beliefs and values of the groups, which they use to define themselves and their 'Other', and are developed out of a neo-Durkheimian discussion of society and the sacred. Mapping these sacred boundaries helps us to understand the nature of beliefs that groups will fight to defend. Concentrating on the sacred, which I argue can be located in secular as well as religious groups, ensures that the exploration of the move to violence in religious groups is not trapped in essentialised or dismissive accounts of definitions of religion and the causative role it plays within modernity.

Together, the operationalisation of the sacred and the use of markers to locate it in the statements of groups form the model – the matrix – that I have constructed for this study. There are, then, two principal outcomes from this research. The first is a set of findings coming out of the exploration of the move to violence. The second is a model which I have demonstrated in use and which I suggest can be used in future research exploring the role of the sacred in modern society.



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## Abbreviations

AGS	.....	Agonshu
ALQ	.....	al Qaeda
Aum	.....	Aum Shinrikyo
RAF	.....	Red Army Faction
SNCC	.....	Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee
UHiT	.....	Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan





# 1. Introduction

This thesis examines the 'move to violence'. Taking the statements (interviews, press-releases, manuals and other primary material) of selected groups I map out instances of the sacred in the ideas and beliefs expressed, and use these to understand the move from strongly-held beliefs to strongly-held beliefs that justify violent action.

In the chapters that follow I set out a model – the matrix – which I use as a method of analysis of this move to violence and which I apply to six case studies: three groups known to have committed acts of violence and three groups that have not committed acts of violence. In my final analysis of the data I evaluate both this model and the findings from the case studies.

In this opening chapter I will summarise the context of this project, before outlining the central research questions and the aims and objectives. I will conclude by laying out the structure of the thesis, briefly explaining the content and purpose of each chapter.

## Context

In 2006 a team (of which I was a part) from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds undertook a six month literature review for the British Government's Home Office, submitting a report entitled '*The Roots, Practices and Consequences of Terrorism: A Literature Review of Research in the Arts & Humanities*' (Knott *et al.* 2006). The findings of this report, most notably those highlighted in sections 5.2 and 6.1, formed the basis of the research proposal that led to this thesis.

Section 6.1 of the literature review (37) stated that, within the fields of the Arts and Humanities, the following areas were in need of further study:

- Further case studies relating to the stages of development of 'extremist' or 'radical' ideological or religious movements, plus a more focused review of existing case studies (e.g. Reader,

2000; Hall, Schuyler and Trinh, 2000; Almond, Appleby and Sivan, 2003):

- More research on the relationship between belief and behaviour in general, and on religious belief and behaviour in particular: on causality, agency, and the explanatory power of religious beliefs and practices; [...]
- Research which tests markers of 'extremist' views in light of the transition to violence.

Taking these highlighted omissions in the literature as its starting point, I proposed to respond to them through a case study-based project examining the move to violence in religious groups. However, during the early stages of the project it became apparent to me that the idea of 'religion' in many explanations of violence was problematic, varying from it being completely absent as a causative factor, to an overreliance or simplification of the role that religion plays in the move to violence. In addition, I queried whether, by focusing on 'religion' as a causative factor, I would not be in danger of excluding similar characteristics in non-religious groups, thereby questioning the efficacy of this approach. Therefore, having considered the complex role that religion played in the literature in the field, I shifted my focus to using the concept of the 'sacred' to illuminate the problem. It is my contention that the sacred can be found in both religious and secular groups and that it is a useful concept which can be operationalised through the matrix.

The problematisation of 'religion' within discussions of violence is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three, as is my decision to use the 'sacred'. To summarise the latter part of that discussion here, I use the concept of the sacred as a border category to refer to the non-negotiable beliefs of groups, whether violent or non-violent. Instances of the sacred being transgressed or threatened with transgression are where we see the potential for violent responses. Therefore, using the matrix, I map out these beliefs (the sacred), providing an explanation of their values and an understanding of how they can lead to a move to violence.

In addition to the above call for more research, the Home Office report (Section 5.2.2) also compiled a list of markers that were suggestive of extremist views (Knott *et al.* 2006: 34):

The literature suggests the following set of markers as strongly associated with terrorist action. These have been noted in groups and individuals post facto in studies which interrogate the factors leading to known terrorist events. Hypothetically, it could be said that the more markers found, the more likely the move to violence, though this needs testing in further research. ... We are conscious ... that this set of markers is highly suggestive of the ways in which a religious frame of reference can intensify the felt legitimacy, urgency and moral transcendence of terror.

The following markers may be present:

- A deep and incontestable sense of conviction;
- An oppositional and dichotomous world-view (cosmology);
- Worldview justified by appeal to legitimating authority external to/transcending the situation (God, religious scriptures, traditions, fundamental human rights or values);
- The present condition/field of action is situated in the cosmic struggle between good and evil;
- A sense of urgency and symbolic import is given to action in the present;
- The field of present action takes on the character of an emergency situation, in which normal moral codes regulating and limiting action are suspended and emergency forms of action legitimated or even demanded;
- A conflation of the fields of human and divine agency (this is God's action) which further removes action from normal moral and legal restraints;
- A sense of some basic injustice, which is non-accidental (i.e. it expresses the core values, true nature of society and is irredeemable), and which reinforces the sense of opposition/dichotomy – 'clash of worlds';
- An absence of common ground with 'others' allowing meaningful dialogue with other world views;
- A sense that all members of the 'other' group are involved and implicated in the opposition to the good, and so legitimate targets: there is no 'innocence'.

This set of indicators reflects the significance we have detected in the literature of the nature and strength of attachment to beliefs.

This list formed the initial basis of the markers that composed the matrix, the analytical model which I applied to the case studies. These markers and their function are properly introduced in Chapter Two, but at this stage it is useful to list them in their earliest form, not least to acknowledge the impact they had on the direction this project took.<sup>1</sup> While the above list concentrated on religious 'frames of reference', this was amended so that data relating to non-religious

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<sup>1</sup> A list of the markers used in this research is provided in Appendix 1.

beliefs could also be captured, reflecting the development of the aims of the project, to which I now turn.

## Aims and Objectives

As suggested by its roots in the Home Office report, the aim for this project was to provide a case study driven matrix examining the role of belief in the move to violence. In light of this, my objectives were:

- To provide a case study based analysis of statements (and other primary material) from selected groups, with a particular focus on issues of collective belief and the move to violence;
- In light of the current literature and case studies, to present a matrix of causal markers suggestive of the move to violence apparent in the relevant cases;
- To provide a theoretical explanation of the markers and how these are determined by belief and can suggest violent potentialities.

Following work on developing the markers into a coherent model, or matrix, the following objectives were added during the course of my research:

- To develop the matrix such that it might be applicable to further studies, both within the present field (of violence and religion) and in the broader subject areas of the Sociology of Religion and Religious Studies.
- To develop the matrix as a tool for use outside of academia, by governments, law-enforcement agencies and other organisations.<sup>2</sup>

These additional objectives reflected the shift from the original intention of the project, to understand the move to violence, to two key aims: to understand the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups; and to define an analytical model for mapping instances of the sacred in society.

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<sup>2</sup> There are ethical considerations of the potential uses of the matrix in this way, which I discuss further in my concluding chapter.



In order to achieve these aims and objectives, I compiled the following list of research questions:

- What can we tell from the statements of groups, about their potential (or past) move to violence?
- What does the current literature tell us about the relationship between religion and violence and, more specifically, the sacred and violence?
- How do the findings from analysis of data developed through the matrix of markers build on and/or support the theoretical framework hypothesised for this project?
- What markers are there, within the context of the sacred, which are indicative of the move to violence?
- How can these markers be critically analysed and tested for adequacy? As a corollary to this question, what capabilities will the matrix of markers have for quantifying the violent potentialities of a group before violent actions are known to have occurred?
- Can these markers, capturing links between beliefs and violence, uncover informative data from non-violent groups, and if so what key factors are necessary (and are any sufficient) in the move to violence?

These research questions guided my approach to the topic, and the attainment of my aims. Numerous studies have analysed violence and religion, as well as the violent groups I chose to research for this project (Aum Shinrikyo, al Qaeda and the Red Army Faction).<sup>3</sup> There have also been attempts to uncover common sets of characteristics that identify the cause of a motivation to violence. This project differs from these previous studies in that it approaches the problem within a framework that posits the centrality of the sacred to society. It is within this framework that I am conducting a comparative study of these groups to map out the role of the sacred in the move to violence.

Whilst a clear conclusion of the thesis is that no one marker can be seen to represent a trigger for violent action, the matrix does demonstrate patterns of violent potentiality evident in the data. This thesis sets out the theoretical and practical framework for this tool, providing a clear evaluation of its uses and

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<sup>3</sup> As I argue in Chapter Seven, it is difficult, if not misleading, to label a group 'violent' or 'non-violent'. In this study, I use the label 'violent' to refer to groups known to have acted violently, and 'non-violent' to those that are not believed to have acted violently.

potential development for further use. The following chapters demonstrate how these aims are met, and it is to an overview of these that I now turn.

## **Chapter Outline**

### *Chapter Two - Methodology*

Chapter Two will introduce the methodology used in this research. The matrix will be outlined first, in order to give the reader an initial understanding of it, though it will be further developed later. The standpoint of the researcher will be defined, before moving onto the difficulties of collecting primary data. I will then address the strategies applied for the collection of the data; the choice of groups; and the process of analysis. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the markers and the function that they perform within the overall matrix.

### *Chapter Three – Key Themes*

The third chapter is broken down into two sections: the first addresses the current literature on terrorism, violence and religion and the second on society, religion and the sacred.

The first section will open with a discussion of the current literature on terrorism and violence, including the problematic place of religion within this field. From absence to over-emphasis, the concept of religion will be shown to be problematic and in need of more nuanced treatment. The second section will address this issue, starting with an explanation of the centrality of religion to a Durkheimian understanding of society. Exploring the themes of the sacred as developed in neo-Durkheimian thought through authors such as Robert Hertz and Georges Bataille, I will look at taboo and transgression, sacrifice and the central role of violence to these concepts, and will demonstrate their relevance to the present discussion. During this discussion the term 'religion' will also be problematised and the concept of the 'sacred' will be introduced as a means to bridging the perceived gap between religious and secular discourses.

This chapter unpacks the theoretical context of the matrix. Placing it within a discourse of modern society and the role of the sacred in violence, it provides the context for the analysis that follows.

#### *Chapter Four – Case study of Aum Shinrikyo*

The first of the case studies will focus on a new religious movement: Aum Shinrikyo (henceforth, Aum), the Japanese group that in a short space of time went from being a yoga class to, in 1995, a multi-million pound organisation that killed innocent civilians in a poison-gas attack on the Tokyo subway. The chapter will take the same format as the following two. The first part will comprise a case study, and in the second part I will apply the matrix of markers to the data, providing an analysis of the group and its move to violence.

In each of the case study chapters I will use the first part to explore key themes through the discussion of the history and development of the group and its actions. In the Aum chapter, I begin by focusing on Aum's responses to, and development of, violent actions, showing how beliefs can change in reaction to unintentional events as well as through strategic choices. I will then address some issues on the differences between leadership and followers, an important consideration as, just because certain leaders espouse violent beliefs it does not necessarily entail that all followers take the same position.

In each of the case study chapters a short conclusion will summarise the key points, which will be picked up again in Chapters Eight and Nine.

#### *Chapter Five – Case study of al Qaeda*

The fifth chapter will focus on al Qaeda. Within the context of al Qaeda the first part will also address themes relating to Islamism and the turn to violence in a global context. The second part of the chapter will focus on an analysis of the markers in relation to the data gathered during this case study.

The section on Islamism and the turn to violence will address some of the history and themes of the context of *violent* Islamist belief before and leading up to the creation of al Qaeda. The following section, focusing on diasporas and the turn to violence, looks at the spread of Islam into contemporary Europe and the issues that have led to support for al Qaeda from *small* numbers of Western Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

### *Chapter Six – Case study of the Red Army Faction*

The Red Army Faction, also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang (but hereafter abbreviated to RAF), provides a non-religious example against which to test the matrix. Whilst drawing out the context of the development and actions of the RAF, the first part of the chapter will focus on three different themes. The first is the application of the idea of the sacred to a non-religious group where, drawing on many of the theorists discussed in Chapter Three, I will demonstrate how these ideas can be applied in practice.

The second section looks at the turn from protest to violence, particularly within the context of 1960s West Germany, but also takes the opportunity to focus on the individual's turn to violence, as a contrast to the concentration of the thesis on beliefs at a group, not individual, level.

The third section addresses the role of revenge, a motif particularly apparent in the name of the RAF's commandos (the groups that carried out individual attacks). Following this, in the second part of the chapter, I undertake an analysis of the data.

### *Chapter Seven – Case studies on non-violent groups*

In order to properly test the matrix, I have also undertaken case studies into non-violent groups and these will be presented in this chapter. Unlike the other case study chapters, there will be three groups discussed: *Agonshu*, a Japanese religious group; *Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan*, an Islamist group in Central Asia; and the

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<sup>4</sup> As suggested in this paragraph, I make a distinction between Islamist belief and violent Islamist belief, as well as acknowledging that I am arguing from the exception, not the norm.



*Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee*, a grass-roots Civil Rights movement from the United States of America during the 1960s.

I chose these groups because they had similar contexts to the violent groups discussed previously. The selection process is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Two.

The first part of this chapter is divided into two sections, the first of which will provide a brief outline of the three groups in order to correctly set the context for the analysis of the text through the markers. The second section will examine how these groups fall within a broader discussion of the problems of labelling groups 'violent' or 'non-violent'.<sup>5</sup> After this section, I will concentrate on an analysis of the data. In this case the data arising from all three groups will be discussed together. The key points will be summarised in the conclusion and flagged up for discussion in the evaluation chapters, to which I now turn.

### *Chapter Eight – Evaluation of the themes*

There are two evaluation chapters, reflecting the dual objectives outlined above – the move to violence and the development of a model to investigate the sacred. Chapter Eight will build on the analysis undertaken in the case study chapters and discuss and evaluate the key themes emergent from them. The first part of the chapter will concentrate on the markers that had the most data coded into them and the range and differences of data coded in each case study.

The second part of the chapter will focus on the major themes that became apparent during the analysis of the markers. Specifically I will focus on the differences between religious and secular groups and the role of the sacred in highlighting those differences; the distinction between violence and non-violence and what we can learn from the data that the matrix generated; and finally I will address the theme of change over time – the move to violence – and how the matrix suggests we might be able to recognise violent potentialities in the beliefs of groups.

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<sup>5</sup> Indeed, I note that including some of these groups as 'non-violent' examples could be considered contentious and will also discuss these concerns.



## *Chapter Nine – Evaluation of the matrix*

This chapter provides an evaluation of the model I set out in Chapter Two – the matrix. It is divided into two parts. The first part evaluates and discusses all of the markers. It presents a summary of the data coded into them as well as an assessment of their function within the overall matrix (for example, whether they highlighted useful information and how these findings related to those coming out of other markers), for this study and for future applications.

The second part of the chapter addresses some broader reflections regarding the application of the matrix, including issues around the interpretation of the data; the nature of the source material the matrix was reliant on; the coding process, including the selection and use of the markers and concluding with some comments about the validity of generalising from the matrix.

## *Chapter Ten – Conclusion*

Drawing together the key points, both from the discussion around the move to violence and the functionality of the matrix, this chapter examines how these answer the aims of this project and contribute to the present academic debate. I also set out some policy recommendations based on my findings.

I then build upon the discussion about the usefulness of the matrix, and suggest future avenues for research and how this model can be applied beyond this particular topic.

## *Bibliography*

The bibliography is divided into two parts. The first half is a standard list of references for the sources used and quoted in this research. The second half is a table that lists all the primary sources which had been coded into the markers.

## 2. Methods and Methodology

### Introduction

This chapter explores the issues around developing a suitable methodology for supporting the model introduced in the opening chapter. In this chapter I will discuss the process by which I collated and analysed the data from the case studies. After this I will set out the methodological approach and then the matrix which I am applying to my case studies. I will then deal with my standpoint as the researcher before moving onto address the data for this study, including problems with gathering it, how I selected the groups and collected and analysed the data. In the final section I will introduce the markers that make up the matrix, discussing what kinds of data they generate and their function within the overall matrix.

### Methodological Approach

The methodological approach I undertook was qualitative in nature. There are several reasons for this. First, qualitative approaches are the most conducive to the social realist paradigm within which I am situating this study, which I outline in greater detail later on. There are also important issues about the collection of source material and its translation, which would affect the reliability of quantitative approaches. I discuss issues about translation later on.

The issues about collection of material and translation would have affected approaches such as quantitative content analysis. Defined by Neuendorf (2002: 1) as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics”, this method provides the researcher with a quantifiable and statistically valid means of analysing text-based (and other mediums, such as audio and visual) messages for characteristics that could shed light on the research questions.

This method can provide sound data (if used correctly) and is replicable by other researchers. It is also a popular and valid means of analysing text. However, because of the nature of the source material in this research (much of which is translated, and by different linguists), it was not necessarily appropriate. Applied in a strictly quantifiable manner such a method would be hindered by the differing translation strategies employed in my source material.

The quantity of source material I was able to collect also varied significantly for each case study, with, for example, significantly more material available for the al Qaeda case study than there was for the Agonshu case study. Where I have provided some quantitative summaries of data I have accounted for the differing amounts of data collected. However, coupled with the translation issues, these differences suggested that providing a quantitative content analysis of the texts would be problematic.

Whilst a limited quantitative analysis has proved helpful – for example if a lot of data is captured by a marker which suggests that there is something of interest to investigate there – the fact is that the opposite of this example does not necessarily hold true (as seen in the discussion of the *External Legitimizing Authority* marker in Chapter Nine). My qualitative approach has meant that I could provide a sufficiently rich analysis of the data and so only where these summaries prove helpful have I provided limited quantitative discussions to supply the reader with an indicator of what the markers captured.

The above explanation should not serve to denigrate the usefulness of a qualitative analysis, which has strong merits in its own right. The nature of the matrix focuses the attention of the researcher to consider both the broader context of the statement around the coded-text which differing markers captured, as well as the wider historical, socio-cultural context that the group operated within. This leads to a richness in the analysis that, whilst allowing for comparisons of particular elements of the groups, also ensures that these comparisons are made within the bigger picture of their fields of operation. This richness is a benefit of the qualitative approach, which connects meanings and contexts, and, while Mason (2002: 1) acknowledges that some critics of the approach suggest that it provides at best anecdotal knowledge, she also counters that such arguments tend to overlook the importance of context and the development of knowledge in any explanation of

social life. These latter points are important to my approach and are strongly evidenced throughout the case studies.

Bruce (2009) is one of the authors who raise concerns with the validity of producing generalised conclusions from qualitative research (see also Bryman, 2004: 284-5). I disagree, but instead state that such conclusions must have caveats attached.

In using the matrix, I have applied a model that has a transparent methodology, and provides all the information which future researchers would require to assess the validity of my conclusions. This addresses one common concern (Bryman, 2004: 284-5; Bryman and Burgess, 1994b). Furthermore, I have been careful to make what Williams (2000) refers to as "*moderatum* generalisations", whereby my observations "can be seen to be instances of a broader set of recognisable features" (215). These qualified generalisations do not belie a lack of confidence in my conclusions, but rather takes the sensible step of admitting that this field is a complex one, rarely helped by simplistic and narrow theorising.

Mason (2002: 7-8) provides some useful statements about what she believes qualitative research should be, which I have summarised here. It should be:

- systematically and rigorously conducted;
- accountable for its quality and claims;
- strategically conducted, yet flexible and contextual;
- involve active reflexivity on the part of the researcher;
- produce explanations or arguments which are generalisable;
- demonstrate awareness and understanding of other methodological approaches;
- and be conducted within and with awareness to its political context.

Throughout this research I have endeavoured to meet these criteria and I will show in this chapter how I achieved this, starting with an explanation of the matrix that is central to this project.



## Research Model – the Matrix

The model suggested by this research is the collation of data relating to a specific group (defined as a cohesive network of beliefs) into a neo-Durkheimian theoretical framework,<sup>6</sup> from which will be derived a matrix of factors demarcating the violent potentiality of the group. In this sense the matrix is both part of the model and the attendant research process, and also an outcome of it.

The matrix forms *part* of the model in a structural capacity. It is delineated by a set of markers that is used to classify the data according to their relevance to the research problem; understanding the move to violence. The matrix, in its final arrangement (the *outcome*), provides a demarcation of the factors involved in this move.

However, the matrix is also procedural because the markers need to undergo constant evaluation and revision in the light of the available data. This is necessary to ensure that they are relevant to the topic being researched and valid in terms of the explanatory requirements placed upon them. In light of this, when I talk of the final arrangement of the matrix I say ‘final’ only as delimited by the bounds of this project; this iterative process is central to the methodological approach I am taking and indeed there is potential scope for further development of the matrix in future evaluations of data about the same or other relevant groups.

Further components of the model in addition to the structural/procedural matrix are the theoretical framework, discussed in Chapter Three, and finally the process by which the data is selected. Together these components help to answer both of the central aims of the project, understanding the role of the sacred in the move to violence, and the related research questions that were set out in Chapter One. By means of my choice of groups I also explore questions that follow on from the central aims, such as if the matrix could be falsifiable by finding groups with the same markers, but no violent tendencies.

The matrix is, then, both a method and a form of analysis. By systematically applying the model to data it allows the researcher to repeat the analysis on

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<sup>6</sup> Set out in greater depth in Chapter Three.



multiple groups, as well as other researchers to clearly understand what steps were undertaken. As an analytical tool that utilises a particular understanding of the sacred it enables a systematic approach to these different topics. However, there is flexibility through the iterative development of markers, and the variation of individual researchers' assessments as to how statements should be coded into these markers.

The issue about replication between researchers, even on the same topic, needs to be addressed. Whilst it is possible to reduce variations in coding decisions through clear definitions of markers (as I have undertaken, see Appendix One) and through example coding, it is clear that there can still be differences. One method to highlight differences is to compare coding across the same documents. This can be done physically through comparisons of coded texts or, over a greater number of texts and researchers, can be achieved through tools such as NVivo's coding comparison report.<sup>7</sup> This report calculates a Kappa coefficient for inter- (or intra-) coder reliability by comparing the number of similarly and differently coded passages (of text or other units) with the probability that these similarities/differences would have occurred randomly (Van Haaster, 2008). Tools such as these enable researchers to compare coding consistency. However, it is also worth pointing out that differences between coding approaches are not necessarily a problem, as they can open up new lines of enquiry, and as long as these differences are explored and explained they can add value to the research.

The application and output of the matrix will become more apparent to the reader through the rest of this chapter, but at this stage it is perhaps useful to visualise the matrix. The output (and completed matrix) is a textual document with data, taken from the statements of groups, coded into markers that highlight significant areas of the group's beliefs. The coded data within these markers is then further analysed and samples are presented in the final output, accompanied by explanations of the significance of the themes that they represent. As is suggested above, this document must be placed within a broader contextual study of the group in question, to ensure that the matrix is applied in a contextually sensitive and accurate manner. The reader will find this model set out and repeated in each of the case study chapters, which are each applications of the matrix.

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<sup>7</sup> NVivo 7 and, later, NVivo 8 were the software applications that I used to code my data. They are qualitative data analysis software provided by QSR International.

## Reflexivity

In the course of this project I utilised qualitative methods of investigation. However, owing to the epistemological ramifications of taking this approach I was also aware both of the social reality that informs my world view, and those of the groups whose beliefs I analysed.

From the viewpoint of social realism it appears impossible to participate in any study of society or the social from a completely disinterested position. Rather than abandon all hope here, my aim was to proceed whilst demonstrating awareness of the cultural influences directing my own views, and those of the groups I studied. In this reflexive path I took heart from Hufford's (1999: 296) statement that:

We must learn to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity, while holding the reduction of uncertainty and ambiguity in our knowledge as primary goals (always sought, never completely achieved.) That is not a contradiction or a paradox. It is a fact of life. *Certainty is a direction, not a goal.* [Emphasis mine]

The goal of this project is the intention to locate the motivation within a group's move to violence. In seeking this, I established the correlated hypotheses that the move to violence may be found within the beliefs of the group (labelled by the markers I established at the beginning of the research and developed throughout). In so doing I conducted a deductive study, precipitated by a preliminary list of markers and a theoretical model within which to place them. These deductive hypotheses would not have been seen to have rigorous justifiability if I did not undertake some form of falsification of its central proposition. It is for this reason that I have tested these markers against groups which could reasonably be asserted to have characteristics in common with those examined in the case studies, excepting that these additional examples were not, at the point in time examined, known as violent groups. In Chapter Seven I discuss some of the problems in labelling a group 'non-violent', but these issues aside, these groups provide further data to both develop and challenge the matrix.

## Nature of the Problem and the Data Available

The original aim of this research was to understand the role of belief in religiously-motivated violence. Through development of the theoretical framework for the matrix (as mentioned in the previous chapter and developed in the following one), I modified this aim to understanding the move to violence in the beliefs of religious and non-religious groups. The intended outcome remained the same, a series of markers which can be used to demonstrate the potentiality for violent action within a particular group, with the additional outcome of a model – the matrix – which can be used to explore the presence of the sacred in society. In order to ensure a valid focus on the role of belief, I chose groups from both sides of the commonly understood religious/secular divide. The ‘violent’ groups in question have all committed acts of violence which fall within a common conception of terrorism (namely, they caused terror within the intended targets and /or the wider community – although this definition is by no means accepted within the field of terrorism studies, wherein many studies of organised violence are found).

However, the parameters for choosing these groups presented a number of obstacles to sourcing accurate data. Most obvious was the legal status of the groups in question. By committing acts of violence these groups all placed themselves in violation of the laws of the states they operated within. This makes contact with those involved in the violence difficult as they are either subject to, or avoiding, incarceration. In the case of the Red Army Faction, the group had disbanded. Whilst the group was no longer active, I could have reasonably expected a similar reaction to efforts to contact any former members as I got when I tried to contact Aleph (the successor group to Aum Shinrikyo) who did not acknowledge my attempts to make contact.

Given the difficulty in obtaining my own primary data I turned to other sources, and on this front at least there was more readily accessible information. There are difficulties associated both with the use of this data and in ensuring that what I extracted from the study was valid and could be applied in a meaningful fashion, and I will address these difficulties as I assess the types of data available below.



### *Types of data available*

The primary source of data for this project was textual, mostly in the form of translated statements made by the groups. However, I considered a number of other channels for obtaining data which, although not successful, are worth mentioning.

One potential source of data I looked at was biographies. However, these were generally the result of commercial endeavours to cash in on the terrorism phenomenon, ranging from the tenuous (e.g. bin Ladin, 2004) to well-written but still not first-hand accounts (e.g. Moussaoui, 2003).

Meeting with those involved with violent attacks could also have been a valuable avenue for obtaining further data, though the most probable means to arranging this would be through the prison service. Previous research (Knott and Francis, 2004) in prisons has suggested that should access be granted then prisoners are often agreeable to being interviewed.<sup>8</sup> This may be due to the break in routine and also for their views/experiences to be heard by someone from outside 'the system'. However, this research was not carried out in a high security prison with high-profile prisoners convicted of acts against the State. In these cases such prisoners could well be suspicious of the motives of the interviewer and it would in any case have been difficult to imagine there being the time to build up a relationship of trust to surmount this issue. An initial approach to the British Home Office, made when planning this project, was unsuccessful and so this avenue of data collection was not available. In addition, even for non-incarcerated participants of violent groups, the identity and location of these people is difficult to find out.

The likely size of any such cohort would have been unable, on their own, to yield results with any statistical validity, given the probable numbers of known and available respondents versus those known and unavailable. That said, the matrix could be applied to any data obtained through these methods and future research could always, potentially, succeed in this aim.

Another important consideration in all of the above discussions was how to gather information on beliefs from any of the different methods. In talking about 'beliefs'

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<sup>8</sup> This report was also reproduced in part in Home Office Faith Communities Unit, 2004.



in this study, I needed to be sure of what I could get information on. The first problem is that a belief is an internal propositional attitude that, as a researcher, I would not have first-hand access to. I follow a commonsense theory of psychology that we can indeed ascribe beliefs to each other, such that beliefs can be seen to influence actions (see Tye (2001) and Segal (2001) for concise summaries of a large volume of literature on the subject). As evidence for these beliefs, I looked for statements that either directly claimed a belief about a subject/object or that suggested propositional attitudes towards such things (people, ideas, places, etc.)

In this study, I have focused on groups rather than individuals, partly because the belief-structures of groups are seen to create a framework of values within which individuals make decisions to act, and also because in these cases the evidence for beliefs is arguably clearer. Aside from clear statements setting out propositional beliefs about certain situations, places, ideas and values I have also delineated beliefs through references to myths, symbols, rituals as well as implied values. In doing so, I have utilised indicators of belief that are found within the Durkheimian traditions that I explore in the following Chapter.

## **Data Collection**

### *Choice of groups*

History is full of groups which have acted violently and there are numerous examples still extant. Narrowing down the choices for this study was important in order to ensure that the project was viable. In order to apply the matrix to the broadest possible examples, I selected the violent groups from clearly different cultural and religious backgrounds.

The studies of these groups are snapshots in time as, at the moment at which I gathered the sources and applied the matrix to them, I was taking the data out of the ongoing development of the much broader society of which they were all a part. For example, the Red Army Faction was a reaction in part to Nazi Germany (Varon, 2004: 34), which was in itself a reaction to the Weimar Republic, and so on. Therefore, when I talk about the move to violence I am not suggesting that these groups are necessarily the end-point within the constant evolution of their

particular society, nor indeed of the more specific movements of which they may form a part (for example the 1960s student protest movements). In addition, I am not saying that there could not also be a move from violence to peaceful action, and even back to violence again.

In choosing these groups I have, therefore, also had to make some decisions about where, for the purposes of this study, the groups start and finish. These decisions are detailed in the case studies, and briefly summarised in the following discussion.

### *Aum Shinrikyo*

Aum Shinrikyo (hereafter referred to as 'Aum') was chosen for a case study because it provides a non-Abrahamic religion to assess the matrix against. Frequently the debate around religious violence is framed within a discourse limited to Islamic identity and if the model proposed in this study is valid it needs to have explanatory power beyond this narrower discourse. Aum is also an example *par excellence* of a group which experienced this move to violence. In addition, it has been the subject of a number of studies, notable amongst them those by Ian Reader (1996; 2000), but also by other authors, ensuring that there is a suitable discussion from which to learn and against which to contrast my findings.

The problem about how to obtain useful data for such case studies is neatly demonstrated in this instance, as unsurprisingly a large proportion of works by and about Aum are written in Japanese and few are translated into English (Susumu Shimazono<sup>9</sup> (1995) is a rare example). Some works written by Shoko Asahara / Aum Shinrikyo have been translated into English, though Ian Reader (2008) questions the quality of some of these translations.<sup>10</sup> However, at least the

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<sup>9</sup> This thesis was not written for a specialist language audience so, where I have included foreign names or words, I have not used diacritical marks and I use Western naming conventions. This is particularly apparent in the Japanese cases where family names are normally followed by given names, for example Asahara Shōkō becomes, in this thesis, Shoko Asahara (given name / family name). This ensures uniformity throughout the thesis, which deals with groups operating in several different languages.

<sup>10</sup> Reader, 2008, is listed in the bibliography and refers to private email correspondence following a request made to him for advice regarding source materials on Aum in the U.K. and Japan. The difficulty in ascribing authorship to some Aum works is also alluded to by Reader (2000: xv). Whilst Asahara is named on the front of the book, ascription of authorship with the publication details often refers to an Aum editorial committee or similar group. All the Aum books in this study reflect this discrepancy. However, given

translations were countenanced by Aum itself and so, whilst the published results may not display the best English, they are the most authentic representation of Aum's beliefs available to this study, as they have not been through any other editorial processes. These works contained many statements by Asahara and also some short auto-biographical statements by members of Aum.

For the purposes of this study, I made a distinction between Aum Shinrikyo prior to the Tokyo Subway gas attacks in March 1995, and after. The majority of the data refers to the pre-gas attack period and this is the focus of the case study in Chapter Four. However, I also collected some data from after this period, as a means to concentrate the matrix on the issue of the transition from, as well as to, violence. Some further reference to this distinction is made in Chapter Four, and the comparison of the data is discussed in Chapter Eight. To simplify the text that follows, AUMa refers to the period up to and including the gas-attacks and AUMb refers to Aum Shinrikyo (and Aleph, as it was later re-named) after the attacks. Appendix Two lists these labels and the divisions to which they apply, for all the groups.

The material for the AUMb data came from two sources. The first was a collection of interviews in Haruki Murakami's (2000) *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, in the second half of which he interviewed former and current members of Aum Shinrikyo. The process of finding willing interviewees was difficult and the nature of Murakami's involvement in the interviews problematic. However, whilst he did play an active role in the interviews – debating points or ensuring the conversation was kept on track – he does acknowledge that he is not an expert of religion, and does not try to be so in the interviews. He also allowed the interviewees to view the transcripts of the interviews (each three to four hours in length) and they were allowed to remove or add material before he then proceeded with publication. As such there are obvious issues with the data in that it only contains the views that the interviewee is happy with the reader seeing, and has therefore been through at least two editing processes. However, as Murakami (2000: 213-216) openly describes the above procedure in his preface before the interviews, we are at least allowed some

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that the majority of the statements in the books are made by Asahara I have attributed the books to him in the bibliography



understanding of this process, and are able to frame our understandings of the limitations of the data accordingly.

The second source of material for AUMb was found in a couple of documentaries, by Tatsuya Mori, *A* (1998) and *A2* (2001). These were the only non-textual sources I used in this case study. This led to a different approach to coding the data, which is discussed below. The interviewer (Mori) lived with Aum Shinrikyo as it struggled with the immense political, financial and media fall-out following the gas attacks. As such he had unprecedented access to the group and its members which, given the failure of my own approaches to Aleph (as it had become by the time of Mori's second film), was an excellent source of material. However, within this I was also aware of the mediating influence of Mori as director, interviewer and cameraman. This simple production approach perhaps lessened the obstructive influence of the filming process, but it is also clear that Mori's personal stance, very much in opposition to the mainstream media's vilification of all Aum members, is stamped firmly on the films.

While the material for the AUMa study was located primarily in the U.K., I did also follow this up with searches in Japanese libraries during a short period spent living in Tokyo. It was during this time that I attempted contact with Aleph and also discovered the Mori documentaries. The library research in Japan also contributed some further secondary material which contributed to the understanding of the background to Aum (e.g. Shimazono, 1995 and Kisala, 1998).

### *Al Qaeda*

Al Qaeda was chosen because of its relevance to much of the contemporary discussion on religious violence. However, it is different to the other two violent groups in that it might be better described as a network, or even recruitment drive. Each of the three groups represent different kinds of affiliation, but al Qaeda's is arguably the weakest, with differing members often alleged never to have met, operating instead as autonomous cells (Congress subcommittee, 2004: 1-2).

However, from my research there is definitely something sufficiently tangible to be recognised as a group, even if it has morphed through several different



incarnations, and as such I track its inception from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan up to the present day. Representative of an ideologically motivated membership spanning international boundaries, it finds its roots in anti-colonialist rhetoric during the time of the British Raj, right through to the complaints of disenfranchised youth in modern multi-cultural Europe (Roy, 1994). That said, I must stress that, as with the Red Army Faction later on, the ideas and themes that spokespeople for al Qaeda have chosen to highlight out of their religious and historical heritage are by no means representative of the much broader and richer history of these movements as a whole.

The data came from a number of translated sources, principally during library research undertaken during an Arts and Humanities Research Council scholarship at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. In addition to much secondary literature contributing to my study for the context of al Qaeda, I also used this time to work on the main sources of materials for this study, principal amongst them: Raymond Ibrahim's (2007) *The al Qaeda Reader*, Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli's (2008) *Al Qaeda in its own words* and Bruce Lawrence's (2005) *Messages to the World*. Where statements were repeated amongst these sources I was able to compare particular translators works and to be more aware of potential deficiencies. This process meant that I did exclude some other sources.

Whilst at the Library of Congress I also managed to access a recruitment video purportedly produced by al Qaeda (2001a) and complete with its own translation. As with the audio-visual source for the Aum case study, this led to a slightly different approach to the coding process, but was nevertheless an excellent and unmediated source of al Qaeda statements.

Because of the high-profile actions of al Qaeda across a number of different borders, the focus on them has been much greater than that on Aum Shinrikyo ever was. Therefore, there was a much greater pool of sources from which to draw the material for this study.

### *Red Army Faction*

The Red Army Faction (hereafter referred to as the 'RAF'), also known somewhat disingenuously as the Baader-Meinhof Gang (after its two highest profile founding members, Andreas Baader and the journalist Ulrike Meinhof), started life in 1970 and undertook a number of bank robberies and bomb attacks against U.S. army installations and other prominent targets. As with al Qaeda they were part of a wider movement, in this case the student movement of the 1960s and 1970s that was anti-capitalist, anti-industrialist and anti-U.S.

The RAF was chosen as a non-religious example for the application of the matrix. In this way I could test the hypothesis that sacred boundaries apply in both secular and religious groups. It went through several distinct incarnations, which meant that it was a good example through which to track the development of beliefs. The case study on the RAF, therefore, sorts the data into four time periods: before the group formed (this period is labelled pRAF) and each of its three generations (labelled RAF1, RAF2 and RAF3).

The material for the pRAF stage came from the columns of Ulrike Meinhof in the leftist publication *Konkret* which, for a time, was a popular mouthpiece for the movement out of which the RAF developed. The material for the RAF1-3 stages came from translations undertaken by sources broadly sympathetic to the aims of the RAF. These were found in Moncourt and Smith's (2009) *The Red Army Faction, a Documentary History* and internet archives, Moncourt and Smith (2010) and Agustin (2010). The translators were clear about the areas and limitations of their sympathy and the translation process was also discussed. There was further material available, but I did not select it as the translation was of poor quality.

### *Non-violent groups*

One of the issues facing case study based research is the question of its validity within the wider population (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster, 2000: 98; Haralambos and Holborn, 2004: 898). To test the credibility of the matrix in its aim to highlight violent potentialities within groups, I also selected several groups which displayed similar characteristics or came from comparable contextual

backgrounds to the groups selected for the three case studies, but which had not, at that point, acted violently.

Selecting good examples to contrast with the violent groups was difficult, but the following groups were the best available choices. The groups are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, I have only summarised the reasons for selecting them below.

In comparison to Aum Shinrikyo, I chose Agonshu. This group is another new religious movement from Japan, marginally older than Aum. There was some overlap in their beliefs and aims, which is not surprising considering that Shoko Asahara, the founder of Aum, had previously been a member of Agonshu. As with Aum, English translations of their works were hard to come by. The majority of the material comes from their website (Agonshu, 2002) and secondary studies which I researched during my time in Japan.

In comparison to al Qaeda, I chose Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (hereafter, UHiT). This group was based in Central Asia, and indeed had contacts with the Taliban in neighbouring Afghanistan at the time that they were hosting al Qaeda (Karagiannis, 2006: 271). It is also part of a global organisation, but for the purposes of this study I concentrated my research on material coming from Uzbekistan, which allowed for a more concise examination. In addition, whilst there have been questions about whether Hizb ut-Tahrir internationally is a non-violent organisation (e.g. Baran, 2004), studies into the Uzbekistan branch strongly suggest that it is (e.g. Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006), and so UHiT provided a useful comparison in this regard.

The search for a contrasting group to the RAF was much harder, as it was difficult to find a well-defined group, within the broader student protest movement of the 1960/70s in West Germany that was non-violent. I chose the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (hereafter referred to as SNCC) as it came from a similar epoch as the RAF, and was also involved in a struggle to challenge the nature of important social institutions of the day including the government of its own country.



## *Gathering the sources*

There were many other groups that could also have been studied. I discussed above why I chose the groups I did, but serendipity also played a role. Available material, and more importantly available translated material, was at a premium for many groups. Therefore, whilst I made conscious decisions as to what kinds of groups I wanted to include in the study, the final results were influenced by how much material I could gather on those groups.

The primary method for gathering these sources was library-based research. Through searches in university libraries (Leeds, SOAS, LSE) and national libraries (British Library, Library of Congress) I identified primary sources as well as locating further primary material through secondary studies into groups. In one case, the relative amounts of material led to me changing which group to study, from the Animal Liberation Front to the Red Army Faction. Both were violent secular organisations, but I could not find sufficient material on the former.

## **Data Analysis**

### *Methodological strategies*

My primary method for analysing the data was qualitative content analysis of the source material. This could have taken many forms, for example, analysing the meaning in the text (semiotic analysis) or the structure and style of speech (rhetoric analysis). To break down how this method was useful to me it is also helpful to consider discourse analysis and documentary analysis and what they can contribute to the process.

Discourse analysis is described by Mason (2002: 57) as “an analysis of the ways in which discourses – which can be read in texts and talk – constitute the social world.” We can understand this better by looking at an example. O’Halloran (2003) looks at the influence culture can have on the meaning in texts, and is specifically interested in the de-mystification of news texts. His work in itself is a useful insight into how critical discourse analysis works and suggests some applicable lines of enquiry for this project. For example, in accessing examples of primary



texts, such as those published by Aum Shinrikyo, it is important to consider the impact of the cultural influence of Aum on the text and therefore on the information retrieved. Additionally, the analysis undertaken by Chilton (2004: 174-193) provides direct evidence of how this approach can enrich the data, in this case on speeches by Osama Bin Laden and George W Bush.

Documentary analysis develops this approach by seeking the characteristics of meaning within the text. Within this study I focused primarily on documentary analysis of textual sources. Whilst this approach is generally suggested where the documents under study are generated by the researchers themselves (for example, in Hodson's (1999) account of this method in which he deals mainly with ethnographic sources) it is still a useful addition to the set of tools utilised in this project. For example, documentary analysis in this research required an understanding of the contexts in which the material was collected, sorted and analysed, as well as the reasons for this process, the intended audience and indeed a contextual sensitivity to my approach to the texts.

Undertaking this process in a consistent and structured approach was necessary to ensure the reliability of the findings. This will be addressed later, but at this stage I will summarise how this approach contributed to my research. The translated collections of texts had already been compiled with ontologies, research strategies, political biases and aims that were not necessarily synonymous with my own project, and the primary texts had been created on the basis of deliberate strategic decisions. Qualitative methods of analysis were essential to unpack how these influences impacted upon the material I had collected. Understanding discourses within the texts and applying a hermeneutic analysis of the frames of reference in the production of them helped further clarify the data I was interested in and how to extract it in a meaningful fashion.

### *Issues of translation*

As mentioned, the nature of my data collection meant that there were a number of influences brought to my source material that I could not control. The range of languages used in the original texts, including Arabic, German, Japanese and Uzbek, none of which I read fluently, meant that I was reliant on a number of

different translators who utilised differing terminologies and master narratives. For example, Kepel and Milelli's (2008) collection of al Qaeda statements was translated from the Arabic into the French by Jean-Pierre Milelli and from the French to the English by Pascale Ghazaleh. As expected in a scholarly work, they both left statements as to their techniques, which is how I know that it is Ghazaleh who substituted 'God' for 'Allah' and removed "many of the repeated pious invocations" (Kepel and Milelli, 2008: xiii – xiv). Ibrahim (2007: xvii), however, states that 'Allah' is a real name, as well as referring to 'the Deity' and so he retains its use.

These differences represent a wider issue in translation studies, which is that there is no neutral method of translation (Müller, 2007). Müller (2007) argues that translation involves the collapse of meaning in the source language and its reconstruction in the target language. We see this in the choice of the translators in Lawrence (2005: ix), Kepel and Milelli (2008: xiii – xiv) and Ibrahim (2007: xvi) to remove phrases such as 'Peace be Upon Him', 'Allah be pleased with him' and so on, from the translated texts. Decisions such as these have ethical and epistemological implications (Temple, 2005), as Ibrahim (2007: xvi) notes when he points out that in this case this removes some of the inherent religiousness of the text.

Temple (1997) argues that one way to surmount this process is to involve the researcher in a conversation with the translator, so that the meanings and contexts of the decisions made and words used are better understood. In my case, as I did not commission these works myself, this was not possible. However, I have used works where there is some awareness (and statement of) the translator's impact and have avoided others. For example, I rejected Laura Mansfield's (2006) translations of some of al Zawahiri's statements, as her impact, and lack of awareness of it, on her translations is unclear.

I compared translations of the same material where possible and used this comparison to make judgements as to the validity of some sources. In working from a variety of sources I also sought to minimise the effect of any one translator's influence on the data. These strategies, whilst not perfect, at least attempted to ensure that I did not assume the translation to be a value-neutral and concept-free process (Müller: 207; 211) and that I was alert to its potential impact on my work.

## *Coding*

Coding was accomplished through the use of the qualitative data analysis software, NVivo. I entered the preliminary list of markers (as outlined in the previous chapter) as codes and the source material as text documents and then proceeded to use the software to analyse the documents. I kept memos (within NVivo) of interesting or pertinent points and where these became more significant themes I created new codes. At times I also created 'tree-codes' whereby new categories were added to capture nuances within the main markers.

As major new codes or amendments were solidified I would re-work back through all the previously coded material and re-analyse it in the light of the new codes. An example of how this led to the amendment of some of the markers is given in Figure 9.1 and the accompanying discussion in Chapter Nine. This iterative approach ensured that I applied a relevant set of markers to the analysis in the most consistent manner possible.

The use of NVivo made this process of coding and re-coding less onerous than it might otherwise have been, and I was able to use additional features to aid in the analysis. For example, I kept research journal notes (within NVivo) in order to ensure the work was undertaken in a logical and consistent manner. I was able to store characteristics of the source materials, which enabled me to later produce reports that separated the material by each case study, group and particular details of the group, including who authored the source (where known) the date it was produced, the generation of the group it was produced by (in the case of the RAF and Aum) and so on. The benefit of these approaches was that I was able to more swiftly undertake a comparative analysis of a number of different criteria.

On some occasions, where I felt that such analysis elucidated a point I was making, I also used some more quantitative tools within NVivo, such as word counts, to demonstrate the strength of particular themes (e.g. Table 5.1). However, my main focus remained the in-depth discussion, by marker, of the data. My distinction between 'source material' and 'data' is made through the above coding process,



whereby the data is generated through application of the matrix to the source material.

When coding the source material into the markers I took into account the context of the overall message and the particular sentences and words used. I took the same care when analysing the data in the case studies, when I looked at all the data captured by a particular marker and subjected it to further analysis to determine any further themes. This context-sensitive approach should allay potential concerns about coding in qualitative methodologies leading to text being taken out of context (Bryman, 2004: 411) and also allow for the connexions between data and theory to be explored.

The above discussion focuses very much on how I coded the textual data but, as mentioned above, I did also code three audio-visual sources. I think that using audio-visual sources is as valid as textual, and indeed a strength of the matrix is that it is equally applicable to both formats. However, there were some additional issues to take into account when coding the audio-visual material.

In NVivo 8, I was able to add audio-visual material as source material for coding. I transcribed relevant sections of the material (both came with English subtitles, the al Qaeda material of mixed quality in terms of spelling) and I could then apply my codes to both the source video and also to the transcript. When listening to statements in the films, I was also able to directly view some of the background material, which was another source of rich data and which I also captured in the transcripts. For example, I captured non-verbal data, such as the presence of many pictures of Asahara in the Aum Shinrikyo/Aleph prayer rooms, even after the presence of these images in this kind of usage was made illegal.

Capturing the statements made in these films (where they were directly important to one of the markers) as well as non-verbal data meant that in some cases I was able to capture much more data than I could from a similar length of text from a book, for example. As with all the coded data, references are provided to the source material where it is discussed in my analysis, and for the audio-visual sources I used time-lines.



Before I move onto the markers, I need to explain how I have referenced the data. Many of the texts were authored anonymously or collectively and therefore using the Harvard system to cite them would have led to a bewildering array of 'Anon' sources. Therefore, in the text I have used abbreviations of the group's names and numbered all the coded sources consecutively. A table showing these sources follows the standard bibliographic list in the Bibliography. As an example, ALQ69 refers to the document titled 'Messages to the People of Iraq I' which can be found in Raymond Ibrahim's (2007) *The al Qaeda Reader*, pages 242-249. Where author information is known this is also listed in the table. Where the source statement is longer than one page, the page number for a particular quotation is included in the in-text citation as per usual.

## The Markers

The initial list of markers was highlighted in the previous chapter, but in this section I focus on the list as it stood at the end of my period of research. As mentioned above, the process of developing this list was an iterative, ongoing development and I do not claim that the current list is set in stone. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter Nine, I would expect that some markers would be changed and others developed as the matrix is applied to new subjects and projects.

There is a list of the markers provided in Appendix One, with the titles (for example, *Basic Injustice*), their abbreviations (for example, *BI*), both of which are used throughout the text, and short definitions (for example, "A sense of some basic injustice, which is non-accidental, i.e. it expresses the core values, true nature of society and is irredeemable, and which reinforces the sense of opposition/dichotomy – 'clash of worlds'"). The markers are listed alphabetically. This Appendix is provided for ease of reference. The following section expands on this list by adding further explanations of the kinds of information the markers are intended to capture and how they relate to the overall matrix.

### *Against Violence*

Actual statement renouncing violence.

All of the markers are applied to all of the groups. However, I recognised during the study that whilst many of the markers would pick up on themes overtly supportive of, or referencing, violent beliefs I did not have a simple marker for capturing the opposite. Therefore, this marker was included purely for the purpose of capturing any statements renouncing or denouncing violence.

### *Basic injustice*

A sense of some basic injustice, which is non-accidental (i.e., it expresses the core values, true nature of society and is irredeemable), and which reinforces the sense of opposition/dichotomy – ‘clash of worlds’.

Many of the markers deal with themes that are closely inter-linked, as one would expect. The values and beliefs captured by this marker are echoed in the *Dichotomous World View* as well as the *Violent Traditions* marker. In the case of the *Basic Injustice* marker, I am particularly interested in drawing out and examining the motif of injustice within the group’s beliefs.

In some cases this sense of injustice may well have been brewing for many years. Lewis (2003) draws attention to major fault-lines between Islam and the West over thirteen centuries of Islamic history. Esposito (2002) refers to the struggle of Islam with modernity and considers the political and economic causes of the current unrest in Islamic societies.

Perceptions of difference can also be reinforced through the media. For example, the influence of negative language referring to Islam in the British media could, for the British Islamic diaspora, confirm negative feelings about the treatment of Islamic culture by the West. Baker (2010) looks at how Islam is represented in the British press as does Poole (2002), who investigates the homogenisation of an Islamic identity separate from a British national identity, a process which creates an environment where British Muslims are placed in a negative category of ‘other’ within public discourses. In Chapter Four, on Aum Shinrikyo, I mention similar negativity from the Japanese media towards Aum, and how this can be seen to lead to greater perceived differences, along the lines of values and beliefs.

### *Context of Group's Internal Development*

Evidence of confrontation within the development of the group, either accidental or intentional.

After I included the marker *Context of Group's Origins/Development* I saw a need to distinguish between internal and external contexts. Whilst the following marker concentrates on the host society the group is based within, this marker explores themes particular to the group. This captures everything from internal debates, and differences regarding leadership styles to the development of ascetic practices that legitimated violence (for example, in Chapter Four I note how the death of a renunciate within Aum led to a change in doctrine ('*poa*')). As this case illustrates, it is important to note that this marker can focus on the considered response to accidental, as much as intentional, events.

### *Context of Group's Origins/Development*

Evidence of confrontation within the wider society within which the group originated and with which it interacted.

Whilst the *Basic Injustice* and *Violent Traditions* markers also capture external influences, this marker specifically focuses on the context of the group's origins and or development. For example, Huntington (2002: 263) refers to the violent origins of Islam from Bedouin tribes, and within the case study on Aum I made reference to several confrontations with authorities. This data doesn't have to be about violence, but in this study I have used it within the context of looking for potential sources of violent action.

For example, Aum was founded within the context of a Japanese society that has numerous groups vying for the attention of potential members (Bocking, 1989) and so its nature could easily have developed from competitive to confrontational in order to survive the exceptionally crowded religious marketplace.

### *Conviction*

A deep and incontestable sense of conviction.

It seems reasonably logical to assume that a believer undertaking a task such as suicide bombing requires a more than average level of conviction to the aims and beliefs of their cause. However, for actions such as those undertaken by Aum, where the perpetrators were not expected to die during the course of carrying out the attacks (although there was a significant risk to health) it could be argued that the sense of conviction could be considerably lower.

What this marker is designed to examine is the idea that for groups where violent action is considered/undertaken there has to be an unwavering belief and loyalty to the group and its aims in order for such actions to be possible.

### *Desire for Social Change*

The intended aim of actions for social change, either in a specific area or globally (this does not mean the end of the world, but could mean global conversion to a particular faith or way of ruling.)

This marker was included to capture statements that didn't focus on violence or power-struggles as such but, rather, suggested that the group saw its aim as an improvement on existing ideologies. This could range from the desire of Agonshu to bring about world peace through spiritual means, or that of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee to ending apartheid in the American South.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

An oppositional and dichotomous world-view (cosmology).

This marker could be explained as a 'Them and Us' mentality. It suggests a worldview clearly demarcated between opposing forces/groups: for example, God vs the Devil, Good vs Evil, Enlightened vs Unenlightened, Believer vs Non-Believer, and so on. The group in question is always on the side of good, and the distinction between those within the group and those without is clear. For example, in Muslim groups those not 'within' may be stated to be '*kafir*' (unbeliever) and as such worthy of punishment. The Red Army Faction had a number of terms they



applied to those outside of the group (generally derogatory) but the point is that they still made a clear distinction between members and their 'Other'.<sup>11</sup>

These distinctions are evidence of the idea of the sacred working as a border category, the theory of which I will develop in the following chapter. However, I mention this now to serve as a reminder that, whilst the markers were tested and developed in relation to the data, they were also strongly influenced by my theoretical research.

### *Emergency Situation*

The field of action takes on the character of an emergency situation, through real or a conflation of symbolic and real pressures, leading to the suspension of normal moral codes which regulate and limit action and the justification of emergency forms of action.

The stress in this marker is on the suspension of 'normal' moral codes and the justification of action, in this case violent action which is legitimated and indeed even necessitated by the emergency situation.

Frequently, violent action takes place within a context of struggle, so, whilst an emergency situation is not necessarily declared, it is presumed. It is also often the case that the 'character of an emergency' takes the form of a declaration of war, such as bin Laden's declaration in 1998 (see Juergensmeyer (2003: 148) for one of many discussions on this) or Ian Paisley's launch of a magazine called *The Battle Standard* (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 150).

### *External Legitimating Authority*

Worldview justified by appeal to legitimating authority external to/transcending the situation (God, religious scriptures, traditions, fundamental human rights or values).

Whilst some works point to how religions in general justify war or violent action (e.g. Burns, 1996; Cole, 2002), it is not too difficult to find justifications attributed

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<sup>11</sup> Throughout this thesis, I will capitalise 'Other' to signify where it is used as a contextual proper noun depicting the people whom are seen, by the group in question, to be outside of (and perhaps also against) the group.

to God or another legitimating authority in justifications of violence. For example bin Laden's speeches frequently reference Allah as a spiritual justification for the actions of al Qaeda. Paul Chilton (2004: 166) points this out when he quotes from a bin Laden speech:

- (5) God Almighty hit the United States at its most vulnerable spot.
- (6) He destroyed its greatest buildings.
- (7) Praise be to God.

However, this marker was deliberately worded so that it would also pick up legitimisation from non-religious sources, such as through interpretations of the works of Marx, for instance. The legitimating authority of a source external to the group is a motif repeated in many group's actions and was important to include here. That said, in the analysis of this marker it was demonstrated that this function was not picked up in the statements of the non-religious groups and the discussion of this difference of the data led to some interesting conclusions (discussed further in Chapters Six and Eight)

#### *Followers Differ from Leader*

Where a follower consciously (or otherwise) expresses an idea that differs from a leader (or disagrees with). To show where beliefs expressed by leaders are not necessarily all taken on by followers.

One important point to note about using the statements of groups to explore the beliefs of the group is that they tend to be made by official sources. That is, either the leader or someone authorised to make statements are often the ones most likely to be interviewed, release press statements, write books and so on. This marker acknowledges that this does not necessarily mean that all members of the group will agree with these statements and aims to catch evidence that suggests followers might be disagreeing with the leaders and/or official ideology of the group.

#### *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence*

A clear awareness of the need and/or desire to frame actions within a discourse of 'revenge'.

Building upon the concept of mimetic rivalry (Girard, 2005), which I will discuss in the next chapter, this marker seeks to capture those statements where the group has clearly decided that revenge is an appropriate response to a perceived wrong. Revenge and violent revenge are deliberate responses which are believed to be justified within certain circumstances.

We see strong evidence of this in my discussions in Chapter Six on the Red Army Faction, especially in the naming conventions of the commandos (small groups) that carried out particular attacks – these were generally named after comrades who had been killed. It is also evidenced in the statements of al Qaeda and I discuss these in Chapter Five.

Believing in the justification of violent revenge is a clear indicator of the non-negotiable character of a group's beliefs, and in conjunction with the *Basic Injustice* marker could be useful to see where certain conflicts may arise.

### *No Common Ground*

An absence of common ground with 'Others' allowing meaningful dialogue with other world views.

The absence of common ground can be represented in a spatial sense as well as ideologically. An ideological example is found in Hizb ut-Tahrir's (2002) *The West's Weapons of Mass Destruction and Colonialist Foreign Policy* which demonstrates to some extent the lack of understanding between the U.K./U.S. governments and the concerns of at least one section of the British Muslim community.

The lack of physical common ground is also a major issue in some groups' development. For example, within Aum Shinrikyo the separation from society was considered an important step in the spiritual development of the group member, and Reader (1996: 25) refers to the strong pressure placed on members to become renunciates.

The lack of common space to discuss differences of world-views can detract from the questioning that may otherwise take place during the development of a particular group's ideology and can also lead to increased entrenchment in the

beliefs of individuals. It also reinforces the lack of mutual understanding as inter-belief dialogue fails due to the absence of a common language.

### *No Innocent 'Others'*

A sense that all members of the 'Other' group are involved and implicated in the opposition to the good, and so legitimate targets: there is no 'innocence'.

The idea that everyone is involved in a spiritual struggle is implicit within the idea of a dichotomous world-view, mentioned as one of the earlier markers. What this marker develops further is the notion that passivity is not an option in this struggle. If you are not 'for' the side of good, then you must be on the side of evil. This idea finds resonance within some non-violent branches of mainstream religions, such as Christianity, but is more explicit in the ideas of violent groups, for example in bin Laden's justifications for declaring war on the U.S. (Davis, 2004: 94).

This is a powerful idea, as it justifies the use of action not just against an enemy consciously acting against the group in question, but extends the field of conflict to all those outside of the group (whether or not they are conscious of their 'Otherness'). Juergensmeyer (2003: 115) surmises that this idea was developed with Aum to suggest that those not in the group could be better off dead – their lives being spiritually poor and already beyond redemption.

### *No Justice Available in the System*

Statement claiming that the group has no recourse to judicial protection.

If a group clearly believes that there is no justice available in the system which governs it, or that the system is illegitimate, then this leaves open the potential for extra-judicial action. This action need not be violent – it could take the form of protest – but this area of belief and indeed the positions taken in response to it have potentially interesting things to say about how a group negotiates its relationship with dominant power-structures (legal systems, governments, international bodies, etc.)



### *Personal Benefit*

Explicit statement of benefits for followers – such as heightened physical or mental abilities, salvation, sense of righteousness, etc.

A strong motivation for joining many groups is the benefits to the believer. Understanding what benefits the group advertises can tell us a lot about what they deem to be important. For example, Aum Shinrikyo mentioned the benefit to withstand nuclear assaults (AUM97: 91) and this suggests that they thought such an attack would be likely.

Personal benefits can motivate in different ways as well, for example in the offer of a better existence in the afterlife than is experienced presently. An example of this might be the suggestion of spiritual safety for one's family and personal access to virgins, as suggested in some of al Qaeda's texts (ALQ62: 143-4; Ibrahim, 2009).

### *Question of Authority*

Dispute within an ideology over who has the authoritative view of its historical and contemporary practice.

Some groups, for example Agonshu, focused a lot on questions of authority and how their particular ideology was a perfection of an earlier or other form of the same branch of ideas, in this case Buddhism. After noting this theme being repeated in other case studies I included a marker to capture it within the matrix. This marker could also be seen to show us how two groups from a similar ideology could have differing approaches towards violence, for example in how Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan's use of Islamic teachings differed from al Qaeda's.

### *Recognition of Innocence*

Recognition that there ARE innocent 'Others', and that they should not be targeted.

The *No Innocent 'Other's'* marker, above, caught data from a very particular point of view, rather than allowing for a number of differing values to be captured by the same marker. Therefore, I included this marker in order to see if any beliefs expressing the opposite view were expressed.

### *Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes*

Evidence of an attempt to conclude a cycle of violence through a sacrificial/judicial act.

This marker relates to the presence of sacrificial rituals or submission to judicial processes within the group. I briefly mentioned Rene Girard in the previous chapter and in the next will expand upon his theory on the role of sacrifice as a mechanism to stop the cycle of reciprocal violence. In modern societies, he argues, this task is undertaken by the state through a system of justice, whereby the state intervenes to remove the requirement for vengeance (Girard, 2005: 16). Through this marker I looked for evidence of an attempt to conclude a cycle of violence through a sacrificial/judicial act.

I developed this marker because it became apparent during the Aum case study that the law of the land was frequently ignored, from illegal land purchases to the murder of opponents (Reader, 2000). There does not appear to be any evidence of Aum attempting to preclude or halt the cycle of violence through judicial or sacrificial process, and so perceived injustice (as highlighted by the *Basic Injustice* marker) cannot be avenged without recourse to violence. Given this finding, it seemed that assessing a group's attitudes towards the prevalent judicial system would provide an indicator of the likelihood of the group deferring to the system to avenge injustice, or to avenging it themselves. Following a Girardian theory of revenge, if the proclivity of the group is to self-justified vengeance, then a reciprocal course of violence is likely to follow.

### *Symbolic Importance*

A sense of symbolic importance given to the present action.

Symbolic importance features strongly in most groups' justifications for their actions. It could be that the action is set against the backdrop of an impending apocalypse: Reader (1996: 55) refers to the increasingly pessimistic prophecies about Armageddon within Aum Shinrikyo from 1989 onwards, and Juergensmeyer (2003: 28-9) and Harding (1994) look at millennialist ideas in various Christian movements. As well as being laden with symbolic importance these deadlines also lend a real sense of urgency to the required action.

The above examples link in with the *Emergency Situation* marker as well. Whilst the symbolic importance of an action captured in this marker can contain a sense of urgency, it does not have to. For example, the action could be compared/linked with a fabricated symbolic event: Karsh (2000) looks at the creation of a revisionist history of Israel that seeks to place it as a source of all evil in order to justify actions taken against it, and Eickelmann & Piscatori (1996) also discuss issues of invented symbolism within Islam. Kakar (1996) addresses similar issues in relation to religious tensions between Muslims and Hindus in India, especially in Hyderabad, and how symbols and memories were created (or re-invented) to suit the needs of differing groups. Kermani (2003) considers the history of martyrdom in Islam and its recent increase in its symbolic influence within Islam.

Possibly the most relevant theoretical work to this issue is found within Danièle Hervieu-Léger's (2000) book *Religion as a Chain of Memory* which looks at the link between religion and memory which invokes in believers a shared ideology and symbolism thus invoking a social community. This work is discussed in more depth in the following chapter, but the above discussion demonstrates the broad range of possible uses of symbolism.

### *Violent Traditions*

Evidence of specifically violent traits/influences (imagery/myth) within the traditions/beliefs of the group.

As with the other markers, this marker in itself cannot act as a necessary indicator of a move to violence. For example, many Christian groups claim a common textual tradition, and yet some have acted violently and some have not. However, this marker does allow for a focus on the violent influences specific to a group and

draws on some of the data which, for example, Mellor (2004: 165) referred to when he spoke of the role of recent discussions and interpretations of jihad within contemporary Islam.

This marker specifically focuses on references to violent imagery/myth within the beliefs of the group and in doing so allows us to explore the ways in which these traditions are interpreted and the differences between these and potentially non-violent interpretations.

### *Wider Struggle*

The present condition/field of action is situated within a wider struggle infused with normative value (good vs. evil; right vs. wrong).

This marker can overlap with the *Dichotomous World View* marker but focuses on a more nuanced understanding of the world view and even of the legitimating authority and connects this with the immediacy of the struggle within the present context. For example, a dichotomous world view need not necessarily be represented in moral terms, those of a political conflict related as such could just be between opposing views. However, this marker suggests the presence of a moral interpretation of the conflict in hand, where 'right' and 'wrong' are not merely opposite ends of a discourse of difference, but rather have received a normative interpretation.

Evidence of this is found in the co-option of people outside of the group (but perceived as sympathetic or in a similar position). For example, the Vietnamese people were seen as on the 'same side' as the Red Army Faction, as their struggle had a moral correlation with the RAF's struggle against the West German and U.S. governments (Varon, 2004: 34-5).

It might also be found in the ascription of a religious dimension to political struggles in many theatres of conflict around the world: al Qaeda especially has used this powerful tool in numerous cases. But nor is its use limited just to non-state actors as even governments such as the U.S., in which religion and state are formally separated, have seen their country as on the side of good (God). Chilton



(2004: 174) quotes both Presidents Clinton and Bush (Jnr) in invoking God's blessings upon America.

## Summary

This project started from a hypothesis that it is possible to identify markers pertaining to violent action within a clearly defined group and, furthermore, that the presence of these markers can demonstrate a necessary and sufficient causality of a move to violence. During the research process this aim has been broadened to include the development and later assessment of a model – the matrix – to the study of the sacred in modern society.

Through an iterative process of qualitative analysis the markers that together form the matrix have been tested and modified accordingly. The outcome of a content analysis of primary sources is a case study centred treatment of both the markers and the underlying theory. It is not assumed that all of the markers have to be necessary to lead to violent actions, nor indeed that any marker by itself is suggestive of violent action. Understanding and illuminating the factors that the markers highlight is part of the purpose of this project. However, I suggest that some combination of the markers will demonstrate a necessary causal influence on the move to violence, and that together these reveal a pattern which will become further apparent as more case studies are undertaken. These findings are further tested when considered against groups which display similar beliefs but do not have a history of violent action (in Chapter Seven).

In this chapter I have outlined the assumptions, methodological approaches, processes of data collection and analysis employed in the research, and introduced the markers. In this final section, I have intimated where and how the markers tie into the broader literature and social theory, and it is to a fuller discussion of this that I now turn.

## 3. Key Themes

### Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the key themes and literature relevant to this thesis. I start off by examining the field of terrorism, as this is where much of the contemporary discussion into violent groups is to be found. However, I highlight the relative lack of investigation into the topic of religion and question why this is the case when the actions of contemporary 'fundamentalist' groups are so often used as evidence of a 'return' of religion to Western society.<sup>12</sup> I then go on to query how the term 'religion' has been used in some discourses of violence.

Rather than using 'religion' as the independent variable in my investigation of violent ('religious') groups I problematise this term and suggest instead that we should use a concept which, in the neo-Durkheimian tradition within which I situate this discourse, is called the 'sacred'. Therefore I start my second section by outlining some of the pertinent areas of Durkheimian discourse as they relate to this investigation and also how I develop these ideas, bringing in other theorists to clarify how the sacred can be seen to be a useful tool in the investigation of contemporary society and beliefs.

I conclude the chapter by summarising how I have used these ideas to operationalise the concept of the sacred for this study.

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<sup>12</sup> As Almond, Appleby and Sivan (2003: 15) note, "the extravagant use of the term 'fundamentalism' encourages nonspecialists to make facile generalisations". In the main I have used the term to refer to groups who claim a return to the 'fundamentals' of their faith, however, in this sentence I use it in the populist sense – whereby so many groups that are visibly different are often conflated with a negative association with 'violent fundamentalists, or, extremists'. I also question whether indeed it is right to see the increasing profile of religious groups in contemporary society as a 'return', something I discuss here and also in Francis and Knott (2011).

## Terrorism, Violence and Religion

### *Terrorism*

The starting point for my research into this field was to look at the literature relating to terrorism. The main aim of this research is to understand the role of the sacred in the move to violence, and not terrorism *per se*. However, the exploration of causal attributes leading to violence is a key issue within terrorism studies, and therefore it is important to examine the wider discussions in this field. To this end, whilst I am not directly concerned with the definitional problems surrounding the term 'terrorism', I will draw attention to them.

In 1988 Schmid and Jongmann (1988) surveyed active researchers in the field of terrorism studies and from this data managed to compile a list containing 109 different definitions of 'terrorism'. Andrew Silke (2003b: 2), in the introduction to his edited collection on researching terrorism, provides some explanation for this proliferation of terms:

Most books on terrorism, and certainly almost all with an academic or research focus, start with a discussion on how terrorism is defined. Or, to be more accurate, they discuss the peculiar and long-running failure to reach an agreed definition.

It is not my intention to re-invent the wheel in this regard and therefore I will not commence with another lengthy investigation into the term 'terrorism'. However, a brief analysis is in order given that I situate this thesis, to some extent, in relation to work coming out of this field.

In *The Terrorism Reader* Whittaker (2003: 3-4) provides a short list of nine definitions of terrorism from a variety of sources from state actors such as the FBI; the U.S. Department of Defense; U.S. State Department; U.K. Government; to academics such as Walter Laqueur and Brian Jenkins.<sup>13</sup> In this list ideas and words are repeated. A concise analysis of these could be best categorised by the phrase, 'Who does what to whom and why?'<sup>14</sup> Under these headings I have listed

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<sup>13</sup> Whittaker cites the following website for this list, however the page no longer exists: [www.terrorism.com/terrorism/basics.html](http://www.terrorism.com/terrorism/basics.html). Attempted access last on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

<sup>14</sup> In asking this question I am loosely following the 3-step model suggested by Bergesen (2007) who argues that terrorist violence differs from other forms of violence by separating

the key words/ideas that appeared, along with the number of appearances if more than once:

**Who:** Subnational groups; clandestine agents;

**Does what:** unlawful, illegitimate; intimidate (2), influence (2), coerce (2), threat (4); force (3); fear (3); violence (7); murder; maiming; menacing.

**To whom:** government (2); the innocent (2); civilian population; societies; non-combatant targets; any person or property; public at large.

**And why:** [objectives] political (8); social; religious (2); ideological (2)

The 'Who?' in this list noticeably excludes state actors, the inclusion of which is an area of contention within terrorism studies which Ranstorp (2007a: 7-8) briefly alludes to in his mapping of the field. The groups in the case studies chosen for my research are all non-state actors, though the matrix, as it focuses on the role of belief, would be equally applicable to terrorism practised from 'above'. This hypothesis would require further testing, but for the purposes of this project I have concentrated on violence enacted by non-governmental actors.

'Does what?' contains a similar theme even if the words used themselves vary widely according to their emotive content. The legality of actions is contested (although this dependent on the position taken by the relevant legislative bodies) and, whilst in this context it is meant in a judicial sense, it could also easily be broadened to a moral context. The intention of coercing or influencing is common to all the definitions, and that such coercion is violent is also a common factor.

In contrast to acts of war, the targets ('To whom?') are usually seen as non-combatants, suggesting an innocence of those under attack. The use of 'innocence' suggests a normative dimension to the actions. As with the morality of any action this brings into focus the moral compass of the active group – how does it compare to that of mainstream society? Do their conceptions of 'good/right' align with those of the wider social network?

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the roles (specifically the latter two) of Perpetrator (p); Victim (v) and Target (t), whereby person A, does violence to victim B, to get at target C:  $A_p \rightarrow B_v \rightarrow C_t$ .



The motivating factor behind the reasons is always assumed to be ideological; taking an understanding of 'ideological' that is broad enough to incorporate religious, social and political objectives. Not wishing to get mired in the debate around legality/morality, state/non-state actors and the many other issues that are tangential to this project, what I am interested in within the field of terrorism are those violent actions motivated and justified by beliefs. I focus on violence and the justification by belief because these qualities are at the heart of this project. However, throughout the study I remained mindful of the effects of the wider issues mentioned above.

The next significant problem highlighted within literature of terrorism studies is that of its over-reliance on secondary data. Silke (2003a: 60-3) draws attention to this when he points out that his own study mirrors the results of the earlier Schmid and Jongman (1998: 138) survey in that 73% of the data used by researchers in the field was from secondary sources.

This can lead to a circulation of theories and data accepted without new investigation. In my research I have avoided working from other researcher's data, instead applying a new model (the matrix) to original material (the groups' statements) in order to generate my data. In the main, I have also avoided using media sources which could, as Silke (2003a: 62-3) states, lead to problematic questions about accuracy, bias and audience context. The exceptions to this are the Mori (1998, 2001) documentaries which, whilst not produced by the mainstream media, still raise some of the same concerns.

### *Violence and Religion*

It is fair to say that the majority of texts relating to contemporary terrorism either marginalise or ignore the role of religion – even where the groups in question have avowed religious aims (e.g. al Qaeda). Works such as Whittaker (2003), Crenshaw (1995), Zulaika and Douglas (1996), Sinclair (2003) and Primoratz (2004) all deal with terrorism in interesting and useful ways, but either fail entirely to deal with, or sideline the role of religion and belief.

Whittaker (2003) for example, provides an edited work looking at characteristics of terrorism, including thirteen case studies and also strategies for the possible prevention and control of terrorism. However, even in the case studies of al Qaeda (41-50) or Northern Ireland (101-119) religion is absent both as a possible cause of conflict, or even as a point for discussion. Rather, a historical analysis of events is filtered through a discussion of political issues, although themes such as myths and memories are also developed as ways of understanding the solidarity and support for the various groups involved in the Irish Troubles (106-115).

Ranstorp's (2007b) edited volume *Mapping Terrorism Research* also largely ignores religion, with mention only being made under the generic heading of ideologies (e.g. Horgan, 2007: 113) or as by-lines within listings of research strategies (Ranstorp, 2007a: 9). In Wilkinson's (2007: 316-328) article on subject areas contributing to a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of terrorism, religious studies and/or theology is not mentioned once, nor are any academics from these fields. The absence of a discussion of religion from a major conference addressing the root causes of terrorism (Wilkinson, 2007: 316-7) further reflects the generally poor consideration of its importance within this subject area.

Further, works that address the move to violence through stages of radicalisation, such as a draft version of a National Policing Improvement Agency's (NPIA) 2008 report, neglected religion.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, in Taarnby's (2007) discussion of the recruitment of Islamist terrorists, religion is mentioned only as the cover for socio-political motivations (176). Others, like Quintan Wiktorowicz (2004 and 2005) in *Islamic Activism* and *Radical Islam Rising* use Social Movement Theory (SMT) to explain the move to violence, with religion merely one amongst many causal factors in a rational process.

Wiktorowicz's theses (2004; 2005) fit within a broader theoretical approach to religion, that of Rational Choice Theory (RCT), which promotes the idea that humans are rational actors and that all choices made, including those leading to violence, are the result of rational choices. This individualistic view of society,

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<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that the role of religion was discussed with the authors of the report and the final draft provided a more rounded approach. From the opposite point of view, in the July 2010 Digest (NPIA, 2010: 38) the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee was quoted saying that there was too much focus on the theological causes of radicalisation, echoing the point I shall make later, that in addition to the lack of a focus on religion too much emphasis is also unhelpful.

proposed by theorists such as Becker (1976), Iannaccone (1997) and Stark (1997) lends greater strength to the assumptions supported in the NPIA's report and the ideas encompassed within SMT.

Where earlier RCT work discusses religious involvement, it is within the guise of a transference of decision making to a corporate actor (in this case a religious organisation) which is trusted as providing the best possible outcomes for the individual actor (Coleman, 1990). Within the current discussion RCT finds a home within SMT as Wiktorowicz (2004: 300) points out, and is developed further to apply to radicalised Islamic activists (298):

[r]ather than viewing Islamists as grievance-stricken reactionaries, recent research has reconceptualized Islamic activists as strategic thinkers engaged in cost-benefit calculations.

This use of economic decision making models leads Wiktorowicz (2005: 15) to claim that non-material incentives such as a sense of belonging and purpose help explain why people are happy to sacrifice themselves for radical Islamic groups. His theory suggests that religion, as with any ideology, is only of interest for potential research when sufficient numbers of rational actors choose to join these movements due to a deficiency of opportunity or positive options within their lives (especially in comparison to the more attractive benefits on offer for the next life (209)).

Wiktorowicz's understanding of the role of religion strips it of the fundamental importance Durkheim (2001) argued it had to society. My objections to this will become apparent during my discussion of religion and society later on, but Wiktorowicz is not the only author who downplayed or, I argue, misunderstood the role of religion within contemporary violence.

There are, of course, scholars (e.g. Bruce, 2002; Voas and Crockett, 2005) who argue that religion is declining in its societal influence generally. Not wishing to be seen to ignore the secularisation thesis (which receives a thorough historical and ideological analysis by Beckford (2003: 30-72)), I will nevertheless restrict myself to acknowledging the comments by Peter Berger, himself a former advocate of the thesis (1967: 107), who has since argued that the near-uncontested acceptance of the idea of secularisation within academia led to many theorists being wrong-footed by the apparent revival of religion (1999a: 2; 2001: 339). Arguments against



this thesis can be found in those who state that the paradigm is only relevant to the European context (Warner, 1993); that religion has been privatised, not declined (Davie, 1994); or that it has undergone a transformation in terms of popular denominations (Berger, 1999a). As with the reduced role that Wiktorowicz (2005) affords religion, the secularisation thesis is countered by the Durkheimian approach I adopt, in which religion had an enduring significance to society, regardless of the demise of particular faiths (Durkheim, 2001: 322-3).

In contrast to accounts which downplay the role of religion in modern society and conflict, Huntington's (2002) *The Clash of Civilisations* thesis of civilisational confrontation groups societies together along cultural, mainly religious, fault lines. For example, he discusses the boundaries of expansion for the E.U., and suggests these will fall along the borders between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy / Islam in Eastern Europe (155-163). Huntington's argument is contested, not least in relation to his claim that Islam has uniquely violent sources: "Islam has from the start been a religion of the sword" (263), and "Muslim bellicosity and violence are late-twentieth-century facts which neither Muslims nor non-Muslims can deny" (258). Whilst these arguments at least draw attention to and discuss the role of religion within society and cultural identity it also portrays a monolithic vision of Islam that ignores centuries of peaceful inter-cultural living within Muslim lands.

A more nuanced account of the role of religion in violent groups is found in the *The Fundamentalism Project*. This mammoth, ten-year project directed by Martin Marty and Scott Appleby (1991; 1993a; 1993b; 1994; 1995) at the University of Chicago produced five major works all with a focus on the role of religion within fundamentalist movements.

However, the authors of this project focus on a very specific definition of 'religion'. Almond, Appleby and Sivan (2003: 15-6) state that only religious movements which postulate an ultimate concern such as a God or eternal reward are authentically religious. Those (mainly Eastern) religions, for example, Buddhism and the Hindu religions, which do not believe in a personal God, are "synthetic" religions for the purpose of their study and groups with strong belief indicators but no reference to "ultimate concerns" are not considered religious at all. Whilst this narrow definition of religion enabled the project to further delineate a set of parameters



that otherwise would have been unmanageably broad,<sup>16</sup> it excludes groups and criteria that are commonly held to be religious.

Mark Juergensmeyer's (2003) *Terror in the Mind of God* is another work which considers seriously the role that religion plays in violent movements and he undertakes several case studies of violent religious movements. In so doing Juergensmeyer argues that violence is an inherent part of religion, but setting this point aside for the moment, I argue that perhaps he places too much emphasis on the role that religion plays in these conflicts.<sup>17</sup>

Juergensmeyer (2003: 10) suggests that there are characteristics of religious violence (transcendent morality, ritual intensity, struggle and transformation as indicative of a cosmic war) that separate religious violence from other, secular, forms. Although he states that all religions have violence at their heart (6-7), he acknowledges that religion does not necessarily lead to violent action (10). Other sets of circumstances need to be present for religion to lead to violence, such as in the case of Sikh separatism, where he (85) mentions that this is an example where "religion has been fused with political separatism."

The problem with this approach is that it tells us little about what is uniquely religious about these forms of violence. Juergensmeyer (2003: 220) is aware of this issue: "Much of what I have said about religious terrorism in this book may be applied to other forms of political violence..." However, his argument (220-1) that religious violence is especially vicious, transhistorical, that it receives moral justification and is supported through absolutist aims with the total commitment of followers, are all features that I argue can be present in secular conflicts. For example, as I demonstrate in Chapter Six, the Red Army Faction displays all these characteristics.

Juergensmeyer's (2003) work is at the best end of a group of works which overplay the role of religion in violent movements. Haar (2005) argues against popular opinions that suggest religion is either inherently good (and so violent forms of

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<sup>16</sup> The five main tomes of the project are already intimidating in size and one volume was referred to by Peter Berger (1999: 1) as a "book-weapon".

<sup>17</sup> Juergensmeyer's argument is based on the violence in the teachings of religions, an argument repeated elsewhere (e.g. Lloyd Jones (1999) looks at the endorsement of violence in the Hebrew Bible). I shall be dealing with a broader discussion of violence at the heart of religion later on, asking why it is there.

religion are deviant) or bad (for example, Dawkins's (2007) assertion that inside every moderate religious believer a violent fanatic is waiting to get out). I do not intend to discuss these polarising works, except to say that, as with Juergensmeyer's (2003) book, it seems that they cannot tell us why religion, qua religion, can cause violence.<sup>18</sup>

In the above discussion I have set out some of the problems in the field, moving from accounts that ignore the role of religion to those that include it, but in problematic ways. Ian Reader's (2000) book on Aum Shinrikyo avoids many of these problems, in his excellent study into the religious beliefs of Aum and how these led to the transition to violent action. However, for all its positives, Reader's (2000) study is only based on one example and he still leaves us with the question about what it is about beliefs, qua beliefs, that could cause violence.

I have introduced some definitional problems above, as well as highlighting my search for a concept that can help us understand the move to violence. I do not argue that there are simple answers to be found, but rather that a different approach may provide more functionally useful answers. In so doing, I argue that religion should play a role in this examination, but not as the independent variable in an explanation of the move to violence.

## **Society, Religion and the Sacred**

It is at this point that I turn to a neo-Durkheimian explanation of society and religion, where the fundamental relevance of the two and the relationship of violence to society are explored. Dealing with both these elements together is, I aim to show, essential for a proper understanding of violent actions by contemporary groups. I say 'neo-Durkheimian' because whilst I start with his works, primarily the 1912 (2001) *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, I develop this beyond his initial theories particularly in relation to the polarity of the sacred

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<sup>18</sup> In grouping these works together, I do not mean to insinuate that Juergensmeyer's (2003) book is not a scholarly and well written thesis. In fact, it is a helpful introduction to the field and explores many of the concepts from which the initial list of markers (Knott, *et al.* 2006) was developed. A similar example can be found in Ruthven (2004) who provides a thoughtful discussion of the term and phenomenon of 'fundamentalism', but fails to argue why secular instances are 'analogous' to, but not within the 'family resemblances' of properly fundamentalist groups, which Ruthven (2004: 33) argues are religious.

(Hertz, 1960); the role of taboo and transgression (Bataille, 2001) and the sacred as a border category (Anttonen, 2000; Knott, 2005b). At the same time I use the work of Mellor (2004) to explore the reality of society (and so also of my use of the sacred) and theorists such as Girard (2005), Bataille (2001) and Le Bon (1903) in their examination of violence and religion.

In the following discussion, I set out an idea of religion and within this, the concept of the sacred, which I argue is more useful in investigating the move to violence. I situate this within an embodied understanding of society, which is where I start this examination.

### *Embodied society*

The social realm, according to Durkheim (2001), is a natural realm (20) arising out of the dual nature of humans – *homo duplex* (18). The duality of our nature roots us in the natural world as individual agents and also sets up a symbiotic nature between us and society – we both create and are created (in a human rather than animal sense) by society (18-19). This concept draws attention to the embodied nature of society. Because society is emergent from the *homo duplex*, it is necessarily influenced by the way people experience the world which is, first and foremost, through their bodies.

Mellor and Shilling (1997: 5) point out that, whilst the above idea may seem obvious, the implications of the embodied foundations of knowledge are “frequently overlooked in ... sociological discussions of culture, belief and ideology...” Building upon these embodied foundations I follow the discussion beyond where Durkheim finished, into how conceptualisations of the body influence social forms (Mellor and Shilling, 1997) and how physical, mental and social concepts of space arise from our bodily experiences (Knott, 2005b).

These spaces contain the genesis of our social relations (Knott, 2005b: 20-21). For example, within a Christian society we ‘look up’ to our heroes (our role-models) and we ‘send down’ our convicts, we baptise our babies, join our bodies in marriage and bury our dead – all in specially defined places. Our lives are ordered by movements between bounded spaces (places) such as those of work (the office);



family (home); leisure (parks); and sacred (churches). Knott (2005b: 21) states that "Social relations exist in and through space, *and* the spatial is socially constituted".<sup>19</sup>

Mellor and Shilling (1997) argue that through the Cartesian separation of body and mind within modernity and the basis of modern society on a *rational* contractarian understanding we have become divorced from the irrational, embodied constitution of society. Writing before the events of 9/11 and subsequent popularity of religious explanations of violence, they argued that this attempt to rationalise society has led to a moral bankruptcy in the contracts that bind us together. The resultant tension between enlightened modernity and resurgent embodied socialities could lead to the kind of violence that Girard (2005) claims was controlled through sacrifice (Mellor and Shilling, 1997: 201).

I will return to explanations of violence coming from the social shortly but, having drawn attention to how this can be linked to the embodied foundations of the social, I will now turn to the fundamental relationship between society and religion.

### *Society and religion*

I have argued that it is within the embodied characterisation of space that we find the social bonds that Durkheim (2001: 319-20) describes. This is not an abstract space, an epistemological thought-experiment with which to theorise sociological constructs, but rather part of the *sui generis* reality arising from the embodied interaction of human beings.

Durkheim's sociology was predicated upon *a priori* facts, in this case social facts or, as Durkheim's nephew Mauss (2002: 3) refers to them: "total social phenomena". Mauss (2002: 100-1) explains that these objects of study are facts that involve the whole of society through all its permutations (moral, judicial, religious, economic and so on). These facts relate to a social body that has objective reality in relation to the human actors that it influences, directs and is emergent from. The Durkheimian society is real, as opposed to the abstract concept suggested by social constructivism, or the "aggregation and interaction of individual actions"

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<sup>19</sup> Italics are Knott's.



(Iannaccone, 1997: 26) which according to rational choice theorists constitute social outcomes.<sup>20</sup>

Building on Durkheim's idea of the *sui generis* reality of society Mellor (2004: 191) argues that:

society is an emergent reality, contingent upon the embodied dispositions and potentialities of human beings, and characterised by a substratum of hyper-spiritual forces that facilitate the emergence of religious forms...

Mellor goes on to state that, whilst society is contingent on human beings (53-79), it is a necessary outcome of the embodied characteristics of humans (80-107). This necessity is characterised by its imposition on individuals, not as something that is random or can be chosen, but as a reality that acts upon individuals and institutions (80-82). Whilst allowing for flexibility in how differing societies are constituted this necessity suggests that there will always be societies, and the embodied nature of humanity means that these societies will have common dimensions.

Religion, signalled by Mellor in the above quotation, is one of these common dimensions. But Durkheim (2001) posits that religion is more than a product of society, it is the expression of society itself (Durkheim, 2001:4). He argues (11) that "religion is something eminently social. Religious representations are collective representations that express collective realities." Socially constructed notions such as time and space are, therefore, the product of religious thought, being predicated as they are on collective realities (12-13).

This places (a Durkheimian understanding of) religion at the centre of society and any study of it. Durkheim (2001: 36) argued that all religious beliefs pre-supposed a division of ideas and objects into two classes: the sacred and the profane, the sacred being those things set apart and special (46). These classes, sacred and profane, underpin the religious categorisations that inform collective knowledge (Durkheim, 2001: 11) and these phenomena fall within two categories, beliefs and rites (36). Beliefs define practices and objects that then become the focus for the

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<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that social constructivism/constructionism does not necessarily preclude a realist understanding of society, as argued by Engler (2004). However, the justifications for a realist social constructionism are somewhat tortuous in comparison to an embodied account of society.

rites. It is the former category, beliefs, which I am concerned with for the purposes of this study. Furthermore, I am interested in beliefs beyond a commonly 'religious' definition of the term. Not mundane or, in the terminology introduced above, *profane* beliefs, but rather those with a special quality, something set apart from everyday worldly concerns, something worth protecting with violence: non-negotiable beliefs.

Mellor (2004: 18-19) argues that 'proper' religion is interested in meaningful cosmological questions: the serious life. He points out that religious beliefs are those cosmological questions that arise from the embodied nature of humans, from our mortality and interdependence. Without diverging from this understanding of religious beliefs, I am nevertheless interested in beliefs including, but also outside of, these teleological foci.

Mellor's definition, above, could be seen as suggesting that religion is an essentialised concept defined by a family resemblance of 'serious questions'. However, I follow others, for example Fitzgerald (1995, 2001) in questioning the role and definition of 'religion' as a concept. It is here that we can see the usefulness of the concept of the 'sacred'. The relationship of the sacred to religion is illuminated in Knott's (2010c) exploration of the boundaries between the 'religious' and 'secular' and indeed on the role of the sacred in relation to 'religion'. The distinction between the religious and secular can be traced back to early Christianity (Knott, 2005b: 64) and was further developed through the Protestant idea of civil society (Mellor and Shilling, 1997: 146; Mellor, 2004: 116-120). That the distinction is contained within the same epistemological category is supported by a consideration that within some societies the idea of a non-religious space is a non-sequitur, such as within some Islamic countries (Mellor, 2004: 20).<sup>21</sup>

Because 'religion' is, therefore, a label that refers to a class of groups and beliefs and is not a concept encapsulating a real and essential quality, I argue that it has a problematic place within the study of violence. For example, the *Fundamentalism Project* used one definition of religion that excluded faiths commonly considered religious. Juergensmeyer (2003) used religion as the independent variable in particular conflicts, but without a clear understanding about what was unique

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<sup>21</sup> Knott (2009b) discusses the development of the terms 'religious' and 'secular' within the context of public/private religion, further demonstrating the positioning of the term 'secular' within a specifically Western epistemological field.

about religion. This is not to say that the label 'religion' is not useful (for example in common conversation), but it seems that it is not clear what it refers to nor how it can be operationalised in a functional application to the problem of violence.

I think that the 'sacred' is a term and a concept which can be operationalised in relation to this discussion (and beyond). I steer clear of using the term 'non-negotiable beliefs' for the same reasons that I reject Taves' (2009) 'specialness'. These phrases (especially Taves') would carry less baggage than the 'sacred', which is often conflated with an essentialised understanding of 'religion'. However, Taves (2009) ignores some of the other developments of Durkheim's concept of the sacred that I include here (Knott, 2010b), as found within the work of Hertz, Bataille and Anttonen, for example. In addition, Knott (2010b) also points out that discussions over non-negotiable beliefs, from both religious and non-religious camps, often utilise discourses of the 'sacred' (see Knott, 2010c) and so in this respect the 'sacred' still seems a more applicable term to use, and it is to this domain, and its separation from the profane, that I now turn.<sup>22</sup>

### *The sacred*

My discussion of the sacred finds its genesis within the idea of taboos which, Durkheim (2001: 224-227) suggests, are the rules created by society to separate the everyday realm (the profane) from the mysterious 'other' realm (the sacred).<sup>23</sup> Transgression is the process by which these taboos are broken, and through which, Durkheim argued, the sacred realm came into contact with the profane.<sup>24</sup>

Durkheim (2001: 341; 232-235) understood that transgression encapsulated a violent action (that of breaking a taboo) and that the sacred itself could be violent (304) as well as positive. However, this element of Durkheim's thought was underdeveloped and it was Robert Hertz (1960) who further elaborated a thesis of the

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<sup>22</sup> Taves (2009) also allows an essentialised notion of 'religion' to creep back into her discussion (Fitzgerald, 2010), something I have rejected here, and a point she accepts to a certain degree (Taves, 2010).

<sup>23</sup> Whilst referring to the sacred realm as that of the 'other' it is worth noting the Greek and Latin roots of 'sacred' which Anttonen (2005: 189-190) draws attention to. The root for *sacer* denotes 'to cut' or 'to set apart', and while the *sacrum* referred to the area set aside for the *fanum* (consecrated area of the temple) the *pro-fanum* (*pro* denoting 'in front of' or 'outside') related to that area outside of the consecrated space.

<sup>24</sup> It is also a factor in the creation of the taboo as it creates the sacred [space], as argued by Mellor (2006: 13-14).



dichotomous nature of the sacred. He drew attention to this sacred polarity, but went further by exploring the embodied characteristics of a spatial understanding of the sacred: left-sacred as representative of the dangerous, repulsive sacred, and right-sacred as the positive, attractive sacred. In its application to the human body Hertz (1960: 101) states that: "The right [side of the body] represents what is high, the upper world, the sky; while the left is connected with the underworld and the earth."

It is important to reiterate the point that the sacred is a social category, and that as such Hertz's importance relates to his illumination of the idea of sacred polarity, not to the affixation of right-good/left-bad sacred domains. This point is further enforced through Granet's (1973: 43-91) study of the *Right and Left in China*, where he builds upon Hertz's theory, but demonstrates how it also fits to a culture which does not share the differential of right/left hegemony found within Western societies.

In her application of a spatial methodology to the study of religion, Knott (2005b) builds on Hertz's sacred polarity but also utilises Anttonen's (1996) conceptualisation of the sacred as a border category. Anttonen (40-3) states that the idea of the sacred is drawn from the bounded nature of human bodies from which we develop the distinction of inside/outside and thus territorialise the space around us.<sup>25</sup> The sacred is the boundary between these distinctions, through which the separate domains are both made and contested (Anttonen, 2005: 191-196). If the sacred is a boundary then it is a relational concept, not referring to objects, but to the relation of those objects to others (191).

It is within this relational understanding of the sacred that we can include those beliefs not concerned with the serious business of teleological questions, for example, the beliefs of left-wing activists about the dominance of capitalist and/or military power. The belief that people have a right to certain political and economic freedoms denied them by 'Western Capitalism' is placed within a sacred boundary. It is non-negotiable and it marks this belief as separate from and unique to, the beliefs of those people who believe otherwise. As a non-negotiable boundary it is also the site of contestation with conflicting beliefs.

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<sup>25</sup> The idea of territorializing space through sacred boundaries is also discussed by Smith (2004: 101-116) where he points to the examples of the Roman God Terminus and of passages in the Old Testament which relate to sacred boundary markers around land.



Understanding the sacred as a site for contestation further illuminates the linkage between violence and the sacred, and this point helps me expand upon how this concept crosses the religious/non-religious distinction I outlined above. Following Anttonen (2000: 208-1), Knott (2010c: 125) argues that instances of the sacred can be found within what would commonly be considered as secular spaces:

The category boundaries that become the focus of sacred-making activities and discourse have the potential to erupt as sites of struggle but for much of the time lie dormant and, as such, are invisible. Routinely taken-for granted, they have the potential to shock us with their capacity to become the focus of deep-seated principles and interests and with their power to divide opinion.

Whilst the sacred is not confined to the religious domain, it is within this epistemological category that instances of the sacred are commonly perceived.<sup>26</sup> Whilst taking on board Mellor's (2006: 11-12) warning not to apply too broad a definition of 'sacred' to social phenomena, I argue that issues such as the struggle against racism (see the case study on the SNCC in Chapter Seven) do relate to 'serious' issues. This secular-sacred is still formed by cohesive practises and beliefs that relate to ideas and symbols that define the metaphysical outlook of that group.

Mellor (2004, 2006) follows Durkheim (2001) in stating that sacred beliefs and practices shape our fundamental social structures and precepts. They constitute the ontological foundation of all social forms, including those expressed within the epistemological domain of the secular. In this case, it is not contradictory to speak of the sacred within secular space, whilst attributing fundamental importance to the 'serious business' of these beliefs.

Mellor (1998: 90) also draws attention to Durkheim's (2001: 157-161) discussion of how sacred qualities can be attached to secular ideas, in this instance in the French Revolution. Durkheim (158) mentions how people (inspired by the sacred) can be violent at such times, although his treatment of the violent side of the

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<sup>26</sup> Knott's statement highlighted that the sacred can often be 'invisible' but whilst it may not be perceived this does not mean that it is absent from wider society. The idea of an absence-presence, raised in a discussion of the body by Shilling (1993) was used in relation to the sacred by Shilling and Mellor (2001: 49) in relation to the College of Sociology and in particular Bataille's (1988a: 104) work relating to the perceived absence of the sacred in modern societies. Building on Bataille, I have explored this absence and how it has arisen in modern society as a result of greater individualisation (Francis, 2004: 66-71).

sacred is underdeveloped (Graham, 2007; Riley, 2005) and I will now turn to how this violence can be seen to be related to the sacred through theorists who developed his ideas.

### *Violence and the sacred*

Bataille (1985a) refers to the sacred as a relational boundary, for instance he improves Durkheim's interpretation of 'taboo' and points out that the taboo is only meaningful in relation to transgression (Bataille, 2001: 38). If the taboo is no longer breached, then the sacred becomes mundane (and therefore profane), but Bataille (1989: 47) also states that the sacred is experienced in the process of transgression itself, thereby suggesting that it is this boundary, the taboo, where we find the sacred.

This taboo, according to Bataille (2001: 44), is set up in order to protect humanity from violence. This violence is naturally occurring (through death which is violence to life, for example) and humanity aims to contain it through taboos, and build a world on the basis of reason (Bataille, 2001: 40) where rules can be made and kept, and progress achieved. Girard (2005: 233-4) claims that this is Bataille's contribution to his own theories – that taboos are enforced to create a profane domain that allows societies to flourish. Without these rules the contagious nature of the sacred (Durkheim, 2001: 237-242; Bataille, 1985b; 1989: 53; Girard, 2005: 51-2) could overcome society, leading to outbreaks of violence.

This contagion is also discussed by Gustave Le Bon (1903: 36) who points out that erstwhile rational, functioning individuals lose intelligence on subsuming their individuality to the crowd:

...by the mere fact that he forms part of an organised crowd, a man descends several rungs in the ladder of civilisation. Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd he is a barbarian – that is, a creature acting by instinct. He possesses the spontaneity, the violence, the ferocity, and also the enthusiasm and heroism of primitive beings, whom he further tends to resemble ... An individual in a crowd is a grain of sand amid other grains of sand, which the wind stirs up at will.

This echoes Durkheim's (2001) concept of collective effervescence, although Durkheim's concept is more nuanced than Le Bon's blunter analysis of the stupidity of the crowd.<sup>27</sup> While both point to the contagion in collective assemblies they also by necessity refer to the profane alternative, of the individual in an ordered society. Whilst society appears to be solely rational, it still has this irrational social contagion driving it (Mellor, 2000: 277) either through the creation of the symbols and rules it orders itself by, or through the occasional controlled/uncontrolled outbreaks of the sacred that re-vitalise it. Indeed, Bataille (1997b: 124-5) and Caillois (1959: 21) both argued that society attempting to purge itself of these irrational elements, by denying the sacred, could only lead to a return of a virulent form of violent (sacred) actions.

Whilst Bataille argues that this violence is a necessary effect of the natural violence of life, Girard (2005) states that it has a more specifically human origin. He argues that it arises through a process of mimetic rivalry whereby humans are instinctively drawn to desire the same object and to violence in order to acquire it (154-5). The violence arising from the rivalry is contagious and self-propagating (27), "Only violence can put an end to violence", as well as being infectious through space:

... the scene of a violent act, and the objects with which the violence has been committed, send out emanations that penetrate everything in the immediate area, growing gradually weaker through time and space.

Violence can only be negated through sacrificial ritual, whereby a surrogate victim stands in for the object of desire. In this way Girard (8) argues that the role of sacrifice is to protect the community from violence, which it does by ending the violence through targeting a victim for whom there will be no reprisals upon its death: "The trick of ritual is to 'purify' violence; that is, to 'trick' violence into spending itself on victims whose death will provoke no reprisals" (37-8). In this sense ritual violence is 'good violence' (38) ending the cycle of 'bad' reciprocal violence. The role of the surrogate victim only works as long as the community

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<sup>27</sup> Llobera (2003: 99-101) discusses similarities between Durkheim and Le Bon's thoughts on collective emotion, albeit with an erroneous understanding of the place of irrationality in Durkheim's theory. Mellor (1998: 89-91) provides a clearer discussion of the difference.



believes the victim is responsible (Girard, 2005: 86), such as with the scapegoating of Jews throughout mediaeval European societies (Girard, 1986).<sup>28</sup>

The role of the surrogate victim helps explain how violence could be abrogated, but it also draws us back to the reciprocal nature of violence. The mimetic drive is found within primitive quarrels over natural resources as well as conflicts over territories. The reciprocal nature of these struggles can spill over into inter-generational skirmishes at the level of civilisations. The role of mimesis naturally involves more than one person, and thus suggests the necessary sociality of desire and, by inference of the process of controlling the violent outcome of this desire, of society.

Whilst I do not subscribe to Girard's (2005: 32) notion of the sacred (that of forces that increase in correlation to human's attempts to control it – such as natural disasters and human violence) I think that the role of mimetic rivalry still places violence at the heart of the sacred. The non-negotiability, the hard boundaries of sacred values lead to violence when in conflict with other sacred values.

Dependent on the context, the violence between these values could lead to the submission to the 'Other's' values (by a weaker group, for example) or to the outbreak of physical violence. By placing violence at the heart of the sacred, this suggests that the outbreak of violence in the history of human interaction is the norm, rather than the exception.<sup>29</sup>

In modern societies *justice* seeks to stop the cycle of vengeance by taking the position of the surrogate victim. In taking vengeance upon the perpetrator the judicial system leaves no person against which to direct the inevitable reciprocal act, thus stopping the cycle of vengeance dead (Girard, 2005: 16-9). In this sense justice is the modern development of sacrifice.

Through the idea of mimetic rivalry Girard demonstrates how the sacred helps societies police competing value systems as well as what happens when these

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<sup>28</sup> Durkheim also recognises the scapegoating of Jews, this time in the Dreyfus affair (Lukes, 1985: 345). See Graham (2007) for a discussion of the limitations of Durkheim's thought in relation to the scapegoat and where Girard built on (but also diverged from) Durkheim's understanding of violence and the sacred.

<sup>29</sup> Girard (2003) went on to suggest that through Christianity the reciprocal cycle of violence can be ended, through the ultimate surrogate victim – Jesus. This theory assumes too much about the truth of the Christian message and is not discussed here.



systems come into conflict. Further, it gives us an explanation of the reciprocal nature of violence and how it may be averted, through sacrifice or a judicial system.

## Conclusion

Through this brief theoretical journey I have outlined areas of thought that impact upon and have explanatory power in relation to the appearance of violent actions in contemporary groups – religious and otherwise.

I started by addressing the lack of religious discussions in many contemporary discourses of violent groups, before problematising the role of religion in some works which did pay serious attention to it. Both issues are due in part to the problematic understanding of religion and the role it plays in society so I then proceeded to highlight how I have approached this issue.

I defined an understanding of the sacred which I will operationalise throughout the rest of this research and explored some linkages between this concept and that of the violence that we encounter in society. Sacred thought is ordered and constructed through boundaries – which create and maintain the boundaries between uncontrollable violence and ordered human society through the use of taboos. It creates spaces, metaphorical, social and physical, which are infused with 'sacred' qualities. The sacred is set apart from the profane sphere of everyday life and the values and beliefs of conflicting systems. It is the boundary and the space on the other side of it, characterised by the violence of uncontrollable forces – significant amongst them mimetic rivalry. The interaction of these differing spheres, transgression, can lead to dangerous, uncontrolled violence.

This violence is contagious, from person to person and space to space. The contagion is driven through the reciprocal nature of violence, whereby violence begets violence. In this final analysis violence is not the co-incidental result of abnormal events, but the essential underpinning of social organisation. Its appearance is to be expected where sacred boundaries are transgressed, and through the understanding of the beliefs of groups, which I suggest can be accomplished through the matrix, we can better predict when such transgressions will result in violence.

With this understanding of the linkages between violence and the sacred, I now turn to my first application of the matrix – as part of my case study on Aum Shinrikyo.

## 4. Case Study – Aum Shinrikyo

### Introduction

Aum Shinrikyo came to international prominence in March 1995 following the release of a poisonous gas (sarin) onto the Tokyo underground railway network. It is one of a class of Japanese religions known as 'new New Religions', being defined as groups which came to national prominence during the 1970s.<sup>30</sup>

Aum Shinrikyo (referred to from this point on as just 'Aum') operated within the highly fractional nature of modern Japanese religious movements, where many adherents may be members of several different religious movements at the same time (Bocking, 1989: 144). This rampant pluralism is not a modern development. As far back as 1963 McFarland (1967: 18) pointed out that government figures accounted for higher numbers of Shintoists and Buddhists combined (the two predominant religious traditions in Japan) than the total population of the country.

In his own survey McFarland (1967: 19) pointed out that 12.4% of respondents claimed allegiance to more than one religion, and, though only 8.8% claimed affiliation to Shinto, McFarland (1967: 19-21; 26-8) goes on to point out that in a significant sense "every Japanese, no matter his personal profession, may be said to be a Shintoist" (20). This is because of the cultural nature of Shinto belief, by which any member of Japanese society imbibes some of its beliefs and values, without necessarily recognising membership of a formal Shinto institution. Likewise with Buddhism: "Because Buddhism is so pervasive an influence in the culture of Japan and is so closely identified with family life, the individual who has absolutely no association with Buddhism is a rarity" (20).

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<sup>30</sup> Shimazono (1995: 383) states his preference for the term "Fourth-Period New Religions" relating as it does to the four periods of growth of Japanese New Religions – the Meiji era; Taishō and early Shōwa eras; the post-war period; and 1970 to the present day. This is more specific but most commentators on these religions are happy to preface the 1970s onwards as 'new New', c.f. Reader (1996: 12). 'New Religions' itself is problematic as a label for religious movements developed since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as McFarland (1967: 6-8) has pointed out. However, for the purposes of this study, 'new New Religions' will suffice to explain the position of Aum in the Japanese religious context.

Therefore, whilst many people may be influenced by or even undertake Buddhist or Shinto practises, they do not necessarily formally associate themselves with these beliefs as 'religions'. This identification of belief with culture is supportive of a Durkheimian reading of religion, which suggests that even in the absence of a significant membership of religious bodies, religious belief can still be seen to influence social mores and traditions.

This context is important to understand, as it helps frame some of the paranoia of Aum and its concern over losing believers within the highly competitive Japanese religious market. Japanese religious promiscuity was also reflected in Aum's beliefs and leadership: Aum combined a mix of Buddhist, Hindu and Christian traditions and even Shoko Asahara had experience of another religion before he founded Aum.<sup>31</sup>

Aum Shinrikyo's inclusion in this study is due to several notable factors. Firstly, Aum is interesting because of its short development from founding to becoming a violent group. Falling outside the Western sphere of influence it also gives us an insight into a religious background other than the Abrahamic religions that dominate contemporary work on fundamentalism and violence. In addition, Aum is often considered to be a textbook example of a "Doomsday Religious Movement" (Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), 1999) and as an example par excellence of an extremist movement (FBI, 1999).

This chapter will start with an examination of the move to violence in the beliefs of Aum, showing how these changed in response to and justification of, violence. I will then turn to addressing an important issue relating to differences between believers and leadership of groups through focusing on the hierarchical nature of Aum. During the course of both of these sections I will provide the reader with background information on Aum and its development, so providing some context to the final section wherein I will interrogate the data that I gathered, by each marker.

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<sup>31</sup> Shoko Asahara had previously been a member of Agonshu in 1981 (Reader, 1996: 21).



## From Yoga to Poa: The Move to Violence in Aum's Beliefs.

Perhaps the most striking element of the Aum Shinrikyo affair is how swiftly the group transformed from a small number of yoga practitioners to a large body of people preparing for Armageddon. The development of their beliefs in this move to violence helps us answer the central research question of this thesis – the move to violence, and in this section I will examine this development through three stages, covering the early yoga years and the first apocalyptic revelations; the development of the idea of '*poa*', used to justify violence within the group; and finally the period when Aum increasingly focused on the need to renounce the world.

### *Apocalyptic visions*

Aum was founded by Chizuo Matsumoto (Asahara) and 15 members in 1984 as a yoga practice group called Aum Shinsen-no kai.<sup>32</sup> Matsumoto had previously supported his family through a herbal pharmacy, although had ceased this when he was charged with illegal practises.<sup>33</sup> During the same period he had also begun a spiritual journey, joining another 'new New Religion' in 1981 known as Agonshu (Watanabe, 1998: 82-3). During this time he undertook many ascetic practises to satisfy his spiritual yearning, but by 1984 was so dissatisfied that he left Agonshu to form Aum Shinsen-no kai (Reader, 1996: 21).

Matsumoto was nearly blind and came from a poor family so when he was young he attended a special state school for blind children. Despite repeated failures to get into university (Reader, 1996: 19), he possessed charisma and the ability to relate to people around him, evidenced in the rapid growth of Aum, which from its original 15 members had grown to 1300 members by July 1987. This phenomenal growth was continued until 1995 when the group had 10,000 members in Japan and more internationally, though most notably 30,000 in Russia (Reader, 2000: 63).

<sup>32</sup> Reader (1996: 21, *fn 18*) translates the name as 'Aum Wizards Society' and later (2000: 62) as 'Aum Mountain Hermits Society'.

<sup>33</sup> Hardacre (1997: 183, *fn 35*) states that Asahara was imprisoned for twenty days and paid a fine of 200,000 Yen.

This initial period of growth was also marked by rapid spiritual change in Matsumoto, who travelled to India and even met with the Dalai Lama.<sup>34</sup> In 1987 Matsumoto changed his name to Shoko Asahara and that of the group to Aum Shinrikyo. The beliefs of Aum also went through rapid change during this time. Like many 'new New Religions' it saw itself as a pure form of Buddhism (Reader, 2000: 47-8; 67-8). Along with the influence of Tibetan Buddhism (Pye, 1996: 266) it incorporated elements of Hinduism, and especially a growing connection to the Hindu deity Shiva (Reader, 2000: 66).

The new name, Aum Shinrikyo, can be translated as: '*shinri* – truth and '*kyo*' – teaching. 'Aum' was derived from the Hindu/Buddhist chant 'Om' and Reader (2000: 61) points to Asahara's explanation of the spelling of this as "A means Creation, U means maintenance or continuation, and M is destruction". Further, Reader points out that the context this explanation was placed in – that of the Hindu god of destruction, Shiva – was limited to the idea of the destruction of evil (not meaningless material destruction). So the name Aum Shinrikyo in essence suggested the creation and maintenance of good and the destruction of evil, coupled with the teaching of the truth.

In these aims themselves there was nothing to suggest a violent impulse, but as the beliefs developed so did the urgency for action and the justification of violent action. For example, an increasing Christian influence was felt on the teachings of Asahara, primarily from the Book of Revelation at the end of the Bible. Lifton (2000: 47-9) points to this influence in Aum as early as 1989 when Asahara quotes from Revelation and predicts Armageddon will occur in 1997 (see also U.S. Senate, 1995). These predictions about the end of the world began a trend towards increasing millenarian tendencies within Aum and started to create an atmosphere in which violence would later flourish.

### To 'Poα'

In 1989 the group was successfully registered as a religious corporation, allowing it greater financial freedoms. Another important point about this registration was

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<sup>34</sup> Much was made of Asahara's meetings with the Dalai Lama and photographs of the meetings were used extensively in Aum promotions. The Dalai Lama was subsequently criticised for his apparent endorsement of Aum (Pye, 1996: 268; Metraux, 1995: 1147).

that it gave Aum a certain amount of protection from the law, which is often cited as a reason for why the police took so long to take action against Aum when they appeared to be perpetrating so many crimes (Lifton, 2000: 235).<sup>35</sup>

At the same time an increasingly negative perception of Aum, caused not least by members defecting and the increasing number of law suits from families of believers and neighbours of Aum facilities, created an embattled nature within Aum and deepened the sense of 'Us and Them' (Reader, 1996: 35-53). This perceived threat to the movement is well demonstrated in the prefaces to Asahara's (1993) book *Beyond Life and Death*. The first preface, written in 1986, talks of the need for a personal journey with suffering, but how there will be eventual enlightenment. However, the preface to the second edition, written in 1988 is darker (1993: xi):

Another important point to be noted is that several disciples of mine have left me due to their arrogance. This was a matter of great pity.

Defections by disciples was a cause of great concern to Aum and indeed Reader (2000: 10) mentions that later on there was increased paranoia about whether defections would affect the future of the movement. It is also noted that when Asahara writes of members leaving Aum he sees it as "disciples" leaving "me". These words suggest people were devoted to Asahara and his teachings first and foremost, and also that their defection was a direct reflection on (and insult to) him. That he was concerned enough to raise this point in a publicly available book suggests that it was indeed a great worry to him.

During this time we also see the development of the idea of *poa*, from a piacular rite to remove negative karma from a person after death, to something that could be done to a person, including potentially killing them, to help them avoid accruing negative karma (Reader, 2000: 16-19; Watanabe, 1998: 84-8). Reader (143-6) states that this shift in belief occurred around the time of the accidental death of a believer during ascetic rituals and a deliberate murder during the subsequent cover-up. However, there is evidence of violent rituals before this time, for example Asahara's wife was beaten to persuade her to undergo ascetic austerities (137).

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<sup>35</sup> These protections came about due to the U.S. imposed policy of separation of religion from state following Japan's defeat in WWII (Reader, 1996: 111).



From this time on, there were several violent incidents against members, including deaths, especially of those seeking to renounce Aum, all of which were covered up by the upper echelons of the group's hierarchy (Reader, 1996: 28).

The development of these violent beliefs also justified actions against non-believers, the most famous being the disappearance of Tsutsumi Sakamoto and his wife and young child in November 1987. Sakamoto was a lawyer who had been representing several disgruntled families and groups in actions against Aum. His remains and those of his wife were found after police had seized control of Aum property following the attacks in Tokyo (Reader, 1996: 37-41).

At the same time as the accidental death of the ascetic, Aum also made a bid to gain political influence in the 1990 elections. Aum did exceptionally badly and was soundly ridiculed by the national media. The humiliation of this defeat affected Asahara and the group and their separation from mainstream society became even more pronounced (Reader, 1996: 43-47).

### *From many to the few*

Four years have passed since the first revision of *Beyond Life and Death*. For Aum Shinrikyo, these four years can be compared to a ship caught in a raging storm. Of course, the storm was not bred without a cause. But this storm has been a great joy for me. If not for this harsh and cruel 'Aum Bashing,' we would never have had the new growth and development. In other words, our karma has been washed off... We do not know when the army of death will come to defeat us. The only way for us not to be defeated by the army of death is to live this moment earnestly in accordance with the law of the truth.

These words (Asahara, 1993: xiii) were written two years after the humiliation of defeat in the national elections and the 'Aum bashing' that took place afterwards in the media. Whilst Aum had enjoyed a difficult relationship with the media right from its first registration as an official religion (Hardacre, 1997: 184-6) this got significantly worse during Aum's political campaign in 1990 (Reader, 1996: 44-5).

Asahara responded to this humiliation by focusing more on the renunciates within the group, and also with some ideological developments, including an abandonment of the plan to save all of humanity in favour of saving a select few. For example,



Hardacre (1997: 187-8) says that in October 1991 Asahara realised that he was the Messiah, which he supported with a quotation from the Bible about the Christ as a sacrificial lamb.<sup>36</sup> He also later reflected about the election defeat and media attacks, linking Aum as well to this analogy of the sacrificed lamb. As Hardacre (1997: 185) points out, these Christian themes also played a central role when Asahara likened Aum's treatment by the media to that of Jesus' treatment, Asahara quoting from Matthew 24:9 in support of this view.

Alongside this increased Christian imagery Reader (2000: 126) also notes a change in religious self-identification, from a *Mahayana* Buddhist path which is dedicated to helping all souls to that of the *Vajrayana* path of esoteric Buddhism which focuses around a select number of renunciates. These changes effectively closed Aum off from the world. Whilst continuing disputes over land purchases (Reader, 1996: 46-9) and other issues would drag Aum into the public arena, they would only serve to reinforce the feelings of paranoia and the justification of Asahara's words that the world was out to get them. It was from this time that Aum's attempts to make lethal chemical agents began (Lifton, 2000: 39; U.S. Senate, 1995: Section 3) and they even tried releasing their efforts in Tokyo (Reader, 2000: 159).<sup>37</sup>

These programmes reached maturity when, in June 1994 seven people were killed and two hundred injured when sarin gas was released in the city of Matsumoto. Aum carried out these attacks primarily to target some court officials hearing a case against Aum (Hardacre, 1997: 190-192). During this time Aum also purchased a military helicopter, which was kept in one of its compounds, and in December they killed a man using VX, a nerve agent that Aum was working on (U.S. Senate, 1995: Section 5).

In March 1995, fearing an impending police raid, Aum senior members carried out the attack on the Tokyo underground system during rush hour. Due to the rushed production of the sarin and its means of dispersal the effects were not as bad as they could have been – Reader (2000: 23), U.S. Senate (1995: Section 5, Part C) and

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<sup>36</sup> 1 Peter 1:18–20

<sup>37</sup> Reader (2000: 97-98) questions the commonly held conception that Aum had access to numerous experts in chemical and biological warfare. Whilst there were significant facilities to aid in their research the scientists involved were well-educated converts as opposed to recruited experts (cf. Daly, Parachini and Rosenau, 2005: 10-11). Leitenberg (1999) also states that, contrary to popular opinion, Aum never successfully made biological weapons.

other sources state that there could have been as many as 10,000 casualties. Despite using a weaker form of sarin, there were still 12 fatalities and over 3,000 people were injured. Aum had moved from desiring to save the many, through saving just the few, to attempting to kill the many.

## **A Hierarchy of Believers: In, Inner and Really In**

Another striking feature of Aum Shinrikyo was the stark hierarchical structure of the organisation. Whilst Aum was unusually successful at converting lay members into renunciates (Watanabe (1998: 81) comments on this as does Reader (2000: 63) who says that 10% gave up their lives and money to join the movement and live in Aum retreats), the majority of members remained living in society and this group remained on the bottom rung of Aum's spiritual ladder. At the other extreme was the core leadership of Aum Shinrikyo, respected throughout the movement and extremely devoted to Asahara. All of the people involved in the sarin attack in Tokyo came out of this inner cadre of believers. When I talk about a group making a move to violence, I am not arguing that all members will make this move at the same speed, or indeed ever. Whilst focusing on this aspect of Aum, this is a good place also to consider why some members of a 'violent group' may act violently, whilst others do not.

### *Guests and Shukkesha*

Asahara reacted to the humiliation of the election defeat (he wasn't even the highest polling Aum candidate)<sup>38</sup> by calling an Aum conference on a small island and converting a not insignificant number of Aum members into full renunciates. To this end a number of compounds were built where Aum members would be safe physically as well as spiritually (Reader, 1996: 45-6). Whilst the focus within Aum had always been on converting members into *shukkesha* (renunciates), after this stage the organisation paid much less attention to their lay believers, known as 'guests' (Reader, 2000: 86).

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<sup>38</sup> Fumihiro Joyu, Aum's spokesperson and a pin-up for many Japanese girls won the most votes. Joyu served a short prison sentence for land fraud but avoided charges linking him to the violence (Lifton, 2000: 31). As such he is not in prison now and is the leader of Aleph, as Aum is now known.

There is an important distinction between these two groups, in terms of levels of commitment to the group. The *shukkesha* would have renounced all contact with family and friends, sold their possessions and donated all their money in order to join Aum. In terms of the markers in my study, we would expect to see this commitment strongly represented in markers such as *Conviction*, and *No Common Ground*. Because they had more contact with general society and less personally invested in Aum, the lay members would have been, in most cases, less likely to have acted on the violent teachings of Aum than the *shukkesha*.

The data in this study comes entirely from members who were *shukkesha*, as I was unable to find any resources from those members who were guests. This means that I am unable to test the above suggestion, and see if there were significant differences in levels of commitment evidenced in the markers. However, to a certain extent there was an apparent difference between the data from the leadership and that of the ordinary level *shukkesha*.

### *Hierarchy within Aum*

It is not surprising that there were some apparent differences in the data coming out of the leadership (for example from the official publications from Aum) and the general *shukkesha* (from the interviews with Murakami (2000) and Mori (1998; 2001), for example).<sup>39</sup> Whilst the general *shukkesha* often lived apparently mundane lives, as school teachers, engineers, delivery men (all within Aum) for example, the leadership were given high-ranking spiritual titles, reinforcing their superiority over the rank and file. This spiritual separation is shown in a table, compiled by Reader (2000: 87) which shows Asahara as six 'levels' higher than the first level of the higher-ranked renunciates and ten levels higher than the novice renunciates. The non-renunciate members of Aum, the lay members, did not even figure on the scale.

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<sup>39</sup> However, it should be noted that I have classed the data from these three sources as coming from the post-sarin period and so, in general, have not used it in this chapter. I refer to it in my discussion on the move to and from violence, in Chapter Eight, and also on the reliability of ideology in Chapter Nine. I have done this as all of these interviews took place after the sarin attacks and so capture statements expressed with the benefits of hindsight, which could distort the findings for this chapter, where I wanted to focus specifically on the violent stage of Aum Shinrikyo.



Renunciates could (in theory) progress up this scale through ascetic practice. The award of a new title was evidence of progress, although it could also be felt through the attainment of new 'powers'. Kisala (1998: 155) argued that it was because of the disillusionment of many followers at their failure to obtain new powers that Aum needed to make more fearful predictions of future calamities than many of its rivals – in order to give them another reason to stay.

The upper echelons of the group needed no such encouragement, as they remained totally devoted to Asahara (although this was not necessarily always so – I have already mentioned that Asahara's wife, later convicted for her part in some of Aum's crimes, was beaten earlier on in the movement's history). While most members of Aum were devoted to Asahara, and this comes across strongly in the markers, some showed higher levels of and even extreme devotion. This is shown, for example, through some of the ascetic practices they had to undertake to reach the elevated spiritual levels, such as being buried in an airtight box with no food and water for five days (Reader, 2000: 121-4). These extreme practices served both to demonstrate the superiority of those who had succeeded at them and to act as a barrier to those desiring elevation from the lower levels.

The setting of these tasks and the spiritual rewards for succeeding at them ensured that many *shukkesha* remained diligently focused on their spiritual devotions, some even after the sarin attacks and the terrible publicity that followed.<sup>40</sup> Larimer (2002) reported for *Time Magazine* on Asahara's court case and mentioned that the group still claimed it had 1,186 members (though Japanese police reckoned there were hundreds more) some of whom turned up to the trial, still devoted to their guru. By 2005 the Japanese Public Security Intelligence Agency (PSIA, 2006) claimed that Aum had 1,650 members.

### *The Elite*

The Aum members involved in the sarin attacks were all at the top end of the hierarchy. These include people like Tomomitsu Niimi who, according to *The*

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<sup>40</sup> See Watanabe (1997) for a summary of the anti-cult movement and other measures taken against Aum after the sarin gas attacks.



*Japan Times* (1998), even when speaking to prosecutors during his trial refused to betray Asahara. Whilst some of the elite members of Aum, such as Ikuo Hayashi (former Aum Minister of Health), regretted their violent actions (Reader, 2000: 114-5) even they had previously displayed an unquestioning devotion to Aum's teachings. Hayashi, for example, was one of those who released the sarin gas in Tokyo.

These members had, variously, been with the group since the beginning or displayed both an intense desire and ability to develop spiritually. To this elite, Asahara preached the *Vajrayana* path of Buddhism, which enabled them, as the select few, to reach spiritual levels beyond those of the rank and file *shukkesha* (Reader, 2000: 88). The *Vajrayana* path involved intense devotion to the guru (Shimazono, 1995: 406), placing one's life within the whims of Asahara's decisions.

What we see in the elite members of Aum, is once again an increase in the personal investment in the teachings of Aum and, therefore Asahara. As Shimazono (1995: 407) notes, Asahara had unrestricted power within Aum, to the extent that Reader (2000: 69) commented that Aum could be known as an "Asaharan religion".

Devotion to the guru was important for all members of Aum but it is clear that there were differing level of this devotion and commitment and these were linked to whether the member was merely 'in' Aum, was part of the more devoted, inner, *shukkesha*, or was 'really in', displaying such intense levels of devotion that they were prepared to kill for Asahara.

These levels of commitment shouldn't necessarily be measured in terms of length of time with a group, but rather by the degree to which a believer subordinates him or herself to the teachings of the group. Where a believer is intensely committed to the teachings (as with the elite members of Aum) and where these teachings are violent, then it seems highly likely that we will see the individual act violently. Such total submission may take weeks, or years, and we could argue that it is only in the minority of cases that someone is prepared to totally bypass their innate humanity such as to carry out violent actions against another (although Milgram's (1974) electric shock experiments would suggest otherwise), but the end result is that we can understand how some individuals within groups make this move to violence and others, still believers, do not.

The trials of the leaders of Aum are still live issues in Japan, with several awaiting execution. The group is now led by one of the elite members, the former Aum Shinrikyo spokesman, Fumihiko Joyu, and has changed its name to Aleph (2007). Despite publicly renouncing violence and apologising for the actions of its members, it is still regarded with great suspicion in Japan and considered as a threat (PSIA, 2006). As already mentioned, I also conducted an analysis of statements made by this stage of the group, which I draw on in Chapters Eight and Nine, however, in the following section (unless mentioned otherwise) I discuss the data coded from the violent stage of Aum, in order to better understand how Aum made the move to violence.

## **Marker Analysis**

In all the case study chapters I will discuss the markers in alphabetical order, apart from those which I coded little or no data into and which I will explore last. The following are the five markers into which I coded the most data in this case study:

- (1) External Legitimizing Authority
- (2) Emergency Situation
- (3) Violent Traditions
- (4) Symbolic Importance
- (5) Context of Group's Internal Development

### *Basic Injustice*

From early on in Aum there was a sense of some injustice, when their initial application to become a registered religious organisation was declined. As Reader (1996: 36-37) points out, their response to this, to go on the offensive, typified the approach they took to most occasions when they felt they had been unfairly treated.

Certainly, Aum seemed to treat most opposition to their group with a certain amount of hurt naivety and saw such cases as further examples of the injustice of society against their group. This reached its peak with the elections in 1990 when

Aum received unprecedented levels of negative press in the media, with people mocking their campaign to such an extent that one academic even expressed his sympathy for Aum (Reader, 1996: 43-5). Inside Aum itself, people asked Asahara why it was being persecuted; this is one of his responses (AUM152):

Master: They have investigated the prophecies, and they are persecuting Aum in order to find out if it will be the religion that embraces them around 1996 or 1997. They are persecuting Aum to see if it is the real Aum. In the meantime, a fierce battle is expected. It will be a battle in which one side will have to patiently endure the persecution, remain calm under all circumstances, and love others from the depths of suffering. These are also battles for those who are religious. I think our ability to behave in this fashion, that is, in a way befitting a god, will determine whether we can embrace the Freemasons.

This sense of injustice fed their view of being separated from society and this in turn increased the chances of them feeling slighted in new clashes with the wider society. Following the election defeat Asahara blamed vote rigging and aired his concerns about a dark conspiracy, involving the media, Freemasons (as briefly alluded to in the previous quotation) and other forces all ranged against Aum. These sentiments are expressed in numerous statements, such as where Asahara identifies the role the mass media plays (AUM151):

The purpose of their plan is to condition the earth in such a way that they can control everything in the direction they desire. For example, we may not feel we are being controlled in present-day Japan, but we are manipulated by the mass media. ... And our way of thinking is manipulated by newspapers, television, and magazines. They propagate such ideas as, 'This is delicious and that is delicious too,' 'This is a bad man and that is a good man.'

In addition to the basic injustices suggested by the leaders, many of those who joined Aum felt outside of society before they joined (and indeed joined because they felt like outcasts) so the feeling of being betrayed by society was one that they brought with them.<sup>41</sup> These 'outcasts' found a home within an organisation that, from these feelings of injustice increasingly stated the destruction of humanity (and the dominant society the members had left) was necessary because of its corrupt materialistic obsession (Reader, 2000: 88-91).

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<sup>41</sup> The testimonials in Aum's own publications (see Asahara, 1993) and in external books (Murakami, 2000) often mention a feeling of unhappiness with society before joining Aum.



## *Context of Group's Internal Development*

Because Aum Shinrikyo's lifespan (at least in its pre-sarin attack manifestation) was so short (from 1984 to 1995) and its growth so dramatic, it is easy to see important data in its internal development. Reader's (2000) second monograph on Aum provides the best account of the internal changes that occurred in Aum and I have referred to key incidents that Reader highlighted in my introduction to Aum, above.

However, even away from Reader's excellent analysis the primary texts that I analysed provided plenty of evidence of the development of ideas, not least through the extensive prophecies of Asahara (so much of which was relevant to this marker that it was the fifth most populated marker in this case study). Here are some examples:

I Asahara have mentioned the outbreak of a nuclear war for the first time. We have only 15 years before it. (AUM97)

I have had a particular vision related to water many times. It starts with a scene of Tokyo sinking. Some parts of the Japanese archipelago gradually sink, and the surface of the sea surrounding Japan suddenly rises and engulfs the land.

I am sure this will come true. Something unusual will occur either in 1995 or 1996. (AUM114)

I have mentioned the apocalyptic statements of Aum many times in this case study, justifiably so as they formed such a central component of their beliefs. The above two demonstrate some of the variety of means by which disaster would hit humankind, according to Asahara. This element to Aum's internal development, the constant refiguring and calculation of the end of their world, cannot be overstated. It was this continual escalation of a sense of tension and impending doom within the teachings of the group's spiritual leader which most clearly defined the group's internal development.

Of course there were also statements which did not refer to any kind of apocalyptic disaster. Additionally those that did refer to catastrophes often contained or implicitly suggested references to the possibility of salvation through Aum. However, the overriding message was certainly that humankind's time on earth (as enjoyed at present) was limited, and the centrality of this teaching remained



ingrained into Aum's renunciates even after the trials for the attacks in Tokyo.<sup>42</sup> The sense of urgency these teachings engendered will be dealt with in the *Emergency Situation* marker, but the way that this was escalated through time is also an important theme within this marker.

In addition to the development of the sacred beliefs of Aum there were also significant internal events which had an important bearing on Aum's move to violence. I mentioned above the accidental death of a renunciate in a cleansing ceremony and the resulting development in Aum's teachings about *poa*. It is important to note that this accident took place within an environment that was conducive to violent thought, even if until then it had been limited to extreme practices coupled with the increasingly negative beliefs that I have mentioned above. It is impossible to predict how Aum would have developed without one of these two conditions occurring, but it is reasonable to speculate on the necessity of these events to the future violent actions Aum undertook. Aum was already committed to a violent path before the death of the believer, but this event undoubtedly acted as a catalyst to the development of these beliefs and sped up the occurrence of the concomitant actions.

Unsurprisingly, this death was not mentioned in the statements of Aum, but it is important to remember that these internal developments have an important bearing on the future trajectory of a group. Capturing this history, where possible, forms part of the essential contextualising that must take place alongside these case studies.

### *Conviction*

That 1,200 members of Aum renounced the world and gave up all their worldly belongings to live in Aum communes suggests a deep sense of conviction (Reader, 2000: 8). However, perhaps the best example of the incontestable nature of this conviction to Aum and Asahara is the number of those who even after the Tokyo attacks still maintained a defiant loyalty to the guru and his movement. A significant amount of data was coded into this marker for the study I conducted on

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<sup>42</sup> In answer to a question as to where they will be in 30 years, a renunciate of Aleph jokes that they will be toughing it out with Armageddon (AUM8: 2:03:18.6 – 2:03:33.6).

Aum statements made after the sarin attacks, and, even after the legal trials and the persecution by Japanese society, some members assented that they would still have followed Asahara's orders to release poison gas, should he have asked. For example the following data was coded from one of Mori's documentaries (AUM9: 15:29.9 – 17:21.6):

*Question:* 'So you have to follow the guru's instructions, even if that feels intuitively wrong?'

*Answer:* 'That's right.'

Many members left the group after the police raids (Reader, 2000: 225), but as the above quotation demonstrated a few retained an unswerving loyalty to Asahara whilst others, although more ambivalent, could still not completely disassociate themselves from Asahara's teachings, even whilst accepting the truth of some of the charges levelled against him. Asked about Asahara's level of responsibility one interviewee replied (AUM71: 246-7):

If he is responsible then he must be judged according to the law. But as I said before there is such a huge gap between the Asahara I have in my mind and the Asahara I see on trial... As a guru, or religious figure, he had something very genuine. So I'm reserving judgement.

Whilst this is not an unconditional proclamation of Asahara's innocence this statement should be placed in the context of incredible media coverage of the Aum affair and indeed of accusations made against Asahara by senior Aum members. In spite of this, this believer, no longer living within the confines of an Aum commune, still refused to condemn his guru.

I use the above examples from the post-sarin attacks group, partly because this data-set provided more information directly from believers (unmediated by official spokespeople), but also because their continuing belief is a clear indicator of the conviction that many more must have originally felt. As a caveat, we should be aware that those who still believed in Aum and Asahara at this stage were likely to be amongst the more committed believers before the sarin attacks too.

However, there was also plenty of data from the violent stage of Aum's development as well. There were many references to the ascetic practices believers undertook, for example (AUM93):

On the same day I was ordered to do single-cell practice for a month. ... I did the one-month practice from April 2 to May 1. ... The master instructed us to practice *Chundali* (meditation) four times a day for three hours each, namely twelve hours a day.

During the above practice the follower remained in a room on his own, for one month, living on limited food. I mentioned other extreme practices earlier on, and the undertaking of these is further indication of the great conviction that members had to the group. This strong sense of conviction was found in the upper echelons of Aum as well – the above quotation was taken from a statement by Shigeo Sugimoto, part of the inner circle of Aum.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

From an early stage in its development Aum had a dichotomous world view, one which saw its own believers as working towards the salvation of the 'Other' – the rest of Japanese society (AUM46: 158). There was a clear demarcation between those within Aum – who were spiritually saved, and those without – karmically doomed, and there was also a sense of superiority attached to this, for example (AUM111): "And there will be confrontation between the gods and ignorant, doubtful beings." As will be discussed in the marker on *Symbolic Importance* later, such quotations were redolent with the spiritual superiority of Aum members over their 'Other'.

As the group became progressively embattled this dichotomous view of society became more oppositional as Asahara increasingly referred to an inevitable Armageddon event. These predictions raised the stakes for believers, who saw the personal consequences of the distinction between Aum members and non-members (AUM97: 91):

... even if nuclear weapons are used, our Astral Bodies stay alive, though our physical bodies will be destroyed. If you want to be born in this world again, you can do so with a new physical body. An emancipated person can do this. If the earth is so devastated as to be hopeless, you can be born in another planet.

Talking about others, however, we can not look on those who are burned in agony. We can not think it is all right if only we are happy.



The need to save non-believers was increasingly important, just as the reasons for this need simultaneously reinforced the significant differences between the two sides. As shown in the above quotation, these differences involve supernatural powers, but some statements even went so far as to afford Aum believers the status of a superior race (AUM106):

However, if a higher ideology is employed, and their wisdom is exceeded through meditation, then a race of beings who produce a superior kind of energy will be the winners, and the world will move in a direction corresponding to the intent of these beings. In other words, if souls meditate on the great four immeasurable, and develop a mind geared toward the salvation of humanity and other souls, this meditation will develop a superior form of energy and the world will be transformed into the holy heaven of the truth.

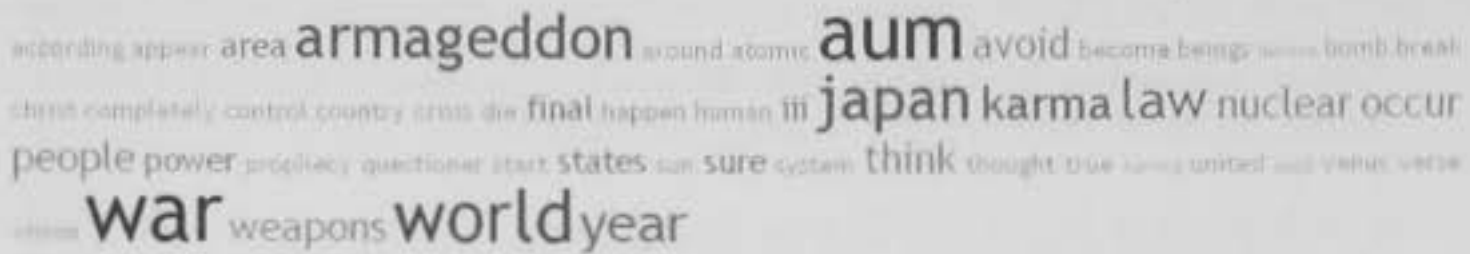
I have highlighted a lot of statements within this study on concerns about a forthcoming war, and these clearly point to a dichotomous world view. Within the discussion on this marker, I have focused on some of the more positive statements which, while talking about how Aum could save the world, nevertheless reinforce both the Armageddon message and the dichotomy between the two 'sides'. However, as we have seen, from being souls to be saved, those not within Aum became lives for whom there was no hope, and in whose death lay perhaps their only chance of a favourable spiritual birth (Reader, 2000: 145-6).

### *Emergency Situation*

As mentioned in the previous section the sense of urgency within Aum increased during the early 1990s and as it did so too did the feeling of an emergency situation. Whilst the majority of rank and file members of Aum were not aware of the illegal practises of their leaders, they would have been aware of the spiritual and real emergency that Aum was facing and their own fear would have fed into the ever-increasing reciprocal fear circulating the communities. The following word-cloud created from the data coded into this marker shows the pre-eminence of themes such as 'Armageddon', 'war' and 'nuclear disaster' within Aum's statements (which



were so numerous that this marker had the second highest amount of data coded into it):<sup>43</sup>



**Figure 4.1 – Word cloud from Aum texts**

In the closed world of Aum, without recourse to external sources of information that may have provided a calming barometer of the actual state of the situation, this shared sense of emergency would only have strengthened the resolve of senior members that their actions were morally legitimated by the dire situation they were in. We do know that there was some, albeit forbidden, contact with the outside world as mentioned, for example, by one Aum member in an interview after the sarin attacks (AUM49: 226). However, such was the strength of the teachings about the emergency situation that what information members received was still filtered through this paranoid paradigm.

This sense of fear was tied in with the historical context of nuclear attacks on Japan by the U.S. at the end of the Second World War (AUM95):

There will be disasters on the scale of the last stages of World War II (*e.g.* atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the massive air raids on Tokyo, the complete destruction of Okinawa, the air raids on Osaka and Kobe). And Japan will be completely defeated.

It is important not to underestimate the impact of the nuclear atrocities at Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the national psyche – in Japan such events were not merely the domain of science fiction but were also historical fact within living memory. Likewise, Aum also tapped into fears of natural disasters, such as earthquakes (Japan has a high level of seismic activity), with Asahara (1995: vii) claiming that he correctly predicted the Great Hanshin earthquake, for example.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The word-cloud was limited to the top fifty most used words in the texts coded into this marker, excluding common English linking words. The size of the words indicates the frequency of their use.

<sup>44</sup> 5,000 people died in the earthquake, which struck on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 1995, many in the large southern city of Kobe.

These events were tied into a persistent rhetoric of the end of the world; the following is a selection of some of the statements made by Asahara in this regard:

“Japan will rearm herself in 1993. Then a nuclear war is sure to break out from 1999 to 2003” – May, 1987 (AUM97)

“... This shows that World War III will have occurred by 2006.” – 1988 (AUM37)

“According to them, Armageddon will occur in 1997.” – March, 1993 (AUM12)

“Japan will be destroyed in 1998” – March, 1993 (AUM2)

“If you are able to survive until the year 2000, you will probably yearn for the Japan of today because a scorched wasteland will be all that is left” – March, 1994 (AUM58)

From just this small selection we can see the variety of dates on which Asahara predicted terrible events would happen, although the three later predictions all talk of something happening before the year 2000. It was this relentless talk of an Armageddon event, and the steady bringing forward of its date, which was the primary cause of the emergency situation within Aum. As the dates for Armageddon were moved closer, so the essentially confrontational nature of Aum, that already had a tendency towards violence, intensified and the urgent nature of the situation created a cycle of necessity and justification for violence.

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

More data was coded into this marker than any other for this case study, and this high rate was maintained for the data of the post-Aum group, Aleph. The significance of an external legitimating authority to the group is not surprising given the total dominance of the group by, and obedience to, Asahara.

For the most part Aum depended on the teachings of Asahara who was the principal (early on, and sole, later on) legitimating spiritual authority within Aum. I explain in Chapter Eight how Asahara could be considered to be an *external* legitimating authority for Aum, due to his authority (as understood by the

believers) transcending this world and the group itself. He reinforced this notion of spiritual superiority to the group through the many self-awarded titles and the spiritual practises that only he could undertake, such as *Shaktipat*.<sup>45</sup> Asahara remained the principal external legitimating authority for the group even after he had been tried and found guilty of involvement in the sarin attacks.

However, Asahara did also reference both Lord Shiva (whom he claimed to be passing messages on for) and the 16<sup>th</sup> Century seer Nostradamus. For example, Shiva apparently chose the name 'Aum Shinrikyo' and told Asahara that only he could save the world. Shiva was an important part of worship and focus for vows within Aum and Asahara once (in 1991) claimed that he was a manifestation of Shiva (Reader, 2000: 66-7).

Nostradamus was perhaps a more eye-catching influence on the group, being the second most referenced source of prophecies after Asahara himself. When Nostradamus's teachings were translated into Japanese in 1973 the book was an instant hit, with nearly 150 printings in the first three months (Kisala, 1988: 144). The way the prophecies were written lent themselves to a variety of interpretations (145-8) which explains some of their popularity for leaders of religious groups looking to use them to authenticate their own teachings. Asahara was no exception in this regard and worked on explaining Nostradamus's prophecies, such as the following example (AUM112):

Verse fifty-three of Nostradamus's Centuries is an important passage which often gets quoted. It states, 'The law of the Sun and the law of Venus contend with each other, both appropriating the spirit of prophesy. Neither will accept the other. The Messiah retains the law of the Sun.' This predicts the advent of the age in which the law of the Sun (the law of the absolute truth) and the law of Venus (the law of hedonistic things such as making money and fulfilling worldly desires) clash with each other.

While a number of prophecies were taken up by many leaders, the '1999 Prophecy' (in Century X, Quatrain 72 (Leoni, 2000: 435)) produced perhaps the most interest. Asahara was particularly interested in these millenarian prophecies of impending disaster, the following being another example (AUM2):

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<sup>45</sup> A practise whereby he would imbibe the negative karma from a believer. He later stopped doing this as he said that taking on all this negative energy was making him ill, and he allowed a few senior Aum members to take on the practice on his behalf.

Nostradamus said that there will be a great amount of blood shed in Japan, and there will be a severe food crisis and water shortage. That is the content of the ninety-eighth verse of the fourth chapter.

Despite this strong dependence on prophecies and especially on Nostradamus's verses, from Asahara's writings we see more significance focused on Asahara himself in the comments from followers, who mention Asahara appearing in their dreams and guiding their actions. The following quotation, as an example of this, is from a statement by Shigeo Sugimoto, later sentenced to death for his role in the sarin attacks in Tokyo (AUM93: 201):

He [Asahara] said to me, 'Look at yourself in a clear mirror. Don't do what you might regret later.' His words persuaded me not to take a hasty action. (Several days later he guessed rightly when I was planning to leave AUM. He had been reading my mind completely through his clairvoyant power.)

This total preoccupation with Asahara, by his followers, was also reinforced through rites which underlined the power of Asahara's physical body, as referred to by Reader (2000: 130-1) who comments on ceremonies where followers drank everything from Asahara's blood to his bath water. In this way Asahara ensured that he was the only legitimating authority that Aum members could turn to and that his influence alone guided their moral compass. Such was the authority of Asahara over the entire world-view of Aum's members that, as previously mentioned, Reader (2000: 69) claims that Aum's beliefs could be known as "Asaharan' religion".

### *No Common Ground*

For the core of Aum members, the renunciates, the absence of common ground between their values and those of the wider society was exacerbated by a lack of physical common space in which to conduct any dialogue. Having turned their back on society members often would not even talk to their family members, and had nothing to do with those who used to form a part of and shape their values. Reader (1996: 36) states that, whilst it may be the case that later on Aum



prevented members from seeing family and old friends, there is strong evidence to suggest that in a lot of cases members would have willingly chosen not to meet them.

In addition to this lack of physical common ground the nature of Aum, inward looking towards Asahara, made common ideological ground difficult to find. The only way that outsiders could find common values with Aum members was by accepting the teachings of Asahara and undertaking the aesthetic practices to further themselves spiritually. Furthermore, the constant development of the Aum belief structure (as discussed above) meant that it would have been difficult for any outsider to be able to record and study the beliefs in order to find common ground and the antipathy of Aum members to other religions and philosophies meant that they were unlikely to try.

This separation between the outside world, and what was going on in the collective Aum consciousness was undoubtedly a major factor in allowing the culture of paranoia and violence to be cultivated and sustained within the communes. The separation itself was justified through the increasing rhetoric of concepts such as *Shambhala*, sacred communes where the renunciates could take refuge from society (Reader, 2000: 91).

The success of Aum in encouraging members to renounce the world undoubtedly contributed to its closed nature, where the renunciates focused so heavily on life within Aum, and not on life on the outside. For example, one renunciate had the following to say (AUM93: 204):

I found myself being at ease and looking at worldly desires from the outside, which had worried me much until then. I did not think anything but just saw worldly desires. At this point my value system changed entirely. I lost interest in what I had liked and had been interested in, and my mind was not affected by anything but what I really needed to do.

Even those members who did not live in communes demonstrated a lack of common ground with the surrounding society. For example, the following quotation is taken from a believer reflecting on the last year of her training in Aum, and the impact it had had on her relationships with others (AUM89: 115):

By the way, what has been the most painful to me in the past year is to reflect upon my mind. It was very hard and painful to watch my own mind and actions controlled only by egoistic ideas such as conceit, envy, anger and adherence which continuously came up from myself. I hated myself. I avoided meeting people and had the urge to take myself out of existence.

The strong emphasis on these physical rites, which reinforced the absence of a common ground between Aum and their 'Other', echoes the Durkheimian suggestion that ritual can fortify belief: through ascetic practice believers closed down potential avenues for discussion or investigation of shared values. Aum's core values were absolutely opposed to those of wider Japanese society, with its perceived overwhelming favouring of materialism, and their beliefs and rituals served to underline this difference.

### *Symbolic Importance*

Symbolic importance was given to the actions undertaken by Aum through Asahara's references to scriptures and prophecies. These references came from as early as 1985 when Asahara travelled to a mountain associated with an apocalyptic vision by a pre-war nationalist (Sakai Katsutoki) who said that a leader from Japan would save the world from Armageddon at the end of the century. Apparently Asahara met a man who had been with Katsutoki. He informed Asahara that it would be a race of 'benevolent *shinsen* people' who would survive Armageddon (Reader, 1996: 89). Asahara subsequently adopted '*shinsen*' (meaning mountain wizard or hermit) into Aum Shinsen no Kai, the name Aum Shinrikyo had before 1988. As already mentioned, Biblical references also featured heavily: for example, Asahara likened both Aum and himself to Christ (Hardacre, 1997: 185; 187-8).

Further symbolism came from Buddhist texts such as the *Kalacakra Tantra* which Reader (2001: 91) tells us mentions a sacred valley called *Shambhala* from where a Buddhist King will triumphantly lead the forces of good against the forces of evil. *Shambhala* was the name given to the communes that Aum planned from 1988 onwards (Hardacre, 1997: 188), and to which its members were to retreat to wait out the final battle (Reader, 1996: 46).

However, it was apocalyptic imagery which, unsurprisingly, featured most strongly in the data coded for this marker (which contained the fourth highest amount of data in this case study). In some cases the statements coded related to Asahara explaining the symbolic importance of prophecies, for example those of Nostradamus (AUM108):

'England will exist without the sea' means that a land bridge will be formed between continental Europe and the territory of England. Various miracles on a great scale will begin to occur at this time. Miracles will begin to happen around 1998.

Miracles and signs formed a large part of this discussion and they acted as portents of forthcoming change and disaster, such as the end of England, which is prophesied in a statement of which the above quotation is an excerpt. These prophecies were often used to state the spiritual superiority of Aum's beliefs (AUM117):

Armageddon will be caused with the aim of creating two separate categories of human beings: those who possess the characteristics of gods and those who possess the characteristics of the three lower states of existence. Armageddon will happen on account of this.

In this quotation, it is clear to see the symbolism relating to the followers of Aum Shinrikyo (possessing the characteristics of gods) and their 'Other' (possessing the characteristics of lower beings). It also gives a purpose for the impending apocalypse. Such symbolism would reassure followers of Aum that Armageddon was happening with a reason, and that they were on the right side. It would fortify their conviction that the actions they had taken, and would be asked to take, were justified and this is a good example of the efficacy of giving a sense of symbolic importance to the present action.

### *Violent Traditions*

References to violent traditions within the statements of Aum were common in most of the pre-attack documents that I studied, and this marker had the third highest amount of coded data. Much of the detail which falls within this marker can also be found within some of the other markers, such as the *Context of Group's*



*Internal Development.* This is because Aum 'imported' some of its 'traditions' during its rapid development.

This point highlights the fact that traditions, myths and memories do not necessarily have to be part of the group's historical development but can simply be claimed by the group. I do not judge whether or not the traditions mentioned here are consistent or even validly claimed by Aum. What is important is that the group acquired these traditions and in doing so further developed and supported the sacred boundaries which shaped the nature of their conflict.

Aum accessed violent traditions from a number of different sources. The interpretation of Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism which Aum largely started with was not without some violent tendencies nor indeed were some of the Hindu influences. Although Reader (2000: 61) mentions that the idea of destruction in Aum's name should be set within the context of the destruction of evil, as opposed to wanton destruction, this still suggests violent imagery and of course the definition of 'evil' within this context is still open for discussion.

However, it was the use of Christian imagery which contributed most to the violent traditions of Aum. Words such as 'Armageddon', prophecies around the year 2000 and texts dealing with the role of the 'Christ' all cropped up regularly in the later teachings of Asahara. This suggests a deep engagement with the ideas of millennialist Christian ideologies, even if only a selective use of them. For example, note that Aum did not borrow from Christian teachings on love and forgiveness, but rather purely on Armageddon.

Equally, the Buddhist idea of karma was often used quite selectively to talk about the negative results of the current actions of individuals and societies (AUM145):

War occurs periodically. Why? Because of the law of karma. It dictates that one can no longer continue living in the human world when one's karma surpasses a certain point. Thus according to the law of karma, a great war, Armageddon, will result.

This selective use of varying religious traditions demonstrates that often what is important is not the source of particular traditions, but how these traditions are interpreted by the group. The concept of karma is not inherently violent, but, as shown above, in Aum's interpretation it forms part of the violent traditions of the



group. This violent interpretation betrays the intent and milieu of the group's beliefs and is one of the clearest indicators of Aum's violent worldview.

### *Wider Struggle*

It is very clear that Aum saw itself as the 'good' half of a cosmic struggle. The groups associated with the forces of evil were ranged from the Freemasons, to State actors (England and the U.S., for example), the media and other less well-defined factions. This conflict was the outcome of negatively accumulated karma and would lead to various calamitous events (AUM98). Aum's members were left in no doubt that this was an endgame played out between evil 'Others' and themselves.

The wider struggle was also played out between other forces which were opposed to Aum (AUM105: 306), and in this case Asahara portrayed Aum as an innocent bystander to the predicted apocalyptic conflagration. However, in other cases, Aum was seen as working in direct opposition to some forces which represented values diametrically opposed to those of Aum. For example, in an interpretation of one of Nostradamus's prophecies (mentioned above in the discussion on the *External Legitimizing Authority* marker), Asahara pits Aum against those who desire hedonistic things (AUM112).

As with all the groups I have conducted case studies on, Aum also included people who weren't members of Aum, as being on 'their side', for example (AUM151: 311):

In the case of Bagwan Sri Rajneesh, some of his teachings were erroneous, but there were good teachings as well. He was persecuted and killed because he wanted to unite the world.

In this case, it is interesting to note that Asahara cites the founder of the group behind the only successful bio-terror attack on U.S. soil (Lindholm, 2002). This point aside, we see how Aum broadened out both sides of the wider struggle it saw itself as a part of. The solution to this conflict was, according to Aum, as follows (AUM97: 88):

If a perfected or nearly perfected person spreads the teachings of AUM, saying, 'The teachings of AUM is like this,' [sic] and 'The root of the truth is AUM,' a conflict will be avoided.

For Aum, the simple truth of the situation, the wider struggle that the world found itself facing, was that only they and their teachings could save the world.

### *Markers not discussed above*

Some of the markers presented little or no information. These are discussed here.

No data was coded into any of the following markers during this case study:

- Followers Differ from Leader
- Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence
- No Justice Available in System
- Question of Authority
- Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes

However, some data was coded into the *Followers Differ from Leaders* marker when I conducted the case study on statements made by Aum after the sarin attacks. These findings are included in my discussion on the reliability of ideology in Chapter Nine. This point aside, it is, perhaps, not surprising that I could not find any data to code into the above markers. With its severe focus on loyalty to Asahara, I would not expect to find much data in the *Followers Differ from Leader* and *Question of Authority* markers.

Perhaps of most interest is that I did not find any data relating to the *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence* marker. Given that Aum saw itself as on the receiving end of a significant amount of persecution, and as acting within the wider symbolism of a struggle between good and evil forces, it is surprising that they did not feel it necessary to retaliate against perceived wrongs. Of course, some of their actions suggest that they did feel this way, for example the sarin attack in Matsumoto. This, therefore, is a good example of where context (in this case with the benefit of hindsight) can be applied to the study of a group. The absence of data in this marker does not detract from what are clear indications of violence in the other markers but, given Aum's actions, I would have expected to have seen some indication of a stated desire for revenge.

Small amounts of data were coded into the following markers, but either in insufficient amounts for decisive analysis, or what was coded appeared of lesser significance. I have, however, discussed any notable points below.

- Against Violence
- Context of Group's Origin/Development
- Desire for Social Change
- No Innocent 'Others'
- Personal Benefit

There was only one statement which explicitly asserted that Aum's teachings were against violence (AUM97: 88): "Their preachments will deny killing, violence, and wars." In one other statement, Asahara suggested (but did not claim outright) that Aum should refrain from violence (AUM152):

It will be a battle in which one side will have to patiently endure the persecution, remain calm under all circumstances, and love others from the depths of suffering. These are also battles for those who are religious. I think our ability to behave in this fashion, that is, in a way befitting a god, will determine whether we can embrace the Freemasons.

Placed against the violent subtext of the majority of Aum's statements, the above quotations do not signify a consistent desire for peaceful action. Overall, I only coded three statements to the *Against Violence* marker.

The two significant statements coded for the *Context of Group's Origin/Development* marker both related to important issues in the history of Aum's development. However, these motifs were not repeated as much as I expected so, whilst I think they still had some bearing on how Aum's beliefs moved to violence, it does not appear to have been a significant issue.

The first issue was that of media bashing, which as mentioned earlier in the Chapter did reach epidemic proportions after Aum's failed election bid. This certainly constituted part of the basic injustices Aum felt levelled against them, but in the overall context of their statements was not mentioned that often. This demonstrates that, to some extent, other issues were more important to their move to violence than the media bashing. The other issue coded into this marker was



that of the nuclear attack against Japan during the Second World War. However, again, whilst playing a role, this historical context does not (in the overall scheme of things) seem to have been particularly significant in Aum's move to violence.

A disproportionate amount of the data for the *Desire for Social Change* marker came from one source (AUM97). This speech by Asahara spoke of the need to change the world into a more positive place through spreading Aum's teachings, which he repeats the beneficial aspects of several times. In this instance, their desire for social change was to increase the number of spiritually emancipated peoples, thus reducing the instances of war and violence. Outside of this motivational speech, there were some references to the desire to help others overcome personal issues. However, there was no overriding desire for social change other than within the context of avoiding the predicted Armageddon.

Only one statement was coded into the *No Innocent 'Others'* marker (AUM58): "It is those of you here and other Japanese people who have not yet awakened to the truth, who are leading Japan to such a state." This ascription of fault to all those who weren't in Aum is clear, but there was less data relating to this marker than I would have expected given the nature of some of their actions.

Reader (2000: 151), for example, points out that in the Sakamoto and Taguchi killings<sup>46</sup> (the first external to Aum, the second internal) Aum had "transformed its vision of a sacred struggle against the forces of evil into a fight against *anyone* who threatened Aum's continued well-being and who therefore was deemed to be the enemy." Society itself was aligned with these evil forces, as they were ignorant of the true path to salvation, and only concerned with greedy, materialistic ways and therefore they deserved '*poaing*' (194).

Practical examples of this point of view can be seen in the sarin attacks in Matsumoto and Tokyo which, unlike direct action taken against perceived or real enemies (such as Sakamoto or unhappy renunciates), were always going to affect 'innocent' targets. One former Aum member recollected the attempts to release chemical agents in 1990, 1993 and the final Tokyo attack in 1995 (quoted from Lifton, 2000: 87):

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<sup>46</sup> Sakamoto was the anti-Aum lawyer who Aum murdered, along with his wife and infant son. Taguchi was killed following his expressions of anger at the accidental death of his friend, Ochi during an ascetic practice (as mentioned earlier in the chapter).



In this way the guru's salvation changed from salvation by means of enlightenment and liberation in this life to salvation in the future by the means of poa...

Therefore, whilst there was not a significant amount of data coded into this marker, the issue of *No Innocent 'Others'* is still an important consideration within this case study.

The possibility of obtaining personal benefits through spiritual practice was an undoubted draw for many believers. However, this did not form a significant proportion of their teachings. Where it was mentioned, it was primarily in cases of how people could avoid the impending apocalypse, by creating a new physical body or being able to seek rebirth on another (unaffected) planet for example (AUM97: 91). The lack of data in the *Personal Benefit* marker probably reflects a desire to downplay the possibility of personal benefits in a direct sense, as many believers started to become dismayed at their inability to quickly develop new spiritual powers. That said, the promised avoidance of destruction through Armageddon that Aum promised is, in any regard, a profoundly personal benefit. However, this was reinforced less often than expected.

## Conclusion

The swift development of Aum Shinrikyo, from ostensibly peaceful yoga group, to violent cult, is atypical of a group's move to violence. In many ways this case study suggests themes found in the other case studies in this research, but in a more concentrated form. These themes will be combined and compared with those from the other case studies to form a more rounded analysis in Chapters Eight and Nine.

However, at this stage it is worth highlighting some of the key themes that have arisen during this study. Firstly, there is the intense focus on Asahara, which ties in with some of the characteristics of other New Religious Movements (NRMs) both violent and non-violent (Melton and Bromley, 2009: 32-3) (NRMs being a class of cult/sect that Aum can be labelled as, outside of the specifically Japanese 'new New Religion' typology). Aum reacted against the greater personal freedoms of modernity by creating an austere environment which stressed harsh physical

practices and intense personal devotion to an over-arching meaning system.<sup>47</sup> This ties up with an understanding of religious extremism by Marty and Appleby (1991) who state that it is the development of a reaction against modernity. However, although they would exclude Aum Shinrikyo from being a proper religious example, it is clear that Aum still displays similar characteristics.

While the teachings of Aum are less clear on issues of personal morality than other groups I have researched, there was still a strong emphasis on denial of physical pleasures. This was, however, done less on a point of morality and more as part of the path to spiritual emancipation. In this case, we have a less clear idea of the mapping of sacred values in relation to ethical beliefs. Where we do get a more apparent idea of the outlines of sacred beliefs is in relation to the areas of an *Emergency Situation*, *External Legitimizing Authority* and *Violent Traditions*. In all three of these markers we saw an abundance of clearly defined violent tendencies, examples of which are useful data with which to compare against the findings of the other case studies to assess the strengths of the matrix as a tool for assessing and predicting violence. With this in mind, I now turn to my next case study, another well-known example of a violent religious group: al Qaeda.

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<sup>47</sup> Dawson (1998) highlights some of the problems with the common tendency to frame discussions of NRMs within a limiting relationship to modernity/post-modernity. However, whilst situating Aum in relation to modernity I do so within a broader context than just this suggested dichotomy.

## 5. Case Study – Al Qaeda

### Introduction

With no or little effective central leadership function and rare opportunities for physical interaction between its members, al Qaeda could be seen more as a network (or database) than a group (Kepel, 2004b: 6). This issue will be discussed later in this chapter, but it is important to note at this stage that al Qaeda *is* part of a wider Islamist movement, and while this chapter will focus on al Qaeda I will also be showing the move to violence as a trajectory on which al Qaeda is placed towards the end, as opposed to beginning of a wider movement.

This case study will allow me to address the movement of religious ideology through time and space via its relationship with contemporaneous power structures within a much broader time-span than my other case studies allowed. Al Qaeda's claims for a global *Ummah* are rooted in a long struggle between the Muslim world and Western countries, who seized power from its ruling elites during the colonial expansion of the eighteenth century and aided the demise of the Ottoman empire in the early twentieth century (Fieldhouse, 2006: 36-66; Lewis, B. 2002). Nationalist revolutionary movements succeeded the colonialists only to be challenged later by Islamist movements (Kepel, 2004a; Lewis, B. 1994). Thus, the Islamic world's relationship to power has seen significant shifts from insider to outsider status during these periods, with the current violent Islamist groups again seeing themselves as outsiders pursuing the right to rule.

Alongside these power struggles the ideological and geographical space of the Muslim world has contracted and expanded dramatically. Whilst less than a century after the death of Muhammad Islam's influence reached from Spain to the Great Wall of China (Waines, 1995: 33; 175-184), by the early twentieth century the last Caliphate had declared itself a republic and was installing secular values (Toprak, 1984: 120-2). Alongside the evaporation of Muslim borders, the sacred boundaries of Islamic ideology were under attack as Christian, Hindu and secular identities imposed themselves into previously Islamic places of discourse as, indeed,

Muslims found themselves living within secular/Christian countries previously understood as *Dar el Harb* (Land of War).<sup>48</sup>

In all of these changes through time, the underlying structures giving rise to group identity and belief remain the same. Rituals and taboos are preserved alongside the creation of new mythologies and histories. Al Qaeda has referenced the histories of British retreat in Afghanistan (ALQ137: 159), and the sacred histories of an Islamic caliphate (frequently in reference to Iraq, as in ALQ70: 254), alongside its preservation of commonly-held Muslim beliefs and rituals.

In this chapter I will illuminate some of this detail in relation to al Qaeda through a brief treatment of the broader move to violence of which al Qaeda is a part. This discussion will form the first part of the chapter, in which I will look successively at the movement through identity (the turn to nationalism), religion (the turn to Islamism), the expansion of ideological space (the turn to global Islamism), and finally the violent actions of the Islamist movement (the turn to violence). In the second part of this chapter I will undertake an analysis of the data, using the matrix of markers to highlight and investigate the significant social forms that aid our understanding of the move to violence.

## Islamism and the Turn to Violence

### *The turn to nationalism*

It is important not to confuse the discussion of a move to violence with a chronological discourse of the Islamist movement: violence has played a role at many stages throughout the history of the Islamist movement, but in order to limit the discussion in this study to a manageable level I am focusing on the acts of violence committed by al Qaeda. Lawrence (1991: 142-4) and Donner (1991: 48-59) both draw attention to the role violence played in the early years of Islamic

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<sup>48</sup> Waines (1995: 258) refers to problems from this collapse of ideological borders as Islam had never dealt with how Muslims were to live as minorities – it was always assumed they lived within *Dar el Islam* (Land of Islam), which did not overlap with its opposite – *Dar el Harb*.



expansion, and this attention is often replicated in less sensitive treatments of Islam which see it primarily as a religion of the sword (e.g. Huntington, 2002).

In India, the advent of British rule meant that large numbers of Muslims found themselves out of power and living in minority communities and this led to the rise of the Deobandi (Metcalf, 1982: 87-137) and Tabligh movements and also latterly to the writings of Maududi, who had so much influence on the Islamist movement in Pakistan and beyond. Tabligh Jamaat was created to help Muslims living in minority communities recover their devotion to Islam by living according to a literal interpretation of the life of Muhammad (Kepel, 2004a: 44-5). However, whilst the Tabligh movement shunned political involvement, the Deobandis, also set up to help minority-Muslims in the Raj (Metcalf, 1982: 11) and following a conservative interpretation of Islam, were politically active (Kepel, 2004a: 44-60). Alongside these movements support was gaining for independence from the colonial masters and, whilst nationalism could be said to be an un-Islamic construct, different nationalist identities were nevertheless being constructed (Sardar, 2003: 82-4). The newly independent governments oversaw a period of significant population urbanisation and expansion, and were seen to structure themselves along Western lines (Kepel, 1994: 193-4).

Towards the end of the 1960's, however, the nationalist governments faced increasing opposition, especially following their failures in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars and the 1971 succession of Bangladesh from Pakistan. Kepel (2004b: 60-62) argues that out of this crisis, and coupled with increasing poverty and the first post-independence generation coming of age, Islamism provided an attractive alternative ideology to nationalism.

### *The turn to Islamism*

The Egyptian Sayyid Qutb sought a radical break with the nationalist government of Egypt (Kepel, 1985: 53) and has since been recognised as a pre-eminent influence on the modern Islamist movement (Haddad, 1983: 67; Khatab, 2006: 1-3). His writings, influenced by Maududi before him, reached the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and encouraged Islamists throughout the region to seek a pan-Islamic, rather than national, identity. For example, Qutb (2001: 35) said:

The soil of the homeland has, in itself, no value or weight. From the Islamic point of view, the only value which the soil can achieve is because on that soil Allah's authority is established and Allah's guidance is followed; and thus it becomes a fortress for the belief, a place for its way of life to be entitled the 'homeland of Islam,' a center for the total freedom of man.

In many ways Qutb symbolises the turn from nationalism to Islamism. He was originally an ardent champion of the post-Independence government, but his initial support waned and his disillusionment with the nationalist ideals grew even further following British policies in the Second World War and a visit to the U.S. which he perceived to be greatly immoral (Haddad, 1983: 69-73; Kepel, 1985: 40-1; Calvert, 2000). His subsequent shift towards Islamism was marked by a number of influential texts focusing on Islam, culminating in the publication of his most significant work, *Milestones*, shortly before he was hanged by the Egyptian government (Kepel, 1985: 42-3).<sup>49</sup>

In his Islamist writings Qutb increasingly emphasised the purity of Islam as a system. He stressed the need to rid Islamic practice of outside influences such as those brought in by the Islamic philosophers (who developed ideas of *fiqh* in conjunction with ideas gained from Greek philosophy) as well as from the pressures of modern Western societies (Haddad, 1983: 76; Kepel, 1985: 51). He (Qutb, 1989: 14-17) outlined a strong demarcation between the world of Islam (the *Ummah*) and the world of ignorance (which he termed *Jahiliyya*), and labelled every state not ruled according to *Sharia'h* as non-Islamic, even if the majority of its citizens were Muslims (148-152).<sup>50</sup> The duty of every Muslim was, then, to radically change the political system so that it was governed according to the principles of *Sharia'h*.

While Qutb (1989: 109-110) did not believe that all people should be forced to become Muslims, he did argue that all non-Islamic systems of government should be overthrown. This makes an important point: that Islam should not just be a system of belief, but actually a system of governance – of every area of people's lives.

<sup>49</sup> *Milestones* was also published as *Signposts*.

<sup>50</sup> Kepel (1985: 44) says that '*jahiliyya*' is actually more analogous to the word 'barbaric', referring as it does to the state of the Arabic peoples before the Prophet came, when they lived in ignorance of God.

In 1979 one country managed to realise this goal. The Shia revolution in Iran saw a religious leader replace the Western-favoured Shah. The Islamic Revolution sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world, and established a religious power that shook the Saudi Arabian hegemony over international Islamic identity (Kepel, 2004a: 118-123). Another important event in the dateline of the Islamist movement occurred in this year, when the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries were only too happy to allow their revolution-minded trouble makers, emboldened by Khomeini's success, to answer the call to jihad against the Soviets (Kepel, 2004a: 137). Among them was the young Osama bin Laden (Gunaratna, 2002: 23), and the man who would become his mentor, Abdullah Azzam (Saghi, 2008: 18).

The two men came from radically different backgrounds – Osama was a scion of a billionaire building magnate, who in addition to holding most of the royal contracts in Saudi Arabia had also re-constructed Islam's three holiest sites, in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem (Bergen, 2001: 41-5). Azzam came from northern Palestine and had been involved with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and fought in the 1967 war against Israel following the annexation of the West Bank (Gunaratna, 2002: 24; McGregor, 2003: 93). He was well-versed in Islamic law, having received a BA in *Sharia'h* from Damascus University, and is considered to be the ideological father of al Qaeda (Gunaratna, 2002: 15).

A reliable go-between for Saudi funding for the Afghan jihad, Azzam also spread his message to funders on several trips to the U.S. (Kepel, 2004a: 144-5; McGregor, 2003: 105). Quoting freely from the mediaeval scholar ibn Taymiyya and the teachings of the Hanbali school of jurisprudence, Azzam popularised the concept of Islamic armed struggle and internationalised it, developing it beyond the nationalist (Egyptian) model he found in Sayyid Qutb (McGregor, 2003: 92-8) and the traditional concerns of Palestine and Afghanistan (Kepel, 2004a: 144-6).

Between 1987 and 1988 he conceived of al Qaeda as a means of utilising the *mujahidin* who had fought in Afghanistan, to use them as a reactionary force in future conflicts.<sup>51</sup> The plan centred around a database of contacts, called *al Qaeda*

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<sup>51</sup> Saghi (2008: 19) states that bin Laden and Azzam devised this plan together, whilst Gunaratna (2002: 28-29) states that Azzam alone drew up the initial plans.



(the [data]base), from which descriptive term the subsequent name stuck (Kepel, 2004a: 315).<sup>52</sup>

### The turn to global Islamism

Alongside the United States, who put in \$3billion to the jihadist effort in Afghanistan, another key funder was Saudi Arabia (Bergen, 2001: 68). Private fundraising and donations from individuals such as bin Laden (Saghi, 2008: 17; Bergen, 2001: 56) were supplemented by donations from the government (Kepel, 2004a: 142-4). The role of the Saudi state as financier of global Islamic issues was already well established, as argued by Kepel (2004a: 72) and Birt (2005). Their religious ideology, Wahhabism, was a conservative branch of Islamic belief that, through financing from petro-dollars, had been exported to Muslim communities throughout the world. Whilst there is some debate about how 'fundamentalist' the movement's founder, ibn Wahhab, was (DeLong-Bas, 2004: 193-229), there is no doubt that Wahhabism was a much stricter interpretation of Islam than that found in many other countries. Keen to suppress internal dissension and cement their place internationally as the keeper of Islamic identity, it was this conservative ideology that Saudi Arabia exported to mosques and community centres, and that spread through debate and dissemination world-wide.

Despite the spread of more conservative forms of Islam through Wahhabism, Tabligh and other Deobandi movements, Islamism did not enjoy great success. Kepel (2004a: 231-6) points out that their one apparent success was the Taliban in Afghanistan, even though it was a failure as a state with most central government functions failing or non-existent. Kepel (2004a) and Roy (1994) argue that the Islamist movement is failing, or indeed has failed. Their analysis is predicated on how Islamism (defined as a political movement) has failed to connect both the proletariat and bourgeoisie within its countries of operation (Kepel, 2004a: 361-3). While the movement does seem to have failed to ignite popular Muslim opinion (Sardar (2003a: 85-86) points to its minority status within Islam), Kepel's (2004a) suggestion that the movement is finished seems premature. Further, despite Kepel's intelligent and nuanced reading of Islamism, it does seem surprising that

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<sup>52</sup> The database is given various different names, but all contain 'al Qaeda', for example Lawrence (2005: xii) refers to it as *Sijill al-Qaeda* (Register of the Base) and Saghi (2008: 19) as *Qaedat al-Ma'lumat*.



his central works have focused so much on Islam without talking about religion. Whilst 'Islamism' is commonly understood to be a political movement (Roy, 1994: vii), it undeniably draws its central identity from a religious interpretation of the world. Although this understanding may well be based on a misinterpretation of Islam (Sardar, 2003a: 85), I nevertheless believe that these religious underpinnings require a richer reading of the social structure of the movement than Kepel's analysis provides.

### The turn to violence

The turn to violence within the Islamist movement was undoubtedly influenced by frustrations with the nationalist agenda of the governments and the effect their policies had on the urban poor and marginalised middle-class (Kepel, 2004a: 66-7). However, whilst these basic injustices may well have served as a catalyst, the resources for justification and motivation of this violence came from religious sources. These issues are drawn out in the analysis of markers in the second part of this chapter.

This turn to violence had met with positive results within Afghanistan. However, following the withdrawal of the Soviet army, the Afghans were keen to see the back of the foreign jihadists – also known as the 'Afghan Arabs' (Raphaeli, 2002: 11) – and they returned to their home countries. They took with them the networks, skills and most importantly ideology, which they had acquired whilst in Afghanistan. Re-establishing these groups within their home countries, they became a source of irritation (or worse) to their governments and were pressured into exile or underground (Kepel, 2004a: 299). Bin Laden, for example, left Saudi Arabia after denouncing the government particularly when Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iraq had led to a governmental invitation to the U.S. to station troops within Saudi Arabia (Gunaratna, 2002: 36-9).

Working against their governments, the jihadists' violent ideologies inspired conflicts in Egypt, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. Thwarted in their intentions to overthrow the 'near enemy' (governments, such as Egypt's, which were perceived as nationalist/secularist, as decried by al Zawahiri's *Egyptian Islamic Jihad* (al Zayyat, 2004: 61-2)), they turned their attentions to the next

available outlet, the 'far enemy', the West. Bin Laden in particular encouraged al Zawahiri and al Qaeda to focus on the United States (al Zayyat, 2004: 68-70). Others focused on Russia as the inheritor of the Soviet Union (Gerges, 2005: 58). Regardless of the target, there was still a common theme amongst global jihadists as one branch of the Islamist movement (Gerges, 2005: 1-3): the internationalisation of jihad, and the exportation of violent means to (re)achieve a global *Ummah*. It is to the effects of this international expansion that I now turn.

## Diasporas and the Turn to Violence

### Move to the West

I have already referred to a lack of consideration of the religious element within discussions of the Islamist movement. Specific attention to religious elements has often been absent or supplementary to political and cultural issues in academic discourse in many fields and McLoughlin and Zavos (forthcoming) note that early studies of Asian diasporas in Britain also lacked sophisticated accounts of religion. However, this situation has changed and McLoughlin (2009) has recently summarised some of the roles religion has been seen to play in accounts of diasporic communities. Previous recent examples of authors giving proper consideration to religion include Cesari and McLoughlin (2005) and Philip Lewis (1994). Lewis has later argued that whilst religion has now been recognised, it is incorrectly utilised as an essentialised concept (2008: xiii), a concern echoed in Caglar (1997). That caveat aside, the role of religious belief, ritual and identity, are now seen as important factors when it comes to the socialisation of individuals within diasporas.

These diasporas have been formed over a period of time and with different motivations. In Britain there was an influx of immigrants from all over the Commonwealth following the Second World War to meet a labour shortfall, particularly in heavy industry, and as such the positions were often filled by unskilled, poorly waged labourers (Lewis, P. 1994: 16-7). The Muslims amongst this movement came mainly from the poorer regions of Pakistan (and what became Bangladesh in 1971). The British approach to immigrant identity was different to European approaches, with the British government not forcing assimilation into

U.K. culture (Lewis, P. 1994: 3). This could well be because within Britain the idea of ethnic identities (English/Irish/Scottish/Welsh) co-existing with state identities (United Kingdom/Great Britain) was already firmly entrenched, so the idea of Indian British or Pakistani British identity fitted within a pre-existing framework (Kepel, 1997: 98-9).

However, for France the approach towards immigration (for Muslims, mainly from the Mahgreb) was substantially different, as they sought the assimilation of all incomers within a national French identity. The creation of sacred space, symbols and identity separate from the typologies provided by the secular state was discouraged. Within the U.S. the situation was different again: whilst they adopted an approach similar to British multiculturalism, their immigrant Muslim communities came from more diverse and, often, educated backgrounds.<sup>53</sup> Consequently this population has not suffered the same level of economic and educational deprivation as their counterparts in the U.K. and France. The other significant development in the U.S. was that of the Black African-American Muslim community, which grew out of the history of American apartheid and Black poverty and which developed a distinctive and separate identity from that of the traditionally Islamic countries and related diasporas (Kepel, 1997: 3-5).

As the second generation of Muslim immigrants have come of age they have culturally identified less with their ethnic heritage and more with their country of birth (Ramadan, 2002: 159-160). This blurring of cultural and ethnic identities has had significant consequences when allied with, in the U.K. and France, a sense of separation from the majority ethnic groups who have enjoyed greater access to education, wealth and power. It is claimed that institutionalised racism, coupled with economic deprivation, has led young Muslims to find their identity primarily in an affiliation to Islam (Kepel, 1997: 150; Freedman 2004: 9; Werbner, 2004: 906-7; Brighton, 2007: 8-9). This inter-ethnic Islamic identity has been encouraged by the spread of international Muslim movements, such as the Deobandis and Tablighi-Jamaat, which spread the sacred ideological boundaries of their interpretation of

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<sup>53</sup> Muslim immigration to the U.S. has had several distinct waves but, as Haddad and Smith (1994: xx) have pointed out, there was a significant influx of professional and skilled immigrants during the 1950s and 1960s. This accounts for some of the difference in comparison to the relatively un-skilled immigrants that arrived in Europe during the same period. As such, and contrary to the title of their book, it is perhaps more accurate to refer to the 'Muslim population' in the U.S. (as opposed to the 'Muslim community' in European countries) as the background and ethnicity of Muslims in the U.S. has historically been very diverse.



Islam beyond the borders suggested by geographical power/state discourses of *Dar el Islam/Harb* (Metcalf, 1996: 110-127; Kepel, 1997: 151). In Britain the perception of the state as a secular, or at least non-Islamic, entity (Goulbourne, 1998: 66; Modood and Kastoryano, 2007), and the role it has played in historical and contemporary Western/Islamic interactions (see Hizb ut-Tahrir, 2002), has led to a problematisation of dual British/Muslim identities and the further decampment of themselves as 'other' within the national consciousness (Werbner, 2002b).

### Move to the World

This move to a global Islamic identity has been made possible in part by problems in the inter-generational transmission of Islam. The British *ulema* (responsible for teaching in mosques) have come primarily from the 'sending' countries and in many cases have suffered from little or no education in the English language and British/Western culture (Lewis, P. 1994: 114). Consequently, they have been unable to connect with a youth that has grown up in a radically different culture to that of their parents and elders (Lewis, P. 1994: 176-9). This has led to a lack of religious literacy among second generation Muslims who, in some cases, have been unable to tell the Islam of their parent's faith from that preached by more radical elements (Lewis, P. 2002: postscript; see also Moussaoui, 2003). These radical elements have often spoken directly to the perceived injustices suffered by the Muslim communities and the dislocation of identity that second and subsequent generations have suffered both from their elders and host-societies.

Even within their parents' generations the lines between 'sending' and 'receiving' countries have often blurred as information, news and issues are passed between communities sharing familial and ethnic ties. Werbner (1994) looked at the creation of global-local fabulations in her case study of a Pakistani community in Manchester, stressing also the influence of the receiving country on the identity of the diaspora in addition to that of the sending country (Werbner, 2002a). These trans-local flows of information have brought 'continents' together within Western countries where geographically proximate communities live within entirely separate religious, linguistic and ethnic worlds supported by separate sacred, communal and financial networks (Knott, 2009a: 157-9; Massey, 1993: 62-65). This



flow of information and social identity is two-way (Werbner, 2004: 896), allowing the influencing of communities at both ends of the exchange including, as I will address later, areas of conflict between Islamic and Western cultural values.

Increasingly this glocalisation has been supported and enriched by the development of new technologies. While the internet is frequently used for benevolent purposes, the use of the internet by radical groups has received increased attention in recent years (Chen *et al.* 2008; Sageman, 2008a). Some authors (Kohlmann, 2008; Kirby, 2007) have argued that al Qaeda is now dependent on digital communities for any possibility of the meeting of individuals. Whilst I haven't undertaken this study here, I suggest that there is the potential, contrary to Meštrović's (1997) expectations, for exploring instances of authentic digital collective effervescence within these interactions.<sup>54</sup>

The use of technology to communicate and socialise allows us to see al Qaeda as more than just a movement, but also as a cohesive group. The digital circulation of communal values, mythologies, beliefs, rituals and identity allow individuals to become socialised into a community, the members of which they might never have met. Whilst this may suggest a more cognitive and less embodied account of religious and cultural identity than I outlined in Chapter Three, I would argue that the means for socialisation still lie within the embodied characteristics of human experience, and that the transmission of social identity over great distances is not problematic as long as the basic socialising conditions are met. Sageman (2008b) has argued that this socialisation (in the case he discusses, involving radicalisation) cannot be completed without physical interaction between members. Certainly this would seem to apply where co-ordinated actions, including violent ones, are under consideration. However, I concur with those authors (Kohlmann, 2008; Kirby, 2007) who have argued that the creation of virtual communities has provided the means for many individuals to locate their primary identity regardless of physical interaction. These communities need not require reclassification along the lines of networks of fluidity as suggested by Urry (2003: 132), as the underpinning social structures remain the same and any change in detail of or loyalty to social groups is perfectly possible within the Durkheimian conceptualisation of society I discussed in Chapter Three.

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<sup>54</sup> Rheingold's (1998) discussion of 'virtual communities' supports this suggestion. In this work, a form of digital anthropology, he describes several examples of effervescing communities, whilst also discussing limitations and dangers of these in relation to 'real life'.

Before I turn to the move to violence within this global Islamic identity, I would point out that I have discussed the above specifically within the context of the Muslim diasporas within the West primarily as a means of controlling the size of the discussion. However, I am aware that the role of technology, the inclusion of Islamic communities within a global identity, and the move to violence are all themes that could equally be discussed within non-diasporic communities such as those found in South East Asia. Sidel (2006; 2007; 2009), Cady and Simons (2007) and Liow (2006) have all charted the development of the Islamist movement in these countries, and, whilst I suggest that my analysis is equally valid in these contexts, I have not included these accounts within my research.

### Move to violence

The trans-local flow of information does not, in and of itself, lead to radicalisation and/or a violent group identity. However, it does facilitate the sharing and transmission of a sense of injustice. This sense, received by individuals experiencing a dislocation of identity from their immediate physical community, and perhaps also suffering from a perceived or real personal injustice, can lead to a real sense of grievance. In the case of marginalised immigrant communities, such as many second and third-generation Muslims find themselves within, such instances can lead to flash-points of anger.

In Britain a prime example of trans-national Islamic issues impacting upon British news and society, leading to a violent response, is the Rushdie affair (Akhtar, 1989; Ruthven, 1990). From the Indian sub-continent to Bradford and onwards to Iran, the issue united Muslims within an ideological space that spanned non-contiguous communities across national, ethnic, linguistic and even denominational divides (Bhatt, 1996: 110). For the first time in the U.K. context, the issue of Islamic identity within British subjects was publicly recognised. In France, the headscarf affair (beginning in 1989, but periodically renewed) had a similar effect, as three girls were expelled from school for wearing ostensibly religious symbols within the secular public space of the school (Freedman, 2004). In both cases the clash revealed previously invisible (to the West, at least) fault lines along secular/religious, Muslim/Western values (Werbner, 2002a: 107; 2004: 905). For some Muslims, the support for secular values of freedom of speech and non-

religious public space was a clear example of an anti-Islamic attitude, and in some cases violence ensued, not least with the issuing of a fatwah on Rushdie by Iran's Imam Khomeini (which demonstrated intent to violence, even if the call was not successfully answered).

Outside of the U.K. and France, the conflicts in Bosnia (1992-95) and Chechnya (1994-96 and 1999-2009) provided rallying calls for Islamic solidarity throughout the Muslim world, including the Western diasporas (see McLoughlin (1996) on a fundraising event for Bosnia held in Bradford). Themselves violent conflicts, they provided an outlet for the frustrations both of seasoned 'Afghan Arabs' and also a new generation of international jihadists (Bergen, 2001: 86). This newest generation attended training camps both at the sites of conflict and also Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, like Islamists after them, they were radicalised at 'home', in the U.K. (Kepel, 2008: 114-120). Whilst action against these centres may have lessened the opportunity for training in them, even without physical training the latest generation still accesses the 'injustices' mentioned above, and uses them as justifications for violent responses alongside other issues such as the economic sanctions and wars against Iraq, the invasion of Afghanistan, and of course the ongoing Israel/Palestine conflict.

This move to violence suggests a number of issues that I will investigate through my analysis of the markers. First of all, violence has broken out at several stages of the Islamist movement: al Qaeda is not an isolated instance. This suggests that the move to violence is not chronologically determined nor is it ideologically unidirectional: movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood have moved from a violent outlook to a non-violent interaction with the state-led democratic process.

Additionally, whilst violence is often justified with recourse to religious teachings, it tends to be triggered by exogenous factors. This brings us back to the importance of context, which is why I have provided this brief overview of the movement of which al Qaeda is a part. The movement back and forth between violent and non-violent action, and the role of factors external to the beliefs of the group do not undermine the central role that I suggest the group's beliefs play in the move to violence. Rather, they reaffirm the fluidity of sacred boundaries as they come in and out of contact with other non-negotiable taboos, creating and later vacating sites of sacred contestation. I will now turn to the analysis of statements of belief relating to these sacred boundaries.



## Marker Analysis

In the following section, I discuss evidence for each of the markers and also list summary statistics where these prove useful. In addition, I provide quotations which are either indicative of the general thrust of the data under discussion or which are particularly noteworthy. The five markers which I coded the most data into were:

- (1) Dichotomous World-View
- (2) Basic Injustice
- (3) External Legitimizing Authority
- (4) Violent Traditions
- (5) Wider Struggle

This case study presents some specific challenges, mainly relating to the sheer volume of available primary material for consideration. As a result, whilst I have, above, discussed the beliefs and some of the works of some key ideologues for al Qaeda and other Islamist groups, I have not included their works for analysis by marker. For this section I focus solely on statements made by al Qaeda, its members and associates. This distinction was necessary both in terms of managing the volume of data, and because my interest in this chapter is solely in al Qaeda's beliefs and not in those of the wider Islamist movement (which is covered in depth by authors such as Kepel (1994, 2004a) and Esposito (1983, 2002), for example).

In my concluding remarks, I provide some overall analysis and comment, although a more in-depth analysis in the context of the wider discussion, including the other case studies, is found in Chapters Eight and Nine.

### *Basic Injustice*

This marker had a lot of data coded into it: the second most in this case study. This is not too surprising given the background to the development of al Qaeda which I discussed above. Bin Laden's involvement in the Afghan jihad was driven



by a sense of injustice over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In addition, many Muslims in the region felt that the Palestinian problem constituted a gross injustice visited upon them by the international community.

In this context it could be argued that al Qaeda was constituted with its primary aim to resolve these injustices, and certainly the communication that could be seen as their opening mission statement suggests this (ALQ157: 53-4):

Today, there is abundant proof of three indisputable facts, on which all just men agree. ... They are:

First, for over seven years the United States has been occupying the most sacred of the Islamic lands, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the peninsula into a spearhead with which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples. ... The best proof of this is the Americans' continuing aggression against the Iraqi people, ... Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which is approaching a million, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres. As though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war, or the fragmentation and devastation, here they come to annihilate what is left of this people and to humiliate their Muslim neighbors. Third, if the war aims of the Americans are religious and economic, they also have the effect of serving the Jews' petty state and diverting attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. Nothing shows this more clearly than their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest Arab state in the region, and their attempts to fragment all the states of the region, such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan, into paper statelets, whose disunity and weakness guarantees Israel's survival and perpetuates the brutal crusader occupation of the peninsula.

In this one excerpt, reference is made to all of the most bitterly felt injustices claimed by al Qaeda to affect the Muslim world. These are: the 'occupation' by the U.S. of Saudi Arabia (and indeed the complicity in this of the al Saud ruling family); the continued bombing and embargoes of Iraq; the role of a global Jewish conspiracy; the Israeli treatment of Palestinian Muslims; and the diminishment of the political strength and independence of the Muslim world.

Table 5.1, below, shows the recurrence of these themes in the data in this marker, by listing their appearance based on the presence of key words. Areas where it was felt that Muslims were unjustly under attack were in Iraq, Palestine, Chechnya,

Kashmir, Timor and Bosnia. Agents of these attacks were primarily identified as American, although Jewish/Israeli conspiracies were also frequently cited.

Theme	Count	Search Words
America	89	'America'
Iraq	71	'Iraq'
Israel	57	'Jew' (30); 'Israel' (27)
Crusade	52	'Crusade'
Palestine	51	'Palestin'
Occupation	26	'Occupy'
Chechnya	17	'Chech'
Sauda Arabia	14	'Saud'
Bombing	11	'Bomb'
Kashmir	10	'Kashm'
Timor	7	'Timor'
Bosnia	6	'Bosn'

**Table 5.1 – Basic Injustice word counts** <sup>55</sup>

References to 'bombing' were made in relation to the U.S.-led coalition's airstrikes over Iraq.<sup>56</sup> Mention of 'occupation' referred to the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia, typically referred to as 'the land of two Holy Places'. Where Saudi Arabia was referred to by its official name it related to the complicity of the ruling family, the al Saud's, to the sale of oil to the U.S., to the military alliance with the U.S. and the failure to uphold Islamic values in lifestyle and governance.

These injustices typically granted al Qaeda a right to revenge. Within a mindset expressed by ideas typically congruent with a Girardian analysis of reciprocal violence the violent actions on behalf of al Qaeda are not seen as an escalation of the conflict, but a justified response. Al Qaeda do not foresee an end to this conflict whilst these injustices remain unpunished, and as long as further assaults are visited on the Muslim world (for instance in Iraq and Afghanistan) they see a justification for their actions.

Within this discussion, it is also interesting to note, as has Kirby (2007: 422-3), the vicarious nature of al Qaeda's list of complaints. Within its predominantly core Arab base and the diasporas in Western countries, few are Palestinian, Bosnian or Chechen and yet al Qaeda claims these injustices for its own, and escalates the

<sup>55</sup> The search terms were entered open-ended, so that 'Chech' for example, would return results for occurrences of 'Chechnya' as well as 'Chechen', 'Chechens', etc.

<sup>56</sup> Two additional references to 'bombing' were made which were removed from the count as they related to other events, such as the U.S. bombing of Japan in WWII which was cited not as an injustice, but as an example of U.S. aggression.

cycle of violence on their behalf. This reinforces the fact that the *perception* of injustice, as much as the actual reception of any, is as important as the perception of a scapegoat in any response.

This point is highlighted by the following quotation from Mohammad Siddique Khan's (ALQ45) video-tape explaining his actions in the 2005 London bombings:

Your democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world.

And your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters.

Until we feel security, you will be our targets. And until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture of my people we will not stop this fight.

As discussed above, these complaints often come from a trans-national flow of information between Muslim communities in the West and within the 'Muslim world'. Regardless of whether the individual, such as Khan, is physically affected by these events, they come to form part of his identity as constructed through his affiliation to the group. The repetition of these narratives forms part of the history and mythology of the group, and informs the beliefs and actions of the members. Nowhere is this clearer than in the data for this marker for al Qaeda.

### *Context of Group's Origins/Development*

When considering the context of the group's origins I have marked text relating to the context of the development of both Islam (as referred to in al Qaeda statements) and also more specifically of al Qaeda. The violent episodes within Islam's formative period that al Qaeda refers to are key to the shaping of the identity of al Qaeda itself, even if it can be argued that their interpretation of these episodes is biased. This is because these episodes also shape, to a greater or lesser extent, the identity of Islam in the broader context, of which the fundamentalist movement and al Qaeda within that are a part. In this case it is also important to see al Qaeda's role within the wider turn to violence of Islamist movements, as discussed, for example, by Kepel (2004a).



Within the sampled texts it was perhaps surprising not to see more reference made to the violent origins of al Qaeda itself. This issue is discussed within the opening section of this chapter and al Qaeda certainly developed its ideologies within a violent and conflicted space. But aside from a few references within the texts, to the conflicts in Palestine and Afghanistan, most of the data that I have included in this category in fact relates to tales of violence in the origins and development of Islam. Whilst a lot of data was coded into this marker I was expecting to see more repetition and reference to the above conflicts, and others, in relation to the development of the group and not just as causes for complaint (as marked up in the discussion on the *Basic Injustice* marker).

For the purposes of clarity, I have given a couple of examples below of text marked into this category. The first is a sample of the data relating to the violent origins of Islam itself. I have chosen not to repeat some of the direct quotations within the Qur'an, which refer to jihad as a duty or to expected (violent) behaviour towards unbelievers, as I have already quoted a number of these within other markers. Rather, I have quoted from al Zawahiri's (ALQ62: 143-4) discussion of martyrdom, where he refers to a story (apparently from a Hadith, but I cannot find the original) including the oft-mentioned virgins as rewards for martyrs:

Al-Muqadam bin Ma'ad Yakrub relays that the Prophet of Allah said: 'The martyr is special to Allah. He is forgiven from the first drop of blood [that he sheds]. He sees his throne in Paradise, where he will be adorned in ornaments of faith. He will wed the Aynhour [wide-eyed virgins] and will not know the torments of the grave and safe-guards against the greater terror [hell]. Fixed atop his head will be a crown of honor, a ruby that is greater than the world and all it contains. And he will couple with seventy-two Aynhour and be able to offer intercessions for seventy of his relatives.'

Not only does this lesson from the Hadith help cement the (violent) role of the martyr, it also glorifies it.<sup>57</sup> More specifically to a context of violence in the development of al Qaeda, bin Laden (ALQ55: 124) refers to the reason why al Qaeda came about: "Al-Qa'idah was set up to wage a jihad against infidelity, particularly to counter the onslaught of the infidel countries against the Islamic states." This clearly points to there being a need for al Qaeda due to (perceived) violence carried out by other nations. Elsewhere bin Laden refers specifically to

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<sup>57</sup> Ibrahim (2009) also points out that it demonstrates some of the violent ends that Muslims seek to avoid – namely the 'terrors of the grave'. Avoiding violent afterlives is an equally powerful motivation to violent action as plentiful virgins.



the conflict in Afghanistan, and also to what he perceives as the invasion of Saudi Arabia by the U.S. All of these events provided the troubled background to the creation and development of al Qaeda and helps us understand why it has the violent mindset that it does.

### *Conviction*

The conviction of al Qaeda members to their cause is demonstrably evident in many of the events that have brought them such notoriety. Well-planned, coordinated suicide attacks require a significant amount of conviction, even if this characteristic is not referred to in such detail in the sample texts. Indeed, most of the data that falls within this marker would also be present in the markers for *Violent Traditions*, and *Context of Group's Origins/Development*. That this data is used elsewhere does not exempt it from being used here with validity. For example, some of these cases refer to tales of willing martyrs told in the Islamic holy texts. Whilst these stories do not refer to examples of conviction within al Qaeda's ranks, they were still chosen as examples both of the conviction that the members should display, and to inspire such qualities in their members. In this case, these examples still point to the level of conviction within al Qaeda.

Outside of these references to early martyrs, there are still numerous examples of al Qaeda's deep and incontestable conviction. Some of these point to a desire for reform, and the will to change one's life to achieve it (ALQ32: 248):

As for us, God knows that we want the reform that we strive for; we left our country out of our desire for it, for we did not need any worldly goods, all thanks and praise to God. I miss my country greatly, and have been long absent from it; but this is easy to endure because it is for the sake of God.

The depth of this conviction is further suggested when bin Laden (ALQ139: 225) says: "I have sworn to not die except as a free [man]" and further claims (ALQ99: 114) for all of al Qaeda that "We will strive to maintain the fight until victory is attained or until we meet God [through martyrdom]."

This claim that they will fight to the death is borne out by many ordinary members of al Qaeda, who have fought in conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq and who also risk

their lives taking the struggle to other countries. Nor is it a view limited to bin Laden amongst all the ideologues or leaders of al Qaeda, al-Zawahiri (ALQ155: 239) also echoes the above sentiments:

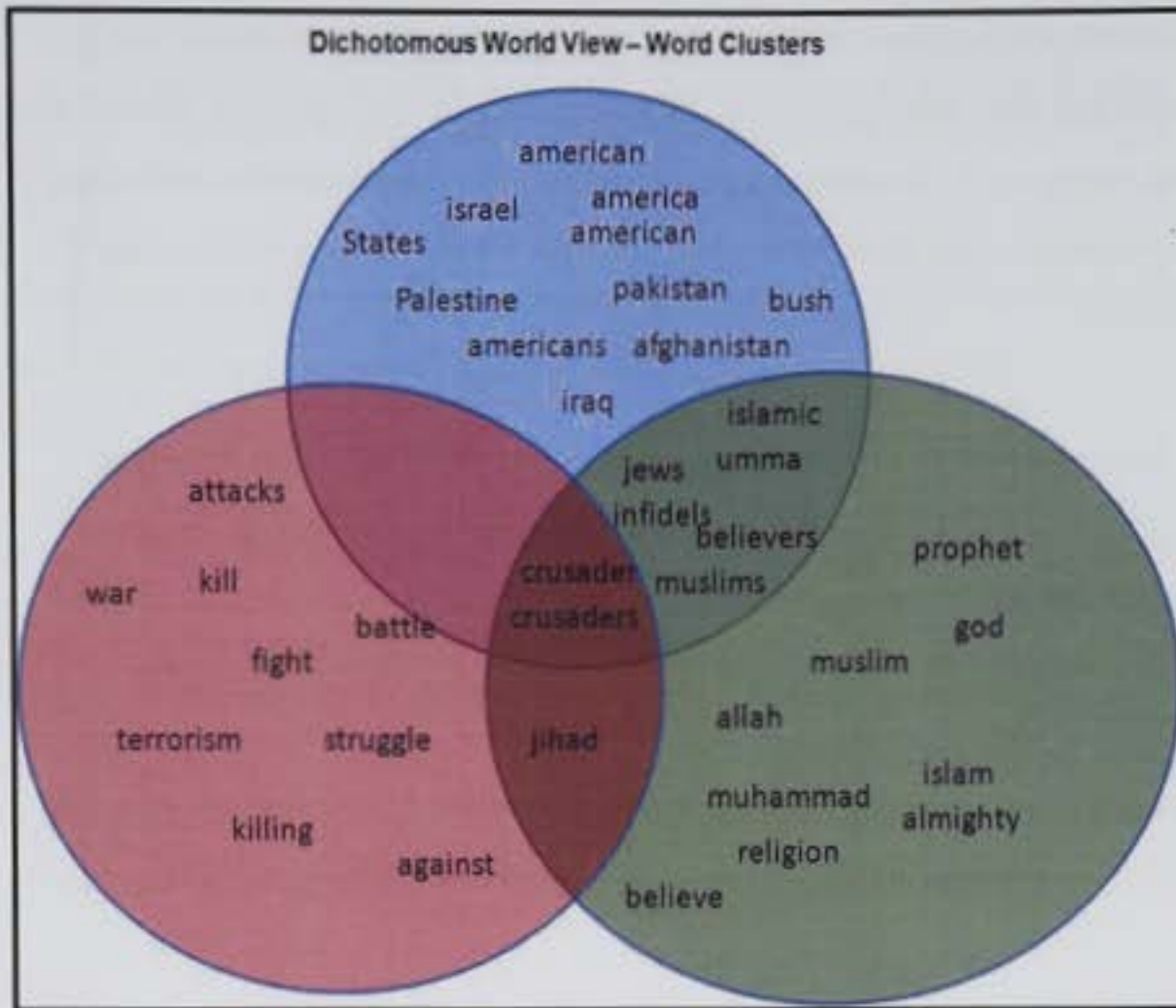
Let Bush, Blair, and those that march behind their Crusader-Zionist banner know that the honorable mujahidin of Islam have made a covenant with their Lord to fight them until victory or martyrdom.

The difference between beliefs and actions is highlighted within this marker. Whilst I have drawn attention to the actions of members of al Qaeda as undoubtedly displaying their conviction, I have not recorded these events within the data for the matrix. This is partly because it is not possible to draw up an objective scale of strength of conviction on the basis of levels of action, nor indeed to conduct a satisfactory survey of actions which display conviction (or otherwise). However, primarily I have not included these events for analysis by the matrix because I am interested in the beliefs of the groups, and not, per-se, the actions of individuals.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

In most of al Qaeda's statements it is clear that they have a very marked dichotomous view of the world and their place in it. This is reflected in this marker, which contained the most coded statements in this case study.

In further analysing this data it is possible to see three groupings of words and phrases within the texts. One group contains words relating to the language of dichotomy (of difference and war, etc.); another groups together words naming what al Qaeda sees as the two 'sides' (America, Islamic world, etc.); and the last grouping is of words relating to the language of religion (Qur'an, Prophet, belief, apostasy, etc.) Figure 5.1 shows the groupings of these terms, and also where they overlap, whilst Table 5.2 provides a word count of the most-used terms within this marker.



**Figure 5.1 – Dichotomous World View word clusters**

Theme	Count	Search words
Fight	68	'Fight' (43); 'Battle' (14); 'Struggle' (11)
America	65	'America'
Israel	49	'Jew' (30); Israel (13); 'Zion' (6)
Crusade	46	'Crusade'
Umma	24	'Umma' (21); 'Islamic World' (3)
Christian	10	'Christian'
Banner	7	'Banner'
Britain	5	'Britain' (3); 'British' (2)
UN	3	'UN'

**Table 5.2 – Dichotomous World View word count**

Some of the texts pointed to a quite straightforward sense of self and other, such as when bin Laden (ALQ99: 108) said, for example:

I say that the battle isn't between the al-Qaeda organization and the global Crusaders. Rather, the battle is between Muslims – the people of Islam – and the global Crusaders.



What is interesting about this statement is that bin Laden sees the conflict not as between al Qaeda and the non-Islamic world, but between Islam and non-Islam; al Qaeda is 'merely' the vanguard. In claiming this, he is also dramatically widening the battle-lines, to encompass all Muslims, and not just those falling within the aegis of his organisation.

In addition to this statement, it is also very clear to see how firmly this dividing line is seen, and within what circumstances, when bin Laden (ALQ69: 248) also makes statements such as "Let your reprimand to the Crusaders be as was spoken by the poet: 'The only thing between us is gut-stabbings and head-choppings.'"

This sense of dichotomy is not just arrived at through a feeling of injustice, but is also supported by evidence from the scriptures, such as the following from the Qur'an (4:76):<sup>58</sup>

Those who have believed fight in the cause of Allah, but those who reject [faith] fight in the cause of evil. So fight the friends of Satan— for feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan!

This point will be further developed in the analysis of the *External Legitimizing Authority* marker. At this stage it is important to remind ourselves of the discussion in Chapter 3 where I built upon the Durkheimian idea of the group to include a discussion of sacred boundaries and how these defined the ideological space that the group occupied. The evidence within this marker reinforces this discussion, a point I will return to in my analysis in Chapter Eight.

### *Emergency Situation*

Within the texts that were marked under this category there were a few references to an emergency situation of a symbolic nature, as indeed I alluded to above. However, most of the marked text referred to an emergency situation of a 'real' nature. These selections were broadly similar to those also found under the *Basic Injustice* marker. However, as an example of some of the concerns falling within this category I would point to bin Laden's statement (ALQ5: 68) that:

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<sup>58</sup> Quoted by bin Laden (ALQ69: 243)



The matter is serious, and if we don't move and the Noble Sanctuary is attacked, and the direction of prayer of 1200 million Muslims is attacked, when will people begin to stir? This is a momentous matter which requires much effort.

Directing his concern for the present situation bin Laden (ALQ32: 273-4) also addresses the leaders of Islamic communities around the world:

I also address the following statement to those righteous scholars, leaders, dignitaries, notables, and business leaders: You must take the necessary steps before it is too late, for things are descending with extraordinary speed towards an explosion. Do whatever is in your power to defuse the crisis...

This concern for the current events comes partly from the contemporary plundering of natural resources by Western countries (ALQ41: 182):

I call upon the mujahidin to focus their campaigns on the stolen petroleum of the Muslims. Most of its revenue goes to the enemies of Islam, and what's left [behind] is plundered by the thieves who rule our countries. This is the greatest theft in the history of mankind. The enemies of Islam are consuming this vital resource with unparalleled greed. It is incumbent upon us to stop this theft any way we can, in order to save this resource for the sake of the Muslim umma.

But it is also important to note that the feeling that there is an emergency situation gripping the Islamic world goes back some way before the creation of al Qaeda. The creation of the Deobandi movement in British India was a reaction to the loss of power experienced by the Muslim community there and their need to take urgent action. In fact, it could be argued that since colonial times the Muslim *Ummah* has felt under threat from Western Christian powers and that this has been building up to the present-day situation (Kepel, 2004a).

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

This marker was the third-most populous marker for the al Qaeda data-set. As discussed above, there are a number of competing doctrinal positions within Islamic theology, and al Qaeda accesses a particular stream of these to provide justification for its actions.

For example, ibn Taymiyya is cited freely in defence of calls to jihad as are other scholars of Islamic jurisprudence. Also, in justification of actions against Muslim rulers (such as the al Saud family), bin Laden (ALQ32: 259) quotes the revered scholar Ayad Qadi "Scholars are agreed that leadership of the religious community cannot be given to an infidel, and that if he becomes one, he must be deposed." Fatwas from contemporary experts are also sought and referred to within texts appealing to fellow Muslims.

Outside of expert opinions, frequent reference is made to the holy texts of Islam, the Qur'an and Hadith. For example, bin Laden (ALQ69: 248) quotes from the Qur'an in his first message to the Iraqi people:

And let the Word of Allah Most High remain ever before your eyes: 'It is not fit for a Prophet to take captives before he has thoroughly subdued the land' [8:67]. And the Word of the Most High: 'When you come upon infidels, smite at their necks [i.e., decapitate them]' [47:4].

He also supported an argument for martyrdom found in a hadith, in his second message to the people of Iraq (ALQ70: 251):

And prayers and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, who said [in a hadith]: 'He who is killed for [defending] his possessions is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his blood is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his religion is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his households is a martyr'

Besides these references to scriptural lessons there are also many allusions made to stories of the Companions of the Prophet. As this generation of Muslims is considered (especially by Salafists) to be the most holy, their actions serve as justification for similar violent action in a contemporary setting. In his treatise '*Jihad, Martyrdom, and the Killing of Innocents*', al Zawahiri (ALQ62: 143-4) wrote that:

Al-Muqadam bin Ma'ad Yakrub relays that the Prophet of Allah said: 'The martyr is special to Allah. He is forgiven from the first drop of blood [that he sheds]. He sees his throne in Paradise, where he will be adorned in ornaments of faith. He will wed the Aynhour [wide-eyed virgins] and will not know the torments of the grave and safe-guards against the greater terror [hell]. Fixed atop his head will be a crown of honor, a ruby that is greater than the world

and all it contains. And he will couple with seventy-two Aynhour and be able to offer intercessions for seventy of his relatives.'

Now, if martyrdom and martyrs are revealed in such a glorious manner, demanding martyrdom and desiring death in the path of Allah becomes legitimate, as was spoken by Abdallah bin Jahsh: 'O Allah! Find me among the idolaters a mighty and furious man, full of blasphemy and unbelief, that I may fight him for your sake. Then he will overcome me, plunder me, and chop off my ears and nose. And when I meet You [Allah], You will say: 'O Abdallah bin Jahsh, why were you mutilated?' And I shall respond: 'For you, my Lord!'"

These references to external sources of authority serve several purposes. They ensure an appearance of impartiality (to other members of the group at least) in that the appeal is made to something greater than and external to the writer's own opinion. In making this appeal, they also reinforce the sacred boundaries of the group, through reference to those sacred texts which stipulate both their 'otherness' in relation to God, and through their belief to the unbelievers. These sacred boundaries are, as discussed in Chapter Three, essential to the identity of the group and also help us demarcate the non-negotiable aspects of their beliefs.

These references to sacred texts are also supplemented by frequent appeals to God, who is further invoked as an external approver of their actions. Such appeals are made through prayer, quotation and statement, and as such it is not surprising that references to 'God' topped the list of theme counts in the data for this marker (see Table 5.3, below).

Theme	Count	Search words
God	420	'God' (267); 'Allah' (153)
Prophet	68	'Prophet'
Jihad	53	'Jihad'
Qur'an	50	'Qur'an' (39); 'Koran' (7); 'God's Book' (4)
Messenger	38	'Messenger'
Hadith	15	'Hadith'
Duty	12	'Duty'
Taymiyya	7	'Taymiyya'
Sunna	2	'Sunna'

**Table 5.3 – External Legitimizing Authority word counts**

One example of these calls is a straight forward plea for assistance by bin Laden (ALQ135: 102):



We ask God to help us defeat the forces of unbelief and tyranny, and to smash the neo-Crusader-Jewish alliance in the lands of Pakistan and Afghanistan. 'If God helps you, no one can overcome you; if He forsakes you, who else can help you?'

Whilst another is an appeal to a more broadly understood right to revenge (ALQ153: 201): "Allah Most High legislated the permission and option to take revenge." In this case bin Laden was addressing himself to a Western audience, and the appeal to an external authority raises his claim to revenge beyond a mere tit-for-tat reprisal (whilst still alluding to this claim as something the readers may understand) to that of an action with sacred authority (and the moral high-ground).

In addition to references to God and the scriptures, there are numerous mentions made of the Prophet. Some of these are again stories of the Prophet's actions which relate to the rights and wrongs of violent action. I discussed these in the marker on the *Context of Group's Origins/Development* as they also relate to the initial identity of the group. At this stage, it is probably sufficient to say that from the above discussion it is clear that al Qaeda makes a broad and frequent reference to external legitimating authorities for its actions, in fact doing so in nearly all of the documents that I reviewed. This strong sense of security in the external legitimation of their actions probably also leads to a greater likelihood that they will act on their aims, due to a corresponding diminishment of doubt.

### *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence*

This marker captures some of the aspects of al Qaeda's activities that relate specifically to what Girard (2005) terms a cycle of reciprocal violence. Most of the data represents a discussion of and desire for revenge. Many of these passages are repeated elsewhere in the discussion of other markers, and I have specifically drawn attention to the revenge motif in al Qaeda statements at several points above. However, what is interesting is that al Qaeda also makes reference to a more universal system of justice as applied by the U.N., but points out both that it is a tool of the West and also that they do not recognise this international system anyway (ALQ41: 178). There is a sense from the text that these two points are chronologically significant – first they feel that the U.N. would never treat the concerns of Muslims fairly and therefore they decide not to recognise its legitimacy. However, the other argument they put forward for the U.N.'s illegitimacy is that

the rules and laws it polices are not God's laws, and any system of law outside *Sharia'h* is 'wrong' and it is impermissible to apply its judgements to al Qaeda and indeed to any Muslims.

This could lead us into a discussion about whose 'justice' is represented in the international courts, and how justice is culturally derived. This is not the place for that discussion, but it does highlight to us that al Qaeda can see itself as implementing justice (through revenge) and also that in this culturally-relative context Girard's analysis is particularly useful as it cuts across these boundaries and provides us with a category definition that highlights this data regardless of cultural interpretations.<sup>59</sup>

### *No Common Ground*

The above discussion – in relation to the *Basic Injustice* marker – of Khan, a British Muslim born and bred in Leeds, is pertinent to the findings of this marker also. The absence of common ground between al Qaeda and its 'Other' (the West) is centred round a separation of values in both a religious and political sense. Within the marked texts in this category reference is made, for example, to a clear distinction between the Islamic world (the *Ummah*) and the West (Western countries such as the U.S., U.K., and others) such as when bin Laden (ALQ99: 113) stated that:

Bush admitted that there can only be two kinds of people: one kind being Bush and his followers; and any nation that doesn't follow the Bush government, or the World Crusade, is guaranteed to be included with the terrorists.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> In referring to Girard's discussion cutting across different cultural understandings of justice, I would direct the reader back to Chapter Three where I discuss how the notion of sacrifice and later, justice, are utilised by societies as a means to halting a reciprocal violent exchange. These notions are examples of Durkheim's 'social facts', and are applicable in all forms of society, regardless of the particular cultural manifestation of these 'facts'.

<sup>60</sup> Despite being worlds apart, there was a lot of similarity between the rhetoric of Bush and bin Laden, especially in relation to the 'with us / against us' dichotomy. Chilton (2004) explores these similarities in his analysis of their speeches.

Furthermore, for bin Laden and al Qaeda, this gulf between the two sides is not just a contemporary issue, but rather the manifestation of a historical divide between the two cultures, as bin Laden (ALQ99: 127) later suggests:

Besides disbelief, this is a war which, like previous wars, is reviving the Crusades. Richard the Lionheart, Barbarossa from Germany, and Louis from France – the case is similar today, when they all immediately went forward the day Bush lifted the cross.

However, this quotation also points towards the other kind of ideological separation between al Qaeda and the West, that of religious values. Bin Laden mentioned the symbol of the cross, representative of the Christian faith and for much of the data in this marker the lack of common ground is an absence of shared religious and/or moral values. This is important because, whilst respected authors such as Kepel focus on the political motivations and aims of the Islamist movement, I argue that they fail to pay enough attention to the religious values underpinning the political ideologies. Whilst the struggle within Islamic countries is undoubtedly about power, I question whether this power is sought for its own sake, or because it fulfils the goals of a religious mission. Certainly bin Laden (ALQ153: 202-203) seems more focused on issues of morality (and so also on the chasm between Islamic and Western morals) when he argues that:

The second thing we call you to is to stop your oppression, lies, immorality, and debauchery that has spread among you.

A. We call you to be a people of manners, principles, honor, and purity; to reject the immoral acts of fornication, homosexuality, intoxicants, gambling, and usury. We call you to all of this that you may be freed from that which you have become caught up in; that you may be freed from the deceptive lies that you are a great nation, which your leaders spread among you in order to conceal from you the despicable state that you have attained.

B. It is saddening to tell you that you are the worst civilization witnessed in the history of mankind:

i. You are the nation who, rather than ruling through the sharia of Allah, chooses to invent your own laws as you will and desire. You separate religion from your policies, contradicting the pure nature that affirms absolute authority to the Lord your Creator.

Within this quotation bin Laden maps out much of the territory which the lack of common ground could be said to inhabit. Addressing himself to the American people his discussion of their vices alludes to the morality gap, but underpinning



that he also draws attention to the religious gap, whereby the U.S. fails to rule according to *Sharia'h* law and fails to acknowledge the role that Allah should play in their lives and governance. Place these statements alongside the American declarations of freedom of speech and separation of church and state and it is apparent that the lack of common ground between the two positions could not be greater.

Moreover, these Western 'values' are contagious, in that Muslims can diminish their own standing by intermixing with Western society. Al Zawahiri (ALQ62: 169) argues that:

There is no question that those [Muslims] who are intermixed with the infidels, apostates, and their aides, of their own free will, are less sacred in the religion than those Muslims who are coerced and used as shields.

There are two important points coming out of this idea, the first relates to the idea of contagion in relation to sacred values, which I discussed in Chapter Three. This suggests that it is possible, through physical and ideological proximity, to become infected by rival value systems or, in a Batailleian (1988a, b) sense, of the negative sacred (in this case the evil, the 'Other'). This feeds into the second point, which is that al Zawahiri's statement has important ramifications for Muslims living in the West, which brings me back to the opening comments in the discussion of this marker.

Al Qaeda no longer has a national base from which to operate, which in its early days in the Sudan or Afghanistan allowed it some degree of physical separation from its enemies. Both for the 'inner circle' of al Qaeda, and for the third generation of its members in the Western diasporas, the issue of separation is increasingly focused entirely on ideological separation, as opposed to the physical separation which was possible with Aum Shinrikyo for example. The lack of common ground evidenced by this separation of values is religiously influenced, but also leads to social separation. This social isolation is something originally felt by Muslim (and ethnic minority) communities in the West, and which has been seized upon by al Qaeda and other fundamentalist groups, but which has also been reinforced by them as a means of preserving and enhancing their group identity. In this way, we see that the lack of common ground is both evidence of, and indeed part of, the sacred barriers (taboos) erected around the group and over (through)

which sites of contestation are found. Therefore, the strong evidence of a lack of common ground between the perceived world-views is an important marker of the move to violence in this case.

### *No Innocent 'Others'*

Whilst there was plenty of evidence within the sampled texts that refer to the legitimacy of killing all members of the 'Other', I will start with a quotation from bin Laden (ALQ55: 121) which suggests otherwise:

... nor do I consider the killing of innocent women, children and other humans as an appreciable act. Islam strictly forbids causing harm to innocent women, children and other people. Such a practice is forbidden even in the course of a battle.

This quotation seems to suggest that al Qaeda absolutely does recognise the innocence of some people who are outside of the Islamic world, in this case bin Laden was referring to potentially innocent people caught up in the suicide attacks on the United States. In making this statement he is following the teaching of the Prophet who reportedly forbade the killing of women and children (Sahih Muslim, 19: 4320).<sup>61</sup> However, in the case of the West it seems that al Qaeda consider everyone to be guilty as, following the doctrine of democracy, all citizens have voted for their governments and so must be happy with the decisions they take. Al Zawahiri (ALQ41: 186) makes this point when he says that:

They claim to be democratic and to have an elected government. This elected government kills our children, and our women, and desecrates what is sacred to us. So if they really oppose it, then let them depose it; but if they are satisfied with it, then they should pay the price for this satisfaction.

This argument is backed up with support from the scriptures, where al Zawahiri (ALQ62: 144) quotes from the Qur'an in such passages as:

Allah Most High has obligated believers to battle all those who reject Him, the Exalted, until all chaos ceases and all religion belongs to Allah. The Most High said: 'Fight them until there is no more chaos and [all] religion belongs to Allah' [8:39].

<sup>61</sup> See International Islamic University of Malaysia (2005) for an accessible translation.

The killing of innocents is also justified in terms of revenge, and in an interview bin Laden (ALQ99: 118-9) cited ibn Taymiyya in support of his view that the teachings of the prophet on non-targeting of innocents can be overturned:

TA [the interviewer]: So you say that this is an eye for an eye? They kill our innocents, so we kill theirs?

OBL: Yes, so we kill their innocents-this is valid both religiously and logically. But some of the people who talk about this issue, discuss it from a religious point of view ...

TA: What is their proof?

OBL: They say that the killing of innocents is wrong and invalid, and for proof, they say that the Prophet forbade the killing of children and women, and that is true. It is valid and has been laid down by the Prophet in an authentic Tradition ...

TA: This is precisely what I'm talking about! This is exactly what I'm asking you about!

OBL: ...but this forbidding of killing children and innocents is not set in stone, and there are other writings that uphold it.

God's saying: 'And if you punish (your enemy, O you believers in the Oneness of God), then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted ...' The scholars and people of the knowledge, amongst them Sahib al-Ikhtiyarat [ibn Taymiyya] and ibn al-Qayyim, and Shawaani, and many others, and Qurtubi – may God bless him – in his Qur'an commentary, say that if the disbelievers were to kill our children and women, then we should not feel ashamed to do the same to them, mainly to deter them from trying to kill our children and women again.

This quotation is important as it establishes both the role of revenge (which I discussed in the marker on *Basic Injustice*) and also the legitimating role of religious sources. It does so in a way that specifically addresses two groups of people generally recognised to be 'innocents' in all cultures and clearly demonstrates to us that, for al Qaeda, there are no innocent 'Others'. All the above tactics were used in the justification of the suicide attacks in the United States, where bin Laden (ALQ99: 118-9) variously pointed to the complicity of those who died in New York as they were part of the 'financial power' of the U.S., and also that 'innocents' were not specifically targeted in the attacks on the Pentagon, but that regardless the deaths of any innocents were justified through the argument of retaliation.



### *Question of Authority*

A lot of the data coded into this marker related to how al Qaeda's interpretation of Islamic thought was more accurate than any who held an opposing view. The targets for these kinds of comments were predominantly the rulers of Arab nations, who were seen as leading un-Islamic lives and regimes (ALQ62: 144):

And among those needing to be fought at this day and age are those rulers who govern the people without the *sharia* – they who fight against the people of Islam, who befriend the infidels from among the Jews, Christians, and others. And Ibn Kathir has transmitted the consensus that it is an obligation to battle such rulers.

Whilst the punishment for such rulers, as suggested by the above quotation, was death, there were gentler exhortations to other Muslims to join al Qaeda. In this context, al Qaeda's hard-line stance with regards to violence was argued to be more authoritative through statements such as (ALQ11: 37:04.3 – 37:16.6), "However, the gentle, the moderate, the lenient and the liberal are far from Islam." These questions of authority are useful areas to focus on when trying to understand the boundaries of a group's beliefs, especially when trying to determine how different they are to groups from the same tradition.

### *Symbolic Importance*

References to symbolic importance within the texts surveyed fall within two broader themes. One is that of an association of the *Ummah* with the side of 'good' – with God and righteousness. The other is that of the opposing side, the U.S., U.N., U.K., and so on, with 'evil', 'satan' and 'the devil'.

Within the contemporary situation references are made to the symbolic import of both sides, for example al-Zawahiri (ALQ41: 178) claims that "the U.N. is part of the Crusader kingdom, over which reigns the Caesar in Washington, who pays the salaries of Kofi Annan and his like." Staying with the Roman theme, bin Laden (ALQ70: 254) warns that "the Romans have begun mustering under the banner of the cross to battle the *umma* of beloved Muhammad." The analogy of battle lines being drawn is repeated in his (ALQ99: 108) statement that:

the battle isn't between the al-Qaeda organization and the global Crusaders. Rather, the battle is between Muslims-the people of Islam-and the global Crusaders.

The symbolism of the contemporary struggle against 'the West' is reinforced when bin Laden (ALQ109: 144) says that "What is unfolding now in Afghanistan is one of the great wars of Islamic history." He goes on to refer to the unprecedented symbolism of the current action (ALQ110: 16):

This momentous event is unprecedented both in pagan and Islamic history. For the first time, the Crusaders have managed to achieve their historic ambitions and dreams against our Islamic umma, gaining control over the Islamic holy places and the Holy Sanctuaries, and hegemony over the wealth and riches of our umma, turning the Arabian peninsula into the biggest air, land, and sea base in the region.

This quotation also suggests to some extent some urgency within the present action, as I have already discussed. However, before I do so it is worth highlighting that the symbolism mentioned above is used to provide further evidence that the struggle in which al Qaeda finds itself is not just a lowly human affair, but has a corresponding part to play in a cosmological struggle between good and evil. The references to these symbols reinforce the sacred nature of the group's beliefs and also encourage the members to action. Therefore, whilst there was not a great deal of data coded into this marker, the evidence I have highlighted nevertheless demonstrates the important potential it has in a group's move to violence.

### *Violent Traditions*

The key themes in this marker, which had the fourth highest amount of data coded into it for this case study, revolved around references to Holy Texts and especially of their interpretation by ideologues (principally ibn Taymiyya). There was also the recounting of tales of willing martyrs in the times of the Prophet. These authoritative texts were supplemented by references to modern martyrs (such as the London bombers) and also the modern Islamic community desiring jihad. Table 5.4 provides a quick guide to the commonly recurring themes.

Theme	Count	Search words
Jihad	57	'Jihad'
Kill	46	'Kill'
Fight	40	'Fight'
Martyr	27	'Martyr'
Conflicts	25	'Afghan' (10); 'Soviet' (9); 'Russia' (4); 'Somal' (2)
Holy texts	25	'Hadith' (12); 'Qur' (9); 'Koran' (2); 'Sunn' (2)

**Table 5.4 – *Violent Traditions* word count**

Of the many references to 'jihad' a number of these contained exhortations to jihad as a duty incumbent on all Muslims. These readings are typical of the kind of interpretation that separates violent fundamentalist Muslims such as those who belong to al Qaeda from 'moderate' Muslims. I make this statement because, whilst there is some disagreement as to whether 'jihad' refers to a struggle, or fighting, or defensive or offensive violent action, within al Qaeda's statements it is always implied or directly stated to be violent action. Bin Laden (ALQ139: 225) offers one example of how jihad is an arguably violent duty beholden on all Muslims: "Neglecting *jihad*, which is prescribed in our religion, is a grievous sin. The best death for us is under the shadow of swords [Paradise]." In addition, al-Zawahiri (ALQ62: 141) quotes Sura 2:190 from the Qur'an: "Allah Most High has imposed jihad on His behalf upon His believing slaves..." and later argues that (145-6):

The best of people, then, are those who are prepared for jihad in the path of Allah Most High, requesting martyrdom at any time or place. Whenever he hears the call to jihad he flies to it until Allah's authority is established.

Al-Zawahiri (ALQ62: 144-5) also refers several times to what happens when this duty is taken up – mainly that the Muslim community suffers, such as in this example:

When Muslims used to undertake jihad in the path of Allah, they were the mightiest of people. But when they abandoned it, Allah humiliated them through division and conquest, just like the Prophet told: 'If you take up a domestic life, hold on to the tails of cattle, are content with farming, and thus abandon jihad, Allah will let humiliation lord over you until you return to your religion.'

In this quotation al-Zawahiri clearly suggests that Islam is a violent religion, and his understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith form an important part of the violent



ideology and mythology of al Qaeda. At this point, it is also important to note that the data for this marker was unusually reliant on one particular text from which all the above quotations are drawn. This was written by (or under the direction of) al-Zawahiri before 9/11 (Ibrahim, 2007: 137) and was titled '*Jihad, Martyrdom, and the Killing of Innocents*'.<sup>62</sup> However, sixteen out of the total thirty-five texts surveyed for this case study contained references to this marker and their contributions suggested that al-Zawahiri's text was representative of the general themes.

As mentioned above, reference was also made to willing martyrs in Islamic history, and these clearly contributed to the violent mythology of al Qaeda's back-story. One example, from al-Zawahiri (ALQ62: 153) is given here:

In the two authentic accounts [Bukhari and Muslim], Jabar said: 'A man said: Where [do I stand], O Messenger of Allah, if I am killed? He said: In Paradise. So he hurled the dates that were in his hand and fought till he was killed.' And Anas said: 'A man said: O Messenger of Allah, if I plunge myself into the ranks of the idolaters and fight till I am killed-what then, to heaven? He said: Yes. So the man plunged himself into the ranks of the idolaters, fighting till he was slain.' Ibn Ishaq relays from Issam bin Omar: 'When the men rejoined on the day of Badr, Awaf bin al-Harith said: O Messenger of Allah, what about His slave does the Lord laugh? He replied: To see him plunge his hand in battle and fight to fatigue. So he threw his shield and advanced, fighting until he died a martyr.'

Al-Zawahiri put a lot of effort in to the justification of "martyrdom operations" (ALQ62: 143), the above quotation being one of the examples he used in support of this aspect of the jihadist's arsenal. Given al Qaeda's use of martyrs in several high-profile actions it is not surprising the desire to legitimate the nature of these attacks. The provision in this marker of violent mythology in support of such behaviour is an important indicator of al Qaeda's part in the Islamist move to violence.

However, it is worth reminding ourselves that the examples cited above were taken from Islamic history, not particularly from al Qaeda's history. While there were examples of texts that cited al Qaeda's battles in Afghanistan, Chechnya and also the London bombers, these modern-day violent myths sit alongside the examples

<sup>62</sup> I sourced this text from Ibrahim's (2007: 137-171) abridged translation, the original Arabic text being nearly 30,000 words long (Ibrahim, 2007: 140).

drawn from an Islamic heritage that is shared with groups that do not act violently. In Chapter Seven I look at an Islamic group that has not followed the turn to violence, but at this stage the above evidence forces us to consider an important, if difficult, point. Within the modern discourse regarding Islamic fundamentalism, it is an unpopular (and brave) person that suggests that Islam is an inherently violent religion. Some readings, such as Huntington (2002) suggest this, whilst utilising a monolithic understanding of Islam. However, even in more nuanced accounts, such as I have undertaken within this chapter, there remains the undeniable evidence of a violent back-story which groups such as al Qaeda have found all too easy to cite in justification of their own world-views.

In defence of Islam (taking as granted the evidence of hundreds of years of peaceful co-existence of minority religious groups within the Ottoman and older caliphates, and indeed the majority of non-violent Muslims within the contemporary global *Ummah*) it should be mentioned that Islamic history was codified under significantly different circumstances than, for example, Christianity. Lawrence (1991: 142-4) points out that Christianity did not have to contend with issues of power until six centuries after its foundation, so it managed to develop an ethical tradition away from the issues of statecraft and governance. Islam, however, codified its first holy texts within twenty years of its foundation, whilst it held and was expanding its power base throughout the region. As such the Islamic holy texts make reference to far more violent episodes than the Christian New Testament (which more directly influences Christian thought and practice than the earlier and more violent Old Testament).

### *Wider Struggle*

This marker had the fifth most data coded into it. The terminology within the texts coded into this marker is subtle and varied, and determining if the text relates to wider issues of good versus evil and/or right versus wrong obliges the researcher to be sensitive to specialist terminology and the contextual basis of the text. For example, there may not be a direct reference to normative values within a discussion about whether jihad is an obligation or not. However, this debate itself is attempting to answer whether it is right or wrong to fight, and indeed whether the determining conditions (injustice against the Islamic community) have

been met. If they have (as al Qaeda asserts they have) then the approval for jihad is itself an acknowledgement of a wider struggle involving clashes of right versus wrong and good versus evil. One example of such a debate (ALQ62: 170) is found in the following text (though there are many other examples of a less direct nature):

Just as the Sheikh of Islam said: 'Defensive warfare is the most critical form of warfare [since we are] warding off an invader from [our] sanctities and religion. It is a unanimously accepted duty. After belief, there is no greater duty than to repulse the invading enemy who corrupts faith and the world. There are no rules or conditions for this; he must be expelled by all possible means'.

Whilst some cases in the text make a direct reference to a spiritual struggle, like the one above, others mix this spiritual element with more general 'values', or transpose Western non-spiritual values in opposition to Islamic sacred values. Two examples from al-Zawahiri (ALQ41: 182, 184) are provided below.

Mixing general values (truth/falsity) with spiritual values (the return of Allah):

Jihad in the path of Allah is greater than any individual or organization. It is a struggle between Truth and Falsehood, until Allah Almighty inherits the earth and those who live on it. Mullah Muhammad Omar and Sheikh Osama bin Laden are merely two soldiers of Islam in the journey of jihad, while the struggle between Truth and Falsehood transcends time.

A wider struggle between Western values and Islamic spirituality:

He casts doubt upon the Divine Entity and the Koran; he calls upon Muslims to accept Western values such as homosexuality... The British liberties, which permitted Salman Rushdie to insult Islam and the Muslims, were not broad enough to include the Islamic libraries and Internet sites that sympathize with the mujahidin, and they threaten to shut them down... Britain's 'sensitive conscience' could not tolerate the killing of civilians in the center of London yet it tolerated the killing of a million children in the siege of Iraq, and the killing of tens of thousands of children in Afghanistan and Iraq, due to the bombings of the English and their allies.

Such examples demonstrate the breadth of the struggle as seen by the members of al Qaeda, widening the struggle to what Huntington (2002) would argue is evidence of a clash of civilisations. That the positions of the two 'sides' are more nuanced than both Huntington and al-Zawahiri would give credit for is not



important here, as the above would suggest that al Qaeda would be happy to subscribe to Huntington's thesis.

In contrast to the above, other instances of coded text are slightly more oblique and require greater understanding to facilitate their coding into the marker. These may often refer to wider debates around the group and/or contemporary situation, which require a good understanding of the context of the group's development and situation. Alternatively, they may be part of a wider hermeneutic discussion about the meaning of key concepts or themes within the holy texts, such as 'jihad' and the obligations present on Muslims today. In these cases the importance of developing a contextual analysis of the group, as I have done in the first half of this chapter, becomes increasingly clear.

#### *Markers not discussed above*

There were a number of markers that attracted no data:

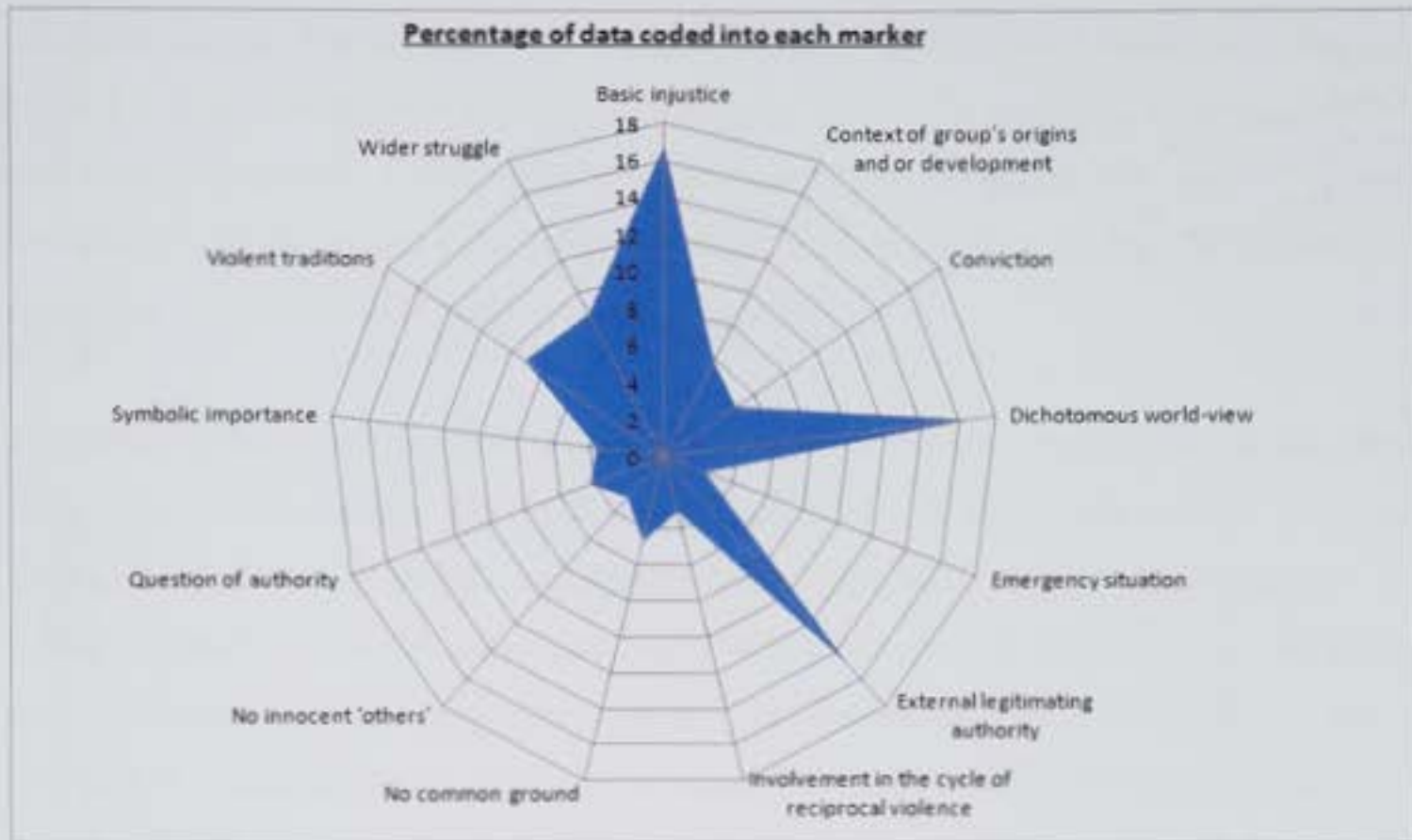
- Against Violence
- Followers Differ from Leader
- Recognition of Innocence

I have not included these in the above discussion. However, with regards to the marker on *Recognition of Innocence*, I would point out that there was some debate about the potential for innocence, and I highlighted this in the discussion on the *No Innocent 'Others'* marker.

The following markers had small amounts of data coded into them, but of lesser significance to the overall discussion. Some data was coded into the *Context of Group's Internal Development* marker which suggested that the successes of the group (in Afghanistan, and in the attack on the USS Cole, for example) were seen as evidence of God's support and encouragement. The *Personal Benefit* marker showed some of the spiritual benefits, especially in relation to martyrdom, for example in a particularly enjoyable afterlife. The *Desire for Social Change*, *Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes* and *No Justice Available in the System* markers had little data of any significance coded into them.

## Conclusion

I have used the data I coded to produce a radar graph showing the amount coded into each of the markers in this case study. This is shown in Figure 5.2.



**Figure 5.2 – Radar graph of al Qaeda Markers**

This diagram provides a useful visual tool to understand where the particular peaks and troughs were. However, as discussed in several of the markers, this should be used in association with the background discussion in the first part of this chapter where, for example, I also presented a strong case for the violent origins of al Qaeda. Likewise, as mentioned above, some of the markers contained significant data even though they did not have large amounts coded into them.

This study has shown how we can determine the violent aspects of al Qaeda's beliefs, for example through how it chose to interpret key ideas and historical events. It is important to see how this might differ from the results for a non-violent group in order to see what is special about the violent aspects of al Qaeda's beliefs, and this will be highlighted through my discussion of a non-violent Islamic group in Chapter Seven and my analysis of this theme in Chapter Eight. Before I do so, I also want to show how such interpretations are not the sole preserve of

religious groups, and so I now move to looking at a non-religious group – the Red Army Faction.



## 6. Case Study – Red Army Faction

### Introduction

This chapter is the third of the case studies that I have undertaken into violent groups. However, unlike the previous two this case study focuses on a non-religious group. The Red Army Faction (*Rote Armee Fraktion*) hereafter referred to as the RAF was formed in 1970, principally by Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader and Gudrin Ensslin. The notoriety of the former two led to the oft-used designation of the group as the *Baader Meinhof Gang* although this denigrated Ensslin's leadership role within the movement.

The aims of the group, and its formation, are often seen as arising out of the decade of student protest in the 1960s (Varon, 2004), although this claim is not uncontested (Cornils, 2008). Increasing frustration with perceived injustices brought about by alleged American imperialism, enacted through liberal capitalism and the Vietnam War, were combined in West Germany with unresolved issues relating to complicity/guilt over the actions of their parents' generation in the Second World War.

The first part of this chapter is divided into three sections. Initially, because this is the first non-religious group I am exploring, I re-visit some of the key points for consideration in how I apply the sacred as a border category to a study of a secular group.

The role of non-negotiable beliefs will be highlighted, as an area in which discussions of the sacred appear particularly relevant and which seems to suggest a bridge between the movement towards violence in religious and non-religious groups. These issues foreshadow some of the findings in my analysis of the markers, which is carried out in the second part of this chapter.

The inclusion of the RAF allows for the critical scrutiny of any inherent religiosity within the markers, which may or may not bias the findings. By testing the matrix against a non-religious group I demonstrate a rigorous examination of its

applicability, as well as the broader usefulness of the methodological tools for examining sociological questions beyond the category of religion.

Following on from this, I present two sections addressing the historical context and development of the RAF. The first looks at the development of the student protest movements and the turn to violence up to the incarceration of the RAF leadership. The second section charts the second and third generation of RAF membership, up to the official dissolution of the RAF in 1998. Following the analysis of the markers is a short conclusion highlighting the key points arising from the chapter.

### **Boundary Crossings in the Move to Violence**

In Chapter Three I discussed the lack of consideration given to religion in many studies in the field of radicalisation and terrorism studies and I also problematised the use of 'religion' in some other accounts. In suggesting that the sacred is a more useful concept to explore this problem, I also allowed that it could be found within non-religious as well as religious groups.

I do so because, following Knott (2010c) and Fitzgerald (1995, 2000, 2001), I have designated the religious/secular boundary a discursive one, with the two positions situated within a single epistemological field. This model (outlined in Knott, 2010c: 121) admits the appearance of characteristics of religiosity within the secular sphere. These characteristics are, I suggest, instances of the sacred (building on Anttonen (2000: 280-1), they are instances of a category-boundary which sets apart things of non-negotiable value).

The sacred need not have any revelatory symbolism, and this will be highlighted in the discussion that follows. The role and use of symbols does not change. They continue to motivate, attract and repulse groups and their members but, as Durkheim (2001: 165-6; 176) suggested, these symbols can be seen to be (and in fact are) created by society.

Through the above discussion, we can see how the notion of 'sacredness' can be applied to any number of non-negotiable aspects of the RAF's values and beliefs, such as their beliefs about the immorality of U.S. actions in Vietnam, or the guilt of

the German establishment in Nazi war-crimes. These beliefs and values can be distinguished from those which were important, but not non-negotiable, such as their concerns relating to the treatment of women in Western society (e.g. RAF25). It is only those beliefs that were non-negotiable which are designated 'sacred'.

Whilst creating these non-negotiable beliefs (and the boundaries that produce and reinforce this non-negotiability), the RAF also suggested that it had a privileged access to the truth or, as I label it here, the sacred. In doing so, the RAF displays further characteristics of religiosity as highlighted by, for example, Hervieu-Léger's (2000: 125) discussion of how religions have privileged access to their conception of the sacred through their shared historical lineage.

Having a non-negotiable belief which others cannot (or have not) shared can lead to varying levels of conflict and, whilst the previous two chapters have focused on religious groups, the following quotation demonstrates that this is equally true for non-religious groups (RAF43: 239):

Protest is when I say I don't like this and that. Resistance is when I see to it that things that I don't like no longer occur. Protest is when I say I will no longer go along with it. Resistance is when I see to it that no one else goes along with it anymore either.

Within this quotation we see that the introduction of non-negotiable elements to beliefs and values marks an important stage in the development of the student protest movement in West Germany from one of protest to violent resistance. It is to this move to violence that I now turn.

## **From Protest to Resistance: The Turn to Violence**

### *Protest and its origins*

The Leftist movement in 1960s West Germany, from which the RAF emerged, was opposed to 'the establishment' on several levels. The government's support for the U.S. war against Vietnam was seen as support for a genocidal campaign against a people unable to defend themselves. The young generation of students and other



supporters of the New Left were determined to avoid the mistakes of their parents' generation, which was seen as complicit with the Nazis' actions through their own inaction during the holocaust. The links between the contemporary West German state and the Nazis provided a common cause for concern for German youth: two-thirds of judges had also served under the Third Reich (Varon, 2004: 33-5), for example.

Varon (2004) provides an excellent discussion of the development of the New Left protest movement in West Germany which developed from University campuses, to commune-based activism (33), to city-wide protests (39).<sup>63</sup> In June 1967 a student (Benno Ohnesorg) was shot by an undercover policeman during demonstrations organised to protest the visit of the Iranian Shah (39). Anger within the New Left movement at this shooting, and the biased reporting of it by the conservative Springer Press (group of newspapers), led to increasingly radicalised and violent discourse. This was exemplified in the showing of a film *The Making of a Molotov Cocktail* (Varon, 2004: 39),<sup>64</sup> and a paper by the leaders of the SDS (*Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund*), one of whom was Rudi Dutschke, discussing the possibility of more militant protests (Bauer, 2008: 41).<sup>65</sup>

Feelings amongst the student protestors and sympathisers were raised further following the April 1968 attempt on the life of Dutschke by a man allegedly influenced by Springer propaganda (Varon, 2004: 40). The heightening of tensions and escalation of violence is neatly captured by Meinhof (RAF43: 240) who was present at the anti-Springer riots in Berlin (Aust, 2008: 35) and wrote in *konkret*:<sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Varon's book, *Bringing the War Home*, looks at revolutionary violence in the 1960s, focusing on the *Weather Underground* and *RAF* as two examples of groups that turned to violence out of the New Left movement.

<sup>64</sup> The author of the film was Holger Meins, who went on to become a founder member of the *RAF*.

<sup>65</sup> The German version of the *Students for a Democratic Society*. Dutschke also co-authored an article in *konkret* (no.6, June 1968: 25-26) entitled '*Gewalt* – meaning 'violence', which discussed the inevitability of violence in the protest against Capitalism (Varon, 2004: 43-4).

<sup>66</sup> The magazine, *konkret*, was written without a capital letter in its title. This reflects a style of written protest repeated in many of the *RAF*'s statements whereby they deliberately used no capitalisation (which in German is used on all proper nouns). In quotations in this chapter I have retained this style where I found it in the source material. However, some statements used standard capitalisation and as I don't know whether this was the work of the original author or the translator I have not changed it, which means that the punctuation and capitalisation in quotations will be irregular throughout this chapter.

The protests against the Easter attack on Rudi Dutschke marked the first time that people massively crossed the boundary between verbal protest and physical resistance. ... They crossed it really and truly, not just symbolically. After June 2, people merely set Springer newspapers on fire. This time they tried to prevent their distribution. On June 2, people threw tomatoes and eggs; this time they threw stones.

This brief recounting of the movement leading up to the formation of the RAF reinforces several important lessons about the move to violence. First, there is the particular history of the broader society out of which the movement arose. In this case the relationship between the elites of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Nazi regime of the 1930s and 40s was a common trope in anti-establishment discourses of the 1960s. The stationing of U.S. troops in West Germany was another situation unique to the German context, but the government's support of the U.S. war in Vietnam was something that exercised students and protest movements throughout the Western hemisphere.<sup>67</sup>

What we see then are some commonalities with protest movements in other countries but also some complaints specific to the German movements, and, as I have already argued, the particular context of a situation cannot be ignored if we are to further understand the move to violence. Within this broader history there are also particular flashpoints which act as catalysts, and in this case we see that the visit of the Shah and subsequent shooting of Ohnesorg, as well as the later attempt on the life of Dutschke, led to escalations of the conflict.

The RAF was not the only group to come out of the above movement. The *2<sup>nd</sup> June Movement*<sup>68</sup> was another violent group that also grew out of this period, but it is also important to remember that, for all the protestors and sympathisers, the vast majority never committed to violent action.

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<sup>67</sup> Varon (2004: 34) points to a 'double-coding' in the discourse about Vietnam due to the protestors' feeling that they, too, were occupied by a U.S. military force and also that West German support for U.S. actions in Vietnam showed how little Germans had moved on from their Nazi past.

<sup>68</sup> Named after the date in 1967 when Ohnesorg was killed.

### *Protestors and resistance movements*

The decision to take this step to move to violence clearly includes a level of individual choice motivated by, and framed within, the ideology of the group. Whilst I have focused on the development of the group in all my case studies, the RAF allows for further discussion on the role of the individual within this development as more is known about some of the key figures. The parts played by Meinhof, Ensslin and Baader are pivotal to this move to violence in the RAF, and examining their own 'move' allows us to explore some of the difficulties of locating violent potentialities within individuals.

On the edges of the student activist movement were sympathisers such as the Leftist journalist Ulrike Meinhof. Following the death of her mother when she was 14 she was brought up by a University professor, who had been the lesbian partner of her late mother following the early death of her father. Like her foster mother (who was now openly gay) Meinhof was a committed Christian Pacifist and was at home in intellectual left-wing circles (Bauer, 2008: 21-4; Aust, 2008: 12-4).

She later married the editor of the left-wing journal *konkret*, and as its star columnist she was feted by the press in West Germany, where she was seen as a mouthpiece for the New Left (Bauer, 2008:37-8). Enjoying a comfortable lifestyle, but supporting an ideology of struggle and conflict, she wrestled with the difference between her private life and her beliefs (Bauer, 2008: 38-9, 42-3). Her columns for *konkret* form the basis of the pre-RAF literature assessed for this case study. The use of one person as an assumed mouthpiece for a whole movement is problematic, but Meinhof is an excellent and accessible vantage point from which to survey what became an increasingly fragmented movement following the assassination attempt on its de-facto leader, Rudi Dutschke. Furthermore, as several accounts attest, she was a popular and influential figure in Leftist circles and so can be seen an appropriate representation of the wider movement (Varon, 2004: 41; Bauer, 2008: 38, 46).

Gudrun Ensslin was the daughter of a Protestant Pastor. A devout Christian she impressed friends in America with her religious passion when she stayed there on a year long school-exchange, although she left with a poor opinion of American society and morality (Aust, 2008: 15). Soon after enrolling at the Free University



in Berlin she was working with the SDS. After meeting Baader in Berlin, she left her fiancé and baby and moved to Frankfurt where she and Baader firebombed two department stores (Eager, 2008: 64-5). Captured soon after, she was imprisoned for three years, during which time she was interviewed by Meinhof (Aust, 2008:39). Worth noting at this time was the attitude of her Christian parents who showed no disapproval of her actions, instead welcoming her desire to complement her beliefs with action (Aust, 2008: 40-2).

Andreas Baader was perhaps the least ideologically motivated of the three people commonly seen as the leadership of the RAF.<sup>69</sup> Brought up by his mother, aunt and grandmother he was involved in petty crime throughout his teens and spent several periods in juvenile detention facilities, especially for stealing cars (Aust, 2008: 8-9). His involvement with the communes in Berlin (where he also left behind a child) saw the beginning of his time with the Leftist protestors (18-9). In 1970 Meinhof agreed to help Baader escape from prison, where he was serving his sentence for the arson attacks. During the escape a security guard was shot and seriously wounded (59-61). This action was probably the first major criminal action of protest by Meinhof and directly led to the formation of the RAF.

All three of the above defy certain common assumptions made about those who become involved in violent groups. Baader, perhaps the most likely by popular judgements, showed no sign of strong ideological commitment, at least, not strong enough to risk his life for. All three were parents, and Meinhof had successfully fought for parenting rights following her divorce.<sup>70</sup> She also had a successful career which was destroyed following her decision to help Baader.

Ensslin was brought up in a Christian family, whose teachings (which she adhered to into early adulthood) were diametrically opposed to the lifestyle she had embarked on prior to the fire-bombings and subsequent life on the run with Baader. Nor was she a meek follower of Baader – her role in the movement is often overlooked and she and Baader (not Meinhof) were joint leaders of the first generation (Aust, 2008: 67).

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<sup>69</sup> There is no evidence for strong ideological attachment prior to the arson attacks, indeed Eager (2008: 65) argues that he did not have a justification for the act until he read Marcuse whilst awaiting trial.

<sup>70</sup> Although even before her move underground (which led to the failed attempt to send her children to be brought up in a Palestinian refugee camp) Meinhof had realised that the path she was taking could lead her away from her family (Aust, 2008: 54).

The diversity of their backgrounds, from their childhoods through early adulthood, makes it difficult to draw commonalities or indeed make useful generalisations or predictions about their predilection for violence. However, by studying the wider movement of which they were a part, and understanding the boundaries of ideals, injustices, internal and external pressures, we can better see how people within those movements may make the move to violence.

Nor should the role of chance be ignored. It is useless to predict, but important nevertheless to consider what would have been the outcome had the security guard not been shot during the liberation of Baader. Those involved in that operation went on to form the core of the RAF, but many others who had been part of the same movement until then never made this transition to violence. Of course, the beliefs that led to that action, and which determined the response to the shooting of the guard, are what I shall be looking for and investigating in the second half of this chapter, but this was a good point at which to remind ourselves of some of the complexity of the move to violence.

## **The Right, What's Right, and Revenge: Changing Reasons for Violence**

### *The turn to revenge*

After the liberation of Baader, the group left for Jordan where they received basic training in urban guerrilla warfare from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (Aust, 2008: 65-75). On their return to West Germany the group undertook a number of bank robberies (79-80), and it wasn't until April 1971 that they released their key ideological tract *The Urban Guerrilla Concept* (RAF126). In May 1972 the U.S. mined North Vietnamese harbours and it was this action that spurred the RAF into a number of attacks on U.S. Army facilities within Germany (Aust, 2008: 159-161). At the end of May the West German police launched their biggest ever operation (164-5) and by the following month all of the RAF leadership were apprehended (170-6). The 'first generation' of the RAF was imprisoned in a specially constructed high-security gaol in Stammheim (200).

Although unconnected with the RAF, the Munich Massacre in September 1972 elicited a pamphlet in support, written by Meinhof (RAF102). The RAF's own violent actions turned inwards at this stage and they conducted several hunger strikes in protest at the conditions in gaol (Aust, 2008: 190). It wasn't until May 1975 that their trial commenced, and it was during this time that the second generation of the RAF turned to violence (218-220). One key member, Brigitte Mohnhaupt, had served part of an earlier sentence in the same wing of Stammheim as the RAF leadership (263). On completion of her sentence she returned underground, and was a leader of both the second and third generations of the RAF until her arrest in 1982.

The second generation was motivated by a desire to secure the release of their 'leaders' from gaol. Additional motivation was provided by the death of Holger Meins (a founder member of the RAF) in February 1974, following a hunger strike (208-9). 2000 protestors attended his funeral and his death gave a boost to RAF membership, increasing from about 40 to 300 members with an estimated 10,000 sympathisers (209-19).

In April 1975 the second generation of the RAF undertook their highest profile attack (to date) when they stormed the West German embassy in Stockholm (223-227). By the end of the action two hostages and two RAF members were dead.

In May 1976 the perceived murder of Ulrike Meinhof, in Stammheim, acted as a further catalyst to RAF members and sympathisers. Over 4000<sup>71</sup> protestors attended her funeral and in some quarters there remain nagging doubts to this day about whether she committed suicide or was murdered (Bauer, 2008: 89).

The kidnapping of the prominent German capitalist Hanns Martin Schleyer in September 1977 (305-11) and the subsequent hijacking of a Lufthansa jet carrying a large number of German tourists (372-408), marked the period known as the *Deutscher Herbst* (German Autumn). Following the successful freeing of the passengers, the Stammheim prisoners committed suicide – Baader, Ensslin and Raspe successfully – while a fourth prisoner survived her wounds (409-412). The

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<sup>71</sup> Varon (2004: 234) states that 7000 attended her funeral.



following day the second generation killed Schleyer, as their intended aim of the release of the RAF leadership was no longer attainable (417-8).

Varon (2004: 234) suggests that the second generation lacked the ideological motivation of the first, lacking any cause other than 'free-the-leaders'. Certainly their turn to violence seemed as much motivated by the continuing imprisonment of the Stammheim prisoners as it was by the anti-imperialist ideals that drove the first generation, as recalled by one of the members, Karl-Heinz Dellwo (Aust, 2008:432-3):

For years, everything revolved around the release of the prisoners. Some of us had died for that, others ended up in jail, or there were other consequences. ... the entire morality of the RAF was overturned – and all the time their release was at the centre of everything.

The violence of the second generation had broadened out beyond the attacks against the U.S. (imperialism par excellence according to the RAF) and West German state machinery to include civilians such as the 81 passengers on board the Lufthansa flight. Even within the RAF, some saw this as a step too far, as Aust (414-5) informs us.

The third generation of the RAF commenced their attacks in 1979, with an unsuccessful bombing of a NATO general, in the name of the *Commando Andreas Baader* (433-4). It wasn't until May 1982 that they released an ideological statement, the RAF's first since Meinhof's *Urban Guerrilla Concept*. In it they claimed that the RAF was as strong as ever (Aust, 2008: 435-6). The group survived the November 1982 arrest of Mohnhaupt, with Birgit Hogefeld and Wolfgang Grams taking over as leaders until Grams' death and Hogefeld's arrest in a police operation in 1993. Until then the RAF had undertaken a number of increasingly sophisticated attacks, against prominent capitalists and U.S. and German government sites. The last action of the RAF was in March 1993, when they bombed a new prison building in Weiterstadt (they had continued to carry out acts in support of imprisoned colleagues). In April 1998 the formal dissolution of the RAF was announced to the press (Aust: 436-7).

### *Fixing moveable boundaries*

This brief history of the RAF offers several important points for consideration. The membership and, perhaps more importantly, leadership, of the RAF changed distinctly over time. The targets for violence, and the justification of the actions also changed – including ideological, financial and political aims. Beyond this, the movement also made a conscious decision (within the RAF) to turn to violence, and indeed renounce it (which it did once before the final disbandment of the group).

Within such a movement it is difficult to establish a coherent appraisal of a group's beliefs whilst avoiding the dangers of presenting the group as a monolithic entity. In all the groups I have studied in this research there is a shift in beliefs over time, but this is perhaps clearest in this case study. This reinforces the importance of addressing this issue as a 'move' to violence, but also stresses the emphasis I have placed on understanding the context for the group's beliefs and actions.

Within the following section I have focused primarily on the statements made by members of the RAF during the three violent stages of the movement. I have not, unless otherwise stated, analysed here the comments from before the formation of the RAF, which I include in my analysis in Chapter Eight. I have done this in order to concentrate on the violent beliefs of the RAF, so that we can understand this group better. I have also drawn attention to where these are placed within the shifting ideological aims of the group. In the brief conclusion I also provide some charts showing how the matrix captures differing priorities across the three generations of the RAF.

### **Marker Analysis**

As stated above, in this section I have primarily focused on data coming out of the statements of the three generations of the RAF. Where such insights are informative or illuminating I have broken down this data further into each of the three generations. However, in the main I have left the analysis of the intergenerational differences to the discussion in Chapter Eight.

As in the other chapters I have dealt with the markers in alphabetical order, apart from those into which I had coded little or no data, which are dealt with at the end. The six markers that I coded the most data into were:

- (1) Basic Injustice
- (2) Dichotomous World-View
- (3) Wider Struggle
- (4) Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence
- (=5) Context of Group's Origins/Development
- (=5) Conviction

### *Basic Injustice*

The RAF was driven by a strong sense of injustice over a number of issues. Throughout their existence there is a strong sense that the issues which agitated them were, as I have also noted with al Qaeda, imported from outside their immediate environs. That issues of injustice in Vietnam, Palestine, Persia and other developing countries were of great importance to Meinhof and her contemporaries is partly a sign of the increasing globalisation of ideas and information, as well as an indicator of common identification through shared normative values. It is important to realise that such identification does not have to be reciprocal (it is unclear that people in Vietnam, for example, felt an affinity with members of the RAF) in order for a group to claim apparent outsiders as being inside their ideological boundaries. This point will receive further development when I discuss the *Dichotomous World-View* marker, but has been highlighted here due to the extensive referencing of conflicts and issues, as basic injustices for the RAF, from areas and countries that they rarely, if ever, visited or lived in.

As an example of their feelings about Vietnam, for example, one need look no further than their statement explaining their bomb-strikes in retaliation of the U.S. mining of North Vietnamese harbours (RAF40):

They must understand that their crimes against the Vietnamese people have provided them new and bitter enemies, that there will be no more place in the world where they could be safe from attacks by revolutionary guerrilla units.

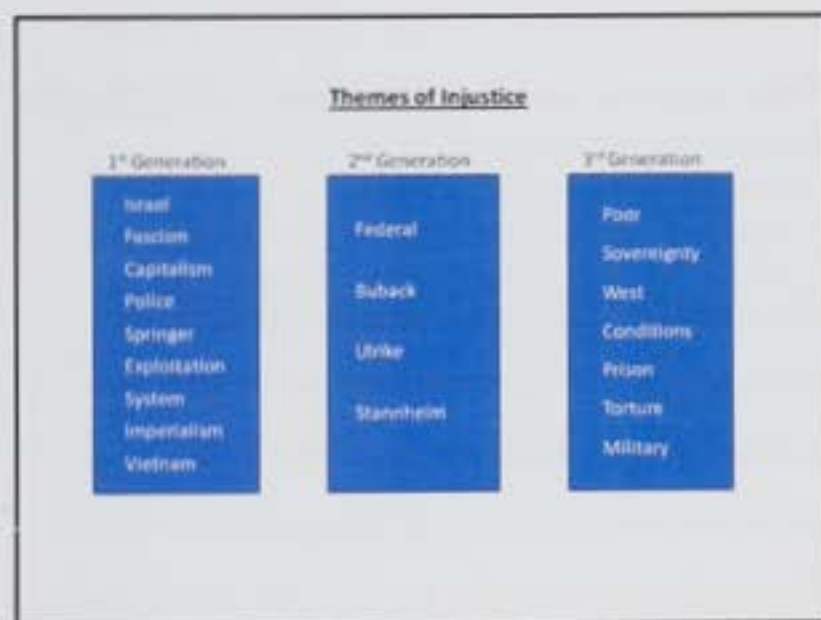


The issue of Persia had of course played a key role in the development and radicalisation of the movement out of which the RAF grew. In 1967 Meinhof wrote a column to the Shah's wife, complaining about the injustices suffered by many in Iran (RAF81), and it was the protests surrounding the visit of the Shah and his wife that led to the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg.

Recent revelations have told us that although it was an undercover policeman who shot Ohnesorg, there were other forces at play.<sup>72</sup> However, the theme of police brutality was another key claim of injustice for the RAF, in terms of brutal tactics against opposition and protest movements, and leading to the police being identified with groups that operated in fascist Germany (RAF18):

**Resist the police death squads!  
Resist the ss practices of the police**

What is important to note, however, is that there was more change in the sources of claimed injustices over time in the case of the RAF than any of the other groups in this study. Figure 6.1 charts some of the key themes coming out of an examination of the data in the *Basic Injustice* marker (through recurrent words and phrases in their statements) and divided into each of the violent generations of the RAF.



**Figure 6.1 – RAF Themes of Injustice**

<sup>72</sup> In 2009 information was discovered in Stasi files which showed that the policeman who shot Ohnesorg, Karl-Heinz Kurras, was also a Stasi spy (Kulish, 2009). Whilst it is not implausible that he could have been acting under orders as an agent provocateur, there has not yet been any evidence that this was the case.

Some of the early considerations disappear altogether in the later statements of the RAF. For example, the concerns about the continuing influence of the National Socialists on the ruling classes disappears, naturally enough as those tainted by Nazi involvement aged and retired from public life.

The second generation were particularly motivated by the mistreatment of the Stammheim prisoners, for example the following statements regarding the treatment and deaths of Holger, Baader and Meinhof (RAF13):

Holger was purposely murdered on 09-11-74 by systematic undernourishment and conscious manipulation of the transportation time from Wittlich to Stammheim...

The Federal Prosecution hoped to break the prisoners' collective hungerstrike against destructive imprisonment, through the execution of one of the cadre, after the attempt to kill Andreas via force feeding failed as a result of the mobilization of public pressure...

...Ulrike was executed in a State Security action. Her death was staged as suicide, to make the politics that Ulrike had struggled for seem senseless.

The third generation continued this motif with regard to the imprisonment of their own generation (RAF52):

we shall not stop fighting against the torture, overt and covert extermination, the whole institutionalized strategy to destroy our identity, which is today being increasingly imposed against us.

The number of themes relating to injustices against their own lends support to Varon's (2004: 234) assertion that the second and third generations were less ideologically motivated than the first. That said, the injustice of poverty, in developing countries primarily, but manifest in discussions of 'metropolises' in the West as well, continued to be a key driving injustice from the earliest to the latest incarnations of the RAF. For example:

From 1970, *Build the Red Army* (RAF25):

They are the ones who must understand the action; those who receive no compensation for the exploitation they must suffer. Not in their standard of living, not in their consumption, not in the form

of mortgages, not in the form of even limited credit, not in the form of midsize cars.

From 1980, *Sigurd Debus Commando* (RAF94):

the creeping death of the 24-hour day in the metropole, the destruction in the struggle for existence, the lack of perspective and the alienation.

This ties into feelings of global injustice that received at least lip service in most of the RAF statements – for example the following ‘sign-off’ (RAF25):

They can grasp that what is beginning to happen here has been going on for a long time in Vietnam, in Palestine, in Guatemala, in Oakland and Watts, in Cuba and China, in Angola and in New York.

### *Context of Group's Internal Development*

Perhaps the most significant event in the group's early internal development was the students' response to the police violence surrounding the Persian Shah's visit in 1967 and the shooting of Ohnesorg. These events radicalised a generation of protesting students and was cited in Meinhof's reaction to the Black September attacks (RAF102):

Shots which were not just fired by a single private fascist (Kurras), but rather were the result of systematic imperialist terror—directed at Dutschke, cheered on by Springer.

In the development of the RAF the key early event was the freeing of Baader, which led to Meinhof joining Ensslin and Baader as fugitives. These two events highlight an important point about the internal development of any group. The internal developments of the groups in these instances were made as a result of conscious decisions following external pressures. For example, in reaction to the shooting of Dutschke, the student movement started to react in a violent fashion, as shown in some of Meinhof's pre-RAF columns (RAF43: 40): “On June 2, people threw tomatoes and eggs; this time they threw stones”. Later, after the escape of



Baader the new fugitives responded to their externalisation from 'normal' (legal) society through violence against property (banks) and then persons.

In hindsight, it is very easy to see how the RAF developed its violence both within the group dynamic and in response to external pressures. Key examples are found within statements about the treatment of RAF prisoners, for example (RAF13): "Under Buback's regime, Siegfried was murdered ... Under Buback's regime, Ulrike was executed in a State Security action." Such actions led to a culture of revenge within the succeeding generations of the RAF.

There were not many statements that highlighted developments within the group which were not stimulated by external influences. Whilst this means that I will not discuss this marker further at this stage, the development of the group will be further investigated in Chapter Eight.

### *Context of Group's Origins/Development*

A lot of data was coded into this marker. Chief amongst the influencing factors was the Nazi past of Germany, and the conflict in Vietnam.

The spectre of National Socialism hung over the post-war youth of Germany as they considered the complicit, active or otherwise, nature of their parents' involvement in the atrocities of that period. For the RAF, the leaders of West Germany were guilty of involvement, as the following statement, written by Meinhof in 1972, reveals (RAF102):

The ruling class—and especially the German ruling class—is so rapacious that, ... .. it hoped to achieve, in conditions that were not yet ripe, that which they managed to achieve later anyway. They formed an uneasy alliance with the old, declining petit bourgeoisie, and they bought into the irrational and deadly antisemitism. Instead of relying on their shareholders, as should have been the case, they developed the imperialist middle class to meet the corporations' extreme demand for capital—they formed an alliance with the retrograde and ideologically backwards Nazi Party. Instead of waiting to grow strong enough to subjugate peoples and countries without military adventures, they started the Second World War.

Thus, in their struggle with the West German establishment the RAF saw themselves as continuing the fight against fascism. Oftentimes, this struggle linked with the other major cause célèbre for many Leftist movements – the Vietnam war. For example, in a statement accompanying attacks against the U.S. base in Heidelberg, they stated that it was in retaliation for attacks in Vietnam. In relation to the search for the perpetrators (self-styled “Commandos”) of this attack, the RAF said that (RAF16):

The people in Germany don't support the security services in their search for the Commandos because they want nothing to do with the crimes of American imperialism and the support which it receives from the ruling class here, because they haven't forgotten Auschwitz, Dresden, and Hamburg...

For the RAF, the violent nature of U.S. actions in Vietnam justified a violent response. It is important to note that this justification in itself does not mean that I am implying a universal causal relationship between the conflict within a wider society and the move to violence of groups interacting with it. However, the above issues, and others like the radicalisation of many movement members following the death of Benno Ohnesorg clearly had an effect on the development of violent strands within the broader movement. The difficulties of drawing causal inferences are discussed in my analysis of the matrix in Chapter Nine, but for now it will suffice to note that there were significant external pressures that led to the RAF developing the way that it did.

### *Conviction*

Along with the *Context of Group's Origins/Development* marker the *Conviction* marker contained the fifth most coded data for the RAF case study. That the members of all the differing generations of the RAF were committed to their cause is shown by their actions – they chose to leave mainstream society and live their lives on the run from the law. The sense of exclusion that this led to was profoundly difficult, as remarked upon by Hans-Joachim Klein (Klein and Bougereau, 1981), a member of another violent group at the time – the Red Cells. In addition, they could not have continued to undertake their violent actions without a great level of commitment to their cause.

In this respect, as in others, the RAF saw themselves as having greater conviction than their colleagues in the extra-parliamentary opposition movement. For example, in responding to criticism about their action to free Baader they wrote (RAF25):

Don't complain that it's too hard. The action to free Baader was hardly a walk in the park. If you understand what's going on (and your comments indicate that you do understand, so it's opportunism to say that the bullet also hit you in the stomach—you assholes), if you understand anything, you need to find a better way to organize your distribution. And we have no more to say to you about our methods than we do about our plans for action—you shitheads ...

... Stop lounging around on the sofa in your recently-raided apartment counting up your love affairs and other petty details. Build an effective distribution system. Forget about the cowardly shits, the bootlickers, the social workers, those who only attempt to curry favor, they are a lumpen mob. Figure out where the asylums are and the large families and the subproletariat and the women workers, those who are only waiting to give a kick in the teeth to those who deserve it. They will take the lead.

The conviction to their ideals continued after capture, with the hunger strikes that led to the death of Holger Meins. This tactic was repeated at several times during the imprisonment of various RAF members, although as shown in a statement from 1981 (RAF52) the reasons for the hunger strike were often beneficial to themselves, even if framed within the wider aims of their struggle:

having been isolated from one another for years now, isolated from all collective processes and from the outside world, it is our aim to break this disconnection by employing the only effective means we have · unlimited collective hunger strike · and to fight for conditions which would allow us to take part in a collective learning and working process in order to survive as human beings.

In all their actions and beliefs, the conviction of the members of the RAF is neatly summarised in the following sign-off to one of their statements (RAF40): "Dare to fight · dare to win".



### *Desire for Social Change*

The RAF had a clear vision about what they felt was wrong with global society, but perhaps not such a consistent idea about how it should look once corrected.

Consequently, a lot of the data for this marker are statements demanding certain activities stop, but there are not many constructive suggestions for what should be started. These are some examples:

We demand an end to the bomb attacks on Vietnam. (RAF16)

... that the Springer press stop spreading lies about foreign workers here. (RAF17)

These statements are very narrow in their subject and do not address problems with the wider malaise in social values that the RAF seemed concerned with.

Consequently, it is easy to see how the RAF could be accused of being focused solely on particular negative issues but not interested in engaging in constructive criticism of the wider debate.

This seems at odds with the general message conveyed by the RAF's actions and statements, that they were fighting a system that imposed poverty on the majority of the population. However, perhaps it signifies that the RAF saw that their struggle was a fight against a particular enemy, success at which would lead to social change (which was a secondary aim). Certainly the potentially altruistic desire to improve society seemed to figure lower down their priorities, and this is reflected in this marker being one of the lower in significance in this study.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

The Red Army Faction demonstrated a clearly dichotomous world-view in their statements, with this marker containing the second highest amount of coded data. The battle-lines were drawn along ideological boundaries, which imparted clear value-judgements on the positions, groups and people held in relation to those boundaries.

Working with texts coded into the *Dichotomous World-View* marker I have sorted some of the key recurrent phrases and ideas into three groupings which show the sites and sides of dichotomy as well as the language of struggle used to define the relationship between them (Figure 6.2).

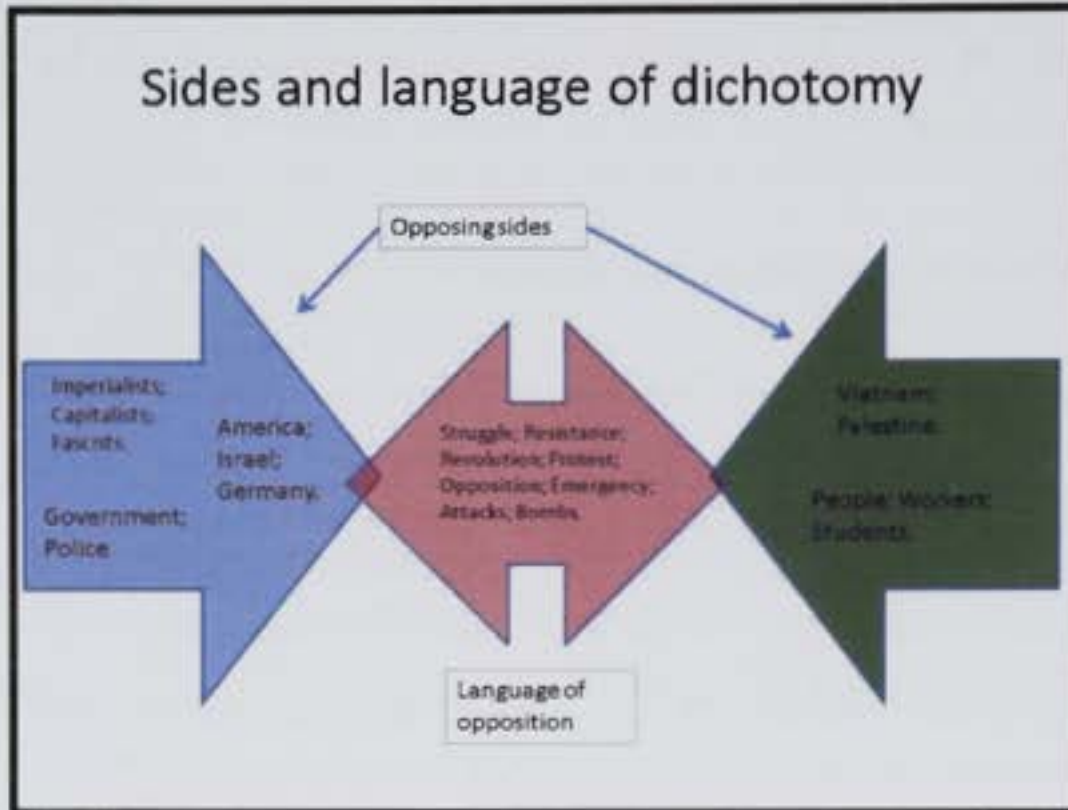


Figure 6.2 – Sides and language of dichotomy

In some cases the RAF took itself to be a champion of ‘the people’. Leaving aside comments about the validity of their Marxist aspirations (or even interpretations), these feelings were expressed frequently, such as the following example from a statement following an attack on NATO general Haig (RAF14): “the people of the world are confronted with a new american offensive...” Statements such as these showed a clear line of division between who the RAF saw as the victims – ‘the people’ and the perpetrators: ‘the system’, or ‘government’ or other phrases and terms representing those in power.

The nature of the alleged attacks against ‘the people’ helps further define where the non-negotiable beliefs of the RAF lay. These can be shown, for example, by what the RAF (RAF18) stated it was fighting for: “the struggle for liberation from fascism, from capitalist exploitation, and from the oppression of the people” (RAF18). These aims are fleshed out in greater depth in other statements, such as the RAF’s statement (RAF25) following the freeing of Baader, the action which gave birth to the organisation:

That's why we're building the red army. Behind the parents stand the teachers, the youth authorities, and the police. Behind the supervisor stands the boss, the personnel office, the workers compensation board, the welfare office, and the police. Behind the custodian stands the manager, the landlord, the bailiff, the eviction notice, and the police. With this comes the way that the pigs use censorship, layoffs, dismissals, along with bailiff's seals and billy clubs. Obviously, they reach for their service revolvers, their teargas, their grenades, and their semi-automatic weapons; ... Obviously, the gis in Vietnam are trained in counter-guerilla tactics and the Green Berets receive courses on torture.

The above shows the lines of division even more clearly. The RAF stood to protect what they understood as the powerless and disadvantaged. Whilst their ideologies are not necessarily clear or even theoretically consistent, they are expressed in emotive and non-negotiable ways, and suggest firm sites for conflict between the opposing groups.

This conflict was, for the RAF, transparently a war between two hostile sides, as shown in their statement that (RAF13):

In the context of the imperialist FRG's anti-guerilla counter-strategy, the courts are a weapon of war – used to persecute the guerilla operating in illegality and to exterminate the Prisoners of War. Buback – who Schmidt called 'an energetic combatant' for this State – understood the conflict with us as a war and engaged in it as such: 'I have lived through the war. This is a war with different means.'

As already noted, the boundaries of the RAF were spread to include those whom they perceived as sharing similar values or receiving similar persecution. This demonstration of inclusive boundaries does not mean that the lines of non-negotiable difference were in anyway 'soft', but rather demonstrated that in an increasingly globalised world, the solidarity of shared ideology could provide sufficient grounds for identification with the group. It also helped legitimate their case, by claiming greater numbers on 'their side'.

The RAF claimed this solidarity with the Vietnamese as well as people in other developing countries (RAF102):

Do people think Vietnam is a joke? Guatemala, Santo Domingo, Indonesia, Angola are all just jokes? Vietnam is an atrocious example for the people of the Third World, an example of how



determined imperialism is to commit genocide against them if nothing else achieves the desired results—if they don't agree to being markets, military bases, sources of raw materials and cheap labor.

They also identified their fight with a number of other resistance groups (RAF52):

with the prisoners of the ira and the inla and their long and determined struggle for political status.

with the prisoners of the red brigades in their struggle against the strategy of extermination, in which they have seized the political initiative.

with all prisoners from the anti-imperialist resistance in west europe, especially in turkey.

with the struggle of the palestinian prisoners for prisoner of war status.

with all prisoners who have begun to resist in prison and are struggling to organize themselves.

arm the resistance

organize illegality

organize armed resistance in west europe

It was not necessary for the people co-opted by the RAF to reciprocate because the criteria for belonging to the same side as the RAF were set by the RAF – it was their ideals and reality that were important. Similarly, those the RAF saw as the 'Other' did not necessarily have to see themselves in the same way (or even acknowledge that there was a conflict). The beliefs and the ideologies of the group justified its own boundaries and enemies, and required no objective justification.

For the RAF, the economic pressures on workers were a contagion of the ideological views of the Capitalist 'Other'; the harassment of protesting students by the police, the contagion of the Fascist 'Other'; the bombing of Vietnam, a contagion by the Imperialist 'Other'. This language of difference and dichotomy remained a strong thread throughout the development of the RAF and expressed a significant aspect to the group's character. And so it was without irony of their privileged Western lives and values that they could frequently say (RAF16):

**SOLIDARITY WITH THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE!  
DISPERSE AND DESTROY THE FORCES OF AMERICAN  
IMPERIALISM**

## *Emergency Situation*

Whilst the RAF clearly felt that the quality of life for the majority of the world's population was lessened through attacks on their sovereignty and economic independence, they did not, on the whole, suggest that this was an emergency situation.<sup>73</sup>

Some comments, like the following, did suggest an urgency to the nature of the conflict, for example (RAF14): "the people of the world are confronted with a new american offensive," and (RAF94) "the people of europe, of the frg, are realizing that unless it can be stopped, this development will mean their destruction." Other statements also implied that the nature of the struggle with the police was increasingly taking on the nature of an emergency situation (RAF52):

the culmination of the hunt against the raf is now to prevent, at all costs, militant protest against rearmament, militarization in all fields and the deployment of the bundeswehr in the streets, all of which are meant to bring germany back to where it was 35 years ago.

The comment about bringing Germany back to the past echoed the RAF's concerns about a return to fascism (and was perhaps an attempt to stir up similar sentiments in the general public). Whilst this is suggestive of a dire situation for German society the references to such concerns are not as numerous or plaintive as with the Aum Shinrikyo case, for example. Certainly there is no suggestion of any obsession with an apocalyptic scenario within the ideology of the RAF. This may be because the RAF, as a non-religious group, did not juxtapose ideas of a better society with post-apocalyptic notions of a utopian future.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Although it is not mentioned in any of the texts I studied, Bauer (2008: 40) mentions that Che Guevara's 'foco theory' had a strong influence on the student protestors – especially the idea that one should not wait for revolution, but should bring it about.

<sup>74</sup> Hall (2009) suggests a framework whereby groups may access a "post-apocalyptic temporality" (11) that orientates actions in the present towards a (timeless) future, and, whilst al Qaeda and Aum could be said to take this approach, I suggest that the RAF's considerations did not include transcendent temporalities.

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

Whilst the RAF certainly had a set of values which it believed justified its actions, it did not recognise these as emanating from a transcendent authority. Neither did it clarify in any of its statements that it saw the values themselves as transcending the field of action, though arguably they did at least unconsciously accept this to be the case, as these values provided an objective and normative justification of their attacks and opinions.

Where the RAF did make reference to some form of external ideologue with a direct bearing on their judgement of both their and the 'Other's' actions it was primarily to Marx that they turned. I do not intend to provide an analysis of Marxist thought or indeed of the validity of the RAF's understanding of it: the validity of their use of Marx is less relevant than the possible use of their interpretation of his ideas to justify violence.

That said, there is no direct linkage made within their statements to a connection between Marx and the justification of violent actions. Marx, Lenin and other ideologues only appear as reference points on matters of theory every so often. For example, as found in the RAF's statement about the Black September attacks in Munich (RAF102): "Functioning as it does at a very high level of Marxist theory combined with revolutionary practice, Black September doesn't need to be told this..." and also in their pamphlet *The Urban Guerrilla Concept* (RAF126).

This marker is one where there is a clear difference between the religious and non-religious case studies. That a non-religious group maintained a sustained and (self-) justified violent campaign without referencing support from an external legitimating authority, suggests that the idea of a god (qua a god) functioning as the triggering factor to violence in religious groups can be questioned. This is an explanation that I explore in Chapter Eight.

### *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence*

The RAF's attacks were justified predominantly as retaliations for the actions of others, be that the vaguer notion of 'the system', or specific foes such as the U.S.



Army or the West German police. As such, it is not surprising that this marker was one of the most populated markers in this case study.

Initially the RAF saw itself as participating in a cycle of reciprocal violence which commenced with the West German police's treatment of anti-government protestors. However, a deep unhappiness at the U.S. Army's actions in Vietnam was also a primary driver right from the beginning and the RAF saw the U.S. Army as the agitator in this conflict, both in Vietnam and in the wider ideological arena in which the RAF fought.

For example, the RAF's feelings about the police were unambiguously stated on a number of occasions, such as when they said (RAF25):

Be absolutely clear that the revolution is no Easter March. The pigs will certainly escalate their means as far as possible, but no further than that. To bring the conflict to a head, we are building the red army ...

... If we don't build the red army, the pigs can do what they want, the pigs can continue to incarcerate, lay off, impound, seize children, intimidate, shoot, and dominate. To bring the conflict to a head means that they are no longer able to do what they want, but rather must do what we want them to do.

In many ways it seems that the police were seen as the representatives for the system that the RAF were fighting against, and that they saw as embroiled in a (class) war against the ordinary German people. Likewise, if the U.S. was seen as the figurehead of the 'imperialist' system, then the troops in Vietnam were the vanguard and the conflict there the preeminent cause for reciprocal violence against the U.S. (RAF40):

They must understand that their crimes against the Vietnamese people have provided them new and bitter enemies, that there will be no more place in the world where they could be safe from attacks by revolutionary guerrilla units.

However, as the actions of the RAF developed, leading to police action that in turn led to casualties on both sides, so the cycle of reciprocal violence became more compact and more vicious. By the time of the later generations, a lot of the actions were mainly justified through reference to actions carried out against their own members (RAF15):

On Monday, May 16, 1972, the Manfred Grashof Commando carried out a bomb attack against Judge Buddenberg of the Karlsruhe Federal Supreme Court. Buddenberg is the judge at the Federal Supreme Court responsible for the arrests and investigations in the current political proceedings...

... We will carry out bomb attacks against judges and federal prosecutors until they stop violating the rights of political prisoners. We are, in fact, demanding nothing that is impossible for this justice system. We have no other means to compel them to do so...

The above quotation came from the second generation of the RAF, and in the naming convention of their attacks was named after their colleague Grashof, who had been caught by the police. The following quotation is from the third generation and is named after Meinhof, who many people (both inside and outside of the RAF) believed had been murdered in prison.<sup>75</sup> This convention of naming actions after former members was in itself a form of expressing revenge (RAF13):

On April 7, 1977, the Ulrike Meinhof Commando executed the Chief Federal Prosecutor, Siegfried Buback ...

... We will prevent the murder of our fighters in West German prisons, which results from the fact that the Federal Prosecutors Office can't stop the prisoners from struggling except by liquidating them...

Because the police were required to seek out and destroy the RAF, this cycle of actions continued in reciprocal violence until the RAF eventually disbanded. From a Girardian perspective I would suggest that the violent reciprocity continued until one of the groups was totally consumed.

### *No Common Ground*

The actions of the group contribute more to the discussion within this marker than the data coded from their statements. This does not invalidate the findings, but does need to be highlighted.

It seems that the RAF certainly lacked common ground with those whom they perceived as the 'Other'. Their withdrawal from mainstream society into the

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<sup>75</sup> Not the core members though, who felt she had committed suicide – although it served their purposes to publicly state otherwise (Aust, 2008: 276).

underground is one clear indicator. The extreme nature of their actions – the intention to maim and kill, is another indicator of a lack of common starting point from which to negotiate beliefs and values.

This is expressed in some of their statements, although what comes through more is their unwillingness to communicate. For example, the “blah blah blah” of the following quotation is an almost childish non-statement about the chasm between their ideas and that of others (RAF102):

The West German establishment has unmasked itself—the more they assert themselves, the more the system's inherent contradictions have proven what this means in the context of developing imperialism: phony campaigns, the social substance of which is a lot of blah blah blah...

This belittlement of other's opinions is also expressed in their feelings about others who could have been argued to sympathise with their views (the 'Left'). This quotation suggests that they have tried to engage in discussion about their actions, but that there is no common ground due to a failure of the correspondents to properly understand the need for direct action. In this case the lack of common understanding is down to a failure of the 'Other' to correctly perceive the nature of the problem and its correct response (RAF25):

It is pointless to explain the right thing to the wrong people. We've done enough of that. We don't want to explain the action to free Baader to babbling intellectuals, to those who are freaked out, to know-it-alls...

### *Question of Authority*

Building on the previous quotation, the question of authority for the RAF was clearly important as it provided an important source of justification for their actions to those with ideological sympathies. The RAF clearly saw itself as the vanguard of the leftist/protest movement within West Germany and was frequently scathing of those 'inferior' colleagues who failed to display the same conviction that they did (RAF102):



And the opportunistic left in the metropole behaves idiotically—being the labor aristocracy of imperialism (Lenin) who benefit from this theft, they sit on their arses. They only take to the streets if something affects them, if the war escalates, if some of them are shot—like during Easter 1968 in Berlin or May 1970 at Kent State. If the system does something against them like what is always being done in the Third World, all of a sudden they get upset, they run to the police, they chase after that rat-catcher McGovern, they run for a post on the labor council and they write a bunch of poems against the war.

This is in stark contrast to themselves (RAF102):

In opposition to this stands the raf—as sure of our cause as the people of the Third World, because they accept their leadership role, because they know that the struggle must be carried out relentlessly, and that is how they carry it out.

The question of authority, for the RAF as for religious groups, is an important one in that they claim the rightful leadership of not just their group, but also of a wider population. Furthermore, those who do not accept this authority are placed outside the 'true' boundaries and so grouped with the 'Other' – as they wrote about one 'leftist' (Negt) with whom they disagreed (RAF102): "Negt need only come out into the open for all to see that he is in bed with the fascists—his 'qualification,' most probably an 'unqualified tool.'"

### *Symbolic Importance*

The nature of the symbolic importance of their actions was contextually different for the RAF than for the religious groups in this study. Whilst the RAF did assign symbolic importance to their struggle the symbols were consciously this-worldly in origin. However, because the RAF created non-religious symbols does not mean that they were not sacred in nature for the group.

For example, as previously discussed, the nature of the sacred that I am discussing in this thesis, and through which I am examining the RAF, is of things special and set apart from the everyday world. In this context, comments such as (RAF16) "VICTORY IN PEOPLE'S WAR", suggests a sacred aspect to the idea of the war. War is oftentimes a sacred activity, leading as it does to a rupture in the normal

existence of its participants. But over and above that the RAF have created a symbol out of 'the People', a symbol which reflects the values and goals of the RAF as well as contributing to the myth of class struggle and the enslavement of the proletariat, by which they ordered their world.

Likewise, their enemies were symbolised as (RAF18) "...exploiters and enemies of the people...", and actions such as those of Black September were valorised as they (RAF102):

... simultaneously clarified both the nature of the imperialist ruling class and of the anti-imperialist struggle, in a way that no revolutionary action in West Germany or West Berlin has. It was simultaneously anti-imperialist, antifascist, and internationalist.

Here we see the ideological lines of conflict symbolised by the positions of the anti-imperialist / fascist, against the 'Other' of the ruling class. The symbols here are flags of identification, standards that mark the positions of the various for and against camps.

Whether an action is seen as having struck at the powers of evil, or of fascism or of the enemies of Allah, each referent to a symbolised 'Other' is of equal importance to the respective group, and each action takes on a symbolic importance which raises the nature of the action beyond just that of a physical attack.

### *Wider Struggle*

As already mentioned in several of the above markers the RAF saw themselves as representative of people far beyond the national borders of their homeland, and they saw their battle as waged on ideological grounds with sites of conflict around the world.

This marker was the third most populated for this case study, with data coded from the RAF's frequent early references to Vietnam and constant claims to represent the poor and disadvantaged in both developed and developing countries.

Sometimes these references did no more than name-check sites of conflict around the world (RAF14):

smash us imperialism and its bases all over the world!  
 organize armed resistance in western europe!  
 build the anti-imperialist front in the metropolises!  
 solidarity with the palestinian resistance against the imperialist  
 final solution!  
 solidarity with the anti-imperialist resistance in turkey!

But other times they represented a deeper engagement with issues, framed within a Marxist terminology (RAF14):

the people of the world are confronted with a new american offensive, which also marks a qualitative leap forward in the development of the relative strength between the forces of revolution and the forces of counter-revolution; or, as we have already said: the worldwide revolutionary process is the encirclement of the metropolises by the people of the hinterland.

The Marxist language and constructs framed the boundaries of the normative values by which the RAF judged the actions of itself and its 'Other'. This is not to say that the RAF correctly understood or even consistently applied Marxist principles or theories. But certainly right from the start it was these ideas through which they interpreted their world and, regardless of whether they could be understood as proper Marxists, their world-view was how they identified and justified the ideological and actual spaces of conflict.

The international and ideological placement of these sites is demonstrated in the two quotations above. But the RAF also saw West Germany as the centre of this struggle, and so justifying their struggle against the government, writing in 1972 that (RAF102):

The comrades from Black September, who had their own Black September in 1970 when the Jordanian army massacred 20,000 Palestinians, went back to the place that is the origin of this massacre: West Germany—formerly Nazi Germany—now at the centre of imperialism. Back to the site of the power that forced the Jews of both West and East Europe to emigrate to Israel. Back to those who had hoped to profit from the theft of Palestinian land. Back to where Israel got its reparation payments and, until 1965, officially, its weapons. Back to where the Springer Corporation celebrated Israel's 1967 Blitzkrieg in an anticommunist orgy. Back to the supplier who provided Hussein's army with panzers, assault rifles, machine-pistols, and munitions. Back to where everything possible was done—using development aid, oil deals, investments, weapons, and diplomatic relationships—to pit Arab regimes against



each other, and to turn all of them against the Palestinian liberation movement. Back to the place from which imperialism launches its bombers when other means of repressing the Arab liberation movement fail: West Germany—Munich—the nato airport at Fürstenfeldbruck.

It is clear from statements such as these that they saw West Germany as the centre of the struggle – thus placing themselves at the core of the conflict. This view also suggests an ordering of their world around their own actions and values. This latter point is borne out through their citing of the ideology of imperialism as the centre of the opposing forces that united the struggle around the world (RAF102): “Imperialism unifies North and South as the centre and the periphery of a single system...”

### *Markers not populated*

Out of the markers I have been using to code data into the matrix, three did not capture any data from the RAF statements. These were:

- Against violence
- Followers differ from leader
- Personal benefit

The first marker is unlikely to capture data from the violent groups, but I wanted to ensure that the same set of markers was applied to all case studies. That the RAF did not make non-violent statements is not surprising given that as individuals they were part of the radicalised end of the student movement before they created the RAF. However, it is worth making that point as we could expect groups that started off non-violently to make such statements, or indeed for statements and actions to suggest very different outcomes. In this case, though, there was no divergence between the RAF's actions and their statements (at least in respect to their commitment to violent means to achieve their ends).

The second marker from the above list reflects two aspects of the RAF's development. Firstly is that there was no single leader. While Baader was undoubtedly the charismatic face of the RAF, Ensslin and Meinhof both played

significant roles. There is evidence from accounts of the RAF that there were significant fallings out between these three (and from time to time between others) but in the main there was no divergence between the 'party line' and the statements and actions of the rank and file.<sup>76</sup>

This could be due to the second aspect, which is that as an underground organisation members were highly committed to the group as they had left society behind and, legally at least, burned their bridges (made it difficult to return due to acting illegally). Where there were cases (and there were) where individuals disagreed with the motives or actions of the group and so left their former colleagues, those dissenters were unlikely to ever publish rationales for this as they still needed to avoid drawing police and judicial attention to themselves.

There are some exceptions, Hans-Joachim Klein, whom I have already mentioned, is one. However, as he was not a member of the RAF I have not analysed his statements for this study. There could also be others, but the majority of my sources for material were at least partially sympathetic to the aims of the RAF (if not the means) and so were less likely to publish dissenting documents. However, I don't believe that this detracts from this case study as this marker sets out to examine the link between leaders' statements / actions and their followers' statements / actions (as further discussed in Chapter Nine). The communal nature of the RAF tended to mean that their actions were jointly supported and statements jointly authored and so were unlikely to provide data in this case.

The last marker from the above list, *Personal Benefit*, also received no data. This marker and what it intends to capture is discussed in Chapter Nine. However, at this stage it is fair to say that the nature of the RAF's struggle meant that it was unlikely to see where the members might derive personal benefit in an immediate, or later, spiritual capacity. This implies a considerable degree of self-sacrifice.

There were two other markers from the standard list which are not discussed above. These received a little data, but not sufficient for a coherent analysis. The first was *Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes*. There was only one statement made that fell into this marker and this was in 1972 (RAF15):

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<sup>76</sup> The following are occasions where there is evidence of a falling out between Meinhof and the other prisoners (Aust, 2008: 252-7) and disagreements in the second generation after the Stammheim deaths (414-5).

We demand the immediate application of laws governing remand prisoners, the Geneva Human Rights Convention, and the United Nations Charter regarding the use of remand custody for political prisoners. We demand the justice system call off the systematic destructive attacks upon the lives and health of the prisoners.

This was the only statement that I found where the RAF appealed to a judicial process to resolve (some of) their grievances. Otherwise, the lack of appeals of this nature suggests that the RAF felt that there were no judicial processes that could be trusted to help them attain their goals. This is perhaps not surprising given the movement's early references to many judges as former Nazi sympathisers and also, for the later generations, the Baader-Meinhof generation's drawn-out and bitter trial at Stammheim.

The remaining marker was the *Violent Traditions* marker. While this did return a few statements, they tended to refer to myths of violence inherent in the 'Other' and not within their own tradition: for example, the history of U.S. aggression against other countries, or of Nazi Germany. So while there were still references to violent traditions within the rhetoric of the group, they were not claiming these traditions as within their own beliefs, although I suggest that the latter generations of the RAF could have referenced the first generation's actions and statements.

## Conclusion

The non-religious case study was a crucial one to undertake in order to test the definition and validity of the markers outside of a purely 'religious' context. As discussed above, I have followed others in arguing that it is possible to see instances of the sacred in secular settings, and the matrix should help locate and map these instances where they relate to a problematic (and violent) discourse.

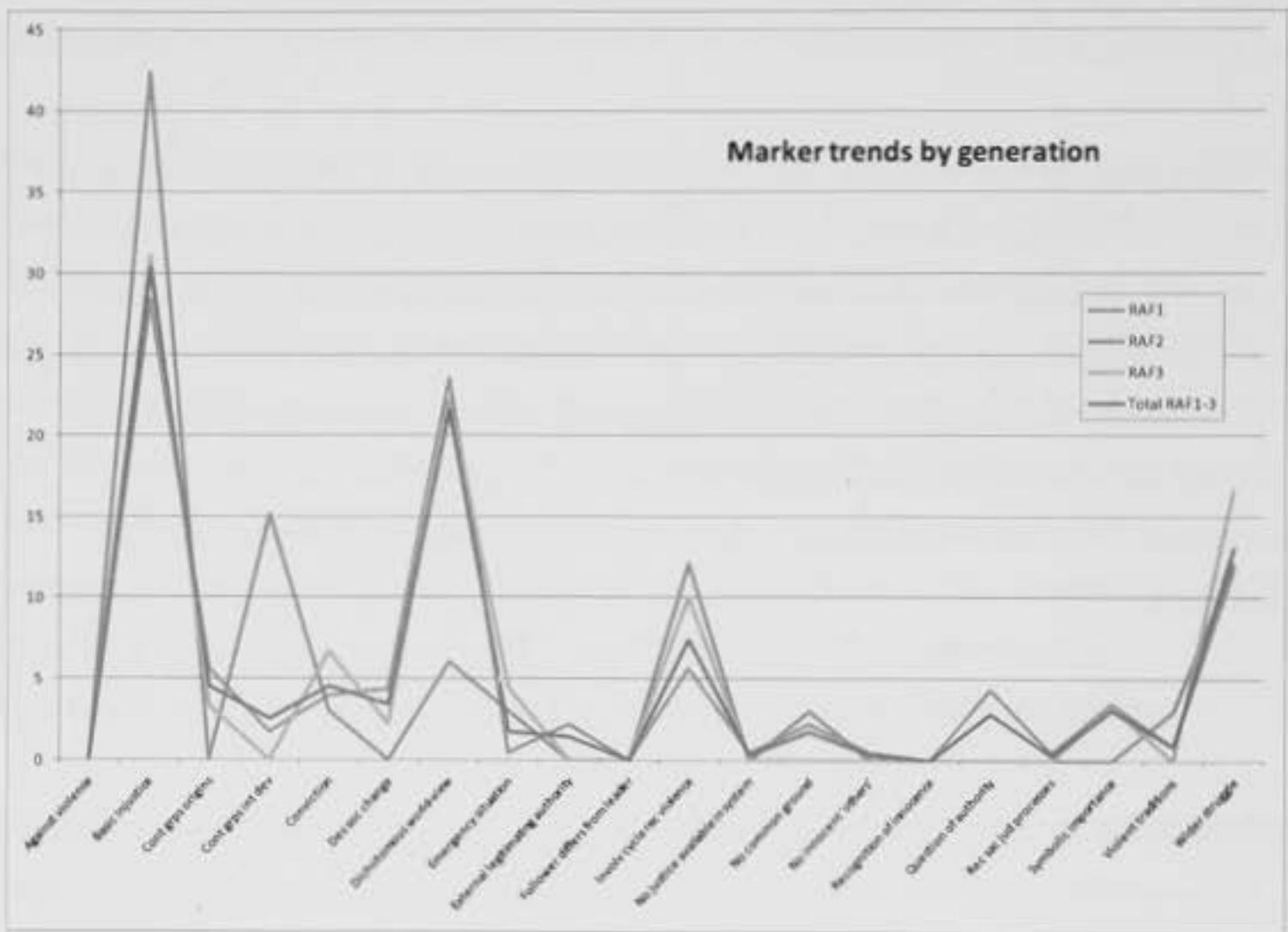
I also expected to find that the markers were similarly populated across the case studies, in both religious and non-religious examples. However, this has not proved to be the case, with the marker on *External Legitimizing Authority* providing the most notable example. The results from the RAF literature suggest



that secular groups might not need to refer to an external legitimating authority and indeed do not necessarily use secular ideologues to support their views in ways similar to the use of religious ideologies by religious groups.

This interesting observation will be discussed further in Chapter Eight. At this stage I will merely summarise some of the other key findings from this case study.

The top five markers for the RAF study can be seen in the following chart (Figure 6.3), which shows the percentage of total data by each marker, separated out into the three generations of the RAF:



**Figure 6.3 – RAF Marker trends by generation**

The above chart shows there were some changes in the markers over time. For example, more data was coded into the *Context of Group's Internal Development* marker for the second generation of the RAF than for the others and the *Basic Injustice* marker in this case was also disproportionate in comparison to the other generations. This reflects the purpose and background to the second generation, the rationale of which was primarily the release of the founders of the RAF. Their complaints of torture and maltreatment against the judicial system and their

deliberate actions with no intention other than the release of the prisoners dominated their statements, unlike those of the other two generations.

As previously mentioned, quantitative representations of the data should only be used to provide an overview of the markers as the proper analysis is to be found in the qualitative investigation of the representative texts. The discussion in this chapter has helped to map out some of the boundaries of the sacred in a secular context. These issues will be further discussed in Chapter Eight, as will a more in-depth examination of the development of groups allowing for a comparison between some of the 'non-violent' and 'violent' data within the movements represented in the 'violent' case studies. However, before I undertake this comparison, I need to consider the data from some non-violent groups, as counter-examples to the three violent groups I have already presented case studies on.

## 7. Non-violent Groups

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse data from groups with beliefs concerning non-violence, which can be used in comparison with data from the previous three chapters, on violent groups. This comparison will draw out more information about what is special about the non-negotiable beliefs that lead to violence, as well as further testing the application of the matrix in mapping instances of the sacred in religious and non-religious groups. Themes that will benefit from this comparison include understanding how violent and non-violent groups differ, when sharing common historical and/or ideological paths.

In order to provide the best comparisons possible I have chosen groups which operated out of similar geographical, chronological or ideological circumstances. They are also representative of tensions within the definitions of 'non-violence', relating to issues of strategy, timing and ideological commitment.

The groups presented here are related to the main case studies in the following ways:

#### *Agonshu (in comparison to Aum Shinrikyo)*

As 'new New Religions' Agonshu and Aum fall within the same era of Japanese religiosity.<sup>77</sup> The application of this label should not be used to mask what are important differences between the beliefs of the two groups. However, there are also some similarities and indeed these are not surprising given that Shoko Asahara attended Agonshu before leaving to start Aum Shinrikyo.

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<sup>77</sup> See my discussion of this classification at the beginning of the Aum case-study.



*Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (in comparison to al Qaeda)*

Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (UHIT) is part of the global Hizb ut-Tahrir movement. As well as sharing many similarities in beliefs with al Qaeda the Uzbek branch had contacts with the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan, also sharing regional concerns. With this in mind, and also to apply a natural boundary to the potential size of the study, I focus specifically on the Uzbek branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir.

*Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (in comparison to the Red Army Faction)*

It was very difficult to find a non-violent comparison to the Red Army Faction within West Germany. Another limiting factor was that I needed to choose groups that had at least a small number of texts available (in English) for analysis. The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was the best example – providing as it did a useful corpus of first and second hand material as well as operating within a similar chronological period to the RAF and also sharing some of its international concerns (e.g. American actions in Vietnam). Both groups also grew out of student protest movements.

Because this chapter includes three groups, rather than just one, it will follow a slightly different format to the other case studies. In the previous chapters I have introduced the group through discussion of some of the key themes that also arose out of that case study. In this chapter I will start by providing a very short introduction to each of the groups by themselves as it would not be possible to give the reader enough of an understanding of the context of each group and at the same time do justice to these themes.

Next, I will discuss some of the problems around labelling groups 'violent', 'non-violent', 'pacifist' and so on, and what this means for my study. The second half of the chapter, as with the previous studies, will provide an analysis of the texts through the markers. I will not discuss each group in each marker, because there would not be enough space to undertake this, but I have selected markers and groups which provide interesting findings. I will conclude with a very brief

summation of the key themes, with pointers to the fuller discussions in Chapters Eight and Nine.

## Groups

### *Agonshu*

Agonshu claims that it is the legitimate guardian of a religious tradition that dates back some 2500 years to the historical Buddha Sakyamuni (Reader, 1988: 238), although its more recent roots lie in the foundation of Kannon Jikeikai by Seiyu Kiriyaama in 1954. This group was devoted to worshipping the *Bodhisattva Kannon* (Goddess of Mercy) through the form of *Juntei Kannon*. In 1978 Kiriyaama changed its name to Agonshu, the new name being based on the Agama scriptures around which its beliefs are now based (Spier, 1986: 50-1).

It is important to note that Agonshu shares traits with a number of its rival groups, partly due to the intensely competitive nature of the Japanese religious marketplace. For example, like Asahara, Kiriyaama's biography details both the hardships he endured as well as past brushes with the law. Agonshu has been gifted authentic relics of the Buddha, although Reader (1988: 246 and 243) points out that both the rags to riches tale and sole authenticity of 'their' relics are traits common to many 'new New Religions'. One of the other shared traits is of more immediate interest to this study, and that is the use of the prophecies of Nostradamus, to which I will turn shortly.

Kiriyaama claims that the Agama sutras are some of the very few genuine Buddhist sutras, that the majority of Buddhism practised in Japan is false, and that only Agonshu practises 'true' Buddhism (Spier, 1986: 52). From 500 members in 1974, Shimazono (2004: 236) states that Agonshu had 206,606 members in 1990, with Clarke (2006: 16-7) claiming around 1 million in Japan with thousands more in several other countries. The primary focus of worship is the Buddha's relics, although the role of the *Goma* fire ceremony is also stated to be of central

importance as well as the teachings of the Agama sutra (Kisala, 1998: 148-9).<sup>78</sup> Kisala (149) acknowledges that Kiriyaama has proven very sensitive to the shifts in Japanese popular culture, and another sign of this is that he was the first Japanese religious leader to take up the prophecies of Nostradamus – which he used to validate his own (154), a tactic that Asahara also used.

In 1981 Kiriyaama published a book addressing the prophecies, in which he interpreted the '1999 Prophecy' (Leoni, 2000: 435) as saying that it was Agonshu which was going to be the saviour of humankind. In 1995 he published another work on Nostradamus, entitled *July 1999 is Coming*, where he predicted a global catastrophe caused by an earthquake under a nuclear installation.<sup>79</sup> Kisala (1998: 149) reports that the book received more attention than normal due to the attacks by Aum which occurred at the same time as the book came out. Unlike Asahara however, Kiriyaama did leave himself with a way out should the prophecy have proved to be false (154).

This eschatological focus and use of Nostradamus does not feature prominently in the works that I was able to access. Rather, more was made of the role of angry ancestors in the form of spirits and the negative effect they could have on the lives of the living. A good example of this is found in the text excerpted in Spier's (1986: 57-60) article where the negative impact of deceased family members, especially children, is spelt out.

The benefits of helping the deceased to attain Buddhahood are that they remove barriers to personal success in the believer's life, and this orientation towards personal gain is further demonstrated in the popular *Goma* fire rite where believers burn votive sticks containing petitions for economic success, good exam results and so on (Spier, 1986: 56-7). This is discussed further in the marker below on *Personal Benefit*.

The beliefs of Agonshu have changed over time, from a focus on a Goddess of Mercy (*Kannon*), to the teachings contained in authentic Buddhist texts (Agama sutras),

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<sup>78</sup> That said, Reader (1988: 250) points out that little substantive teaching is given from these sutras and Spier (1986: 64 – *fn* 30) highlights that despite claiming that the *Mahayana* sutras are inauthentic, some of the teachings of Agonshu are based around some of these sutras.

<sup>79</sup> This earthquake-themed message was written after the Great Hanshin (or Kobe) Earthquake that January, which killed over six thousand people.



to relics of the Buddha (*Sakyamuni*), and including legitimisation from the teachings of a French seer (Nostradamus). Throughout all this there has been a theme of world-peace and, in pursuit of this, Kiriyaama has taken the *Goma* ceremonies to a number of countries and met individuals such as Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama.

### *Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami in Uzbekistan*

I have used Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan as it provides an example of an Islamist group with a radical ideology not too dissimilar to that of al Qaeda and which also has links to the global flow of ideas and information both from the Middle East as well as further afield.<sup>80</sup> Although enjoying its greatest influence in Uzbekistan and amongst ethnic Uzbeks, UHiT has also maintained a presence in neighbouring countries (Naumkin, 2005: 192-3).

Islam came to Central Asia after the conquest of the region in the seventh century by the Arab Caliphate, by 875-999 CE becoming the official religion of the area. In the 1930s, the Soviets imposed a policy of secularisation on Central Asia (Khalid, 2007: 50-83; Frank and Mamatov, 2006: vi-x), which has led to many of the 'secular versus Islamic' debates still underlying Islamist discourse there today. Following the collapse of the USSR these regions formed nation-states, although the dissolution of their borders under a Caliphate is part of the appeal of UHiT for many inhabitants of the region.

The majority of Muslims in the area are Sunnis, though in contradistinction to Wahhabi and Salafi Sunnis in Saudi Arabia, they still follow many customs of the pre-Islamic folk religions (Naumkin, 2005: 6-7; Karagiannis, 2006: 261).

Most commentators seem to suggest that Hizb ut-Tahrir came to the region around the mid 1990s (Naumkin, 2005: 139-142). There is some evidence that the first cells were started by Jordanian subjects (141) although from at least the late 1990s

<sup>80</sup> Like al Qaeda, Hizb ut-Tahrir is a global movement, and as with Abdullah Azzam, Hizb ut-Tahrir's key early figures were Palestinian (Karagiannis, 2006: 264). It is in this regard a good comparison. In this case-study I have restricted the literature to that of Uzbekistan as a tidy limiter of the available literature (but which is still based very firmly within the central ideology of the party). It also allows for a further comparison on a local level, with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which I will touch upon in the following section.

UHiT literature was being published locally (142). The flow of ideas from the Middle East clearly made an impression, with reference in local leaflets to the oppression of Palestinians and the invasion of Iraq (187). In addition, the central Hizb ut-Tahrir website (hosted in Britain) also contained significant information on events in Uzbekistan, suggesting that links were well-maintained (127), although financing was probably local (182). Estimates of the pre-2001 membership of Tahriris in Uzbekistan range from 10,000 (Naumkin, 2005: 158) to 30,000 (Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 316).<sup>81</sup>

As part of the global Hizb ut-Tahrir movement, UHiT campaigns for the restoration of the Caliphate. Hizb ut-Tahrir was started in 1953 by a Palestinian judge who had split off from the Muslim Brotherhood. In opposition to Arab Nationalist movements of the time (Ba'thism, Nasserism, etc.) Hizb ut-Tahrir sought to bring Muslims back to an Islamic way of life, in an Islamic pan-national state (Naumkin, 2005: 127-132). Rather than seeing itself as a religious group, it sees its role as a political group whose ideology is Islam (Naumkin, 2005: 129; Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 316). In order to bring about the Caliphate it seeks to model its plan of action on that of the Prophet Muhammed through three stages (Naumkin, 2005: 146):

1. The stage of culturing: 'finding and cultivating individuals who are convinced by the thought and method of the party.' They will then carry on the party's ideas.
2. The stage of interaction with the *umma*, in order 'to establish Islam in life, state, and society.'
3. The stage of taking over the government 'and implementing Islam completely and totally, and carrying its message to the world.'<sup>82</sup>

These three stages are important to understand in the context of Hizb ut-Tahrir's stated commitment to non-violence. While some literature has been presented as evidence of UHiT's support for violence, Naumkin (154) points out that some experts believe that the authenticity of this evidence is questionable. Karagiannis

<sup>81</sup> Naumkin bases his figures on independent observers, but notes that an exaggerated figure of up to 60,000 is quoted by some. Karagiannis and McCauley put the exaggerated figure at 100,000, but base their own estimate from Karagiannis's research in the region from 2003-2005. If accurate, this suggests that Naumkin's assertion that numbers dropped after the attacks on the U.S. in September 2001 could also be called into question. The clandestine nature of the group and the State's inflation of numbers by charging people of being members on little or no evidence make exact numbers hard to come by (Frank and Mamatov, 2006: 240).

<sup>82</sup> Naumkin summarises this from an-Nabhani (1993: 33).

and McCauley (2006) provide a closer look at why it seems to be that UHiT has, in fact, not moved to violence. They suggest two central reasons which are based around the commitment to following the Prophet's model for achieving the Caliphate, and the fact that Hizb ut-Tahrir believe that they are still only at the second stage of it – which does not require violence (328). This is despite UHiT having the same resources, opportunities and motivation to act violently as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which has pursued a terrorist strategy in Uzbekistan and wider afield in the region (320-4).

Importantly for Karagiannis and McCauley (2006: 328), Hizb ut-Tahrir are not necessarily against violence, just that without a Caliph they do not believe it can (yet) be legitimated. At this stage, on the basis of research conducted in the region (Naumkin and Karagiannis have both undertaken research there over a number of years) as opposed to popular opinion about the movement, UHiT does not appear to have acted violently.

### *Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee*

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) came into being in April 1960 (Stoper, 1989: 6). However, it grew out of a history of protest and direct action within the U.S. Laue (1989: 57-74) charts some of the history of these protests, which formed what came to be known as the Civil Rights Movement, giving significance to the 1954 Supreme Court decision to de-segregate schools and the pre-1960 protests with, for example, Martin Luther King Jr. The background to these protests was the racial discrimination against the Black American population, practised through the legal, judicial, political and law enforcement agencies as well as in the common culture of (especially Southern) White America. This discrimination had led to the crushing poverty and marginalisation of Black Americans for generations.

It was within the context of increasing local protests (Laue, 1989: 75) that some students of A&T College in Greensboro, North Carolina started a sit-in in the White section of the segregated lunch counter in a Woolworths on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960 (Zinn, 1964: 16). After an hour of receiving no service the counter closed and



they went home. The next day they returned for two hours. The sit-ins started to be reported in the national news and within two months there were fifty-four student sit-ins in nine states (Murphree, 2006: 11).

In April 1960, 300 students attended a conference organised by the Southern Churches Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Civil Rights organisation headed by Martin Luther King Jr, where the SNCC was born (Stoper, 1989: 6). Because of the energy and vibrancy of its mainly student membership, it was courted by some of the more established organisations. However the students chose to maintain their independence (Sellers, 1990: 36-9).

An important part of the early movement was its commitment to non-violent protest. Key figures such as James Lawson and Bayard Rustin had travelled to India in the 1950s to learn from activists who had studied with Gandhi, whose teachings had also greatly influenced Martin Luther King Jr., who in himself had come to symbolise the non-violent approach in America (Murphree, 2006: 15; Laue, 1989: 58-9, 74). Other educated protestors involved in the legal struggle leading to the 1954 de-segregation decision were what Laue (1989: 59-60) called 'professional pacifists' and they too had been heavily influenced by Gandhi. Right from the start of the SNCC there was an awareness of the difference between practising non-violence as a principle or as a strategy, and King, in a speech at the opening conference, asked students to be "disciples of nonviolence" (Sellers, 1990: 36).

The initial role of the SNCC was to coordinate the student sit-ins (Stoper, 1989: 7), but the following year, May 1961, supporters undertook a 'freedom ride' on two buses from Washington DC to New Orleans to protest about segregation on the buses (Zinn, 1964: 40-61). During this trip one of the buses was set on fire and protesters on the other bus were attacked (Stoper, 1989: 7-8). When other organisations pulled out at this stage the SNCC carried on and tried to coordinate the activists involved in this struggle. In August the organisation started two separate tactics, one included continuance of direct action, such as the freedom rides, and the other focused on voter registration.

These twin aims continued until 1964 and large numbers of white northern students also got involved in the movement, especially in a campaign to highlight the exclusion of Black voters from the democratic process (Stoper, 1989: 13-15).

Towards the end of this year the movement lost momentum and went through significant internal upheaval. In March 1965 members took part in a march organised by Martin Luther King in Alabama. Some members stayed on there, organising a freedom organisation, which had the symbol of a black panther. The explicit goal in this Black-majority area was power and in 1966 they ran their own candidates for local elected positions. This movement, started by Stokely Carmichael who was later elected as President of the SNCC, was the beginnings of the Black Panther Party (Stoper, 1989: 14-15).

Within the SNCC there was significant discord over the role of white activist volunteers (Sellers, 1990: 157, 193-7), who were encouraged to leave the organisation and focus on educating poor whites. The election of Carmichael to President of the SNCC led to more militant organisation and groups with guns even defended SNCC members on marches (165). In June 1966, speaking to a large crowd after he was arrested, Carmichael used the phrase 'Black Power', which became a popular slogan (166), although it instilled fear into many White communities (173). In 1967 Carmichael stepped down and Hubert "Rap" Brown took the organisation in an increasingly radical direction. Murphee (2006: 145-8) states that 1968 was the last year of any kind of meaningful SNCC action (although very different from its beginnings) and, while the group re-named itself the Student National Coordinating Committee in 1969, this only lasted a few more months. From being part of an avowedly non-violent group some SNCC members had ended up openly endorsing violent actions. This highlights a more general problem about labelling particular groups or movements 'violent' or 'non-violent', and it is to this topic that I now turn.

## **Biding One's Time or Turning the Cheek: Understanding 'Non-violence'**

Included within this chapter are two groups whose label of 'non-violent' could be seen as problematic to many people. I have chosen to include these groups because, in addition to the similarities to their 'violent' counterparts that I mentioned above, they also allow for an exploration around some of the complexities of violence and belief which need elucidation beyond a simple violent/non-violent binary.

There are many different ways a group could be understood as non-violent. I have listed the primary reasons here, and will discuss each of these in more depth as a means to better understanding this complex area.

Non-violence can be seen as arising through:

- Commitment
- Non-engagement
- Strategy
- Timing
- Perception

I don't suggest that this list is exhaustive, but it certainly brings out the most important factors relevant to such a discussion.

### *Commitment*

A good place to start in this category is through comparison of 'non-violence' with the term 'pacifism'. While the terms are sometimes used interchangeably they are absolutely not the same. The former relates to an absence of violence whilst the latter is an ideology through which a person or group is committed to the positive avoidance of violence.

As mentioned above, the SNCC was heavily influenced by Gandhian principles of pacifism (Murphree, 2006: 15). Gandhi's pacifism did not mean a meek acceptance of the prevailing injustices of the time, but rather that the resistance to these should be peaceful, avoiding violence no matter what the provocation. His teaching of these principles and their part in the successful struggle for Indian Independence had a great influence on many Americans seeking to right the wrongs of their own segregated society. Groups such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Fellowship of Reconciliation (FoR), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) which helped start the SNCC, all interacted with Gandhi's ideas. All aided in the distribution of Gandhian literature and cited him in their ideological statements; CORE gave out an annual Gandhi award and the SCLC even started a 'Gandhi Society' (Laue, 1989: 60-1).



This Gandhian pacifist approach found a natural home in the Christian beliefs of many, as perhaps best shown in the teachings of Martin Luther King (2010: 84):

Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale.

Unsurprisingly many of the early leaders from the sit-ins followed in this tradition (Stoper, 1989: 27) and this was reflected in both the name and statements of the SNCC.

For these people pacifism was an ideological commitment, something they believed was right, and which we would expect to see reflected in statements from the group. Perhaps more than any of the other modes of non-violence in discussion here, this is the one that should leave the most obvious trail.

This commitment is also shown in Agonshu's actions and statements, as discussed in greater depth in the *Against Violence* marker below. In this case the ideal comes out of the cultural context – other 'new New Religions' also claim to work for world peace (Reader, 1988: 256). This in turn is no doubt influenced by the experience of Japan during and in the ending of the Second World War, as indeed mentioned by Kiriya (AGS10).

For any group that demonstrates a clear ideological commitment to non-violence the chance of acting violently is highly unlikely. As I have argued, beliefs do change over time but at least in these cases we would expect to see a quite obvious shift in feelings about violence. Whilst this point seems quite obvious, it is worth making as non-violence as practised in some of the other forms discussed here does not lead to such a clear-cut conclusion.

### *Non-engagement*

One common characteristic of all the groups within this study is that they have engaged with the world around them. Within the non-violent case study it was

important to find groups that similarly engaged with the world, so that they provided a proper comparison for the markers.

It is for this reason that I did not choose non-violent groups such as Old Order Mennonites, Amish and Hutterites, groups which have commitments to pacifist behaviour, but which also limit their interaction with groups whose beliefs are likely to conflict with theirs.

The above groups withdraw from society in a variety of ways, from the refusal to use similar technologies and clothing to segregating their homes, schools, places of work and communal areas from the wider populace around them. This withdrawal from other members of the same nation removes the possibility of their engagement in conflict. This is not to say that they have not been involved in violence: the above groups all received significant persecution in a number of countries, but fled rather than fought their oppressors (Mennonite Historical Association, 2001).

The pacifism of these groups should not be confused with other traditionally pacifist groups, for example the Quakers, who have engaged with the world as indeed have many branches of the Mennonite faith.<sup>83</sup>

The example of non-engagement is found in other places in history and location – outside of the above groups which all came out of the European Reformation. For example, during the Roman occupation of Palestine, the Zealots and Essenes took radically different approaches to coping with the imposition of foreign belief systems. The Zealots fought with the Romans, losing and eventually bringing about persecution on all the remaining Jewish sects. Meanwhile the Essenes withdrew from worldly society to create a separate community (Hall, 2009: 25-6).

The important point to take forward from these examples is that, as argued throughout this thesis, violence occurs at the points of contact and conflict of non-negotiable beliefs. Where a group actively avoids contact with 'Others', the

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<sup>83</sup> In keeping with my emphasis on the fluidity of beliefs in relation to violence, it is worth pointing out that both the Hutterites and Mennonites (from whom the Amish separated) are descended from the Anabaptist movement, which itself was involved (both as aggressor and victim) in many violent episodes during the Reformation.

possibility of such contact is greatly diminished and with it, the possibility of violence.

### *Strategy*

In Martin Luther King's opening statement to the SNCC he made a distinction between a commitment to pacifist principles and the use of non-violent tactics. Sellers (1990: 35) passes on recollections of moments of his speech:

Dr. King also told the students that nonviolence was not a tactic, but a way of life. 'Our ultimate end must be the creation of the beloved community. The tactic of nonviolence without the spirit of nonviolence may become a new kind of violence.'

King's point is very important, because holding pacifism as a belief is very different to using non-violence as a strategic aim, and this will obviously have a significant difference to the data that the markers capture. For example, the *Against Violence* marker would, it is expected, be more likely to capture data where non-violence forms part of a broader ideological commitment, as opposed to a (potentially temporary) strategic aim. Likewise, it would not be incompatible to find reference to violent mythology within the *Violent Traditions* marker, where a group is using non-violence as one tactic amongst a number of means for achieving its goals.

King's comments also suggest that he saw an ambiguity in the students' commitment to non-violence, and this seems borne out when one looks at how the group developed. From the records of discussions at some of the meetings, it does seem that whilst some of the leadership and group were pacifists, others saw non-violence as a tool, and it was this element which later abandoned non-violence when it was no longer expedient to their cause. Stoper (1989: 26-30) charts how the use of non-violent tactics became less useful as their opponents stopped using violence to counter them. Another strategic element to non-violence was the necessity to ensure continued funding, which was harder to attract when the group was seen as more militant.

As seen in the SNCC case study, there was a turn from non-violence as a belief to non-violence as a strategy. Once this was made, it was entirely possible that non-



violence could be abandoned altogether. This element of non-violence is, therefore, an important distinction to recognise as it has a significant impact on the violent potentialities of a group, something which is captured in the discussion of the markers.

### *Timing*

The distinction between commitment to non-violence as a belief and as a strategy is further nuanced by Hizb ut-Tahrir which is ideologically committed to non-violence, as shown by Karagiannis and McCauley (2006) in their discussion of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan, but only for the present time.

Karagiannis and McCauley looked at many other theories as to why groups may turn to violence and found that they do not apply in this case. They suggest that it is because of UHiT's ideological commitment to non-violence that it has not acted violently. However, Karagiannis and McCauley are also at pains to point out that the UHiT approach to non-violence is not one of pacifism, but of timing.

Hizb ut-Tahrir does not exclude violence as having its place, but it will not act violently until such a time as the Caliph allows it. Karagiannis and McCauley (2006: 328) put forward two ways of summarising UHiT's relationship to violence:

The first is to say that they have been committed to non-violence for fifty years. The second is to say that they have been waiting for fifty years for the right moment to begin violent struggle.

This complex approach to violence perhaps also explains the strong feeling in some circles as to whether Hizb ut-Tahrir is a terrorist organisation. In some quarters UHiT has been condemned as a dangerous organisation (e.g. Baran, 2004), although it could also be suggested that the strong lobbying by President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan, an early key ally in the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan, led to the blacklisting of Hizb ut-Tahrir (Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 329; Naumkin, 2005: 183).

Another argument is that Hizb ut-Tahrir radicalises young Muslims and sets them off on a path that makes them more amenable to acting violently. This 'conveyor-belt' argument can also point to contact between UHiT and known terrorist organisations such as the Taliban (Baran, 2004; Karagiannis, 2006: 271). However, this does not change the fact that individuals have had to leave UHiT to pursue violent means with other groups (so suggesting that it is not allowed within UHiT itself), nor does it take into account the criticism of UHiT by the IMU for their non-violent approach (Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 325).

Certainly some UHiT members have turned to violence. Within Uzbekistan two groups have been known to splinter off from UHiT: *Akramiya*, whom Naumkin (2005:160) says has suffered persecution and the arrest of its leader, and *Hizb an-Nusra* (Party of Victory), which did not survive state repression (Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 330). This might suggest that, whilst Hizb ut-Tahrir shares many of the traits of violent groups (and teaches its members accordingly), its crucial ideological commitment to non-violence has forced members to abstain from violence.<sup>84</sup>

This type of non-violent ideology will show up in different ways in the markers to many of the other categories I have discussed here. For example, in UHiT's case, I would still expect to see greater evidence of violent traditions, external developments indicating violent pressures as well as more ambiguous statements against violence. The markers that capture all of these areas should be closely examined to note the differences. Because the commitment to non-violence is one of timing, it also suggests that, should the group develop in certain ways, they might more proactively seek the external legitimation they need to act violently. Karagiannis and McCauley (2006: 329) suggest that, to this end, they have in the past approached the Ayatollah of Iran about accepting the title of Caliph. This ideological, but limited, commitment to non-violence suggests that this group has a higher probability of leading to violent action than those with an unconditional acceptance of non-violence.

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<sup>84</sup> However, Herbert (2009: 398-401) notes that there is a conflict between the means and ends of Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideology, and argues that this necessarily forces disaffected members to seek other channels, including violence.

## *Perception*

Whether a group is seen as pacifist or not can sometimes be down to the perception of what counts as a violent action. Leaving aside discussions as to the validity of violence, I focus more narrowly here on the types of targets and tactics used.

For example, whilst one element of the Weathermen claimed that they did not use violence, they based this assertion on their targeting of property and not persons (Varon, 2004: 121). The assumption here being that violence is something done only to other human (or living) beings. Their claim is contested elsewhere (193), but the targeting of property as opposed to people can sometimes be seen as evidence of a non-violent form of protest. There are problems of gradation here, for example, is graffiti non-violent but structural damage violent?

Likewise, some violence against humans is cast within the realm of non-violent protest, when it is enacted against the perpetrator's own body. Hunger-strikes, whilst often used within the context of violent campaigns (e.g. the RAF and IRA), have also been seen as peaceful modes of resistance (but note the conflation of 'peaceful' that can sometimes occur with 'non-violent'). Again, the possibility of a scale of violence could be open for debate, for example, in a comparison of hunger-strikes to self-immolation.

I don't intend to answer these debates here as my focus is centred on violence against other persons. However, whilst this category of non-violence is the most contentious, it contains questions which should be kept in consideration when talking about non-violent movements and actions.

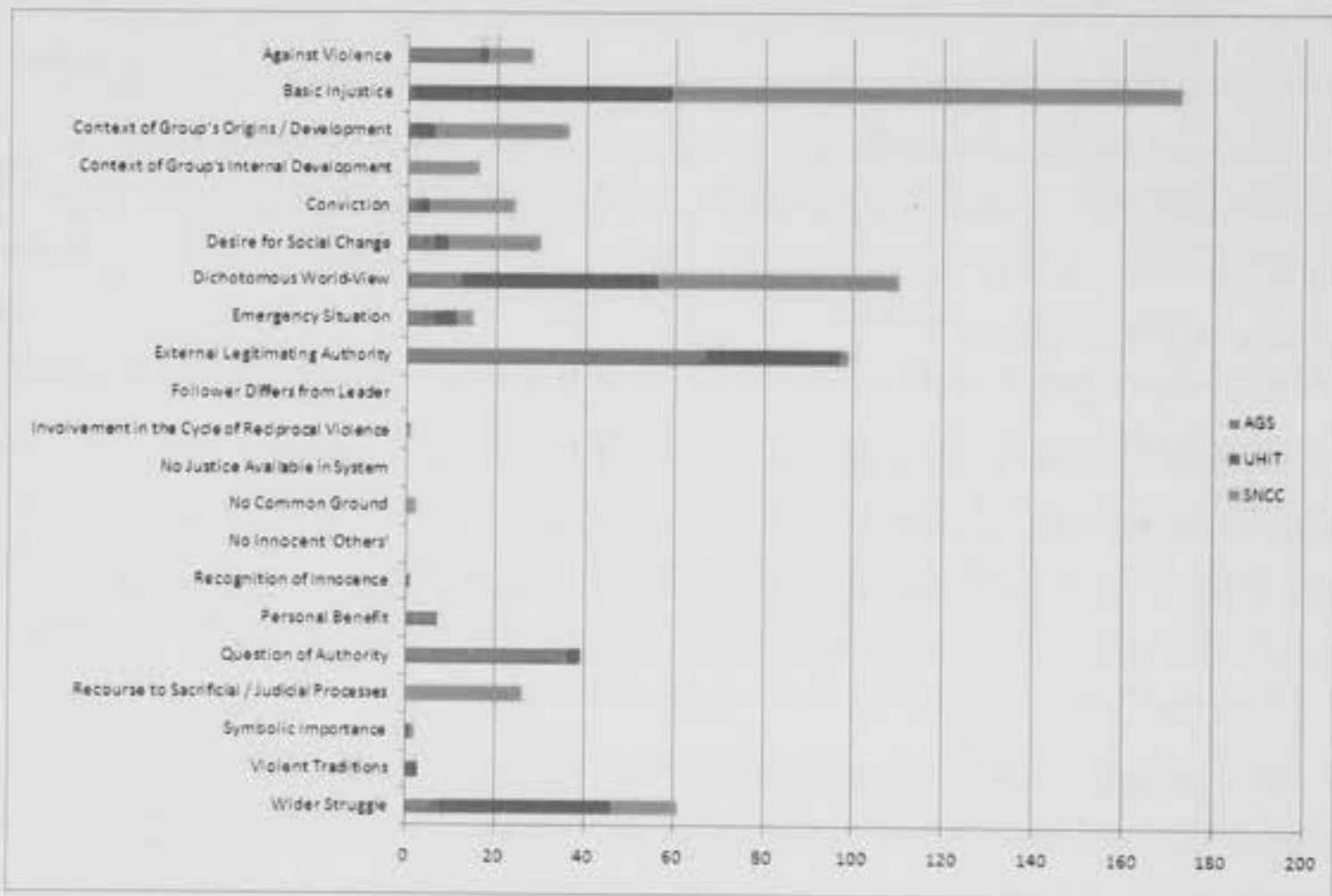
The above categories problematise a simple understanding of 'non-violence'. Likewise, the inclusion of Aum Shinrikyo in this research could also be seen to problematise the labelling of a group as 'violent', because it precludes the possibility of it adopting non-violent beliefs (which Aum has undertaken since the sarin attacks, despite finding it nearly impossible to shake off the 'violent' label in the eyes of the Japanese public). Therefore I suggest that, whilst the violent/non-violent binary is a useful distinction for simplifying everyday communication about groups, it should be used with awareness of the complexity of each concept.



## Marker Analysis

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter I will not be discussing each group under every marker, as this would lead to an unwieldy discussion. Instead I have focused on the most salient facts coming out of the data, and have therefore only discussed one group in relation to some markers. The following chart (Figure 7.1) provides the reader with a comparative picture of how much data was coded for each group, within each marker. The markers with the most coded material being:

- (1) Basic Injustice
- (2) Dichotomous World-View
- (3) External Legitimating Authority
- (4) Wider Struggle
- (5) Question of Authority



**Figure 7.1 – Non-violent groups by Marker**

As with the previous chapters the markers are discussed in alphabetical order, with those that had little or no data coded into them discussed at the end.

Following this, I summarise some of the key points before moving onto my analysis of the themes arising from all the studies.

## *Against Violence*

Following the earlier discussion on the differences between not acting violently and pacifism, it is interesting to note that for AGS and SNCC this marker was quite well populated. However, there were only a couple of passages within the UHiT texts. Moreover, the statements populating this marker from the SNCC were primarily from the founding statements and speeches from its early leadership who, as discussed above, were committed to non-violence in principle, as opposed to the more strategic commitments of the later leadership and membership.

Agonshu makes very specific statements against violence and in support of world peace. It is fair to say that some of these arise out of the role of Japan in World War II. For example, reference is made to the founder, Kiriyaama, having witnessed the Pacific theatre of the war and the influence that this had on his desire for world peace (AGS10).

As well as speaking of this desire, some of Kiriyaama's actions to help achieve it are also listed, including a prayer service for world peace with the Dalai Lama in 1984; in 1986 a similar service held as part of a Japan-China friendship mission in China; and in 1988 an Islam-Buddhist forum on world peace (AGS10).

The above list shows a number of important distinctions. The meeting with the Dalai Lama shows a desire for peace within the Buddhist community (undoubtedly by using the influence of the Dalai Lama to promote the superiority of Agonshu over other Buddhist sects). The meeting in China demonstrates a willingness to reach across secular national boundaries, this boundary being one traditionally full of tension. The final meeting, the Islam-Buddhist forum, shows the desire for peace across religious boundaries, there being other examples mentioned in the texts, such as Kiriyaama's meeting with Pope John Paul II. This philosophy was further spelt out in Kiriyaama's interview with some Taiwanese journalists (AGS56):

Philosophically speaking, religion knows no national borders, races or tribes. It is for everyone. With this in mind, we sincerely pray that people worldwide will unite as one and live a peaceful life in harmony. This is our philosophy.

What is important about the above examples is that, whilst we see clear evidence of Agonshu identifying and protecting its ideological boundaries, the examples give clear evidence of an approach to potential transgressions of these boundaries that is conciliatory in tone. It would be interesting, in further research, to see how this conciliatory approach holds up in dealings with other 'new New Religions' – which might provoke a different response. Within the highly competitive nature of the Japanese religious marketplace there is often tension and discord between groups. However, the above evidence demonstrates that it is also possible to approach such competition in an open and non-violent manner.

### *Basic Injustice*

As well as being the most populous of the markers within this case study this was also the most populous for the SNCC sub-set. The injustices referred to within their documents related to the treatment of blacks by white people in the general populace and the local and national government. As Ella J Baker pointed out, the desire was not just to challenge racism in particular areas of everyday life, but to challenge the underlying problem in wider American society (SNCC24):

Whatever may be the difference in approach to their goal, the Negro and white students, North and South, are seeking to rid America of the scourge of racial segregation and discrimination—not only at lunch counters, but in every aspect of life.

The injustices of racial discrimination informed every action that the SNCC undertook. The above quotation refers to the discrimination at lunch-counters that sparked some of the initial protests of the SNCC movement. But this discrimination was also recognised to be rooted in the way that people, blacks and whites, were taught, and the evidence of this very basic injustice also exercised the SNCC students (SNCC85):

In the books that children read, whites are always 'good' (good symbols are white), blacks are 'evil' or seen as savages in movies, their language is referred to as a 'dialect,' and black people in this country are supposedly descended from savages.

Important to recognise is the fact that these injustices were not just acknowledged by the victims themselves. Sympathy for these issues was found outside the target



communities, and many whites also joined the early SNCC movement. These volunteers were also on the receiving end of persecution and violence (SNCC42).

The spread of the movement outside of the core black membership was not unproblematic, as I mentioned above. Questions of authenticity were raised as to whether the movement could truly be seen as a black protest movement whilst whites were involved. The legitimacy of white involvement was challenged through arguments such as the following, presented in a position paper on the basis of black power (SNCC85):

It must be pointed out that on whatever level of contact blacks and whites come together, that meeting or confrontation is not on the level of the blacks but always on the level of the whites. This only means that our everyday contact with whites is a reinforcement of the myth of white supremacy.

Why this is particularly interesting is because, in many of the other case studies the question of legitimate membership was not discussed so openly. Within the SNCC, the problem was eventually settled on grounds of race, so that the causal identifier behind the basic injustice that created the boundaries of the group was also used to 'other' a section of its membership.

These weren't the only issues of prejudice that drove the group – the treatment of women was equated with the harmful effects of the white/black dichotomy (SNCC86), but this wasn't a driving concern of the membership as a whole. As with the other groups that I have studied here, we also see a shift in the ground that these markers cover over time and, as with many of the other movements, this included the co-opting of other struggles as the group's own. In this case the U.S. war in Vietnam was, as with the RAF, invoked (SNCC84):

The murder of Samuel Young in Tuskegee, Alabama, is no different than the murder of peasants in Vietnam, for both Young and the Vietnamese sought, and are seeking, to secure the rights guaranteed them by law. In each case, the United States government bears a great part of the responsibility for these deaths.

The difference between the SNCC and RAF, on their co-option of the Vietnamese into their own struggle, was that the RAF saw it as further justification for violent action. How this move is made cannot be understood just by looking at the existence of basic injustices. As can be seen from the above discussion, there was

no shortage of injustices, fuelled by racial hatred, to motivate the followers of the SNCC. However, as with many other elements of the wider Civil Rights movement, they chose not to act violently.

### *Context of Group's Internal Development*

Out of the three groups only the SNCC self-consciously wrote about the developments within the movement that defined how the group matured. That the SNCC wrote about such issues and events was undoubtedly due to the democratic and discursive nature of their power structures.

These power structures themselves came out of the development of the organisation as a student-led movement, separate from 'adult' groups and the potential interference of their leaders (SNCC24). Because it was a student movement the internal development grew out of a typically youthful approach, as evidenced in one volunteer's (SNCC42: para.12) recollection of the hard partying during the training stages for the Freedom Summer.

An important internal development, from early on, related to tensions between whites and blacks within the movement. The following paragraph relates to these tensions (SNCC42: para.16):<sup>85</sup>

Later that night a discussion of the conflict between staff and volunteers began, and, becoming more and more emotional, ran on until 2 a.m. The discussion was resolved -- as the bitter personality conflicts that came up in the Movement so often are -- when the SNCC Freedom Singers came into the room, and with the singing of freedom songs reminded everyone that there was a bigger battle to be fought.

What is particularly important to note here is the way in which the conflict was resolved. Instead of focusing on the differences, which were deep-set and heart-felt (SNCC85), they focused on their shared identity. Of course, this example relates to an inter-group dispute, so there would presumably be more to unite the differing factions than separate them. However, the way in which they resolved the issue points to a group with a non-violent ethos apparent in its own development, which

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<sup>85</sup> The volunteers were mostly white, coming from Northern colleges (SNCC42: para.11), whereas the staff were mostly black.

might also colour how it approaches the 'Other'. This is in stark contrast to how Aum, for example, dealt with some of its internal difference which, as mentioned in Chapter Four, resulted in violence towards members.

### *Context of Group's Origins/Development*

The historical context that the SNCC worked within, of slavery, segregation, and the civil rights movement, is well-known. Whilst steps had been taken to right many of these wrongs, the SNCC was clear about the limitations of these efforts and in writing about these also gave a clear insight into their concerns about the wider society in which they lived (SNCC63).

The history of violence visited on the black community, and especially the civil rights protestors, played an important role in influencing how the group developed, even in the more practical matters its members were instructed in (SNCC42):

Under the shade trees of this sedate girls school, lessons were given in how to protect your vital organs while being beaten and what happens when a mob gets out of hand.

However, in contrast to an engagement in reciprocal violence that Girard argues is more common in social conflict, the SNCC specifically avoids violence and teaches its followers how to protect themselves as opposed to aggressive defence. This non-violent approach was maintained even under extended harassment and threats to their lives. Some of these threats were recorded by volunteers in the Mississippi voter registration drive (SNCC42):

White men in cars, some carrying guns, followed the voter registration workers as they canvassed in the Negro neighborhoods.

What we see from these examples is that the SNCC was the recipient of more sustained violence than two of the violent groups (Aum and the RAF) and yet this did not lead to violence. Whilst the SNCC eventually disbanded, with some of its members turning to violent alternatives, they did so after the authorities had stopped using violence against their protests (Stoper, 1989: 26-30). What this demonstrates is that, whilst it is useful and important to know the context out of



which a group developed, we cannot assume that because this context was violent, that any nascent group will also develop violently.

### *Conviction*

Building upon the comments in the last marker, it is clear that the members of the SNCC knew the risks of what they undertook, both from the well documented violence against their community and from first-hand experience. However, this did not deter them (SNCC24):

We want the world to know that we no longer accept the inferior position of second-class citizenship. We are willing to go to jail, be ridiculed, spat upon and even suffer physical violence to obtain First Class Citizenship.

In this quotation the reasons for their conviction are clear – their desire for racial equality. Additionally they are also quite clear on the differing kinds of suffering that might be visited upon them. They also made sure that their volunteers knew what they were letting themselves in for (SNCC67):

In addition it is important to realize that civil rights work in Mississippi presents certain risks. Those who apply must be aware that they may face physical danger and jail.

This demonstrated a deep conviction not only amongst the SNCC staffers, but also among the volunteers, many of whom came from outside the movement and only volunteered during the summer holidays.

This conviction is shown in many movements, both violent and non-violent. Whilst it seems unlikely that a member of a group would carry out a violent action without being committed, the presence of conviction alone is not enough to suggest a violent potentiality. What it does demonstrate is a greater likelihood of members acting according to the group's beliefs.

### *Desire for Social Change*

The SNCC set out clear goals for social change, and this was reflected in its ethos. Clear statements, such as (SNCC63) "We march today for jobs and freedom" left people in no doubt as to what they hoped to achieve.

They had a broader aim too, such as to change what they saw as the basic injustices facing their communities. In this case as in others, it is interesting to note that their methods of tackling these injustices were still entirely non-violent in concept and application (SNCC67).

Whilst they were very much focused on their own community, the SNCC later on also broadened the scope of its concerns. The Vietnam War was a concern to many groups at the time who to some extent 'owned' the conflict as a source of justification (or cause) for anti-American sentiment. For the SNCC the cause was more personal as many members were likely to be called up to fight. In this case, it is not surprising to see Vietnam as the solitary cause which was external to the key aims of the movement. However, as shown in the following quotation, the SNCC demonstrated that there was a non-violent way of opposing the draft, reflective of their non-violent beliefs (SNCC84):

We believe that work in the civil rights movement and with other human relations organizations is a valid alternative to the draft. We urge all Americans to seek this alternative, knowing full well that it may cost them their lives--as painfully as in Vietnam.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

A significant amount of data from the UHiT case study was coded into this marker. In the first and most obvious instance this is shown in their opposition to the elections in Uzbekistan when they talk about the Republican system (UHiT59): "it is a democratic infidel system that is absolutely contrary to Islam." In this instance the world-view of UHiT, Islam, is placed in dichotomy with a diplomatic 'world-view'. This is reinforced further when they speak about the differences between their religion and the Uzbek President – Karimov's (UHiT59: 269):

If your religion points to Heaven, his drags [others] to Hell. If you turn away from him, the Jew will be humbled.

While the first quotation inferred a moral judgement on the democratic system through its opposition to Islam, the second quotation specifies a spiritual element to the dichotomy. Heaven and Hell embody the polarisation of the two systems in UHiT's eyes.

Most of the 'Other's' world view as understood by UHiT is embodied in the policies of Karimov. However, he is also seen as a representative of a broader evil 'Other', that of the capitalist/democratic system outside of Uzbekistan. The following two quotations point to this dichotomy within Central Asia (UHIT119: 259) and also the rest of the world (UHIT118: 253).

It's not based on a single source or idea; ideologically it's a bankrupt political system, not only Karimov's political system, but in all Muslim countries today, and especially all of the political systems that rule in Central Asia, are political systems that are just as ideologically bereft. It's known that the creed, which is the belief that people in Muslim countries have, is the creed of Islam, which came about because this system comes from God; in all the world only it is suitable to rule over humanity.

Since the capitalist infidel system that is upon you exists, it's unsuitability has become obvious now, the democratic system that is filling the world with evil deeds is being exploited.

So far we have seen a world view that focuses on a dichotomy within one country as an example of a wider conflict, and in the next quotation we see that this account extends through time as well, through its historical roots (UHIT119: 259):

The reason that Karimov is inflicting such oppression is that his ancestry is Jewish and infidel. This is because the Jews are the ones who are the most fiercely hostile to Islam and Muslims.

The recent animosity between Muslims and Jews over the land of Israel runs alongside a deeper historical awareness of the separation between Islam (according to UHiT) and the 'Other' (UHIT148: 277):

Remember! Before Islam the peoples of Central Asia were base fire-worshipping nations who bowed to the Zoroastrian religion. When Islam arrived they came out of the darkness and into the



light, and joined the ranks of the powerful peoples of the world as an inseparable part of the great Islamic world community.

The above quotations demonstrate an excellent example of a dichotomous world-view, through national, regional, political, religious and historical dimensions. Some of the language used is similar to that seen within al Qaeda tracts, and it is difficult to point to any indication that such strong and imbedded hatred (which is certainly contained in the emotional tone overlaying the world-view expressed above) would not lead to violent action.

Perhaps such evidence could be found in the absence of threatened violence, where in its place the suggestion that the creed of Islam is offered as part of a revelation, but that this isn't done through force or violence (UHIT119: 259). The broader context of this suggestion is placed within a wider discourse of the extreme dichotomy between Muslims and America and also the persecution received by UHiT members despite their non-violent methods. These two dichotomies seem perfectly poised to motivate violent action but, unlike the case of al Qaeda, they haven't. This suggests that this marker in itself cannot be seen to act as a trigger to violent action.

### *Emergency Situation*

The sense of an emergency situation did not come across strongly in any of the three groups within this case study. However, that is not to say that this kind of tension was not present in their thought. For example, within the goals of Agonshu stated on their website, they mention (AGS10) that a religion needs to have both compassion and wisdom "in order to save the earth from proceeding into disaster."

Although that statement is made in relation to both Christianity and Agonshu, it is clear that they believe that it is their own religion which can avert this global disaster, as claimed in the following quotation (AGS132):

We believe that Agon Shu, having these three special methods of practice, is the sangha that has the mission of the messiah who saves the human race from the Earth's crisis and prevents the destruction of the human race.

This theme of the destruction of the human race echoes Asahara's teachings. A key difference is found in how this fate is avoided, through the alternative strategies of 'poaing' non-believers (Reader, 2000: 194), as opposed to *Goma* fire ceremonies.

UHiT also do not make much reference to an impending disaster, and when they do it is to a more immediate and mundane matter – impending financial disaster (UHIT118: 249). This kind of disaster (the disastrous consequences of an opponent's economic policies), is of the type more commonly used by politicians the world over in order to create a fearful climate. It suggests a more pragmatic approach to what motivates their audience than perhaps the far-off concerns of the annihilation of the human race (in general, or their group in particular). Furthermore, the absence of a stress on the need for immediate action is to be expected in UHiT, where they feel that they still have not arrived at the correct stage for violent action. Within this context, I would suggest that an increase in statements coded into this marker would be evidence of UHiT moving closer towards violent action.

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

Significant amounts of data from both Agonshu and UHiT were coded into this marker. The references within UHiT texts were broadly similar to those of al Qaeda so I have mainly focused on Agonshu here.

From the Agonshu texts we can derive that the Buddha is a source of external legitimating authority (AGS21):

One sect is not merely an idol worshipping religion, and that is Agon Shu. Agon Shu venerates the authentic Buddha, who is not an idol. This one Buddhist order amongst the numerous Buddhist groups in Japan venerates the actual Buddha, who is not an idol.

The above statement is made within the context of Agonshu's desire to avoid a charge of idolatry, which could be levelled at it by monotheistic religions such as Islam or Christianity. However, this focus on the Buddha is also born out through indirect qualifications such as the following examples (AGS44):

It was truly the Buddha's intention.

That is the Buddha's will.

With the Buddha's decree ...

The teachings of the Buddha which Agonshu abide by are argued to be different from those followed by other Buddhists sects within Japan. In this way Agonshu does not just claim to follow an external legitimating authority, but also a unique and authentic external authority (AGS56):

This sutra is the only scripture which contains the teachings of Gotama Buddha. Agon Shu was established on the basis of this sutra. It is a form of Buddhism which integrates the Mahayana, Tibetan Buddhism, and the ancient sacred dharma of Japan.

Within this quotation we see the creation of a non-negotiable boundary around their idea of the authenticity of their teachings. Despite sharing a historical and ideological identity with millions of other Buddhists, they have claimed an interpretation which is unique and this is an essential part of their beliefs and identity.

This question of authenticity is prominently stated elsewhere, and is an indication of the competitiveness of the Japanese religious market place. For example, an important object and symbol of worship within Agonshu are the Buddha's relics.

In many cases it seems that Kiriyaama himself is the arbiter of authenticity in cases of the Buddha's relics (AGS23; AGS 90) and, indeed, whilst he does not appear to receive the same level of worship that Asahara did within Aum, there are some parallels between the roles that they play. For example, Kiriyaama states that (AGS29): "If I look at someone's character, I can see what karma they have before I even see it through my clairvoyance."

As with Asahara, Kiriyaama's authority is also found in his explanation of spiritual influences, in this case through the negative influence of ancestors (AGS115). However, in contrast to Asahara, Kiriyaama's message has more consistently been focused on bringing about world peace (AGS56) and therefore about avoiding global catastrophe, not helping a select group to be saved from it. Whilst Agonshu's



message might not always have been so positive, there is a definite bias towards this positivity in all the sources I analysed.

### *Personal Benefit*

This marker attempted to catch the data relating to beliefs that might motivate followers in a particularly individualistic way. However, only Agonshu had any data that fell into this marker, and then it was only seven occurrences.

Partly the concept of personal benefit was found within ritual mantras such as the following (AGS3):

I'm going to do it!  
 I'm going to succeed!  
 I'm a very lucky person!  
 Everything's going to work out fine!  
 I'm definitely going to win!

This received the response:

Good luck on your way to victory.

This mantra was led by Kiriya and repeated by the crowd, and appeared in several sources that I read (AGS100 and AGS29). Within such statements personal benefit can be found in the implication of both the text and the fact that it followed a motivational talk that also suggested the benefits of Agonshu's teachings.

There were also more direct benefits referred to, such as the increase in intelligence and health of followers (AGS56):

Our shugyo is based on meditation. Specifically, the Gumonji Somei-ho, which is Mikkyo's esoteric method for making a person more intelligent. It makes a person about three times as intelligent. This is what we make our followers to practice. Because you cannot understand the Buddha's shugyo unless you are this intelligent. The Gumonji Somei-ho is also accompanied by better physical health. A genius with a weak constitution won't do any good.

The this-worldly benefits of increased intelligence and health are found within many Japanese religions. However, I suggest that the nature of these benefits,

intelligence and health, rather than the ability to withstand nuclear attacks (as in Aum) point to a key difference in how these two groups approached the benefits of membership. As with so many of the differences between the violent and non-violent groups that I have so far highlighted in this chapter, this is a subtle difference as opposed to a simple trigger that could be easily formulised.

### *Question of Authority*

The question of authority was very important to Agonshu largely because of the competitive nature of the Japanese marketplace. Part of Agonshu's authenticity comes through their argument that they are not an idol-worshipping religion, unlike other Japanese groups. Their's is the true religion, a true Buddhism (AGS21):

My heart desires that Japanese Buddhists amend this mistake [of idol worship] and return to true Buddhism as soon as possible, and I appeal so to society. However, most Japanese Buddhist followers are not even aware of this issue.

While Agonshu claims it is the true authority within Buddhism, it is interesting to note that they wish their 'Other' to 'amend their mistakes' and do not hint at more forceful methods of conversion.

There is also a curious concern within Agonshu about how Christianity and Islam view Japanese religions as idol-worship, and Agonshu is quick to be apologetic about (and therefore acknowledge) this trend (AGS90). However, the explanation for this may lie within a further claim to authenticity, which in itself is tied to the more established monotheistic faiths. For example, Agonshu claims that (AGS127):

The center of the Catholic Church, the Vatican, is aware that Agon Shu is the only different order of Japanese Buddhists.

Even more importantly, Kiriya met Pope John Paul II, a meeting which in itself confers some legitimacy, as Kiriya is keen to make clear in his account of the meeting (AGS127):<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Reader (1988: 25) points out that many 'new New Religious' leaders have similar 'meetings' with the Pope.

One day, I stood in a throng of 300,000 people at St. Peter's Square. I saw the august personage of the Pope walking towards me. As he neared, he broke ranks with his entourage and came up to me, the leader of a different religion. In an unprecedented move, he shook my hand.

Apparently, in the thousand year history of the papacy, this has never happened before or since. I think he greeted me this way because, even though Agon Shu is a relatively small organization, the Catholics feel it represents the real Buddhism.

Again, what is interesting here is that Agonshu are as capable of deriving positive benefit from their relationship to the 'Other' – through gaining authenticity from other religions, as they are to the more commonplace use of the 'Other' (i.e. idol-worshipping 'fake' Buddhism) – to define their boundaries in relation to. This (selective) bilateral relationship, inclusive of an acceptance of the 'Other', is not found in any of the violent groups I studied.

#### *Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes*

Perhaps not surprisingly, there was little data for this marker within the violent groups, but within the SNCC there were quite a few references. For example, they stated that (SNCC24): "We are willing to go to jail." Even when dealing with more mundane matters, such as administration, they showed how they were specifically orientated towards cooperating with the judicial system within the U.S. (SNCC42):

Specifically, my duties included, handling the press, FBI, Justice Dept. and local law enforcement officers; keeping a daily log; handling telephone communications with the Jackson, Greenwood and Atlanta offices; sending a daily written report to Jackson and weekly reports to the Justice Dept.

Their liaison with the Justice Department and the FBI arose because part of their approach was to take information about their complaints to the establishment, despite the lack of response to them. Furthermore they also tried to make their claims further up the power structures, through involvement in the democratic process (SNCC42):



The next step in the campaign was to elect delegates to the Democratic convention in Atlantic City with a procedure as closely parallel as possible to the procedure used by the MDP.

In this way, rather than through the bombs of their near contemporaries the Red Army Faction, or indeed within the U.S. the Weathermen, they sought to subvert the system by participating in it, not sabotaging it.

Their protest within the democratic process also involved encouraging people to become involved in it, empowering them through voter registration and education (SNCC67: para.5). Legal challenges were also made, again demonstrating a desire to work within the original system, as opposed to attacking it (SNCC67: para.6):

Law students will be dispersed to projects around the state to serve as legal advisors to voter registration workers and to local people.

Others will be concentrated in key areas where they will engage in legal research and begin to prepare suits against the state and local officials and to challenge every law that deprives Negroes of their freedom as American citizens.

The above data are excellent examples of what I was looking for within this marker. As I have argued elsewhere in this thesis, I do not believe that any one marker demonstrates the definite eventuality of violence or non-violence. However, it does seem highly unlikely that a movement that is as committed to working within the system against which it is protesting could undertake violent actions in attempted sabotage of it. That would be counter-productive. Where evidence could be found within this marker it seems that the possibility of violent action is accordingly lower, but, at the same time, if this commitment wanes (perhaps due to the ineffectuality of such approaches) then the possibility of violent action outside the legislative process correspondingly increases (as we saw in the eventual demise of the SNCC).

### *Wider Struggle*

This marker was the fourth most populated for the combined data coming out of all the non-violent groups, and was second most important for UHiT. As discussed in the marker on dichotomous world-view, UHiT saw its struggle as having a moral

and spiritual element on several levels of social organisation – in their country, their region and around the world.

As with many Islamist groups, the state of Israel is recognised as a source and focus for the forces of the 'Other' (UHIT59: 267):

Among all the peoples of the worlds, Jews are known for the faithlessness of their promises, their treason, their avarice, their immorality, and their cowardice. As for their state, Israel, as an enemy to Muslims, acts as a teacher to international Jewish organizations, and to all the world's Jews.

The battle with Judaism takes on cosmological proportions and the Jews are seen as being behind many of the enemies of Islam (UHIT59: 268):

While Russia is slaughtering Muslims in Chechnya, China is murdering Muslims in Eastern Turkestan ... This is because all of the world's Jews strongly fear the fact that Muslims are returning Islam, which they love ...

That Islam is the holy ideology, originating from and justified by God, is centrally important to UHiT's claim that it is the only system suitable to rule over humanity (UHIT119: 259). Therefore any other system is a negation of the sacred truth of their beliefs and therefore part of the wider struggle against their non-negotiable ideals.

It is because of this that other countries are also seen as directly in conflict with Islam and therefore with UHiT (UHIT148: 275):

America intends to undermine Islam, which is rapidly spreading in Central Asia today, and to impede activities concerned with establishing the Caliphate.

This is not just because of their politics, but also because of the immorality of their systems, for example their greed against the liberating potentialities of Islam (UHIT148: 278):

At the same time as the Western countries have colonized the whole world, and are greedily pillaging it, they are calling Islam, which is trying to free humanity from their oppression, international terrorism.

These quotations demonstrate the global impact of a pan-Islamic identity on the actions of a group within a very particular locality. The message of a wider struggle (and its content) is similar to al Qaeda's. However, I note differences in the absence of UHiT's call to arms to counter this. In UHiT's case, there is a creation of some of the common motivations for violent actions in terms of raising awareness of basic injustices perpetrated by a global 'Other', but no clear strategy (violent or otherwise) to resolve these.

### *Markers not populated*

Within the overall matrix no data was coded into the following markers:

- Followers Differ from Leader
- No Justice Available in System
- No Innocent 'Others'

Given that this was a case study into groups that have not acted violently, it is perhaps unsurprising that no data was coded in to *No Innocent 'Others'*. Not much data was coded into the *Followers Differ from Leader* marker in any of the studies, and some issues around this are discussed in Chapter Nine. However, it would not have been unusual to see dissent within the groups just because the groups were non-violent. Certainly I noted several references to internal dissent within the texts on the SNCC. However, due to the organisational structure of this movement, this could not be classified as the followers differing from the leaders – as the group discussed and made decisions as a collective entity. Later on in its history there was a clear split between leadership and followers, but the dissenters were either expelled or voluntarily left the group and there was no reference to dissent within the texts that I analysed.

It would also not have been beyond the bounds of possibility to see that some of the groups felt there was no justice available in the system. However, this was clearly not the case with SNCC (as seen in the above analysis) and Agonshu did not appear to have any issues with their host society which required them to seek judicial assistance. The subtext of many of the UHiT statements was one of



frustration with the established system, but there was no explicit mention of it to capture within this study.

The following markers had little data coded into them (Table 7.1).

Markers with little data	No. of occurrences	Groups
Involvement in the cycle of reciprocal violence	1	SNCC
No common ground	2	SNCC
Recognition of innocence	1	AGS
Symbolic importance	2	UHiT & SNCC
Violent traditions	3	UHiT

**Table 7.1 – Markers with little data**

Perhaps the most striking of the above is the *Violent Traditions* marker, which contained three references for UHiT. Although this is a small number, it is interesting to see it within the data for a 'non-violent' group. I don't believe that this is problematic for this study – rather it reinforces some of the statements I have made about the nature of groups and of fluidity in the moves to and from violence. UHiT access similar religious traditions to that of al Qaeda, so in that respect perhaps it is not surprising to see that some of these are violent (given the latter group's disposition to violent ideology). However, I say 'similar' rather than 'same', because although both groups label themselves Islamic and refer to the same core texts, their interpretations differ, as does the stress they place on certain violent (or non-violent) elements.

One of the references coded in to this marker referred to the political tradition (democratic) through which UHiT claimed violence was being used, and the other two referred to a future (but unspecified) possibility of violence to protect their community. These latter two statements are congruous with the suggestion that UHiT is a non-violent group at the present time only.

We might also have expected to have seen more references to the *Recognition of Innocence*, a marker which I deliberately inserted to capture where a group might specifically allow that members of the 'Other' could be innocent. However, whilst the above groups never advocated or sought unilateral (violent) action against the

'Other', nor did they tend to recognise a difference between those opposing their beliefs, and those just not supporting them. This lends weight to the analysis of groups seeing their beliefs (and the boundaries they create) as suggesting not just membership, but also a clear binary with their 'Others'.

## Conclusion

This chapter further contributes to my argument about the complexity of the move to violence. As I have shown, this is partly because the concept of non-violence itself has multiple layers, with important differences for how the data is coded into the markers.

It has also served to highlight that the markers do not act as indicators of triggers to violence. With many of the markers I demonstrated how much of the data coded needs to be analysed within the context of the groups' histories and beliefs in order to properly ascertain their relationship to potential violent action. This finding has been proven through contrasting some of the data coded through these case studies with the findings from the case studies on violent groups. I will now build on this comparative analysis in the following chapter, where I concentrate on some of the key themes that have arisen during the course of this research.

## 8. Evaluation of The Move to Violence

### Introduction

In this chapter I will evaluate the data that was coded into the markers in the case studies. Samples from this data were included and discussed in each of the above chapters dealing with these groups, though there were also cohorts of data that have not received significant attention thus far.<sup>87</sup> For example, I coded data from statements made by Ulrike Meinhof before the start of the RAF, which did not feature in the markers discussed in the RAF chapter. All the data will be brought to bear in this chapter, in order to provide some additional comparisons both over time in the same groups and between groups.

The first section of this chapter will address the most populated markers, comparing the range and differences of data from the different groups. This will then be followed by sections addressing some of the more prominent themes that arose during the course of the case studies:

- Religious versus secular groups
- Violence versus non-violence
- The move to violence

These will be followed by a look at some other less prominent themes before I conclude by demonstrating what the discussion has contributed to our understanding of the move to violence.

Through linking these themes back to the theoretical discussion outlined in Chapter Three, I will not only point to the relevant data, but also demonstrate how it fits within the broader theoretical framework I adopted. This will also contribute to showing how these themes relate to a map of the sacred beliefs of the groups. This final part of the picture also overlaps to a certain extent with the following chapter (Chapter Nine), in which I will evaluate how the matrix performed in organising and analysing this data.

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<sup>87</sup> All the cohorts of data are listed in Appendix Two.

## Most Populated Markers

In order to introduce and frame the discussions in this chapter I will use a variety of charts. These have the benefit of providing the reader with an overview of the data I have collected as well of the peaks and troughs of data in each comparative set. However, as previously mentioned, they also come with a caveat. The nature of this study is qualitative and the meaning of the data within these markers is far more important than the quantity. Indeed, the absence of data in certain cases is also very significant.

With this in mind, this first section selects markers for comparison on a purely quantitative basis. I have adopted this approach because it is not feasible, within the limits of this study, to do a comparison of each marker and each group. I have also chosen to work this way because it is interesting that some markers consistently contained large amounts of data, and a further exploration and comparison of some of this data helps us further understand what seem to be important markers.<sup>88</sup>

I will focus here on the most populated markers. To ensure that I use the most meaningful comparisons the following table (Table 8.1) shows both the top five aggregate, as well as the top five by each data-set ('violent' versus 'non-violent' – see Appendix Two for which sub-sets of the groups fall into each data-set as well as the acronyms I have used to distinguish them from each other).

	All Groups								Violent set				Non-violent set					
	Overall		Violent		Non-violent		Religious		Non-religious		Religious		Non-religious		Religious		Non-religious	
	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%	Marker	%
1	BI	21	BI	17	BI	29	ELA	18	BI	35	ELA	16	BI	30	ELA	27	BI	36
2	DWV	15	DWV	15	DWV	14	BI	16	DWV	19	DWV	14	DWV	22	BI	16	DWV	17
3	ELA	13	ELA	14	ELA	12	DWV	13	CGO	12	BI	14	WS	13	DWV	16	CGO	10
4	WS	8	WS	9	CGO	10	WS	8	WS	8	VT	10	ICRV	7	WS	13	RSJP	8
5	CGO	7	VT	9	WS	7	VT	7	DSC	4	WS	8	CGO	5	QOA	11	DSC	7

**Table 8.1 – Top 5 populated markers**

<sup>88</sup> It also suggests interesting findings as to what data was highlighted through the application of the matrix and how. In this respect the approach, if not the discussion, will be repeated in the next chapter, although there I focus on what types of data were coded, as opposed to what the data tells us about a move to violence.



From the above table a number of markers stand out. *Basic Injustice* (BI) featured in the top five in every category as did *Dichotomous World-View* (DWV), *Wider Struggle* (WS) featured in all but one, while *External Legitimizing Authority* (ELA) was a notable difference between the religious and non-religious groupings. Given the consistent importance of these four markers I will look at each of these in greater depth to see the variety of data they contained and if any additional themes arise.

### *Basic Injustice*

One of the first things that stands out in this marker is that the complaints that were coded into it were predominantly levelled against state actors. For Aum, it was the state which had initially declined its application to become a religious organisation; for al Qaeda, first the Soviet state and then the international community had been responsible for the situations in Afghanistan and Palestine; for the Red Army Faction it was the West German and U.S. governments which were primarily responsible for the continued influence of former Nazis, the capitalist exploitation of the working classes and the Vietnam War. Even in the non-violent groups we see that for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (the Uzbek government and also the international community) and SNCC (the U.S. government and agencies) it was state actors that bore the brunt of most protests.

While some data within this marker is directed towards non-state actors, the sense of injustice generally arises as a result of the actions of those who hold a position of power over the groups. This suggests that perhaps the violence comes about through a feeling of powerlessness and a need to utilise violence in order to combat a stronger 'Other'.

There are a couple of exceptions to the significance of the *Basic Injustice* marker. Agonshu and Aum Shinrikyo were not 'protest' groups and so their raison d'être did not include any injustice that they sought to right. Given this it is perhaps not surprising that no data from the Agonshu case study were coded into this marker. Some were coded for Aum Shinrikyo, as mentioned above, although not much.

Clearly, the data coded into this marker points to the importance of perceived injustices to any move to violence. Significantly, the only group (Agonshu) where no evidence of this kind could be found was also (as suggested in Chapter Seven) the clearest example of a 'non-violent movement'. The injustices cited by Aum, whilst not repeated as often as in, for example, al Qaeda's statements, were nevertheless very significant to the development of the movement – for example, recall (from Chapter Four) how Aum significantly withdrew from engagement with Japanese society after its humiliation in the Diet elections and the perceptions of Aum-bashing which followed.

### *Dichotomous World-View*

There are several interesting points to make when comparing the data for this marker across the groups. The first is that in creating a dichotomous world view there are some common enemies shared by many of the groups. Perhaps the most obvious is the United States (in some cases more specifically the U.S. government). The SNCC and RAF share a concern over the U.S. war on Vietnam, whilst this issue is also repeated to a lesser degree in the writings of al Qaeda (who, along with UHiT, concentrate on more contemporary U.S. led conflicts). The U.S. as flag-bearer or vanguard of Imperialism and/or Capitalism is a common symbol of the 'Other' for the RAF, al Qaeda and UHiT. Agonshu makes no reference to the U.S. in any capacity and whilst Aum mentions it in relation to a final World War there is no clear suggestion of animosity to the U.S. per se (despite the discussion over American fighter-jets flying over Aum camps). The identification of the U.S. as a significant 'Other' by several groups fits with the recognition of power imbalances as a source of conflict in the discussion on the *Basic Injustice* marker, as the U.S. has been the dominant world power during the time-frame of all the above groups.<sup>89</sup>

Another common enemy is 'Capitalism'. The exceptions to this view were the SNCC and the Japanese groups. Their interactions with their host-societies were predominantly based around issues of racism and spiritual salvation respectively.

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<sup>89</sup> On this basis, I would expect to see former imperial powers cast as villains in past epochs – for example Great Britain during the Victorian era. We also see this reflected in Biblical texts, for example the negative connotations of the 'Great Babylon' or the pervasive use of Rome as a symbol for secular/profane power.

This could be because their struggle was not framed within an adverse reaction to modernity, a reaction which has been argued to be the case with Islamist movements.<sup>90</sup> This argument could conceivably be extended to the case of the RAF.

Interestingly, a lot of the data pointed to the co-option of struggles and issues beyond the geographical proximity of the groups into their own discourses. Examples of this were found with the cause of Vietnam for the RAF, as well as Palestine, Bosnia and Chechnya for al Qaeda and UHiT. For the RAF the boundaries of membership on their side of the divide were based on an identification with the Vietnamese as victims of global Capitalist ideals and Imperialist expansionism. For al Qaeda and UHiT there was a common ideological belief, Islam, which for them justified a shared identity. It is also fair to point out that, whilst most members, and indeed most core members of both al Qaeda and UHiT had never been involved in these adopted struggles, there is evidence to suggest that they had sought and possibly even established links with actors in these other conflicts, unlike the RAF who never had any links to the Vietnamese.

The co-option of wider issues and peoples within the ideological boundaries of a group's dichotomous world-view contributed to a further legitimation and clarification of their own identities. This is a tactic undertaken by all groups regardless of whether they act violently or not. For example, recall from Chapter Seven how Agonshu implied a connection with the Vatican, a tactic which sought legitimacy by association with the internationally recognised Pope, but which also implied that the Pope approved of their beliefs and so was on their 'side'.

Indeed, it seems fair to establish from the data that defining a dichotomous world-view is, to a greater or lesser extent, a common feature in the foundation of any group. On a basic level, you are either a member or not. Where we can see a distinguishing factor is in the power relationship between the two sides of the divide, as well as the level of anger towards the 'Other' and the amount of exclusivity claimed for membership. Where groups perceive that they are without power (or at least on the lesser half of the equation) then their complaints will

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<sup>90</sup> Akhtar (1990) amongst others makes this claim specifically in relation to Islam, whilst the Fundamentalism Project (see, for example, Almond, 2003, and Marty and Appleby, 1991; 1993a; 1993b; 1994; 1995) situates fundamentalisms more generally as a reaction against modernity. I am not suggesting that Capitalism and modernity are indivisible but rather that, in Weberian (1965) parlance, there is certainly enough of an elective affinity between the two concepts for this argument to hold.



manifest as basic injustices (as mentioned above). The increasing levels of anger directed at the 'Other' are also indicative of violent potentialities. The level of exclusivity (or how porous the dichotomous divide is) also could be a key indicator: those groups with little or no common ground with their 'Other' are also more likely to make the move to violence. These issues and how the markers interact will be discussed in greater depth later on, but it was important to highlight the importance of this marker here to show how the data coded into it linked into the wider picture.

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

One of the most interesting findings is that almost no data from the non-religious groups were coded into this marker, despite it being defined in such a way as to include secular ideological legitimation as much as that from religious authorities. This finding will be discussed further below as part of an examination of the differences between religious and non-religious groups. At this stage I will focus on what data was coded.

Looking at the data across the groups, external legitimating authorities could be loosely gathered into three types:

- External outside of the group
- External but within the group
- External as the group

The first of these is also the most obvious and plenty of the coded data related to a deity or significant religious symbol (bones of a Buddha, the Buddha himself, Holy Scriptures, etc.) This was certainly where most significant discussion took place and is perhaps also the most obvious kind of external legitimating authority. The role of these authorities varied, from issuing clear directives (through a particular translation of scripture, for example)<sup>91</sup> to providing a figurehead around which a group identified itself (for example, Agonshu around the Agama Sutras or Buddha's relics).

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<sup>91</sup> Another translation, or non-believer's translation, might not see the directive as so clear. But the groups I studied did not express any sense of doubt in the divine directives they received.



'External but within the group' relates to symbols which, whilst belonging to the group itself, are seen as transcending the group (and so also, in a sense, external). The distinction could be seen as a contradiction in terms, so I will illuminate it with an example from the case studies.

For al Qaeda, Allah is an external legitimating authority. His role as authority is in no way related to the group and regardless of the objective truth of his existence his authority relates equally to believers and non-believers whether or not al Qaeda continues to exist. Allah is an authority outside of the group.

For Aum Shinrikyo, Shoko Asahara is also an external legitimating authority. However, as the founder and leader of the group his role of authority is linked to the group and he can be seen, both by believers and non-believers to be part of the group. However, for believers his authority also transcends the reality of this plane of existence, as his powers and actions transcend those of the bodily realm that members of the group inhabit. Asahara is, therefore, an external authority within the group, with an immanent and transcendent spiritual presence.

The final type perhaps helps explain why no data were coded into this marker for the RAF and SNCC, the two non-religious groups. The Durkheimian (2001: 154, 314) theory I outlined within Chapter Three includes the explanation that what societies may see as their god is, in fact, society itself. The upshot of the boundaries which protect the sacred beliefs, space and structure of the group is that they confirm the reification of the group itself. This explanation would be challenged by believers themselves, but my assertion is that it provides the clearest explanation for the differing social structures (in relation to 'gods'), whilst also providing a consistent explanation for the role that the sacred plays within these groups. The absence of reference to an objectified symbol of the group (an external 'God', or 'Allah') explains the lack of data coded into the marker, but does not necessarily mean that the group lacked the justification this external symbol provides. The group justified its own actions by drawing legitimation from its own beliefs and values in and of themselves. With this in mind, perhaps we can state that in this respect the difference between religious and non-religious groups is that the former objectivise the role played by the group, whilst the latter do not. This of course also reinforces the idea that 'Gods' don't kill, people do.

This suggestion is an academic and theoretical construction, and as such we would not expect to see it referenced within the statements of the groups. The lack of data for this marker from these groups is because the groups have not identified any external authority as legitimating their actions. In doing so, they support the above suggestion by unconsciously seeing the symbolic value of their group as external to the everyday field of action. If we accept this explanation, then, in addition to helping us explore the nature of the external legitimating authority and what it legitimates, it also helps us understand the gap between religious and secular groups and perhaps even explore the values that bridge it.

### *Wider Struggle*

In many ways this marker is closely linked to the *Dichotomous World-View* marker. The difference comes from the *Wider Struggle* marker focusing on a wider symbolic conflict of good versus evil and so capturing the normative aspects of a struggle that the *DWV* marker misses. Within the data in this marker it is clear that the 'Othering' of non-members of the group takes place as much on the basis of their values as it does on their support (or lack of it) for any particular group. By this I mean that for al Qaeda, for example, their values are seen as representative of the 'good' position and that a wider struggle is underway in *all* places where these ideological values (Islam as they interpret it) are not followed. This marker, then, adds texture to some of the findings of the *DWV* marker in that, whilst we can work out the nature of the dichotomous and oppositional world view that a group holds, the *Wider Struggle* marker helps us understand more about the anger (and the values that cause it) with the group's opposition to the 'Other'.

For example, an indication of the wider struggle from UHiT comes from their claims of the immorality of the West (their 'Wide Other').<sup>92</sup> This immorality is also found within their 'Narrow Other' – President Karimov. It is through learning what the morals are that they feel are ignored and transgressed that we better

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<sup>92</sup> In the process of Othering, we can often see two types of 'Other'. For example, in the UHiT case the 'Narrow Other' is Karimov: the immediate enemy of the group in the location they are based; the 'Wider Other' are non-UHiT actors outside of the immediate site of conflict, for example the U.S., or Western countries in general. The distinction largely rests on a question of proximity to the group.

understand where there could be sites of contestation between their beliefs and that of their 'Other'. Agreeing with their morals, or their construction of the 'Other', is not necessary for using this marker in order to understand where flashpoints and potential violence may occur. So, from the RAF case study, we see that capitalist values, American expansionism and the denial of Palestinian independence are all areas which are evidence (to the RAF) of a wider struggle between 'good and evil', and knowing this allows the external observer to map out some of the areas of belief of the group. The following table (8.2) shows how this could be used to help determine potential new areas of conflict had the RAF not disbanded.

<b>Evidence from statement</b>	"the people of the world are confronted with a new american offensive..." (RAF14)	"since capital is now creating the conditions for its own aggressive reconstruction on a world scale" (RAF52)	"This imperialism only reveals its fascist character when it encounters resistance..." (RAF102)
<b>Value expressed</b>	Anger against American expansionism	Anti-capitalism	Anger at oppressive action
<b>Application to other situation</b>	It is not difficult to see that were the RAF in a position to comment on the current U.S. led invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, they would be against it. However, as the anger seems also to be directed at aggression by a powerful country, it seems plausible that they would have had similar concerns about, for example, Russia's war with Georgia in 2008.	The current economic crisis and its causes in abuses of the capitalist system would provide a rich source of material for the RAF, justifying its fear that capitalism further impoverishes the poor.	Likewise, the police handling of the G20 protests in London in April 2009 where a man was killed would have supported their feelings on this point. We would expect to find the RAF equally in support of the November 2010 student protests in Millbank, London.

**Table 8.2 – Examples of the RAF's values**

Although this marker was not amongst the top five for the SNCC (the only group for which it was not) this could in part be because, whilst their protest focused on the U.S., the U.S. was also where they were based. However, there was still data within the texts which pointed to the wider struggle for the rights of human beings (seen as a 'good' value), for example with the U.S. state (as 'evil' actor) denying these rights in the case of the Vietnamese people. The correlations were made between their own struggle (and the murder of some protestors) and that of the Vietnamese people, and this suggests the positioning of their struggle within what they clearly understood as a broader fight between 'good and evil'.



## Religious versus Secular Groups

As discussed in Chapter Three I have not privileged religion in this research, rather, I have focused on the role that the sacred plays and have argued that we are as likely to see instances of the sacred within secular groups, as we are in religious groups. My assertion is that with this understanding we are better able to comprehend the similarities between religious and secular beliefs, and the move to violence provides an excellent context within which to frame an example of this discussion.

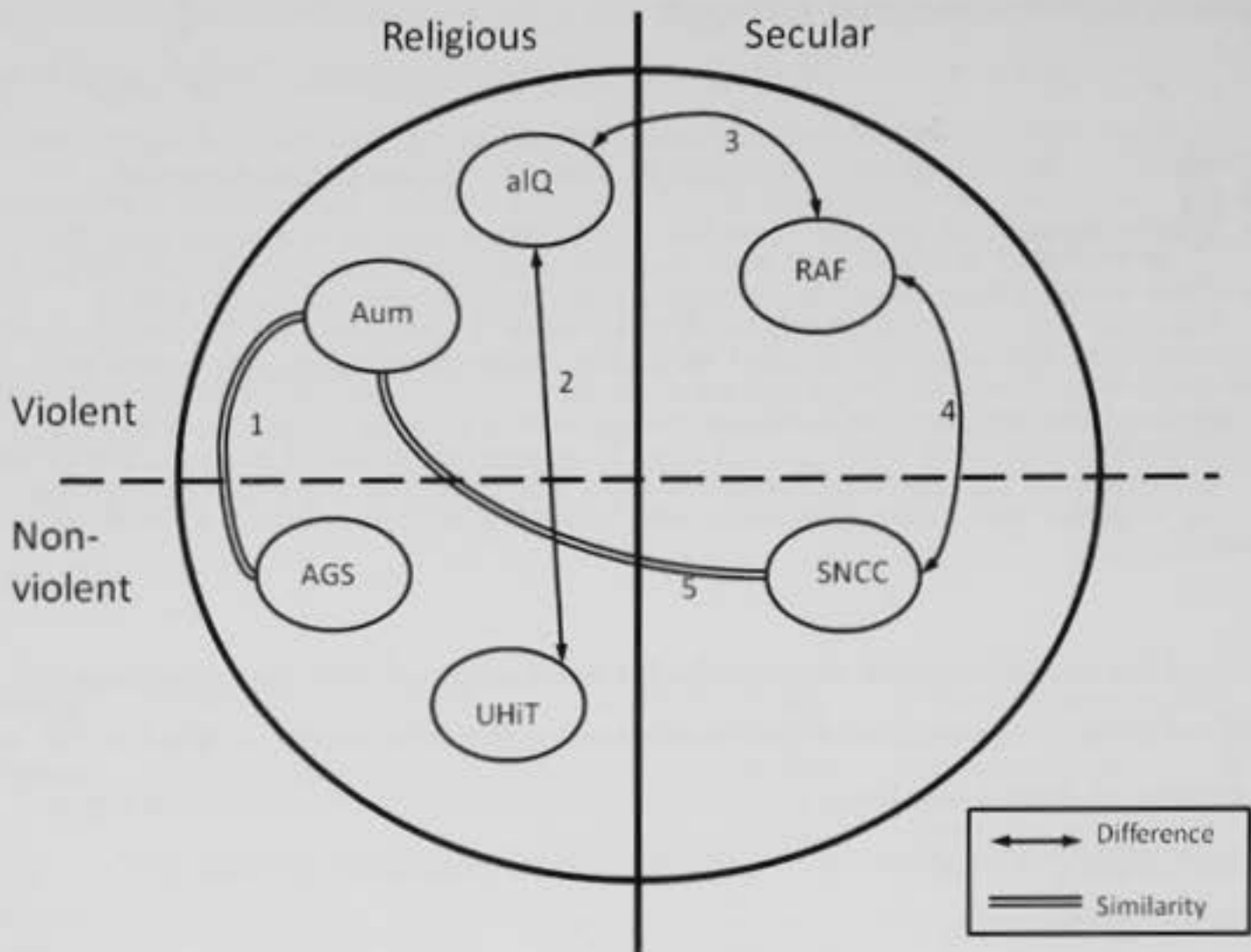
The role of the sacred and the way in which I have mapped instances of it form the theoretical basis of the matrix. I will be discussing how the matrix worked in the next chapter, so here I will focus on some of the key differences (within the context of violence) between religious and secular groups, as suggested through my mapping of the sacred.

In Chapter Three I built on Knott's (2005:217-8) argument that the boundary between the religious and secular is a second-order distinction which divides a single epistemological field, and that instances of the sacred can be seen on both sides of the divide, for example in the creation and renewal of groups' boundaries through their engagement with other groups. Learning where those boundaries are, and how they are constituted and maintained, is the key purpose of my matrix. The following diagram and discussion help to show how this is achieved, by demonstrating differences in sacred beliefs between groups and across the religious and secular division.<sup>93</sup> I have also used the discussion to explore some of the key differences and similarities between these camps in the data that I gathered.

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<sup>93</sup> Figure 8.1 is an adaptation of the model 'The religious/secular field and its force relationships' presented in several of Knott's publications, one example of which can be found in Knott, 2010: 121.





**Figure 8.1 – Diagram of the religious/secular field**

Figure 8.1 shows the division between the religious and secular camps. Within these camps are the groups on which I have undertaken case studies, positioned according to whether I utilised them as a violent or non-violent case. These groups demonstrate some of the different positions that can be taken up within the same religious/secular camp. The lines between the groups represent shared or differing values – instances of sacred potentiality which could, if in conflict, lead to violence. The diagram demonstrates how such values can be shared or contested across the religious/secular boundary, and between groups which share their position within these camps.<sup>94</sup>

I have numbered the shared/contested relationships so that I could provide examples of how the matrix provides data that helps us map occurrences of the sacred and therefore be attentive to differences and commonalities between how it influences potential actions of the groups. Table 8.3 provides a summary of these relationships and the discussion that follows, based upon those markers where there were interesting differences between groups, and demonstrates this with

<sup>94</sup> Clearly most of these groups have never had direct relationships with each other. The diagram is not a suggestion of how they would interact, but an examination, using data from the case studies, of how values can be shared and contested between a variety of differing ideologies.

examples from the case studies. Where relevant I have broadened the discussions of these areas to include other examples from the case studies.

	Group	Similarity/ difference	Group	Marker
1	Aum	=	AGS	Personal Benefit
2	alQ	↔	UHiT	Violent Traditions
3	alQ	↔	RAF	External Legitimizing Authority
4	RAF	↔	SNCC	Recourse to Sacrificial and or Judicial Processes
5	Aum	=	SNCC	Desire for Social Change

**Table 8.3 – Examples of similarities/differences between groups' values**

(1) *Aum = AGS (Personal Benefit)*

That these two groups shared common values in relation to the *Personal Benefit* marker is perhaps not too surprising given the linkages in their history, through Shoko Asahara, and their shared national and cultural identity. However, this shared history does not guarantee similarity in beliefs, so this example still provides an interesting case for examining shared values.

Within both groups there was a strong theme of spiritual development through ascetic practice. Both believed that through different rituals, such as the *Goma* fire ceremony (in Agonshu), or the 'miracle pond initiation' (in Aum), as well as individual practices such as meditation, that they could resolve problems and evolve as spiritual beings. These beliefs were not open to discussion, they formed non-negotiable aspects of the groups' beliefs, and as such are excellent examples of sacred boundaries. Any groups or persons doubting the efficacy of these practices, or indeed of the power of spiritual development (and so also the premises that these assumptions rest on, such as the presence of a spiritual realm, the ability to control one's progress through it, and so on), comes into conflict with these beliefs and boundaries.

This marker was also one of those that showed a strong difference between religious and non-religious groups. Within the religious groups it picked up on a theme of spiritual betterment, either through the immediate personal benefit (in this life) suggested by Agonshu and Aum Shinrikyo, or in the afterlife as shown in the texts of, for example, al Qaeda. The differences between when this benefit is

experienced (now or the afterlife) perhaps reflect a tendency within Japanese religions to focus on “here and now relief” (Reader, 1995: 8). But of more interest to us here is the distinction between the religious and non-religious groups. The lack of immediate reward (or promise of it in the future) in the statements of the non-religious groups suggests that these groups are, in some ways at least, more altruistically inclined than their religious counterparts – their self-sacrifice is made without hope of reward.<sup>95</sup> Whilst this could lead to a suggestion that their desire to commit wholeheartedly to their cause would be weaker as a result (no personal gain is derived) quite the opposite seems to be the case, with many in the RAF and the SNCC risking death (and indeed many dying) for their cause. Whilst having no effect on the violent potentiality of a group, this marker does appear to be one of those which show some distinction between religious and non-religious groups.

## (2) *alQ ↔ UHiT (Violent Traditions)*

Although al Qaeda and Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (UHiT) share a common religious tradition, their interpretation of this collective religious history is often different. From the case studies we see that al Qaeda drew upon the violent traditions of its religious ancestry and appeared to interpret key spiritual lessons and historical events through a violent lens far more often than UHiT did. The difference in the adoption and use of violent traditions by these groups was also reflected in their beliefs and actions and this marker can be seen as an excellent frame to examine this aspect of the non-negotiable differences between these groups. The strength of this non-negotiability was demonstrated, as I mentioned in Chapter Seven, in the criticism between UHiT, the Taliban (supporters and hosts of al Qaeda in Afghanistan) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, on their differences regarding the use of violence (Karagiannis and McCauley, 2006: 325).

Using this marker as a frame, we see that only one of UHiT's statements showed a similarity to the many identified in the al Qaeda study, this being (UHiT118): “When the time comes to unite your community as a single person, if someone wants to break up your unity, strike him on the neck with a sword”. The other

<sup>95</sup> This is not to say that members of the religious groups did not act altruistically – their actions still entailed personal suffering and were still undertaken in support of a group that they felt was oppressed by their ‘Other’ (Best, 2010)



significant statement captured by this marker talks about the need to “uproot the system enemies imposed”, but does not suggest that this has to be done through any form of physical violence. So, whilst UHiT have access to the same religious texts and teachings as al Qaeda, they choose not – in the main – to accept or interpret these as evidence of violent traditions.

The *Violent Traditions* marker was, interestingly, also one of those that showed a marked difference between religious and non-religious groups and the amount of coded data. The RAF only contributed a little data to this marker, and no data was coded into the marker from the statements of the SNCC. This is despite the SNCC, and also the later traditions of the RAF, having some access to violent narratives, formed through the earlier history of their own groups, on which they could have drawn. For example, the SNCC could have drawn on episodes of violence in the anti-slavery or civil rights movements, and the RAF could have drawn more upon the episodes of violence within the parliamentary opposition movement and its own early history. That they did not could feed into the theory suggested by Hervieu-Léger (2000) that one of the aspects that makes a group religious is the narrative thread, the shared history that binds its present believers with its past and future. In the cases of Aum Shinrikyo and Agonshu (although the latter did not access violent traditions) we do see evidence of the creation of such traditions, tying the believers into a shared chain of religious memory, even though these chains could be argued (by outsiders) to be a contemporary fabrication. Although this thesis is not unproblematic, it does appear to be a constructive explanation for the difference in data present in this marker between the religious and non-religious groups.

### (3) alQ ↔ RAF (*External Legitimizing Authority*)

This example is one where the two sets of data were diametrically opposed. Whilst al Qaeda showed a very strong belief in an external legitimating authority (Allah) the RAF demonstrated no strong adherence to any authority with this kind of role. For al Qaeda any system of belief that does not observe the authority of Allah is completely anathema to it, and this is one of the key areas of belief which are protected with a non-negotiable boundary. As well as understanding the non-negotiability of this area of belief, we can also use this marker to understand what



kind of legitimation the external authority performs for the group. In the case of al Qaeda, the actions legitimated are clearly violent and point most forcefully towards enemies and the rules for engagement with them.

Similar values seem to be legitimated in the case of the RAF but, as discussed above, there is no evidence of this being performed by an external legitimating authority. Whilst this suggests a clear difference in the nature of sacred boundaries between religious and non-religious groups, the Durkheimian explanation for this difference, that I previously discussed, allows us to see similarities in the values unencumbered by the relative religiosity of the legitimation. To this end, it is interesting to note that amongst the symbolisation used by the RAF was the process of ascribing authorship of public statements (about attacks) to Commandos (cells within the RAF) named after recent martyrs for the cause. For example, the attacks in Augsburg and Munich (12<sup>th</sup> May, 1972) were claimed by the 'Thomas Weissbecker Commando', Weissbecker having been killed by the police in March the same year (RAF18). This self-reference appears to reinforce the inward gaze of the group, with no need for external support.

#### (4) *RAF ↔ SNCC (Recourse to Sacrificial and or Judicial Processes)*

Both of these groups operated within the secular camp and, although they both engaged with what they saw as deep injustices in their host societies, they had a different approach to the involvement of sacrificial or judicial processes.

The RAF did not believe that they would receive any level of satisfaction from the authorities, political, legal or judicial. Little data from the RAF case study was coded into this marker and, where it was, this related to demands for justice, seemingly made with little expectation of a positive response. The SNCC, however, went to great lengths to take their complaints to the proper authorities, even assigning volunteers specifically to liaise with law enforcement agencies. This was despite the poor record of these agencies in responding fairly and positively to their complaints.

In both cases this data paints an important picture about the nature of the struggle of the groups, their understanding of the relationship with the state and, as a

result, the likelihood of their conducting their activities outside of the respective legal framework. This, in itself, does not have to lead to the possibility of violence – many of the SNCC protests fell foul of local, state, or national laws but still avoided violence – but the decision to refuse to engage with judicial processes at least focuses the investigator's attention to how the group might choose to protest outside of the law.

More data was coded into this marker from the secular groups than from the religious groups. However, the majority of this data came from the SNCC study, so I would be cautious about extending any lessons from this too widely. The performance of the marker will be judged in the next chapter, but it is useful to include it here as an example not just of a difference (between groups) within the secular camp but also because it shows how the absence of data, in this case in the RAF's statements, can affect our understanding of the sacred boundaries of the group, in this case of their interaction with the judicial system.

(5) *Aum = SNCC (Desire for Social Change)*

This marker demonstrated a similar belief in the possibility and desire for social change by these two groups, but, by focusing our attention on the data coded into it, also showed important differences in how they felt this was possible. The SNCC believed that social change was possible through political protest against, and interaction with, the authorities. The data captured their desire to provide cultural programmes and literacy drives. Aum Shinrikyo, however, believed that global change was possible through spiritual intervention, and the data highlighted their desire to open branches around the world to spread the Aum training system. The data gave further pointers to the nature of their beliefs. Whilst the SNCC spoke of a future where one man could receive one vote (SNCC63), Aum warned of a future nuclear war which they hoped to avert (AUM97). These beliefs about the future further delineate their sacred boundaries, giving us an idea of how constructive (or negative in the case of Aum's apocalyptic beliefs) their content is.

At least some data was coded into this marker from all the groups I studied, however, proportionally more for the secular groups. Because of the amounts (of data) I would not suggest that the presence of data in this marker would in itself be

suggestive of any difference between the characteristics of religious or secular groups and also not of any potential move to violence. However, it is clear from the analysis of the data, that this marker, as shown through the above examples, does allow us to see differences between religious and secular groups. A broader qualitative assessment of the common differences shows that, in general, the nature of the social change desired by the religious groups related to the saving of humanity on longer term moral and political grounds (e.g. the establishment of a caliphate, *dar el-Islam*, or the aversion of an apocalyptic event), whereas the social change desired by the secular groups related to improving the present conditions of society (e.g. racial equality, or the overthrow of the capitalist state).

The above diagram (Figure 8.1) helps demonstrate how instances of the sacred are found within both religious and secular groups, and also shows how focusing on the groups through the use of the markers helps to identify shared areas of values and to understand where significant differences can be found, as well as demonstrating areas for potential conflict. I will now develop this latter point in more detail.

## Violence versus Non-violence

As I have argued at several points during this thesis, it is misleading simply to reduce the labelling of groups to either 'violent' or 'non-violent'. However, leaving this problematic binary to one side, at least within stages of the development of movements we can see definable non-violent or violent periods. Within the groups that I analysed was data from non-violent periods of three groups (that are commonly considered as non-violent groups) namely, Agonshu (AGS), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (UHIT). Additional data was coded from statements from non-violent periods of two movements (that are commonly considered as violent) namely, Aum Shinrikyo (labelled as 'AUMb') and Ulrike Meinhof of the Red Army Faction (labelled as 'pRAF'). I have grouped this data together as 'non-violent' and analysed it in comparison to the data coming from the violent stages of the movements I studied.

In order to see where some of the clear differences were in terms of the markers, I have produced the following stacked bar chart which compares the two sets of data (Figure 8.2).



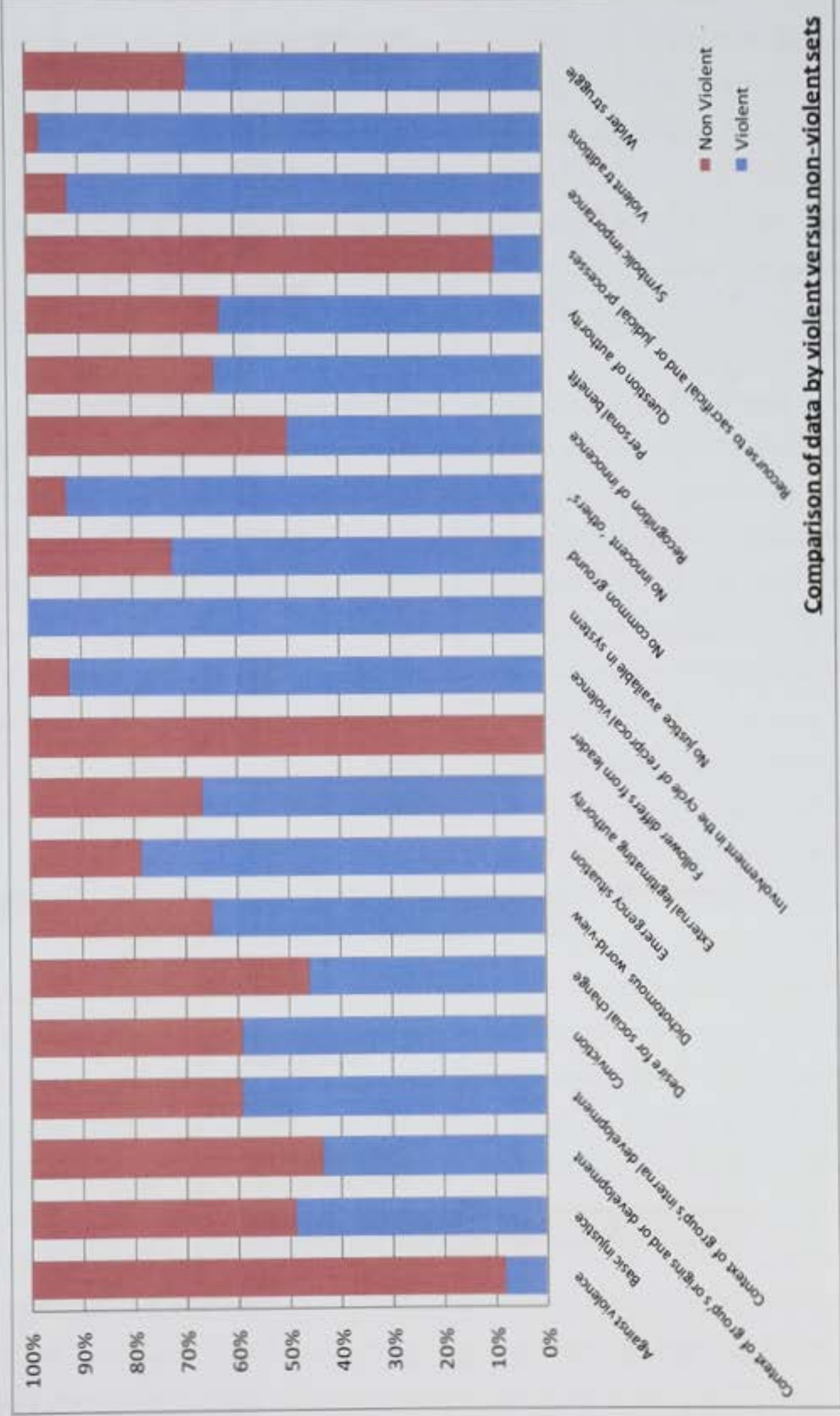


Figure 8.2 – Percentage of violent / non-violent data by marker



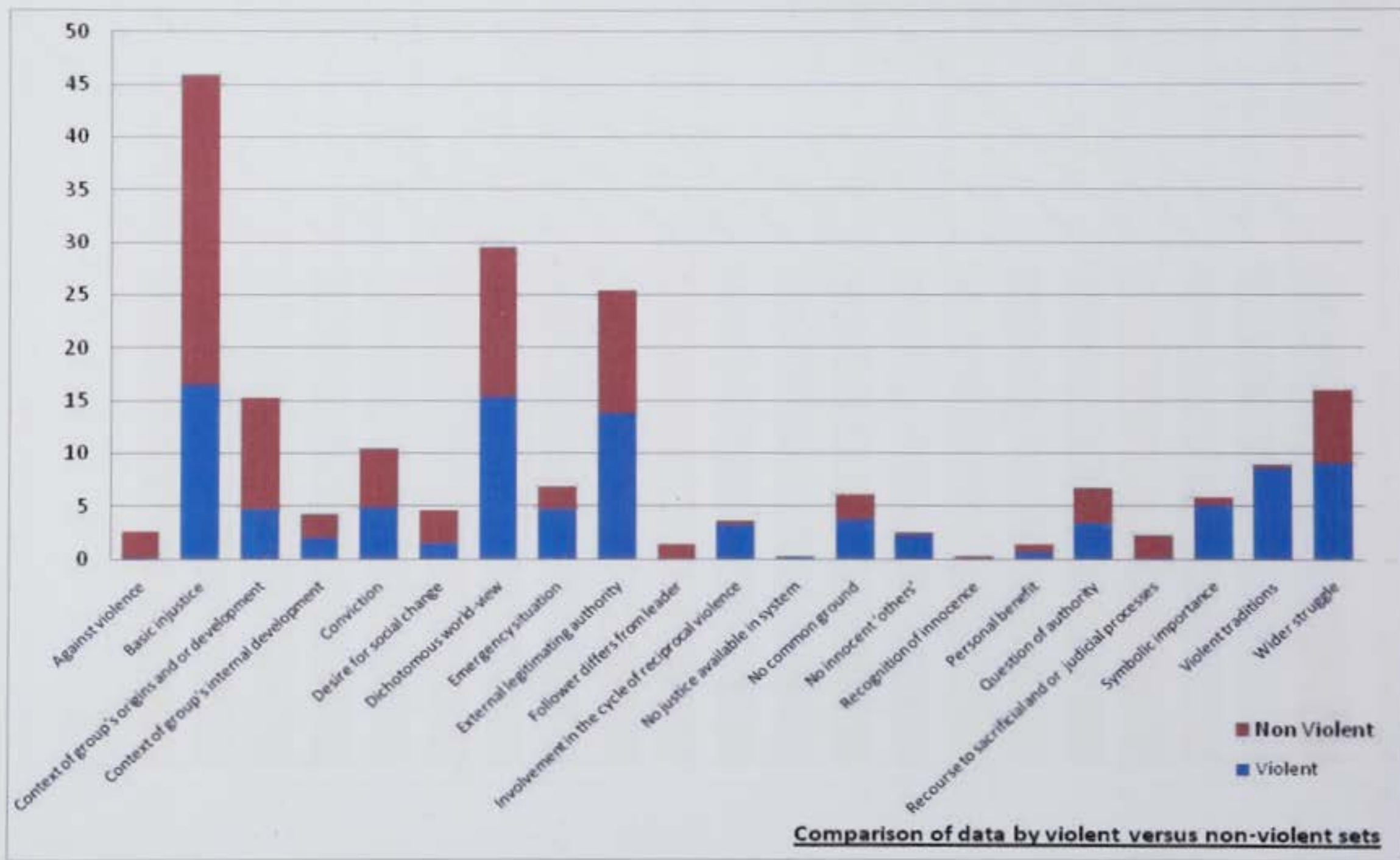


Figure 8.3 – Comparison of markers by violent /non-violent sets

From this comparison we can see that there are some markers which contained significantly more data for the violent set than for the non-violent set. However, some of these, such as the *No Justice Available in the System* marker contained very little data overall, so although it shows that 100% of the data coded into it came from the violent set there was not enough data from which to draw a useful conclusion. To help show which markers provide both significant data and significant differences between the two sets I have also produced the above chart (Figure 8.3), which shows the percentage of data caught by each marker and, within each marker, the split between the violent and non-violent sets as discussed above.<sup>96</sup>

From comparing the markers in the above two charts it is clear we need two distinct strategies to help determine what might be the significant differences between the violent and non-violent sets. First, we need to consider how the data is different in the most significant markers: for example, the *Basic Injustice* marker contained roughly similar relative amounts of data for both the violent and non-violent sets. Because we are not interested in the amount but the content, we need to establish if the kind of basic injustice that this marker highlighted differs at all and to see if any common themes arise in the data in the violent set. Secondly, we need to look at those markers which, whilst not containing as much data, nevertheless contained significant amounts which almost wholly came from the violent category. These markers could be those which act more clearly on their own as indicators of violent potentialities.

Within those markers that contained the most data, the differences between the violent and non-violent groups are largely to do with the semantics of the message. Within the texts from the violent groups a more violent lexicon is employed. So, whilst we often see similar themes and indeed problems, there is an underlying description of violence, using words such as death, attack, blood, destroy, massacre, murder, weapons. All of these markers share this distinctive language. This is not to say that the non-violent set does not contain any violent language, but it is significantly less and used mainly within the context of persecution or violence received. The following table (Table 8.4) demonstrates this point, in which I have drawn words used within violent discourses from a list of the top 100 most

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<sup>96</sup> To ensure that the data from each set is shown as a relative comparison, Figure 8.3 shows the percentage of data in each marker as a percentage of the data in each set.

frequently used words in all of the texts for the relevant sets (I omitted structure words from the list – pronouns, conjunctions, etc.)<sup>97</sup>

RAF		ALQ	UHiT
Violent (RAF1-3)	Non-violent (pRAF)	Violent	Non-violent
Struggle/s/ing (0.56%)	War (0.26%)	Kill/s/ing/ed (0.38)	Infidel (0.34%)
Revolution/ary/aries (0.46%)		Jihad (0.35%)	
War/fare (0.35%)		War (0.30%)	
Attack/s/ed/ing (0.30%)		Fight/ing (0.23%)	
Bomb/s/ers/ing (0.29%)		Crusade/r (0.21%)	
Resistance (0.24%)		Infidels (0.18)	
Commando/s (0.22%)		Mujahidin (0.15%)	
Military (0.22%)			
Guerilla/guerrilla (0.21%)			

**Table 8.4 – Difference in violent/non-violent use of language**

In consideration of this, it seems that one significant difference between the sets, as an indicator of violent potentiality, is the use of violent language. This is a subjective assessment, as it requires measurement against non-violent examples. But it seems that an increase in frequency and specificity is a good indicator of the presence of violent beliefs.

Looking at those markers which contained a significant amount of data from the violent dataset, a lot was coded into the *Violent Traditions* marker, which in itself was weighted heavily (over 90%) towards the violent set. Interestingly, whilst it contained large amounts of data from Aum Shinrikyo (up to the time of the attack in Tokyo), and also from al Qaeda, little was coded into it from any of the RAF stages. Whilst we might not expect to see much data for the first stage of the RAF, I would argue that the example set by Baader, Ensslin, Meinhof and their colleagues did construct a violent narrative that informed the later stages. However, this demonstrates the differences between the *Violent Traditions* marker and the *Context of Group's Internal Development* marker. The latter marker

<sup>97</sup> The values shown in Table 8.4 represent, as a percentage, the usage of those words out of the total words used in all of the documents categorised into that data-set. For example, "struggle" and the associated words "struggles" and "struggling" together made up 0.56% of the total words used in all the documents authored by the three violent generations of the RAF.



contains the kind of data which is more relevant to the latter stages of the RAF, as it relates to events which impacted on how the group evolved.

The *Violent Traditions* marker, meanwhile, contains data that relates to, for example, the interpretation of foundational myths and/or of instructional scripture. This includes where such myths were (re)created. Understanding the development of these traditions is difficult: were they created or remembered because the group is violent, or did their presence encourage the violence within the group? In the absence of a definitive answer to this question, the marker does still seem a reasonable indicator of violence: whilst Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan shares a common religious heritage with al Qaeda there was not much data in the UHiT study relating to violent traditions.

These traditions play an important role, demonstrating a history (and so precedent) and justification for violent action. They can also normalise violent activity, placing it within 'acceptable' moral parameters by making it appear as part of a more ordinary series of events.

The following markers also contained data of which the majority (at least 70%) came from the violent rather than the non-violent datasets (number of instances occurring in the violent sets listed in brackets):

- Symbolic Importance (115)
- Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence (73)
- No Innocent 'Others' (51)
- Emergency Situation (106)
- No Common Ground (84)
- No Justice Available in System (5)

Some of these markers lend themselves to suggesting violent potentialities more easily than others. For example, *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence* – taking revenge for violence (or perceived violence) received – is quite clearly a marker of violent action. Less clearly, the idea that there are *No Innocent 'Others'* involved in the wider struggle suggests that people not directly involved in the dispute could equally be targeted. However, it does not necessarily follow that the dispute *has* to be violent. Similarly, if it is felt that there is no justice available to

a group, that legal and/or judicial channels for resolving perceived injustices are closed to them (*No Justice Available in the System*), then it is possible that a group could turn to violence, but it does not necessarily have to.

The *Symbolic Importance* marker contained more data from the two religious violent groups, al Qaeda and Aum Shinrikyo, than from the RAF. Where there was evidence of this marker within the RAF data, it related to the present action having symbolic importance within a wider struggle, such as the class struggle, or the fight against imperialism. Both the current action and the symbolism it related to were very much situated within the period contemporaneous to the statements.

However, in al Qaeda and Aum Shinrikyo, the actions were often linked through the symbolism to a future (or at least predicted) event. Within Aum much of the symbolic importance of their actions was tied up with the prophecies of Nostradamus. So, for example, the need to excel at spiritual practises within Aum was tied to the desire to survive the impending (prophesied) world-wide disaster. For many of the references in the al Qaeda study, the future event was related to personal benefit (for example the heavenly rewards for pious behaviour in the present) or the eventual victory of global Islam over the 'Other'. This is shown in the following quotation (ALQ11: 12:41.1 – 13:08.1):

O youth of my Ummah! Say we prefer death over humiliation. And facing death is greater than running away from it. Evil has prevailed, and the wounds of Al Aqaaa are deep but, O heroes of Palestine, O Muslim Warriors, O protectors of Al Quds be patient in the field of death. For Allah has promised you victory and you have promised him to remain firm. So fulfil your promise and He will fulfil His.

The present action, linked openly to the Palestinian struggle, but also implicated in a broader fellowship of Muslim 'warriors', is laden with symbolism redolent of heroism, good and evil, and warrior virtues as well as the promise of future rewards.

So, whilst the *Symbolic Importance* marker, in terms of its definition, does not automatically suggest a violent potentiality within a group, its content can, and it is interesting to see that much more data was coded into this marker for the violent set of groups than the non-violent set.

The *Emergency Situation* marker was most strongly represented within Aum and indeed did not contain nearly as much data (proportionally) from either of the other violent groups. As discussed in the case study on Aum (Chapter Four) this is perhaps because of the situation within Aum where the leadership was forced to raise the stakes in order to stem the potential loss of believers. Outside of the Aum data-set, there is not strong enough evidence to suggest that this marker could be a distinguishing factor between violent or non-violent belief systems. We could expect to see data here that is suggestive of an increasing desperateness about the current situation or field of action, and therefore legitimating more extreme action. But, whilst there is evidence of this within the violent sets, there is not enough for it to be an easily identifiable indicator of violent potentialities.

The *No Common Ground* marker is another which, in and of itself, does not have to be representative of violent action. For example, I would expect to find plenty of data within this marker if I studied pacifist world-renouncing groups such as the Amish. The difference between the violent and non-violent groups relates to how this absence of commonality is constructed and maintained. In the case of the violent groups there is a desire to ensure that the distance with the 'Other' is maintained, and this is achieved through violent belief and action. For example, the following quotation is from al Qaeda (ALQ57: 212):

Know that we are counting our dead, especially in Palestine, where your allies the Jews murder them. We are going to take revenge for them from your blood, as we did on the day of New York [9/11]. Remember what I said to you about that day regarding our security and your security. Baghdad-the seat of the Caliphate-will never fall to you, by Allah's grace, and we will fight you as long as we carry our guns. If we fall, our sons will replace us. May our mothers become barren if we leave any of you alive on our soil.

This quotation demonstrates the complete absence of any form of opening for dialogue. It is representative of the dichotomous world-view we saw come across so strongly in the al Qaeda case study (Chapter Five), but also reinforces the notion that the only interaction between the two sides will be one of violence. This is quite a different kind of evidence to that found from the Aum Shinrikyo case study, where most of the data came from the biographies of believers. Here the lack of common ground was shown through the self-realisation of the complete disparity between worldly values and those of Aum (AUM93):



I found myself being at ease and looking at worldly desires from the outside, which had worried me much until then. I did not think anything but just saw worldly desires. At this point my value system changed entirely. I lost interest in what I had liked and had been interested in, and my mind was not affected by anything but what I really needed to do.

And the speaker goes on to say:

It was painful to speak with and contact people. I felt idle talks to be a loss of a lot of energy. Before the single-cell practice, I thought the world I lived in was very good, but after the practice I felt everything I had been thinking as good was actually sufferings. I also thought that this life would bring about only sufferings.

Through his religious practice, the speaker had reached a level of spiritual realisation which closed off avenues of dialogue with those outside Aum, even restricting his desire to speak with outsiders.<sup>98</sup>

I have presented these two examples (data from the RAF is similar in nature to the above al Qaeda example) because they demonstrate the broad range of data within this marker and two different ways of looking at it. The first is that it seems that a lack of common ground is a necessary element in the beliefs of a violent group. However, on its own it is not sufficient for violent action because, as mentioned earlier, this characteristic is common to many non-violent groups. Additionally, the Aum quotation does not in itself suggest any violent potentiality, but rather is just evidence of the presence of a lack of common ground. The al Qaeda quotation, however, shows both a lack of common ground and also clear evidence of a violent mind-set.

A further point to consider is that, of the non-violent set, only AUMb had a significant amount of data relating to *No Common Ground*. Therefore, I might add that, notwithstanding my comments that presence of data in this marker cannot be seen to indicate violent potentialities, it certainly seems that non-violent groups are less likely to refer to this theme as often (perhaps because they want to see

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<sup>98</sup> This complete change in focus need not be indicative of a move towards violence – as Simmel (1997: 137) writes, it is not unusual for a person to change “the whole of existence” around a new ideology, but he suggests that this could also happen for a new “amorous affection”. Barker (1998: 12) also points out that a degree of separation from the rest of society is common in fledgling religious groups – which Aum was – although the severity and success of the separation it promoted was, as mentioned in Chapter Four, unusual.

themselves as reaching out to their 'Other'). The Aum exception is probably at least partly due to the public and official persecution of Aum members, as well as a continuing culture of separation from the pre-sarin attack days.

Out of the three markers that perhaps more obviously demonstrated violence, the *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence* marker contained data from the RAF and al Qaeda and, interestingly, from the pre-violent stage of the RAF (pRAF), though not a substantial amount. No data from Aum was coded into it. This is perhaps due to the fact that, whilst Aum did feel it was subject to some basic injustices, it had not been on the receiving end of any sustained violence or persecution (although there is reasonable evidence to say that many of its members were *after* the Tokyo sarin attacks). Both the RAF and al Qaeda grew out of a pre-existing conflict and saw themselves, to a certain extent, as avenging wrongs committed by the 'Other' *before* they commenced their activities. Given that no data from the Aum case study was coded into this marker, I would suggest that the presence of this kind of data suggests violent potentialities, but that the absence of it does not preclude this outcome.

Likewise, the *No Innocent 'Others'* marker contained large amounts of data in the al Qaeda case study, but very little for the RAF and Aum studies. Its presence suggests a likelihood of violent potentialities, not least in the way that the evidence for this marker suggested a broadening of violence to all those who are not members of the group. Interestingly, while there was little data for Aum or the RAF, it could be said that both demonstrated a lack of regard for the innocence of others, despite this not being reflected in their statements.<sup>99</sup> I will discuss this disparity in the following chapter, but I do not believe that it changes the strong link between the presence of data in this marker and the likelihood of violent action.

The non-violent set of Aum data (AUMb) also contributed a small amount in a limited way to this marker. Interestingly this related primarily to questions about the morality of releasing the gas, and the answers suggest that some of Aum's teachings that allowed the attacks still held sway.

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<sup>99</sup> The RAF (RAF17) stated that they had tried to avoid injury to workers and staff in the attack on the Springer press in May, 1972, but in general their methods suggested this was not a strong or consistent commitment. Aum's actions were clearly indiscriminate in who was targeted.

The above discussion looked at some of the key differences between the violent and non-violent data-sets that I examined in this research. Next, I will examine the move to violence. Together these two sections address the principal question out of which this research grew.

## The Move to Violence

In the above discussion I looked at some of the differences I found between violent and non-violent stages of groups. Understanding these differences is essential if we are to understand how certain characteristics might be suggestive of violent potentialities. In this section I take the lessons learned from the analysis in the rest of this chapter, and apply them to some samples of data taken from specific generations of the groups.

I will focus principally on two groups, the RAF and Aum Shinrikyo. Both these groups had significant events that forced substantial change on the leadership and membership, primarily due to the imprisonment of leaders. The data-sets I will be using to compare these changes are listed in Appendix Two. These two groups provide interesting comparisons. The secular RAF will allow us to track the data from the stages before and during violent action, whilst looking at the case of the religious Aum Shinrikyo will focus our gaze on the move from violence to non-violence.

### *The Red Army Faction and the move to violence*

The data I gathered on the RAF started with the writings of Ulrike Meinhof in her columns for *konkret*. Meinhof's close involvement with the protest movement before she helped Baader escape and her prominent, if not leading, role in the RAF, makes her a reliable source.



The following charts (Figures 8.4 – 8.7) show the volume of data, by marker, for each of the RAF generations, which give us a rough indication of the differences between them. The RAF labels 1-3 refer to the generations of the RAF and the pRAF label refers to the statements coded prior to Baader's escape and the formation of the RAF.<sup>100</sup>

It is interesting to see that the *Conviction* and *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence* markers for the pre-RAF (pRAF) generation were significantly different to the violent generations of the RAF. The *Context of Group's Origins / Development* marker contained much more information than for the other generations – this being filled with statements relating to the problems with the present establishment's links with Germany's Nazi past. That there were not more differences in the markers is not surprising, as the time that Meinhof was writing these columns was very close to when the RAF was formed. They were written during a period of social upheaval when the state had already begun to use some heavy-handed tactics against the protestors. In this period we start to see the escalation of the conflict towards the unapologetic violence of the RAF.

The relative lack of data in the *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence* marker is best explained by the fact that, before the formation of the RAF, there was limited violent revenge. Limited, not none, because as Meinhof mentions (RAF43: 239-40) there were some incidents where protestors acted out of revenge (for example in attacks on Springer Press buildings) and these actions, highlighted through this marker, are an indication of things to come.

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<sup>100</sup> The labels and corresponding generations of the RAF are also laid out in Appendix Two.



Figure 8.4 – RAF1 radar chart



Figure 8.5 – RAF2 radar chart

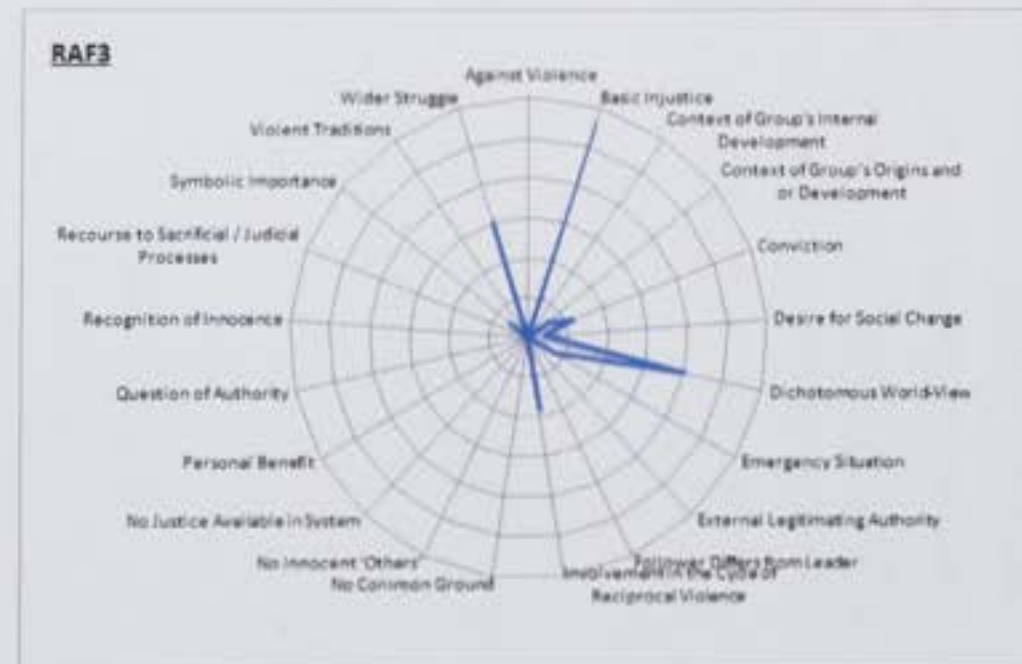


Figure 8.6 – RAF3 radar chart

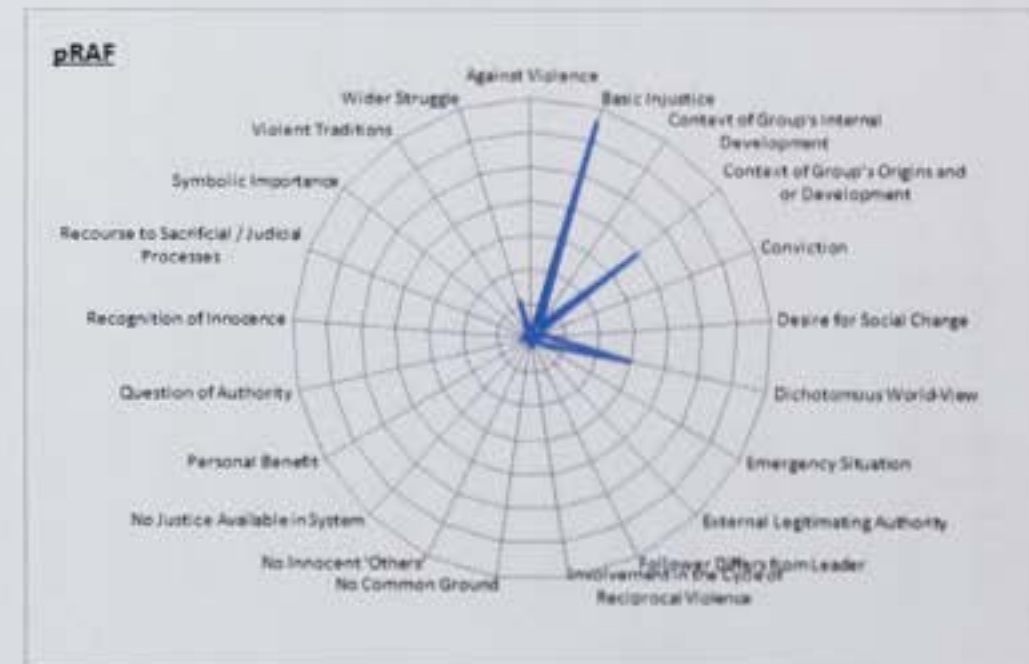


Figure 8.7 – RAF4 radar chart

The change in conviction from the pre-RAF stage to the violent stages of the RAF deals with *who* has the conviction. In her column 'from protest to resistance', Meinhof (RAF43: 242) writes that "there are people" who have the conviction to take a stand against terror and violence, but this changes after the RAF had been formed, to say that she (as part of the RAF) had the conviction to take this stand (e.g. RAF25). The lack of conviction in the pRAF stage perhaps reflects her own prevarication, for example as noted by Aust (2008: 35) of the occasion when she was not keen for her car to be used as part of a protest blockade she was attending.

In addition to the amount of data for the various stages not being that different, the content of this data also remained relatively consistent. In the violent stages of the RAF, the markers captured statements that expressed stronger feelings and harder beliefs than the pre-RAF stage. This difference of degree is exceedingly hard to measure, due to the difficulty of establishing an objective frame of reference. What I can say with some confidence is that, from the analysis already completed, we have an idea of which markers capture significant amounts of data suggesting violent potentialities. We also now have some examples of the kind of data that suggests a hardening of the sacred boundaries within the group's ideologies. If we tie this up with what we see from the pre-RAF data-set (pRAF), which shows what we expect to see just before a group moves to violence, then we have some idea of what to look for in assessing violent potentialities.

A further analysis we can apply to the question of the move to violence is of findings from the Aum Shinrikyo data. In addition to coding the data from Aum before it carried out its attacks on the Tokyo underground (labelled 'AUMa'), I also coded some data from after that period, when the group was still called Aum Shinrikyo, and also from the time when it had renamed itself Aleph (labelled 'AUMb'). In the case study in Chapter Four I focused on the data from the pre-attack stage, but an interesting contrast comes from looking at the statements of the group made when they had had to confront their violent beliefs, and also after the core leadership had been imprisoned. The following charts (Figures 8.9 and 8.10) show differences in markers between these two sets of data.



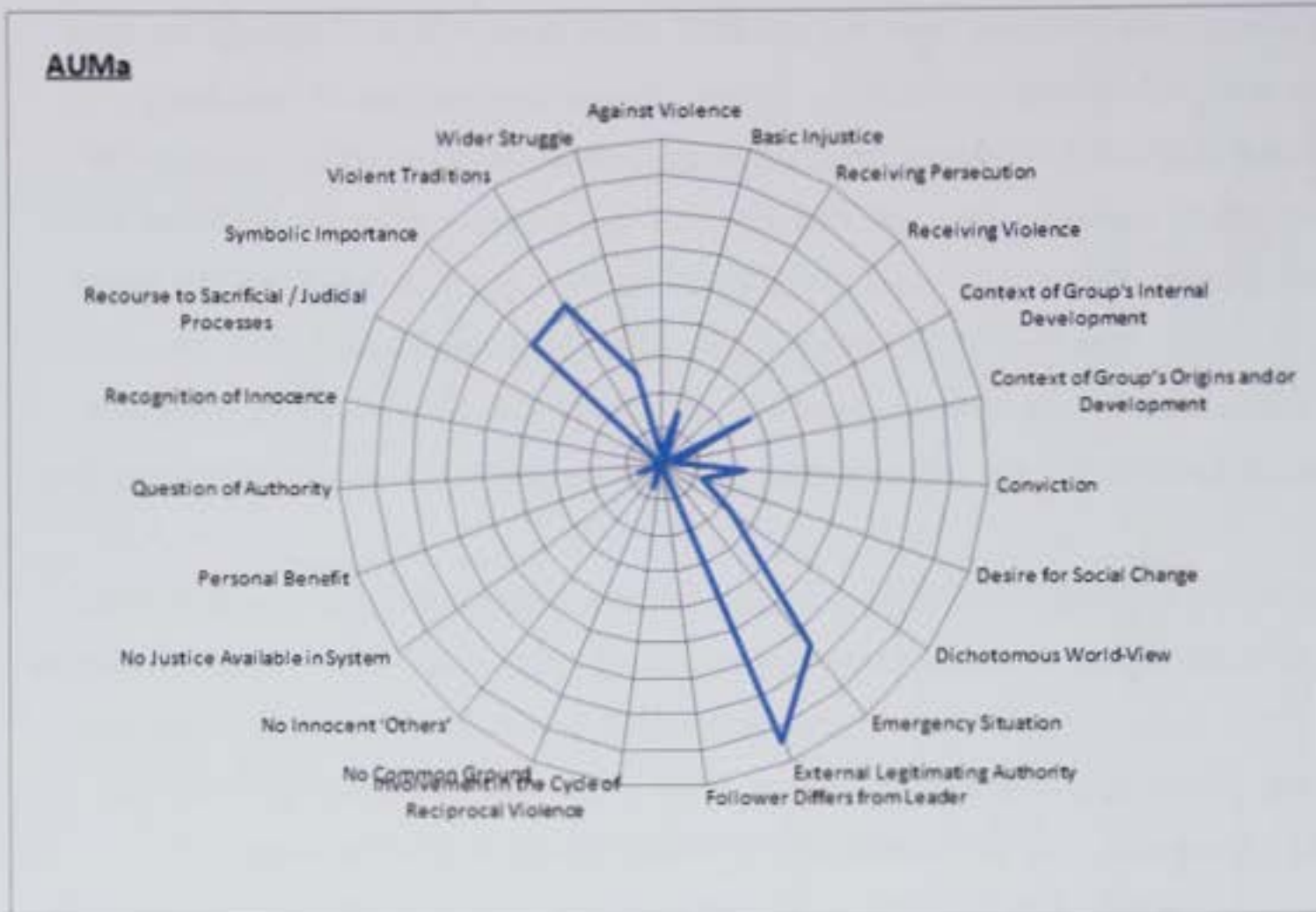


Figure 8.8 – AUMa radar chart

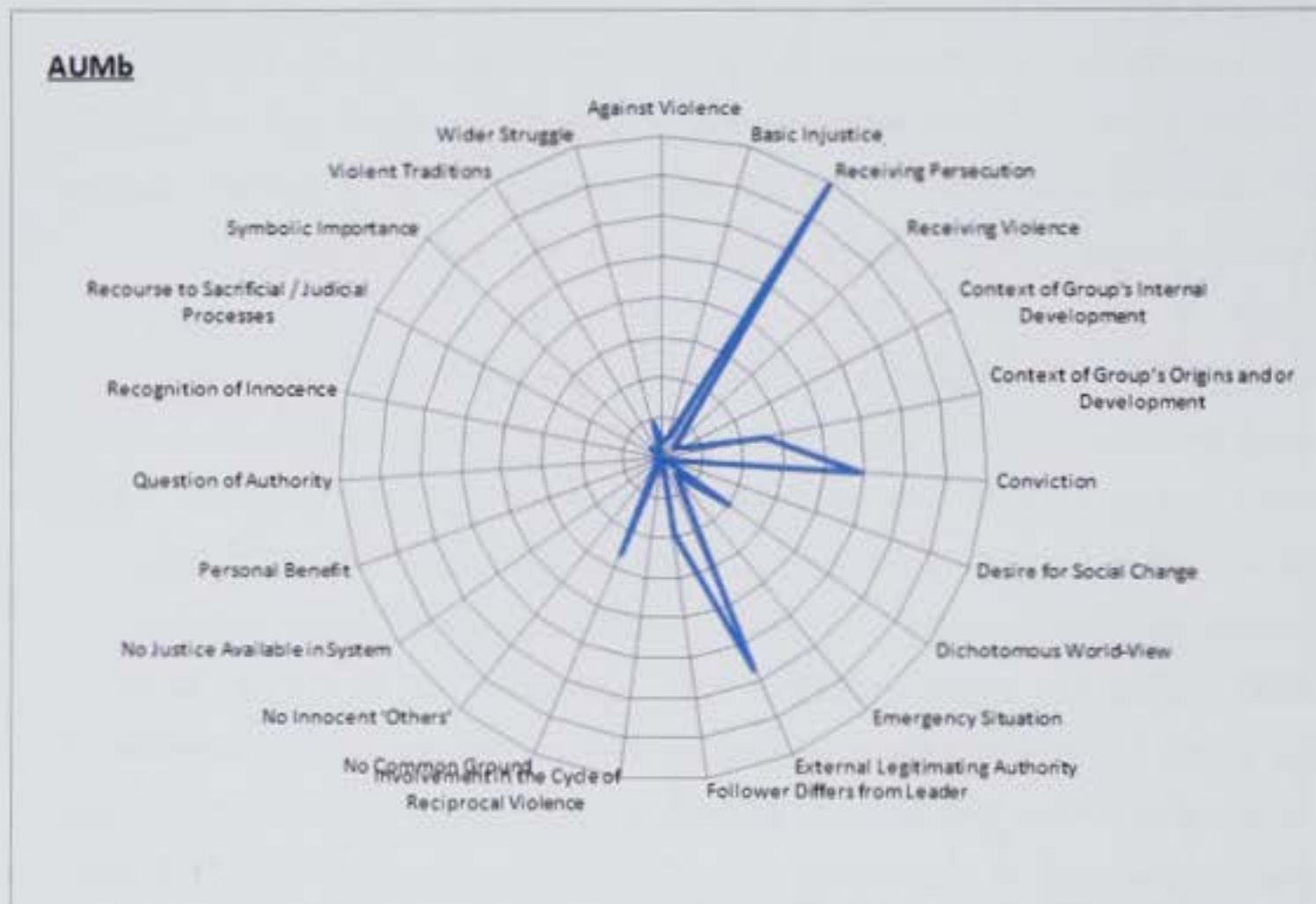


Figure 8.9 – AUMb radar chart

Unlike the RAF comparison, we can see quite clear differences between the Aum generations. Partly this is due to difference in sources of data (which I will discuss in the following chapter), where the data for AUMb was gathered mostly from

audio-visual sources as opposed to textual sources (which provided most of the AUMa data). Because of these differences in sources I do not want to make too much of the variation between the amounts of data that the markers gathered. For example, the *Basic Injustice* marker contained a large amount of data for AUMb relating to the persecution and, in some cases, violence that the members of Aum received (from members of the public, the media and law enforcement agencies). If we stripped that persecution out of the *Basic Injustice* category (an analysis I achieved by creating sub-codes of the *Basic Injustice* marker specifically to differentiate this data) then we would see that proportionally half as much remaining data was coded during the AUMb study as was coded during the AUMa study. In order to demonstrate this difference, I have separated out (from the *Basic Injustice* marker) the data relating to these two sub-codes of *Receiving Persecution* and *Receiving Violence* in the above charts (Figures 8.8 and 8.9). Of course, part of the *Basic Injustice* data for AUMa was related to their perceived treatment by the wider Japanese society, but by no means as much as the amount for AUMb.

It is within this qualitative analysis of the data that we start to see some useful findings. For the members in the post-sarin attack Aum (AUMb), there was still some concern about the apocalyptic predictions made by Asahara, although the sense of an emergency situation was much diminished from that felt before the sarin attack. There were no references to violent traditions within the group either. Both of these elements were reliant on the teachings of Asahara and the leadership, and their removal and the reasons for it were substantial factors in the increasing prevarication of the remaining members about these teachings.

It is in this area of doubt that we see some significant changes. Whilst the remaining members of Aum seemed to have a stronger sense of conviction, this was in part due to having remained in the group despite the persecution and public derision of their beliefs, and this refusal to leave Aum also boosted the sense of a lack of common ground. However, when analysing the data in these markers, we see bridges beginning to be built between Aum communes and the local communities, including one touching example of former anti-Aum protestors exchanging food and books with Aum renunciates (AUM9: 49:03.1–49:28.5; 1:07:42.1–1:07:49.2). While there is still strong evidence of a desire to maintain a separation from the outside world (which we would expect to see in a group where

members are cloistered together, violent or otherwise) and a lack of common ground, it is the exceptions to this which we did not see before the Tokyo attacks which confirm the move to non-violence.

Some of these findings are specific to the development of Aum Shinrikyo, which we might not expect to see in other groups which have moved from violence to non-violence but not had to renounce their leader or had such a public battering of their beliefs. However, the findings still reinforce the need to question the kind of data in the markers, in order to see the differences between violent and non-violent potentialities. With the Aum case we see that, as with the RAF, the non-violent stage suggests 'softer' boundaries, ones that allow for doubt, in areas where for the violent stages there was no such ambiguity.

This movement, seen by comparing one stage of the group with another, is where I suggest that close attention needs to be paid in order to assess the shifting of beliefs from violence to non-violence, and vice versa. Although I did not carry out the same generational analysis of the SNCC and Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan (in the former case because of a lack of primary data and in the latter case because there has not yet been a move to violence), we can see similar tendencies in some of the authoritative scholarship on these groups. Within the SNCC there was a gradual lessening of commitments to non-violence, and an increased discussion of trends that suggested a move to violence (for example the debate about the carrying of guns for self-protection (Sellers, 1990: 162)). Likewise, in Karagiannis and McCauley's (2006: 328-331) discussion mention is made of some of the criteria which could see Hizb ut-Tahrir (in Uzbekistan and internationally) make that move to violence, such as the appointment of a Caliph.

## **Conclusion**

During this research I have been exploring the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups. I have applied the matrix to several groups and in each chapter have analysed the data to explore some of the significant themes around this move.



In this chapter I have drawn the key themes together and evaluated what they contribute to understanding the move to violence. I demonstrated how an analysis of the data coded into the markers contributed to this understanding. I focused on the four markers into which most data was coded, but I also highlighted how all of the markers were important, even where little or no data was coded. Using Figure 8.1, I demonstrated how a comparison of the role of the sacred in each of the groups enables greater attentiveness to the differences and commonalities between religious and non-religious groups as well as those groups that have, or have not undertaken violent actions.

I highlighted how the semantics of messages was important in discerning a move from non-violence to violence – I expect to see greater use of violent imagery and language in a group that has strong potential to act violently. I also evaluated markers in which the presence of data did not necessarily confirm the move to violence, but which suggested a strong potential to do so.

I also demonstrated how the data presented through the application of the matrix could be mapped onto other areas which had not been covered by the statements of the group to-date (Table 8.2). By establishing the important markers on which to concentrate and which values, highlighted by the matrix, can be mapped onto other areas of potential conflict, I suggest that I have given a clear indication of how we might predict the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups. This is also demonstrated in the following table (Table 8.5) which lists the markers that contained significantly more data for the violent groups than the non-violent. The table also lists the markers which contained the most data, and in which we could see evidence of violent potential in the semantics of the messages. A brief summary of the relevant data is given for each marker, alongside a suggestion of the kind of indications that should be looked for when assessing the violent potentiality of all the groups.<sup>101</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Two, in the case of these indicators my aim is to make qualified generalisations rather than to assert watertight predictions. The markers did not contain similar amounts or kinds of data for all the violent groups,

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<sup>101</sup> In all of these markers, I would refer the reader back to the caveats included in the text, above. For example, that whilst NCG did not in and of itself suggest a violent potentiality, the non-violent groups did not stress this aspect as strongly in their statements as their violent counterparts.

so Table 8.5 suggests 'familial characteristics' which I maintain should be used as an ideal-type for future assessments of any move to violence.

Whilst I have highlighted the key points in the move to violence in this conclusion, I have, throughout all the chapters, reinforced the point that the context of the group, and the wider picture suggested by all the markers are vitally important to the proper functioning of the matrix.

With this in mind, it is important that I evaluate the application of the matrix in its entirety, a task I undertake in the following chapter.

	Marker	Percentage of Coded data in		Summary of significant coded data (with examples)	Indicators of violent potentiality
		Violent sets	Non-violent sets		
Certain at least 50% more violent data	Involvement in Cycle of Reciprocal Violence (ICRV)	3%	—	Contained significant data from ALQ and RAF1-3 that related to actions taken in response to perceived wrongs by their 'Other' (RAF13, RAF15)	Evidence of the need to respond to violent actions believed to have been taken against it - in this case could look for data in conjunction with the <i>Basic Injustice</i> marker. Might also be evidenced in clear awareness of past reciprocity in interactions between the group and its 'Other'
	No Common Ground (NCG)	4%	2%	Data demonstrated that avenues for dialogue were emphatically shut off (ALQ57) or also that followers removed themselves from situations where common ground could be explored (AUM93)	Data in this marker need not indicative of violent potentiality, but the majority of data coded did come from the violent groups. Look for the nature of the barriers erected between the group and its 'Others'. Have deliberate steps been taken to close down potential avenues for discussion, are the reasons for this premised on sharply conflicting values coupled with extreme and/or violent declarations (similar language to anger/violence expressed in <i>DWV</i> marker)
	No Innocent 'Others' (NIO)	2%	—	Evidence of data suggesting that all members of the 'Other' are at least guilty by association, even if they have not directly fought for the 'Other' (ALQ41, ALQ45)	Signs of a conflation of all actors perceived to be 'Other' - no distinction between active/inactive, combatant/non-combatant, etc
	Symbolic Importance (SI)	5%	1%	Data suggested violent symbolism employed to motivate and/or legitimate violent actions. For example, apocalyptic symbolism in Aum (AUM54) and warrior symbols in al Qaeda (ALQ11)	Presence of data more likely (but not necessary) for violent groups. Look specifically for those suggesting violent events and or causes. Will probably call on traditions and mythology highlighted in the <i>VT</i> marker, but will specifically use this to unite the community with consideration towards potential violent conflict
	Violent Traditions (VT)	9%	—	Captured significant data from the religious groups, but not so from the non-religious groups. Data captured related to foundational myths (AUM2, AUM146) and interpretations of instructional scripture (ALQ1, ALQ156)	The presence of violent traditions and imagery are good indicators of violent beliefs. In cases where this heritage might be shared with non-violent groups, look for violent interpretations of contentious teachings
Violent data clearly remarkably different	Basic Injustice (BI)	17%	29%	Perceived injustices which involve violence could, especially in consideration of the data in the ICRV marker, be seen as motivating violent action (ALQ70, RAF40)	Injustices which are linked to statements of required revenge ( <i>ICRV</i> marker), perhaps committed by evil 'Others' ( <i>DWV</i> marker) and/or as evidence of a wider struggle ( <i>WS</i> marker). Essentially, data in this marker should only be considered in relation to the suggested reaction to injustices
	Dichotomous World-View (DWV)	15%	14%	Evidence of perceived power imbalances reflected in where the lines drawn between the opposing sides of differing world-views. For example, against the U S (ALQ11, RAF14), Capitalism (RAF102) and Christianity (ALQ73)	Increasing levels of anger apparent in group's statements about the 'Other'. Less porous divide evidenced - check in conjunction with <i>No Common Ground</i> marker
	External Legitimizing Authority (ELA)	14%	12%	Uses of an authority to legitimate violence, as found in teachings of Asahara (AUM37), or interpretations of the will of Allah (ALQ66)	References to violent teachings or messages of any legitimating authority, or to violent interpretations of teachings. A violent theme in the language used, especially directed at an 'Other' are good indicators of violent beliefs that could motivate violent action
	Wider Struggle (WS)	9%	7%	Captures more normative data than the <i>Dichotomous World-View</i> marker, but one might expect to see similar statements. Identification of the 'Other' takes place as much on the basis of their opposition (or lack of support) for the group's values, as it does on any direct support or antipathy to the group (ALQ5). Themes of confrontation (RAF48, ALQ88, AUM111) and specifically violent confrontation were all clearly evidenced in the violent data	Understanding the values used to drive this Othering can help understand where flashpoints of violence could occur. This would need to take place in conjunction with other markers, but would provide useful data to help determine <i>where</i> violent action might take place, if it is suspected to do so. Look for evidence of severe tension or warnings of confrontation and see if these are framed using violent language

Table 8.5 – Important markers for highlighting potential to move to violence



## 9. Evaluation of The Matrix

### Introduction

Having evaluated some of the key themes within the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups, I now turn to evaluating the form and function of the matrix.

First, I will evaluate the markers. Using the list of markers, as it stood at the conclusion of my research, I will provide a brief summary of the kinds of data each captured and how this contributed to the overall picture. As already mentioned, this list should not be seen as definitive. I commenced my research with a list drawn up during the Home Office literature review (Knott *et al.* 2006) and adapted this iteratively during my subsequent research. While the present markers provide an informative and productive insight into the nature of the move to violence, I leave open the possibility that future research could add new markers to the list.

This possibility is discussed in the second section of the chapter, which looks at some broader comments about the matrix. These include issues surrounding interpreting the data the matrix produces, the nature of the source data it is reliant on, and the coding process, including the selection and use of the markers.

I will build on this evaluation in my concluding chapter, where I highlight the usefulness of the matrix. There, in addition to summarising some of the key themes in the move to violence, I will address questions about what new insight this model has contributed to the work already extant in the field, as well as considering the predictive potentiality of the model. I shall conclude by signalling some of the areas where the marker could be applied.

### Evaluation of the Markers

In this section I look at the kind of data coded into the markers, and how the markers 'performed', by which I mean what kind of analysis they aided and how

this fits into wider theoretical discussions. Five of the markers were investigated at length in the previous chapter: *Basic Injustice*, *Dichotomous World-View*, *External Legitimizing Authority*, *Violent Traditions* and *Wider Struggle*. I will therefore focus solely on their place within the broader analysis, and will not repeat a discussion of the kinds of data coded into these five.

Because this analysis of the markers can only be illuminated through examples from the current research, the examples will relate to the central research question of the move to violence. I will, however, avoid repetition of examples used in the previous chapter.

### *Against Violence*

#### Actual statement renouncing violence

This marker was introduced during the course of the research in response to some of the themes and data I was expecting to come out of the case studies on the non-violent groups. As the very short description of the marker suggests, it was intended to simply capture remarks renouncing violence, and was applied to all the case studies.

Not surprisingly, it did not capture much information from the violent groups. Some examples of where it did capture data came from the Aum Shinrikyo case study. For example, there were statements from members of Aum (after the gas attacks) reaffirming their beliefs in non-violence, although this should be put into the context of their wish to assert their distance from the violent actions of Aum, and of what they perceived as the likelihood of such events ever occurring (they wouldn't wish to be known as people who had known Aum was capable of violence). That said, Aum's leadership also made some statements (before the gas attacks) which suggested a clear line on non-violence (AUM97). This demonstrates that statements which run counter to the prevailing trends (and in this case to the reality of their actions) can also be captured by the markers. This does not diminish the functional usefulness of the marker, which should be considered in the context of the other markers and discussed in the analysis of the data. It also demonstrates the danger of pinning predictive statements onto too little evidence,

and throughout this analysis I will be reiterating the need to consider the model holistically and not with isolated reference to individual markers.

Overall, this marker was one constituted very specifically for the study at hand and would not necessarily be useful in studies into different topics. It was useful to focus on attitudes to non-violence within the groups. Understanding in what contexts and in relation to what issues the groups made these statements further illuminated the nature of their beliefs.

### *Basic Injustice*

A sense of some basic injustice, which is non-accidental (i.e., it expresses the core values, true nature of society and is irredeemable), and which reinforces the sense of opposition/dichotomy – ‘clash of worlds’

This marker was one of the top five markers in terms of the amount of data coded into it. In Chapter Eight I discussed the nature of the data it contained, and will not repeat that discussion here. However, it is worth recalling some of the information that can be derived from this marker.

Less data was coded into the marker from Aum Shinrikyo and Agonshu than the other groups. With this in mind, I suggest that this marker provides us with an indication of whether the group is a ‘protest group’, that is, whether their core aims set about to resolve a particular concern with the society they operate within.

Because so much data was coded into the marker, it could be argued that it would serve more purpose if disaggregated into smaller markers which could capture more specific trends. In the course of analysing the data for the case studies I did utilise some sub-categories. For example, I tried separating out cases of ‘receiving persecution’ from the broader *Basic Injustice* marker. However, this did not contribute any significant new findings, and the nature of the data was suitably different between the cases for the marker to remain in its broad form and also remain useful as a comparative tool to apply across all the cases. Within each case I was able to identify specific trends and compare these across the range of groups under study, as discussed in the previous chapter.



### *Context of Group's Internal Development*

Evidence of confrontation within the development of the group, either accidental or intentional.

After the first case study, which I undertook on Aum Shinrikyo using the list of markers largely suggested by Knott *et al.* (2006), I recognised the need to add several markers capturing statements relating to the context of the development of the group, both internal and external. This marker is one of those two new markers, and would be applicable to any study to which this matrix might be applied. The internal development of a group has a clear bearing on its beliefs and the nature of its interactions with wider society. In the Aum case study I drew attention to the accidental death of a renunciate, a death which came about due to the harsh (and some would argue, violent) practices that Aum required for its members, but which nevertheless had in itself a huge impact on the direction that Aum took in its broader use of violence.

Whether it is competition for leadership, re-assessments of theological teachings, or accidental developments, the internal trajectory of a group is an important part of the overall data and needs to be properly mapped and discussed to understand their beliefs and actions. In the cases studied for this project, most of the data (in this marker) related to developments which were not accidental, and rather which could be seen as expected developments consistent with the earlier beliefs and statements of the groups. That the majority of this data suggested a trajectory of development consistent with earlier beliefs lends confidence to the predictive potential of findings based on the analysis of the groups. What is important to remember, however, is that these developments were not assured, nor were they planned. In all cases there were particular moments that seem notably significant to the progression of the group. It is generally only possible to know which were the more significant with the benefit of hindsight, but the close analysis of all events provides an insight into the beliefs of the group, and even its possible reaction to certain developments.

### *Context of Group's Origins/Development*

Evidence of confrontation within the wider society within which the group originated and with which it interacted.

The influence of the wider society within which the group develops is of similar significance to the internal development of the group. Differing historical and cultural pressures can be seen in some of the statements a group makes. Some of these are highlighted by the *Violent Traditions* marker, which I will discuss in more detail later on. However, the *Context of Group's Origins/Development* marker is more focused on the interactions between the group and its wider society (as opposed to the broader historical influence – although in some cases groups do claim a common heritage with others that have been around for long enough that this history impacts on the present, and is claimed as part of the confrontation between the group and the wider society).<sup>102</sup>

The data collected by the marker reflects these themes. There is some discussion of the historical context within the al Qaeda case study alongside the more recent context of their actions (for example, in relation to historical and current Western involvement in Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan). This kind of discussion is also found in statements by Aum Shinrikyo, the SNCC, the Red Army Faction and Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan. Some of these instances overlap with data captured by the *Basic Injustice* marker, but for this marker I am specifically interested in their influence on how the group developed as opposed to claims of injustices *per se*. That the group saw fit to make these statements demonstrates that they were both aware of these events and that the events had some influence on their thinking (even if the group was not conscious of what this influence was). The nature of these influences has an impact on how the group develops, whether in terms of the increasing withdrawal from society due to media-bashing (Aum Shinrikyo) or the funding and creation of a guerrilla movement to resist non-Islamic invaders (al Qaeda). The role of external events on the group is a key consideration in

<sup>102</sup> For example, see the development of Agonshu in Chapter Seven, where they claimed a clear lineage back to the historical Buddha. Additionally, al Qaeda and Hizb ut-Tahrir also claim a common heritage with the early, and apparently more pious, Muslims, although they do also recognise a group identity distinct from that early period.

understanding any move to violence as well as in the development of a group's beliefs. This marker has a central role in the matrix regardless of the question it is used to investigate, although the limitations of its predictive contributions are recognised: in hindsight it is easy to explain how an external event changed a group; however, predicting which events might take place *and* how they might affect a group can be significantly more difficult.

### *Conviction*

A deep and incontestable sense of conviction.

A straight-forward marker, the idea of a strong sense of conviction can be a useful indicator in understanding the strength of a group's identity and hold over its members. Difficulties can arise (and did during the research) in that, while many actions can suggest conviction (for instance leaving one's family to become a renunciate), they are not necessarily repeated in the written statements of the groups. Therefore, in the absence of clear actions by a group the data for this marker might not be forthcoming.

A further consideration (also made in regard to some of the other markers) is that it is difficult to suggest a sense of scale to the level of conviction, especially a scale that could be used comparatively across groups. In the absence of an objective scale of conviction, I have applied common-sense notions. For example, joining a movement by paying money to them could be seen as an indicator of a deep sense of conviction in one group (as in some cases in Aum Shinrikyo), as much as leaving 'normal' society to join a group which is actively pursued by law enforcement agencies in another (as witnessed in the RAF). In both cases there might later be prevarication by members, or a repudiation of previously strongly-held ideas (as indeed there were in the above two examples). However, this does not challenge the incontestability of the sense of conviction at the time it was demonstrated. The matrix allows for the analysis of statements made at a particular point in time, and that such conviction was felt at that time is at least as significant as subsequent changes. Additionally, I made sure that dates (where available) and the wider context of the marked texts were made clear in the analysis, so that the development of beliefs, and my analysis of them, could be confirmed and placed in a context of later variation of convictions, where appropriate.



### *Desire for Social Change*

The intended aim of actions for social change, either in a specific area or globally (this does not mean the end of the world, but could mean global conversion to a particular faith or way of ruling.)

Only a little data was coded into this marker from the al Qaeda study, but a fairly consistent amount was coded in the other case studies. The definition was broad enough to encapsulate the aims and desires of all of the groups, as it allowed for social change through both spiritual and material means. These distinctions are shown through analysis of the data in the marker: for example the RAF wished to change the imperialist (and largely U.S.) control of modern society, whereas Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan wished to counter the immoral (and largely U.S.) influence on Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In both of these cases the means to achieving this change was this-worldly: through political pressure and force. However, in some cases the change was to be brought about through other-worldly means: Agonshu believed that, through the observance of certain spiritual practices, the world could become a happier place.

The marker drew attention to these differences, and this is important for future applications of the matrix. However, having completed the analysis of the data, I can also see that there is room for a potential disaggregation of this marker, to differentiate between a desire for social change that would be forced on others (for the greater good, for example) and a desire for social change that would be implemented with the cooperation of others (non-members of the group). This would, for example, have led to a more nuanced analysis of the UHiT case study, where some stages of their ideology related to bottom-up social change (i.e. conversion). From a more general perspective, it might also have provided a potentially useful and clear distinction between the analyses of the violent and the non-violent groups. While my intention was to allow for markers that were broad enough to provide data for an informative comparative analysis, the further distinction of data in this marker may have yielded more focused results.

## *Dichotomous World-View*

An oppositional and dichotomous world-view (cosmology).

This marker was discussed in Chapter Eight as one of the top five in terms of quantity of coded data. One of the interesting features of this data was what it revealed about the way in which groups were seen to co-opt outsiders into their own world-view. This demonstrated that, whilst they saw their ideological boundaries as impermeable, they were satisfied that their interpretation of some other groups' beliefs demonstrated that their net of belonging could be cast wider.

As with the *Basic Injustice* marker, this marker captured a lot of information, but aside from the tone of the language used, there was no clear and easy distinction between the differing groups I studied in terms of their relationship to violence. Furthermore, as with most of the markers the statements highlighted in this one demonstrated a mixed approach to the conscious and unconscious creation of boundaries. Statements in some cases clearly denoted a 'them' and 'us' distinction, but the marker also captured statements which betrayed this view without suggesting a conscious intention to do so. Because this marker dealt with one of the basic devices for constructing a group identity and also because it captured a significant range of information, I would suggest that it would be useful to include it in future applications of the matrix.

## *Emergency Situation*

The field of action takes on the character of an emergency situation, through real or a conflation of symbolic and real pressures, leading to the suspension of normal moral codes which regulate and limit action and the justification of emergency forms of action.

The sense of an emergency situation in some groups that had acted violently became apparent in the literature review that preceded this research (Knott *et al.* 2006). In many ways, it corresponds particularly well to those groups with millenarian concerns, such as Aum Shinrikyo. However, the definition of the marker was broad enough to allow it to relate to those cases where, for example, an understanding of being at war could lead to the suspension of normal moral codes. It is this suspension, along with the justification of emergency forms of action ('all

is fair in love and war'), that this marker was particularly interested in capturing. In addition, statements relating to the emergency pressures that led to such moral developments contributed to this analysis.

Interestingly, all the groups, violent and non-violent, made some statements implying a sense of emergency. The nature of these varied from apocalyptic concerns (voiced by Aum Shinrikyo and Agonshu) to statements suggesting a time of war (al Qaeda, Red Army Faction). There were several statements by SNCC, couched in the language of revolution, that were relevant, relating to the desire for their struggle to achieve its aims immediately. However, in this instance, there was little indication that this urgency validated any call for violent action. Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan referenced a wider emergency situation within the context of the Western fight against Islam, but also included concerns about an impending national financial disaster.

The marker captured information from all these groups because it did not specify that violent action would take place, only action outside of the 'normal' moral spectrum. In this instance, deliberately flaunting laws in protests at restaurant counters (e.g. SNCC) is as valid an example as the kidnapping of a prominent capitalist (e.g. RAF). Whilst this marker may perhaps be less relevant in future uses of the matrix, it was undoubtedly essential to my analysis of the groups for this study, helping me to frame exceptional periods of action.

### *External Legitimizing Authority*

Worldview justified by appeal to legitimating authority external to/transcending the situation (God, religious scriptures, traditions, fundamental human rights or values).

This marker also contained a significant amount of data, but only for the religious groups. The absence of data collected for the secular groups is in itself significant, and was discussed in depth in Chapter Eight. Despite this one-sided contribution to the analysis, the marker nevertheless provided a rich vein of information. It also provided a good example of the strength of the model in providing data in segments that were easily comparable across sources. In this case, whilst I expected to see all groups making clear references to external legitimating



authorities of some form or other, this marker made clear that some did not, and allowed me to compare the examples across the groups. Such findings (even in those cases where data was absent) allow for greater focus on questions raised, and further our understanding of some of the differences highlighted.

During the course of the research I specifically re-worded the definition of this marker to its present form to enable it to capture information from non-religious as well as religious groups. Whilst this did not yield the results I expected, I would maintain that this approach should be retained in future applications of the matrix, as it allows for a fair comparison of the data that is captured.

### *Followers Differ from Leader*

Where a follower consciously (or otherwise) expresses an idea that differs from (or disagrees with) a leader. To show where beliefs expressed by leaders are not necessarily all taken on by followers.

I will discuss some of the findings from this marker later, as it raised some interesting points about what kinds of data the matrix captured, and the relevance of who authored this data. Therefore, I will limit my discussion here to two brief comments.

This marker was introduced to capture my concerns that the matrix was too heavily skewed towards an un-critical acceptance of the idea that the beliefs expressed in statements – normally by leaders of the movements – were wholly accepted by their followers. This was an important point to consider as the acceptance and indeed interpretation of beliefs in a group can vary from member to member. If I had not examined this area then the matrix could be said to be less effective due to its leader-bias.

My assessment of this marker is that it did not contribute much to the matrix overall. The principle behind it might be better served by labelling the data with indicators to signal whether the statements were made by followers, leaders, heretics, and so on. Statements by these groupings could then be compared, across all the markers in the matrix, in order to see where divergent opinions arise. This

method would also allow for the capture of differences in beliefs, over time, by the same persons.

### *Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence*

A clear awareness of the need and/or desire to frame actions within a discourse of 'revenge'.

I developed this marker during the process of coding the groups' statements in response to my concern that little significant data was being coded into the *Recourse to Sacrificial/Judicial Processes* marker. By re-framing the approach to this Girardian concept from the opposite point of view I aimed to collect data relevant to it, to ensure that I could still utilise and investigate this interesting theoretical suggestion.

Significant amounts of data were coded for both the al Qaeda and Red Army Faction case studies. Both of these groups demonstrated a conscious and deliberate intention to act in revenge for perceived ills. In addition, and in support of Girard's thesis, both also perceived that actions made in response by the 'Other' constituted additional injustices that necessitated further reprisals. This marker is, therefore, a good example of how a specific theoretical construct can be brought to bear on the nature of the matrix.

Utilising the matrix I have been able to draw out data that supports Girard's (2005: 27) contention that "reprisal can thus follow reprisal without any true conclusion ever being reached." This marker is a useful addition to the matrix for capturing this information in respect of the move to violence. In other applications, other problem-specific theoretical constructs could be equally valid.

### *No Common Ground*

An absence of common ground with 'Others' allowing meaningful dialogue with other world views.

The lack of a common ground, of common values on which to base meaningful dialogue, was shown to varying degrees in all of the violent groups in this study. The marker captured statements which both exhorted followers to maintain at

least an indifference to 'Others' and an opposition to their ideologies. It also highlighted illustrative statements of how this separation worked, for example through testimonials (in the Aum case study) and recounting of martyr's lives (al Qaeda).

Just as important as these practical examples of separation were the ideological boundaries which were reinforced by these statements, and the explicit references to the gulf in moral values. The absence of common ground denoted in these statements is a useful indication of the beliefs of the groups, and highlights points of conflict between these and opposing ideologies.

This marker fulfils an important role in capturing and mapping the sacred boundaries of a group. However, although it was a marker significantly populated by data from groups that had moved to violence, it may have a more limited function when applied to research on other topics. It might nevertheless merit inclusion given the quality of data it can capture.

### *No Innocent 'Others'*

A sense that all members of the 'Other' group are involved and implicated in the opposition to the good, and so legitimate targets: there is no 'innocence'.

This marker was suggested in the list presented as part of the Home Office literature review (Knott *et al.* 2006). However, it collected relatively little information. Most of its data came from al Qaeda, who made statements relating to the legitimization of attacks even against non-combatants. The problem perhaps lay with the use of 'innocence' in the marker. For example, al Qaeda had (it believed) good grounds for seeing non-combatant American civilians, because they had voted for the President (Clinton), as implicated in the President's decision to attack Muslim lands (ALQ5: 70). This highlights that 'innocence' is very much a subjective definition.

The idea that those people outside of the group are in opposition to it seemed generally accepted in all the groups I studied. The more pertinent question is whether this opposition took violent forms or not (and did or did not deserve violent



retribution). Additionally, the marker suggests a distinction between combatants and non-combatants that is perhaps more recognised by international law and actors than non-state agitators.

In addition to the above qualifications, this marker also highlighted a difference between the data from the statements and the actions of the group. For example, whilst the actions of the RAF and Aum did not suggest that they recognised potential innocence in members of the 'Other', I found little evidence of this attitude in their beliefs. This raises an important point about the use of the matrix. Account should be taken of the wider context of the beliefs, and any analysis should be undertaken with as much background information as can reasonably be gathered. Whilst this helps in addressing potential gaps in the data, it also points to the difficulty of operationalising lessons from the matrix to future events. For example, it would have been difficult to predict the indiscriminate nature of Aum's actions in Matsumoto in 1994, when they sprayed sarin gas at residential buildings. There was no evidence of a disregard for 'innocent others' in their statements that would have been suggestive of violence on this scale. So, whilst the matrix utilises belief statements to understand how they might motivate violent action, it can only make general predictions on the basis of the available data.

#### *No Justice Available in System*

Statement claiming that the group has no recourse to judicial protection

This marker was introduced to capture data related to complaints about the inadequacy or absence of judicial protection or support vis-à-vis the group's grievances. Very little data was coded into it (for the RAF and al Qaeda case studies), and the data that was coded was of little significance. On the basis of this, I would not use this marker in future applications of the matrix.

#### *Personal Benefit*

Explicit statement of benefits for followers – such as heightened physical or mental abilities, salvation, sense of righteousness, etc.

Overall, little data was coded into this marker, but what data there was suggested some interesting differences between the groups as well as some of the potential motivations for joining them. For example, for al Qaeda members there was the potential of rewards in the after-life, for Aum members the benefits of enhanced physical abilities (e.g. to withstand certain kinds of attacks) in this life, and for Agonshu there were benefits in this life (better promotion, results in exams, and so on) which were linked to the influence of ancestral spirits.

These personal benefits were benign enough, but they provided useful information about the focus of the groups and some of the enticements for would-be members. In this light, I would recommend that this marker could provide interesting information (if in small quantities) for future studies.

### *Question of Authority*

Dispute within an ideology over who has the authoritative view of its historical and contemporary practice.

This marker drew attention to areas of difference with outsiders to the group who nevertheless claimed to belong to the same ideological heritage. It was particularly useful in mapping the sacred boundaries of beliefs, because it highlighted nuanced areas of ideological dispute as understood by the group itself. In discussing how they saw themselves as different to other groups within the 'same' tradition, these statements gave much greater detail about the nature of their beliefs and in particular about those which they felt were particularly significant.

For example, in the al Qaeda case study, this marker captured information relating to interpretation of holy texts and influential teachers that suggested quite specific interpretations of the concept of jihad. In Agonshu's case, it provided evidence on the areas where they felt they encapsulated the 'true' Buddhism, in contrast to the many other Buddhist ideologies available in Japan.

Many examples, such as in the Red Army Faction case study, suggested a difference based on whether the ideology legitimated action or not, with the RAF dismissive of those who preferred 'to talk the talk', but lacked the commitment to the ideology to act on their beliefs. This data points to information found within

the *Conviction* marker, but was also captured here as it raised questions about whether a group's actions were consistent with their ideology (the RAF would say that in the case of those who did not join them, the answer was 'no').

This was a constructive marker to include in the matrix, and would be a useful addition in other potential uses of the matrix where it might also demonstrate nuances within ideological traditions.

### *Recognition of Innocence*

Recognition that there ARE innocent 'Others', and that they should not be targeted.

I created this marker and applied it to all the groups, violent and non-violent, in response to the kind of data the *No Innocent 'Others'* marker set out to capture. In this case I felt it was also important to provide an example of how I could capture exactly the opposite position, and whether I could track a change in position in some of the groups. As it was, this marker captured very little information. The analysis was still valuable, but in future applications the marker might more usefully be merged with the *No Innocent 'Others'* marker to form a frame focusing on questions of innocence, or levels of guilt by association. There remains a need to concentrate on this area in research addressing the move to violence but the adjustment, as suggested above, from the present focus could lead to a more constructive contribution to the output of the matrix.

### *Recourse to Sacrificial/Judicial Processes*

Evidence of an attempt to conclude a cycle of violence through a sacrificial/judicial act.

This marker was specifically worded to capture data from both sets of groups in support of the Girardian thesis that sacrifice (and in its modern form, justice) is an attempt to halt the cycle of reciprocal violence.<sup>103</sup> In particular I expected to

<sup>103</sup> It could be argued that sacrifice is not just (or even at all) about concluding a cycle of violence. However, Girard (2005: 280-1) is clear that in his understanding, which I have applied here, even ritual sacrifice ultimately fulfils this function.



capture data which would help understand the group's relationship to the legal and judicial apparatus of the country it operated in.

The vast majority of data captured related to the SNCC. This was not surprising given that it was a protest movement, and one that either operated within the law, or within a deliberately defined and limited opposition to the law. None of the other groups met both these criteria.

The lack of information captured by this marker suggested that either the groups being studied did not regard the legal processes as relevant (which is the most likely explanation for most of the groups) or that they did not see a necessity to challenge the law (e.g. in the case of Agonshu, which was not a protest group). In cases where the former explanation holds true, this could be understood partly through reference to data captured by the *Emergency Situation* marker, and perhaps more strongly through the *No Common Ground* marker.

The lack of evidence in this case does not necessarily disprove the Girardian thesis, as in all bar the Agonshu case there was the potential for a cycle of reciprocal violence. In terms of the wider value to the matrix, the marker could benefit from a slight change in focus to address the group's involvement (or attempted involvement) in *externally* validated legal/judicial processes. This would capture attempts (or refusals) to be involved in methods to solve their complaints or protests outside of their own legitimated rules. Removing the reference to 'sacrifice' would clarify this aim, but need not lead to the Girardian reading of the data being discarded. Whilst this shift in focus would help to highlight the data relating to engagement with external processes, it could still capture the possibility of internally validated attempts to halt violence. My reason for suggesting a shift of focus to externally validated efforts is that none of the groups showed attempts to embrace internal measures to halt violence and it seems unlikely that they would. However, as in the case of SNCC, attempts to use external measures show a clear desire to frame action in a context which does not lead to an uncontrollable escalation of violence (even if that was not always the reality – e.g. police brutality towards protestors).

## *Symbolic Importance*

A sense of symbolic importance given to the present action.

This marker highlighted a significant amount of detail from across the violent groups, but not so much from the non-violent groups. Despite this difference, it should still play an important role in any future use of the matrix. Relevant data in this study related to actions undertaken by the group as well as their 'Other', with the symbolic importance of their actions varying from the invocation of action on behalf of symbols such as 'the proletariat' (Red Army Faction) to the wider struggle that sit-ins in lunch counters symbolised (SNCC).

In some cases large sections of the coded statements were written using symbolic language, accessing symbols that the author's target audience would understand and which would carry an emotive (and in some cases also spiritual) significance. The al Qaeda statements were good evidence of this, with references to sacred places, imagery such as false maidenhood, and past conflicts such as the Crusades. In other cases, such as those statements made by Aum Shinrikyo, I found examples where the importance and symbolic meaning was not assumed to be readily understood by the audience, and so the interpretation was provided along with the reference, for example in the use of Nostradamus's prophecies.

In all cases, these symbols invoked powerful emotional responses from other believers, and their use served to unify the identity and purpose of the group. By focusing a marker on these symbols I was able to draw attention to some of the key areas of beliefs, and by trying to understand the intentions behind these references, I could better allude to the violent potentiality of the groups. Furthermore, by focusing on the symbolic element, this marker draws attention to the importance of the role of collective emotion in religious beliefs (in motivating action) as emphasised in Durkheim's work.

Identifying and signifying the symbols of a group are of central importance to understanding the sacred landscape within which they operate. To do so requires placing these statements within the broader context of the particular discourse, as well as the history and broader events within which they are made. The example of this marker, perhaps more clearly than others, demonstrates the context-centric

utilisation of the matrix, as the symbols themselves are difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend out of context.

### *Violent Traditions*

Evidence of specifically violent traits/influences (imagery/myth) within the traditions/beliefs of the group.

The nature of the data coded into the *Violent Traditions* marker was discussed in the previous chapter, so I will limit my comment here to its function in any further use of the matrix.

The marker was clearly important for this particular research question, as the role of violent traditions was something that became increasingly pertinent during my case studies. Whilst the formation of this marker might change for future uses of the matrix, I would argue that a marker relating to the traditions of the group is an essential frame with which to focus attention on an important aspect of the groups' beliefs.

To a large extent, this is captured through the use of the *Context of Group's Origins/Development* marker, although any analysis of this would need to attend to the subtle difference between the group's reference to the origins of its context, and the use of some of these origins as formative imagery or myth in relation to their beliefs.

Overall, this marker provided an essential function in understanding the move to violence and, in a broader context, is a good example of how the matrix can (and needs to) accommodate markers which can focus on very specific elements of a group's statements.



## Wider Struggle

The present condition/field of action is situated within a wider struggle infused with normative value (good vs. evil; right vs. wrong).

As discussed in the previous chapter, this marker contained a lot of statements relating to the wider struggle, with particular reference to the United States. The SNCC was the exception to this rule, but, as I mentioned, this could well be because it was situated within America, and so did not identify with the U.S. as an actor in a wider struggle (although there was some evidence of this in regard to the Vietnam War).

The significant amount of data relating to the close correlation between the idea of a wider struggle infused with normative value, and the common positioning of the U.S. as an 'evil' and powerful, actor in this struggle is an important finding. As the dominant world-power since World War II, and the only superpower since the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the U.S. has enjoyed a position of unparalleled influence on the world stage. Closely coupled with U.S. ideals have been economic theories of capitalism. The pervasive influence of this economic model, whether or not coupled with military force, has led many people to accuse the U.S. of expansionist policies. So I would suggest that the findings of this marker point to the groups I studied as reacting against the dominant symbol in an uneven power struggle.

This resonates with the understanding of many scholars, for instance Almond *et al.* (2003) and other scholars working in *The Fundamentalism Project*, who believed that many 'fundamentalist' groups were reacting against modernity. Where the U.S. is seen (rightly or wrongly) as guiding the modern project (synonymous with Western 'progress') then it appears that the findings from my research suggest a similar reaction against modernity.

However, understanding contemporary violence as a reaction to modernity is an oversimplification of a move to violence that encompasses and is driven by a number of factors. For example, members of the Red Army Faction were often at the vanguard of modern ideals, for example in their discussion of women's rights (RAF156). In spite of this, their violent acts against U.S. army bases were still primarily about their disagreement with U.S. foreign policy and its support of

capitalist economic policy, and they identified the U.S. as their primary enemy (after the West German government). Similar issues with capitalism and U.S. foreign policy are found in the statements by al Qaeda, UHiT and to much lesser extents by the SNCC and Aum Shinrikyo. For Agonshu, the problem of a wider struggle is also seen as one relating to contemporary society eroding traditional ethics and morality, but they make no linkage between this erosion and any particular state or ideology.

This brief discussion demonstrates how the matrix, and this marker in particular, can bring the comparison of data from a number of different groups into a discussion of a popular or influential theory. The role of modernity in the move to violence is more complex than can be assumed from a small number of case studies, however this marker allows us to bring a very specific set of data to bear on this discussion, and to help determine its validity.

### *Re-coding the markers*

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the potential issues about the application of the matrix is the accuracy of any future replication of the study. Any researcher will bring their own questions and issues to their study of this subject and, as suggested above, I have also allowed for new markers to be added to the above list in studies of other research topics. The matrix, and the way in which I have used it, suggests a method of analysis utilising an understanding of the sacred and the role it plays in society.

In order to aid in the valid replication of this topic, I have set out the theory of the sacred I have utilised, and explained the process of applying the matrix. For those researchers seeking to replicate this study, I have also provided titles, short explanations, longer explanations and evaluations for each of the markers. As such, I would expect any replication of the research to take into account the evaluation of the markers that I have just completed, and adjust or add to these where necessary.

## Evaluation of the Matrix

I will now turn to four areas of discussion that raised important questions about the functioning of the matrix. The first relates to analysing the coded data, including dealing with the absence of data and also some discussion of the relative merits of qualitative versus quantitative analysis. I will then look at questions surrounding the reliability of the ideologies, before moving onto the process of choosing and defining the markers.

### *Analysis of the data*

The first point to raise regarding the analysis of the data is the difference in how this was undertaken in relation to the textual and audio-visual sources. As mentioned in Chapter Two, three films were included amongst the sources for my study. One was what can best be described as a 'recruitment video' for al Qaeda. Featuring speeches by bin Laden and other ideologues it was a rich source of direct statements about beliefs. The other two films were documentaries about Aum Shinrikyo/Aleph, in the months and years after the Tokyo sarin gas attacks. An important point for consideration here is that in these cases some of the markers captured not direct statements made by the believers, but data that was evident from non-verbal sources in the film. For example, I was able to watch scenes of devotion to Asahara as believers prayed, even though this was not a direct statement made by the believer. I treated this data in exactly the same way as the written statements, as I feel it nevertheless contributed to understanding the beliefs of the group.

Throughout this study, analysis has been carried out on data that I coded from these textual and audio-visual statements, within the context of broader studies of the groups in question. However, in some cases the markers contained little or no data. Because of the comparative nature of the matrix this focused my attention on why there might be no data captured. In some cases, there would be quite straightforward explanations, but in others this absence raised interesting questions. One of these was discussed in the case study on the Red Army Faction in which I pointed to the lack of data for the *External Legitimizing Authority* marker, and then discussed some theoretical explanations focusing on the question of



'externality' in legitimation (see Chapter Eight). The matrix also focused attention on coded data in such a way that I could see interesting differences between religious and secular groups, and from this think about how such differences might have occurred. In highlighting themes in the data in these ways, the matrix aided a rich analysis of the groups and topics that I investigated.

### *Reliability of ideology*

In the course of this thesis I have made several references to the fluidity of beliefs, and how beliefs change – for individuals and for groups – over the course of time. If I had applied the matrix to the beliefs of the yoga study group at the time when Aum Shinrikyo started out, I could not have predicted the possible dénouement to their activities 11 years later. The matrix can only be applied to beliefs at particular points in time, and this in itself raises questions about the reliability of using ideology as the subject of the matrix's study.

These beliefs are not fixed, but are situated in relation to the wider world of the believer, and can change over time whilst still being regarded as immutable. The believer does not necessarily recognise what an outsider might see as change. This arises because there is a thread of narrative consistency to the beliefs (for example, see my discussion of *poa* in the case study on Aum Shinrikyo). In this case, the problem of the death of a renunciate was assimilated into a new variation of the group's beliefs, within the extant explanatory framework. In my use of the matrix, I have attempted to account for this wider narrative within my analysis of the markers, by setting them in the context of a broader picture of beliefs.

However, this still does not change the fact that, by taking my source material out of the here and now of their inception, I have fixed them in time, and so divorced them from their original chronological place in the ideological development of the group. This is a necessary part of the research process, but at the same time I have needed to be sensitive to the ongoing development of the believer and the group, and work this into my analysis. I have accounted for this by carefully labelling the source material, attaching categories such as dates of authorship, and also accounting for the relative position of the statements in relation to the development of the group. For example, in the RAF case study, I separated the

data into three distinct stages of the movement. These labels allow future researchers to question my intra-group analysis and the corresponding statements I have made about the trajectory and change in the beliefs of the groups.

Finally, there is the thorny issue of whether the followers agree with everything that the leaders say. Within the Aum Shinrikyo case study, I identified data from followers of Aum, in distinction to that directly from, or sanctioned by, the leadership. Some of this data demonstrated, at best, a relaxation of the ideology laid out by the leadership, and some was clearly contradictory to it. For example, within an Aum Retreat I could see 'Hello Kitty' rosaries, and one renunciate had been doing origami, which suggested an attachment to 'things' in contradistinction to Aum's teachings (AUM9: 11:40.6-12:36.8; 25:34.0-27:03.8).<sup>104</sup> Even more strongly, in one interview a believer states that no-one really cared about Nostradamus's prophecies. This clearly contradicted the many references made to them in official Aum publications (AUM49: 221).<sup>105</sup>

My solution to this problem was to create a marker which captured differences between leader's and follower's ideologies – as this also provides interesting data on the ideological coherence of the group (and raises questions about the potential conviction of its followers). But it is not always possible to discern where these differences lie, so I also labelled all the source material with who authored the statements (where known). This allowed me to analyse the statements by different authors, and to look for divergent beliefs.

However, it is also the case that statements from believers are harder to come by than statements from the leadership.<sup>106</sup> In the absence of 'follower' data, there are some reasonable, common-sense assumptions that we can make about the correlation between the two sets of beliefs (in the absence of data pointing to large-scale defections, etc.) If the group is growing, or maintaining a sizeable number of followers, then it is reasonable to assume that the followers agree with the leaders,

<sup>104</sup> 'Hello Kitty' is a trademarked cartoon cat which features on a number of products, from sleeping bags to pens. Japanese in origin, it does have international popularity.

<sup>105</sup> The context of this statement is important – this interview, though still with a believer (not an ex-believer) took place after the gas attacks, when it might be more convenient to be seen to question some aspects of the group's beliefs.

<sup>106</sup> Because of the stakes involved in the various struggles, and in claiming membership of most of the groups, it is not surprising that I was unable to find a lot of dissenting views. I deliberately excluded ex-believers/members as they, by definition, are likely to have clear agendas about groups' beliefs. Still, the data I did capture (primarily from Aum Shinrikyo) suggested that differences were by degree, not absolute.



at least in the main. All of the groups had defectors, which suggests some level of internal dissent, however we might again reasonably assume that the majority of those remaining were agreeable with the orthodox position. The relationship between believers and leaders can be as fluid as the content of the beliefs themselves but, through the careful labelling of sources and data I was able to ensure that I could account for and investigate these shifting positions.

### Selection/judging process

In the discussion on methodology (Chapter Two) I brought up the iterative nature of the markers and how they were constructed. I think it is instructive, at this stage, to demonstrate how this worked in practice, with a couple of examples.

Figure 9.1 gives an example of how some of the markers were amended during the process of conducting the case studies.

Old		How changed		New	
Cosmic struggle	The present condition/field of action is situated in the cosmic struggle between good and evil.	→	Re-defined	→	Wider struggle The present condition/field of action is situated within a wider struggle imbued with normative value (good vs. evil, right vs. wrong).
Symbolic importance	A sense of urgency and symbolic import is given to action in the present.	→	Disaggregated and re-defined	→	Symbolic importance A sense of symbolic importance given to the present action
Emergency situation	The field of present action takes on the character of an emergency situation, in which normal moral codes regulating and limiting action are suspended and emergency forms of action legitimated or even demanded.	→	Re-defined	→	Emergency situation The field of action takes on the character of an emergency situation, through real or a conflation of symbolic and real pressures, leading to the suspension of normal moral codes which regulate and limit action and the justification of emergency forms of action.
God's actors	A conflation of the fields of human and divine agency (this is God's action) which further removes action from normal moral and legal restraints.	→	Merged and re-defined	→	

**Figure 9.1 – Re-definition of markers**

When these markers were re-defined, I then re-visited all of the source material and re-coded it with these 'new' markers in mind. This ensured that all of the material was coded consistently. One example is my re-definition of the *Symbolic Importance* marker which was disaggregated, as shown in Figure 9.1. In its original form, the marker captured a significant amount of information which was too broad for useful analysis. By disaggregating it into two markers, I was able to collect more focused information on these areas, which provided me with a better basis from which to compare the findings between the different groups.

By making these definitions clear and available to the reader, it is my intention that future researchers could add to, or further modify these markers. The



structure of the matrix is not fossilised, indeed one of its strengths lies in the flexibility of the markers to be reappraised for new (or old) subjects.

### *Evaluation of generalisation*

The flexibility of the markers in this regard is one issue which might bring into question the validity of generalised statements made on the basis of the application of the matrix. In this study I have, as already discussed, taken pains to provide a transparent account of the processes involved in the construction and application of the matrix.

Notwithstanding these efforts there are broader concerns, as mentioned in Chapter Two, about the generalisability of findings based on qualitative research (e.g. Bruce, 2009). I have taken care to ensure that, where I have generalised findings from my research (as in the previous chapter) I have coupled these with caveats about potential limitations. Whilst I accept that qualitative research can lead to more limited generalised findings than quantitative research, I suggest that it is possible and desirable to generalise from my research. Furthermore, I suggest that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to undertake quantitative research in this field that would meet rigorous statistical standards in relation to randomisation and adequate sample size. In light of this, I propose that my *moderatum* generalisations (Williams, 2000) provide a useful and necessary function in understanding recognisable features of the role of the sacred in modern life. If future applications of the matrix are undertaken with the same rigour, then there is no reason why valid generalisations could not be made on other subjects.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have evaluated and discussed the utility of the matrix within this study, whilst also focusing on its potential for future research. I will now turn to some concluding comments regarding this and make some recommendations arising from my research on the move to violence.

## 10. Conclusion

### Introduction

In the Introductory chapter I set out my aims for this research:

- to understand the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups;
- to define an analytical model for mapping instances of the sacred in society.

The second of these aims was developed as it became clear that I needed to operationalise a concept of the sacred to explore the move to violence. In order to meet these aims I set out a number of objectives:

- To provide a case study based analysis of statements (and other primary material) from selected groups, with a particular focus on issues of collective belief and the move to violence;
- In light of the current literature and case studies, to present a matrix of causal markers suggestive of the move to violence apparent in the relevant cases;
- To provide a theoretical explanation of the markers and how these are determined by belief and lead to violent potentialities;
- To produce a model – the matrix – which could be applicable to further studies, both within the present field (of violence and religion) and in the broader subject areas of the Sociology of Religion and Religious Studies.
- To develop the matrix as a tool for use outside of academia, by governments, law-enforcement agencies and other organisations

In this final chapter, I will summarise some of the key findings from the preceding chapters, which demonstrate how I met the above aims and objectives. I will conclude with some observations about the relevance of this research to the field of

violence and religion, to the wider study of religious and non-religious groups in society, and to some suggestions for future research.

I will start by highlighting my findings in relation to the move to violence, addressing the significant markers and the potential for predictive statements. I will then turn to some policy suggestions made in light of these findings, before considering more broadly what this research has brought to the study of violence and religion, and what marks it out from similar studies in the field.

My concluding remarks will address the future development of the matrix, including its utility in operationalising a concept of the sacred in relation to areas of sociological interest beyond religion and violence, and potential areas for future research.

## **Key Findings in the Move to Violence**

In my conclusion to Chapter Eight, evaluating my findings on the move to violence, I presented a table listing the key markers that contained data which could signal a move to violence (Table 8.5). These markers were separated into those wherein the presence of data suggested a potential move, and those which contained significant amounts of data and where the semantics of this data could be suggestive of a move.

In highlighting these sets of markers, I generalised from the characteristics of the groups I studied to suggest that, if we see these characteristics in other groups, we might assume that they too have violent beliefs that could lead to violent action. These characteristics are ideal-types of the beliefs of violent groups. In Table 8.4, I also showed how the language of violent groups, used in expressing these beliefs, differed from that of non-violent groups.

In both these cases my research led to clear findings. In Table 8.2, I demonstrated how we might extrapolate from values expressed by a group in one situation to how they might react in different circumstances. This involved taking these values out of the context in which they were originally expressed and applying them to a hypothetical state of affairs. This useful application of the matrix has limitations:



as Bruce (2005: 8) suggests, for cases of comparison it relies on the caveat of "other things being equal", and to the law of unintended consequences.

The findings (as highlighted in Table 8.5) suggest some policy recommendations for the prevention of violent actions arising from 'violent' beliefs:

- (1) Tackle the basic injustices (shown in the *BI* marker);
- (2) Encourage integration across the conflicting world-views (*DWV*);
- (3) De-mystify traditions and myths which contain violent origins or lessons (*VT*). This could be done through sponsoring alternative traditions or interpretations;
- (4) Understand the boundaries around non-negotiable beliefs, and watch for likely 'incursions'.

### (1) Tackle the basic injustices

The idea that British foreign policy has had a causal effect on Islamist violence is a controversial assertion that has been supported through my research. In the groups that I have studied, the data contained in the *Basic Injustice* marker showed the issues that drove the groups' engagement with the world and some of the central assumptions in their negotiation with their 'Other'. In the data in my al Qaeda case study were direct references to the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan (for example, ALQ137; ALQ70) and the feeling that these were part of a broader conspiracy by al Qaeda's 'Other': in this case the West (e.g., ALQ76: 146; ALQ31: 135). Countering the effect of these policy decisions could take a couple of approaches: first, this could involve removing the cause of the basic injustice, which in the above example would be the withdrawal of Western troops from Iraq and Afghanistan; or second, countering the idea that this is an injustice, which could be achieved through education and legitimation of the action in the idiom of, and with reference to, the language and values of al Qaeda. In this case the latter option is, given questions about the legitimacy of the Iraq War, extremely unlikely to succeed. However, I include it as an option to highlight that the data coded into the *Basic Injustice* marker is a *belief* about an injustice and, as such, in any attempt to negate the effects of these propositional attitudes, it is as valid to change the belief as it is to change its cause.

*(2) Encourage integration across the conflicting world-views*

Seeking to explore and highlight values which bridge the dichotomous world-view would help to create common ground for discussion. For example, the sanctity of life and the right to live without fear of impingement through the actions of the 'Other' are commonly held values regardless of the system. More specific (and limited) examples exist around areas of morality. Whilst the differences often prove to be non-negotiable, this should not discourage a 'long game' highlighting and promoting similarities rather than differences.

*(3) De-mystify traditions and myths which contain violent origins or lessons*

This recommendation could appear controversial – consider the difficulties and criticisms surrounding the creation of a moderate/extremist Islam dichotomy<sup>107</sup> – and runs the risk of legitimising an 'extreme' form of Islam, (by essentialising a 'moderate' form (Alatas, 2005: 43-4; Spalek and Lambert, 2008: 265-6)). Rather than targeting religions – "a unified system of beliefs" (Durkheim, 2001: 46) – I have focused on what these beliefs are relative to: the sacred. In so doing I am neither concerned with moderate nor extreme forms of any religion, no matter how formulated, but am instead interested in instances of the sacred which have the potential to lead to violence. These instances, which share characteristics with the ideal-types I suggested from my studies (e.g. Table 8.5), could suggest a move to violence and may – but not necessarily – be found within forms of violent extremism. In targeting just violent translations of a particular myth, for example, it could be possible to undermine this element of a move to violence.

An example of the above has been seen in the practice of some groups, such as the Brixton Salafist community, to counter violent interpretations of Islamist ideology. This community, whilst holding beliefs that are popularly recognised as 'fundamental', have nevertheless demonstrated that these are unlikely to lead to a

<sup>107</sup> Haddad and Golson (2007) and Geaves (2004) discuss the move to create a 'moderate' Islam and some of the problems with this. Some of the problems are highlighted by an insider's account about who exactly could be considered 'moderate' (Saeed, 2004).

move to violence (Lambert, 2008). This undermines the argument for limiting government or wider public support only for certain proscribed 'moderate' groups.

*(4) Understand the boundaries around non-negotiable beliefs, and watch for likely 'incursions'*

All the above recommendations relate back to the manner in which the sacred beliefs of groups can be transgressed, and ways of mitigating these transgressions. By applying the matrix it is possible to learn about the non-negotiable values of groups and to map these out, as I have done in the case studies in this research. Doing so facilitates an understanding of where possible conflicts might arise between the sacred values of groups and their 'Others'.

The above are brief examples of how these recommendations could be put into practice. Through the application of the matrix I have operationalised the sacred and, I argue, demonstrated its value for exploring violence in religious and non-religious groups.

## **How the Matrix differs from other Analyses**

The idea of the sacred, as suggested through my introduction of the theorists in Chapter Three, is not a new concept. However, by introducing the concept of the sacred to this research area and utilising it in association with the matrix, I have developed a new tool for analysing the move to violence.

In Chapter Three I highlighted some of the problems with contemporary accounts of terrorism which either ignored religion, or which over-emphasised the role that it played. The former assumed that religion could not be seen to play a causative role in violence (for example, Ranstorp, 2007b; Wilkinson, 2007), and the latter essentialised certain understandings of religion in ways that undermined what such accounts could usefully tell us about the move to violence (for example, Juergensmeyer, 2003). I am not the first person to recognise these difficulties: see, for example, the comments by the editors of a special issue of *Numen* (2005). Bruce (2005), another academic who was aware of these pitfalls, successfully navigated



them in his research on Northern Irish Protestant fundamentalists and violent action. However, his research ultimately tells us little about either where the similarities and differences were between Ian Paisley's church and the terrorist loyalist organisations with which Paisley had occasionally shared a platform or, more importantly, how and why these differences existed.

Precisely because it does not start with an assumption of religious characteristics but focuses instead on the sacred, my research helps us seek out commonalities between these kinds of groups (such as Paisley's church and loyalist terrorists) and understand why, although they share aims, they use different methods to obtain them. By concentrating on the sacred values of both groups I can present richer analyses of this problem than research which, whilst sensitive to concerns of essentialising religion or imagining it has little benefit, still struggles to explain why one group may be violent and another not.

Whilst I have used Bruce as a good example of an awareness of these twin issues, I should point out that it is not his intention to explain why one group is violent and the other is not. My argument, though, is that his approach *could not* explain this. His thesis, that Protestantism is less likely than Islam to lead to violence because it is more tolerant of opposing views, neglects both those Protestant sects which are not tolerant of opposing views, for example, the Reformation Lutheran Church (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 19-43),<sup>108</sup> and the open-minded and fair behaviour of many Muslims in Islamic countries and Muslim diasporas throughout the ages. By focusing on how and where groups defend non-negotiable values, I avoid conclusions based on broad religious labels.

Another aspect of my research which develops new insights is the focus on the collective construction of the sacred. As I outlined in Chapter Three, building from the ideas of neo-Durkheimian theorists I argued that instances of the sacred are collective boundaries, which reflect collective realities. In using the sacred to map out the contours of a group's beliefs I have illuminated group dynamics in a way that has predictive potential in relation to the move to violence.

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<sup>108</sup> The founder of this church has acted as a spokesperson for activists who have murdered abortion-clinic staff and has participated in some violent actions against clinics himself (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 21-2).

By group dynamics, I mean the way that a group interacts with the world around it – its collective reality – and also how we could predict that it will interact in certain situations, based on the beliefs it has expressed about its reality. This focus leads to two further benefits. The first, which I will explore in my final section, is that this method of examining the role of the sacred in groups hints at broader explanations of global group dynamics. The second, which I discuss here, is that it could also have something useful to say about the move of individuals to violence.

Predicting which individuals make the transition from non-violent to violent action is difficult. Whilst some accounts hint at a clear transition from believer to violent believer (for example, Malik, 2007), it is clear that there are problems with these accounts. Githens-Mazer and Lambert (2010) argue that theories which suggest that such predictions can be based on ideology ignore evidence which suggests otherwise, and they cite the example (amongst others) of Rahman Adam (a.k.a. Anthony Garcia) who was convicted of conspiring to cause explosions in the U.K. in 2007 (BBC, 2007). Whilst popular accounts focused on his ideology as the cause for his violent behaviour, they failed to account for his older brother (Lamine Adam), who was a member of the same movements and also, Githens-Mazer and Lambert (2010: 893-4) assert, more committed to the ideologies of the movement than Rahman.

I agree with Githens-Mazer and Lambert's summation of the problem. Just because I have suggested that a group's beliefs have violent potentialities does not necessarily entail that all followers of those beliefs will act violently. However, I do argue, through my research, that the move to violence is a collective move and, as such, individual members of the group are strongly influenced by it. This influence occurs through the impact that the collective has on the social side of the homo-duplex (Durkheim, 2001: 18): whilst we may, as individuals, choose to act, the choices are presented through socially constructed frames. For example, whilst the Adam brothers may have chosen differently, the decisions of both were still framed within the context of the values and beliefs of the group of which they were a part.

Therefore, if an individual is already part of a group which sees the world in dichotomous terms, feels wronged by injustices which are felt to be part of a wider struggle, and which can be placed within the context of violent interpretations of

teachings which legitimate violent reprisals, then it is not such a big step for that individual to make the move to violence. The important point to remember is that not all believers will act on their beliefs in the same way. Some may be hangers-on, some may be deeply committed. Some may have the opportunity to act violently and others may not – there is room for other variables and serendipity to play their part.

However, whilst it is difficult to make judgement calls about individuals, I suggest that the matrix focuses attention on aspects of ideology – in this case, sites of potential sacred conflict – which can suggest violent potentialities. This information is better than no information, although further data on individuals and their beliefs about these sacred boundaries (i.e. how much they differ from the group's beliefs) could aid more accurate inductions. For example, whilst the Adam brothers both subscribed to the same ideology, we could assume that there were some aspects about the beliefs of Rahman where he believed more strongly about the need or legitimacy for violent action than his brother. Of course, we could also assume that it was due to serendipity that Rahman was offered the opportunity that his brother was not, or indeed that he was seen as an easier target for involvement in such an action. Even with these caveats as possible variables, there still remains an underlying motivation, based on certain reactions to the transgression of sacred beliefs. No-one can account for all the variables, but that shouldn't stop us from doing the best job we can.

There is an additional concern about this suggestion – and that is about the ethical considerations of the application of the matrix. I suggest that the matrix could be used to assess the beliefs of groups and, through an operationalisation of the sacred, make *moderatum* predictions about their violent potentiality. Used unscrupulously, the matrix might be more specific than profiling based on race or essentialised ideological constructs, but could still discriminate against people who would never have acted violently. Barker (1995) talks of the difficulty of using knowledge that we, as academics, have constructed and applying that to situations outside of the 'Ivory Tower'. Whilst acknowledging the dangers and pitfalls she also asks whether we might not also have a duty to do so.

In considering my answer to this, I would point out that the matrix is a value-neutral model that could be applied to good effect as much as to discriminatory



ends. Because it does not, in its essence, pertain to morally questionable ends, I believe that it is right to suggest its usage beyond the walls of academia, and to trust that both the intention and the rigour of any applications are sincere and morally useful.

## Future Applications

With these ethical considerations in mind, I now turn to my last section, in which I give an example of an application of the matrix with contemporary policy implications as well as its potential within academic research.

The policy applications seem, to a large extent, to be reasonably clear. Statements from groups can be coded into the markers and the resultant data analysed for signs of violent potentiality.

By utilising the sacred (through the application of the matrix) one can build a picture of what, in particular, groups count as their non-negotiable boundaries. For example, the English Defence League's (EDL) mission statement (EDL: 2011) states that it is concerned about threats to human rights, democracy, public education and English tradition, from "religiously-inspired intolerance and barbarity that are thriving amongst certain sections of the Muslim population in Britain". By focusing on the sacred boundaries within these themes, we can both better understand the potential sites of conflict and, where appropriate, apply the recommendations I listed above to disabuse and avert the reasons for, and threat of, potential conflict.

This example can also be used to highlight the global dynamics of the sacred that the matrix explores. For, whilst the EDL situates its values within a discourse of 'Englishness', it is clear that similar values exist in movements in other countries. This can be seen in the EDL support of the Dutch politician, Geert Wilders, when he screened his film in the House of Lords and their initial invitation to the American, Pastor Terry Jones, to speak at a rally (BBC, 2010a; 2010b). The sacred is not limited by national boundaries, and focusing on instances of the sacred helps explain the cohesiveness of groups organised on trans-national lines, even via the internet and in small groups which have not had physical contact with each other.

Further research into the how the sacred could be seen to explain and underpin global group dynamics would be an interesting and potentially significant development of this project. Likewise, the matrix can also be used to explore subjects, such as religious norms (Francis and Knott, 2011), to see their general influence upon and interaction within the wider societies of which they are a part. Understanding the sacred boundaries of groups need not be about understanding violence, but could instead be about discerning a greater insight into what is important to groups and our fellow citizens.

I contend that the matrix can be applied to any situation where there is a desire to know more about what really matters to groups: the nature and relation of their sacred beliefs. I suggest that in mapping the contours of the sacred in relation to the groups in this study, I have been able to shed light on the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups, and that in doing so I have also developed a model which can have a broader application both for the academic study of groups and the creation of useful knowledge further afield.

## Appendix 1 – Markers

Name	Abbr.	Definition
Against Violence	AV	Actual statement renouncing violence
Basic Injustice	BI	A sense of some basic injustice, which is non-accidental (i.e., it expresses the core values, true nature of society and is irredeemable), and which reinforces the sense of opposition/dichotomy – ‘clash of worlds’
Context of Group's Internal Development	CGID	Evidence of confrontation within the development of the group, either accidental or intentional
Context of Group's Origins/Development	CGO D	Evidence of confrontation within the wider society within which the group originated and with which it interacted
Conviction	CON	A deep and incontestable sense of conviction
Desire for Social Change	DSC	The intended aim of actions for social change, either in a specific area or globally (this does not mean the end of the world, but could mean global conversion to a particular faith or way of ruling.)
Dichotomous World-View	DWV	An oppositional and dichotomous world-view (cosmology)
Emergency Situation	ES	The field of action takes on the character of an emergency situation, through real or a conflation of symbolic and real pressures, leading to the suspension of normal moral codes which regulate and limit action and the justification of emergency forms of action
External Legitimizing Authority	ELA	Worldview justified by appeal to legitimating authority external to/transcending the situation (God, religious scriptures, traditions, fundamental human rights or values)
Followers Differ from Leader	FDL	Where a follower consciously (or otherwise) expresses an idea that differs from a leader (or disagrees with). To show where beliefs expressed by leaders are not necessarily all taken on by followers.
Involvement in the Cycle of Reciprocal Violence	ICRV	A clear awareness of the need and/or desire to frame actions within a discourse of ‘revenge’
No Common Ground	NCG	An absence of common ground with ‘Others’ allowing meaningful dialogue with other world views
No Innocent ‘Others’	NIO	A sense that all members of the ‘Other’ group are involved and implicated in the opposition to the good, and so legitimate targets: there is no ‘innocence’



<i>Name</i>	<i>Abbr.</i>	<i>Definition</i>
No Justice Available in System	NJA	Statement claiming that the group has no recourse to judicial protection
Personal Benefit	PB	Explicit statement of benefits for followers – such as heightened physical or mental abilities, salvation, sense of righteousness, etc.
Question of Authority	QA	Dispute within an ideology over who has the authoritative view of its historical and contemporary practice
Recognition of Innocence	RI	Recognition that there ARE innocent 'Others', and that they should not be targeted
Recourse to Sacrificial / Judicial Processes	RCJP	Evidence of an attempt to conclude a cycle of violence through a sacrificial/judicial act
Symbolic Importance	SI	A sense of symbolic importance given to the present action
Violent Traditions	VT	Evidence of specifically violent traits/influences (imagery/myth) within the traditions/beliefs of the group
Wider Struggle	WS	The present condition/field of action is situated within a wider struggle infused with normative value (good vs. evil; right vs. wrong).

## Appendix 2 – Group Names and Subsets

Groups	Abbr. in text <sup>1</sup>	Abbr. in References <sup>2</sup>	Sub-set labels	Violent / Non-violent	Notes
Aum Shinrikyo	Aum	AUM	AUMa	V	Data collected from sources created before the Tokyo underground attacks (March 1995). Discussed in case study in Chapter 4.
			AUMb	NV	Data collected from after the attacks. Effectively March 1995 onwards. Data used in comparison for discussion on move to/from violence in Chapter 8.
al Qaeda	alQ	ALQ	No-subsets	V	Data from statements from al Qaeda, including ideologues. Primarily attributed to bin Laden, but also statements from al Zawahiri and others linked to the organisation. Discussed in case study in Chapter 5.
Red Army Faction	RAF	RAF	pRAF	NV	Data from Ulrike Meinhof's columns in <i>konkret</i> . Upto May 1970. Included in discussion on move to/from violence in Chapter 8.
			RAF1	V	The founder generation of the RAF. From May 1970 to October 1977. As with the other two generations of the RAF, discussed in case study in Chapter 6 and in the discussion on the move to/from violence in Chapter 8.
			RAF2	V	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation of RAF activists. Covers from June 1972 to October 1977, which overlaps chronologically with the founder generation who were in prison during this period.
			RAF3	V	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation. From June 1979 to April 1998.
Agonshu	AGS	AGS	No-subsets	NV	Data from official sources of movement, gathered in 2009. Discussed in case study on non-violent groups in Chapter 7.
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee	SNCC	SNCC		NV	Data collected from sources created 1960-66. Discussed in case study on non-violent groups in Chapter 7.
Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan	UHIT	UHIT		NV	Data collected just from Uzbeki authored material, 1999-2003. Discussed in case study on non-violent groups in Chapter 7.

<sup>1,2</sup> For example, when writing about Aum Shinrikyo I often refer to 'Aum'. When citing a statement by Aum Shinrikyo (that I have coded) I reference using (AUM###). See the table in the Bibliography for the list of coded statements.

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No.	Title	Author (if known)	Source	pp./url
ALQ1	911 Spiritual Manual		Kippenberg & Seidensticker, 2006	pp. 11-18
AUM2	A Crisis in Japan in 1998	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 273
AGS3	A Japanese famous actress named Miyako Chocho		Wayback Machine, 2011	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233647/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_02.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233647/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_02.html</a>
RAF4	A Man with Good Manners	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 121-129
ALQ5	A Muslim Bomb	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 65-94
AUM6	A Religion Helps Start War	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 251
ALQ7	A Saudi Oppositionists View	Mohammad Al-Massari	Calvert, 2008	pp. 180-185
AUM8	A.Title1		Mori, 1998	
AUM9	A2		Mori, 2001	
AGS10	Agon Shus Goals		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_06.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_06.html</a>
ALQ11	Alq_LoC		al Qaeda, 2001a	
AUM12	Armageddon Will Begin in 1997	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 263
RAF13	Assassination of Attorney General Buba		Moncourt & Smith, 2009	pp. 490-492
RAF14	Attack on General Haig		Agustin, 2010	<a href="http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019790625%20EN.pdf">http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019790625%20EN.pdf</a>
RAF15	Attack on Judge Buddenberg		Moncourt & Smith, 2010	<a href="http://www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72-05-20.html">www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72-05-20.html</a>
RAF16	Attack on the Heidelberg Headquarters		Agustin, 2010	<a href="http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019720524%20EN.pdf">http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019720524%20EN.pdf</a>
RAF17	Attack on the Springer Building		Moncourt & Smith, 2009	p. 177
RAF18	Attacks in Augsburg and Munich		Moncourt & Smith, 2010	<a href="http://www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72-05-16.html">www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72-05-16.html</a>



No.	Title	Author (if known)	Source	pp./url
AUM19	Aum Shinrikyo Will Absorb Freemasonry	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 299
AUM20	Aum Shinrikyo Will Be the Center of the World	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 297
AGS21	Authentic Buddhas and Idols		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_02.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_02.html</a>
AGS22	Authentic Buddhas Relics in Japan for the First Time		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_05.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_05.html</a>
AGS23	Authentic Buddhas Relics in Japan for the Second Time		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_06.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_06.html</a>
SNCC24	Bigger Than a Hamburger		Columbia University, 2009	<a href="http://amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_04_010_baker_hamburger.pdf">.amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_04_010_baker_hamburger.pdf</a>
RAF25	Build the Red Army		Moncourt & Smith, 2010	<a href="http://www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/70_06_05.php">www.germanguerilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/70_06_05.php</a>
AUM26	Christs Coming	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 288
RAF27	Columnism	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 249-254
ALQ28	Complains about the U.S. and U.N. and warns that U.S. U.N. attacks divide the world	Osama bin Laden	Parker & Bridges, 2008	pp. 195-204
AGS29	Conquer Yourself		Wayback Machine, 2011	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233531/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_01.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233531/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_01.html</a>
RAF30	Counter violence	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 234-238
ALQ31	Crusader Wars	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 133-138
ALQ32	Depose the Tyrants	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 245-275
RAF33	Deutschland deutschland among other things	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 150-152
ALQ34	Disappointment of Pakistan's shifted support to the United States and the United Kingdom	Osama bin Laden	Parker & Bridges, 2008	pp. 194-195
RAF35	Dresden	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 134-137

No.	Title	Author (if known)	Source	pp./url
RAF36	Everybody talks about the weather	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 187-189
AUM37	Excerpted from Twilight Zone magazine Jan 1998	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 262
RAF38	False Consciousness	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 190-208
RAF39	File Number XY	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 224-228
RAF40	For the victory of the People of Vietnam		Moncourt & Smith, 2009	p. 174
ALQ41	Four Years After 9 11	Ayman al-Zawahiri	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 175-189
SNCC42	Freedom Summer Recollections		University of Southern Mississippi, 2003	<a href="http://anna.lib.usm.edu/%7Espcol/crda/shaw/ts001.htm">http://anna.lib.usm.edu/%7Espcol/crda/shaw/ts001.htm</a>
RAF43	From protest to resistance	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 239-243
AGS44	From Religious Activities to Social Activities		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_07.htm">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_07.htm</a>
ALQ45	Full text of videotape of Mohammad Sidique Khan	Mohammad Sidique Khan	Khan, 2005	
AUM46	Fumihiro Joyu	Fumihiro Joyu	Asahara, 1988	pp. 154-158
RAF47	Germany without Kennedy	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 153-156
RAF48	Gudrin Ensslin commando		Agustin, 2010	<a href="http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810915_01%20EN.pdf">http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810915_01%20EN.pdf</a>
AUM49	Hiroyuki Kano	Hiroyuki Kano	Murakami, 2000	pp. 217-228
RAF50	Hitler within you	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 138-143
RAF51	Human Dignity is Violable	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 144-149
RAF52	Hunger Strike Declaration 1981		Agustin, 2010	<a href="http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810206_01%20EN.pdf">http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810206_01%20EN.pdf</a>
ALQ53	I Am Among the Muslim Masses	Ayman al-Zawahiri	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 226-228
AUM54	In 1997 the Christian Era Will End	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 291
ALQ55	Interview published in Ummat Karachi newspaper		Parker & Bridges, 2008	pp. 121-128

No.	Title	Author (if known)	Source	pp./url
AGS56	Interview with Taiwanese reporters		Wayback Machine, 2011	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050223234037/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks03_01.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20050223234037/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks03_01.html</a>
ALQ57	Israel, Oil, and Iraq	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 209-212
AUM58	Japan Will Become a Scorched Wasteland	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 248
UHiT59	Jewish Rule is Forbidden to Muslims		Frank & Mamatov, 2006	pp. 266-270
ALQ60	Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders	Osama bin Laden	Kepel & Milelli, 2008	pp. 53-56
ALQ61	Jihad in Islam	Syed Abul ala Maudidi	Laqueur, 2004	pp. 398-400
ALQ62	Jihad, Martyrdom, and the Killing of Innocents	Ayman al-Zawahiri	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 137-71
SNCC63	John Lewis Speech		Columbia University, 2009	<a href="http://www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_06_010_lewis_marchwashington.pdf">www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_06_010_lewis_marchwashington.pdf</a>
RAF64	Jurgen Bartsch and society	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 179-183
SNCC65	Letter from a Mississippi Jail		Columbia University, 2009	<a href="http://www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_04_020_moses_jail.pdf">www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_04_020_moses_jail.pdf</a>
ALQ66	Manchester Manual		al Qaeda, 2001b	
SNCC67	Memorandum on the SNCC Mississippi Summer Project		University of Southern Mississippi, 2003	<a href="http://anna.lib.usm.edu/%7Espcol/crda/ellin/ellin062.html">http://anna.lib.usm.edu/%7Espcol/crda/ellin/ellin062.html</a>
ALQ68	Message to the Allies of the United States	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 230-232
ALQ69	Message to the Muslims of Iraq I	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 242-249
ALQ70	Message to the Muslims of Iraq II	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 250-255
AUM71	Mitsuharu Inaba	Mitsuharu Inaba	Murakami, 2000	pp. 239-250
AUM72	Miyuka Kanda	Miyuka Kanda	Murakami, 2000	pp. 261-271
ALQ73	Moderate Islam is a Prostration to the West	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 17-62
RAF74	Napalm and pudding	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 229-233
RAF75	New German Ghetto Show	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 110-120



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ALQ76	Nineteen Students	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 145-157
ALQ77	Oath to America	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 192-195
AUM78	Oil Will Trigger Armageddon	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 270
RAF79	On the topic of July 20	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 130-133
AUM80	Only the Truth Can Save	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 299
RAF81	Open letter to Farah Diba	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 171-177
ALQ82	Peace Treaty Offer to the Europeans	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 233-236
ALQ83	Physical Fitness of the Mujahid	Yusuf al-Ayiri	Calvert, 2008	pp. 240-243
SNCC84	Position Paper On Vietnam		Sixties Project, 2010	<a href="http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_VN.html">www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_VN.html</a>
SNCC85	Position Paper The Basis of Black Power		Sixties Project, 2010	<a href="http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_black_power.html">www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_black_power.html</a>
SNCC86	Position Paper Women in the Movement		Sixties Project, 2010	<a href="http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_women.html">www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_women.html</a>
RAF87	Regarding the bomb threats against Stuttgart		Moncourt & Smith, 2009	pp. 181-182
ALQ88	Resist the New Rome	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 212-232
AUM89	Ritsuko Sato	Ritsuko Sato	Asahara, 1988	pp. 113-115
AGS90	Sacred Relics Capable of Manifesting Miracles		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_03.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_03.html</a>
RAF91	Setting fire to department stores	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 244-248
RAF92	Shadows of the Summit	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 101-109
AUM93	Shigeo Sugimoto	Shigeo Sugimoto	Asahara, 1988	pp. 201-206
RAF94	Sigurd Debus Commando		Agustin, 2010	<a href="http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810831%20EN.pdf">http://labourhistory.net/raf/documents/en/0019810831%20EN.pdf</a>
AUM95	Six Attainers of Final Enlightenment	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 293
SNCC96	Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Founding Statement		Sixties Project, 2010	<a href="http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_founding.html">www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_founding.html</a>

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AUM97	Supreme Initiation The 6th Speech	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1988	pp. 87-94
AUM98	Survivors Will Be Selected by the Power of Karma	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 278
ALQ99	Terror for Terror	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 106-129
AGS100	The actor who had the leading role in the Superman movies turning into a true super man		Wayback Machine, 2011	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233735/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_03.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233735/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks01_03.html</a>
AUM101	The Birth of Superhumans	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 293
RAF102	The Black September Action in Munich	Ulrike Meinhof	Moncourt & Smith, 2010	<a href="http://www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72_11.php">www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72_11.php</a>
AGS103	The Buddhas Seven Systems and Thirty Seven Practices		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_05.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_05.html</a>
AUM104	The Collapse of China	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 271
AUM105	The Conflict Between Christianity and Buddhism	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	pp. 306-307
AUM106	The Development of a Superior Form of Energy	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 290
AUM107	The Disciples of the Christ	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 294
AUM108	The End of England	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 273
ALQ109	The Example of Vietnam	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 139-144
ALQ110	The Invasion of Arabia	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 15-19
AUM111	The Law of Karma Will Be Verified	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 292
AUM112	The Law of Venus and the Sun	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 291
AUM113	The Mission of Aum Shinrikyo	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 295
AUM114	The Movement of the Continental Plates and the Submerging of Japan	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 248

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AGS115	The Negative Influence of Ancestors		Wayback Machine, 2011	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233847/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks02_01.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20050223233847/agon.org/us/DharmaTalks/DharmaTalks02_01.html</a>
AUM116	The Order of the Weapons	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 305
AUM117	The Polarization of Human Beings	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 279
UHiT118	The Political and Economic Situation in Uzbekistan		Frank & Mamatov, 2006	pp. 247-253
UHiT119	The President of Uzbekistan Admits His Own Ideological Weakness		Frank & Mamatov, 2006	pp. 258-261
AUM120	The Revival of German Nazism	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 272
ALQ121	The Saudi Regime	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 31-43
AGS122	The Significance of Founding Agon Shu		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_03.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_03.html</a>
ALQ123	The Towers of Lebanon	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 237-244
AUM124	The Turning Point Will Come Around 1995	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 289
AUM125	The United States Will No Longer Rule the World	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 271
RAF126	The Urban Guerilla Concept	Ulrike Meinhof	Murphy, 2005	pp. 9-36
AGS127	The Vatican Knows		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_04.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_03_04.html</a>
AUM128	The Victory of the New Power	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 297
AUM129	The Wheel Turning Holy King	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 288
AUM130	Those Who Are Leading Us to Armageddon	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 271
AUM131	Thought Control Makes War Popular	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 251
AGS132	Three Elements of Buddhist Religion Buddha Dharma and Sangha		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_04.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_04.html</a>



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RAF133	Three friends of Israel	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 161-165
AGS134	Three Reasons for Founding Agon Shu		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_02.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_02.html</a>
ALQ135	To Our Brothers in Pakistan	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 100-102
RAF136	To the News Editors		Moncourt & Smith, 2009	pp. 179-180
ALQ137	To the People of Afghanistan	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 158-159
AUM138	Tomomitsu Niimi	Tomomitsu Niimi	Asahara, 1995	pp. 133-136
ALQ139	Truce Offer to the Americans	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 220-225
AUM140	Two Types of Freemasonry	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 282
ALQ141	Under Mullah Omar	Osama bin Laden	Lawrence, 2005	pp. 95-99
RAF142	Under visa duress	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 166-170
RAF143	Vietnam and Germany	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 157-160
AUM144	Visions of Nuclear War	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 261
AUM145	War is the Consequence of Karma	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	pp. 277-278
RAF146	Water cannons	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 214-223
AUM147	We Cannot Avoid World War III	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 263
UHiT148	What Doctrine is President of Uzbekistan Karimov Imposing on Muslims		Frank & Mamatov, 2006	pp. 275-278
AGS149	What is Agon Shu		Agonshu, 2002	<a href="http://www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_01.html">www.agon.org/us/about/b_01_01.html</a>
AUM150	When Christ Appears	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 294
AUM151	Why Create War	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	pp. 310-312
AUM152	Why Has Aum Shinrikyo Been Persecuted	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 299
ALQ153	Why We Are Fighting You	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 196-208
AUM154	Will the Prophecies of Nostradamus End	Shoko Asahara	Asahara, 1995	p. 295
ALQ155	Wills of the Knights of the London Raid	Ayman al-Zawahiri	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 237-40
RAF156	Women in the SDS	Ulrike Meinhof	Meinhof, 2008	pp. 209-213

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ALQ157	World Islamic Front Statement Urging Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders		Kepel & Milelli, 2008	pp. 53-56
AUM158	Yoshihiro Inoe	Yoshihiro Inoe	Asahara, 1988	pp. 137-140
ALQ159	Your Fate Is In Your Hands Alone	Osama bin Laden	Ibrahim, 2007	pp. 213-219
AUM160	Yutaka Kanda	Yutaka Kanda	Asahara, 1988	pp. 125-128