BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS?

Profiling Perpetrators of International Crimes who Fled from the Turmoil in the Arab World

Sarita Snik
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ABSTRACT

Since the turmoil in the Arab world started almost four years ago, the number of migrants from countries like Libya and Syria has increased rapidly. Amongst this group of migrants are also former fighters who have committed international crimes. The countries which offer these migrants shelter must know how to deal with former fighters from areas in conflict as best as possible. The goal of this research is to investigate whether or not there are any similarities between the migrants that are suspected to be guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes. The findings concerning these perpetrators are compared with those who lived in similar conditions, but did not commit any of the described crimes. This way, this research is able to investigate the indicators that are contributing to radicalization processes among the research population. As a result, a profile of perpetrators of international crimes deriving from the troubled areas in the Middle East and Northern Africa is formulated. This research concludes with recommendations, improvements and suggestions for further research.

Preface

In September 2013, I started the master specialization of Human Geography 'Conflicts, Territories, and Identities'. In this master a focus question is: '*How can violent conflicts be analysed, understood or explained and how can they be managed?'* The master program tries to address all important and relevant aspects in studying conflicts and post-conflict issues. The master program combines theories, methods and instruments to get an overall vision on how to analyse and manage violent conflicts.

As part of the master's program, I had the possibility to take an internship in order to bring theory and practice together. I had the privilege of conducting my internship at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) of the Ministry of Security and Justice. The result is not only this research report in front of you, but perhaps even more important a very interesting, instructive and warm experience at my internship. The way I was welcomed and included in the unit of the IND made it possible to achieve the research as it is. I wish to thank all my colleagues for the pleasant cooperation during my time at the organization. Especially I wish to thank Peter ten Hove, who always offered guidance and support during the research.

Further, I wish to give special thanks to everyone I had extensive discussions with about different migration issues. The dynamic relationship between laws, politics and current conflicts in migration issues causes a very interesting and fascinating field. These discussions and experiences at the IND made me decide that this is the direction I want to continue working in. In realizing this, I especially want to thank Eveline Schot-Kooiman, Unit manager of the IND. Her efforts as my 'wheelbarrow', as claimed by herself, makes this possible.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who helped me improve my master thesis. First of all, my thesis supervisor Bert Bomert who repeatedly helped me with constructive notes and comments. He supported me to make the thesis of the higher quality I wished to achieve. And secondly, my friends and family, who were always there for me when I got stuck again.

I hope that reading my master thesis will give you as much enthusiasm and newly profound perspectives in migration issues, as it did to me.

Sarita Snik
(10 October 2014)

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1   INTRODUCTION

In 2014, in the framework of an internship at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND), I have contributed to the project *Arab Spring and Beyond: Safeguarding the Integrity and Acceptance of International Protection*. The IND is part of the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice, which has as one of its goals the safeguarding of people in the Netherlands living together in freedom, regardless of their background, lifestyles or views. It is the responsibility of this Ministry to deal with security threats that might jeopardize this freedom. One of these threats might come in the form of potential repercussions from the Arab Spring, mainly from the conflict in Syria. The IND project focuses on creating a network of knowledge and expertise of different institutions and organizations, which enables initiating concrete plans and services. This network collects information about refugees and migrants that have taken part in this particular conflict and are suspected of having committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, or serious non-political crimes. Because of these crimes, these individuals have lost their rights as a refugee to receive a residence permit. They are seen as a larger security threat to the public order (for instance, in the form of terrorist acts), and therefore have no place in Dutch society. This results in denying them access to the Netherlands and they are either sent back to their country of origin immediately or prosecuted.

One of the possible threats originating from the conflicts in the Middle East is the threat of acts of terror. The number of refugees arriving and Dutch 'foreign' fighters returning from countries like Syria is increasing rapidly. It is often not clear what actually has taken place in these countries and, more specifically, what the role of the refugees and migrants has been in the conflict. Did they participate in the war? Were they part of one of the Jihadist groups like the al-Qaida related Jabhat al-Nusra or the extremist group Islamic State (IS)? And the most important question for Dutch authorities in this respect is: are these refugees a potential (terrorist) threat to Dutch society?

1.1 Research Goal and Research Question

Although a lot of research has been done on the phenomenon of terrorism, a clear and unambiguous theory about the causes of terrorist acts has not been found (Bakker, 2004, 2006; Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009; Pligt & Koomen, 2009; Leeuwen, 2005). Nevertheless, research has shown that so-called radicalization processes are very influential in an individual's decision to participate in extreme criminal acts. The crimes mentioned before – war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes – are certainly examples of these extreme criminal acts. This makes the radicalization process for investigating perpetrators of international crimes of great explanatory value. Another factor which is found to be an important determining element in committing extreme criminal acts is whether or not a traumatizing time or event has been experienced. This traumatizing experience can be labelled as a so-called catalysing event. Refugees who flee from their war-

torn country and hope to find safety in Europe, more specifically in the Netherlands, have often experienced a traumatizing time. For most of the refugees this has been caused by threats of becoming victims of violence. Not only 'regular' refugees flee their country, so do potential militant refugees, for instance because of a threat of repercussions. The militant refugees that have committed extreme criminal acts and are fleeing from a region in conflict, can therefore be considered to be an already radicalized group.

Because of the crimes committed, the (alleged) militant refugees asking for asylum in the Netherlands are treated differently. They are under serious investigation by the International Crimes unit of the IND, because they are suspected of being guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or serious non-political crimes. These individuals have already been radicalized during the conflict, otherwise they would not have been able to commit the alleged crimes. The relevant question is: Which factors did have a contributing effect on the radicalization process of this group of individuals, so as to make them capable of such extreme acts? Since all refugees have experienced catalysing events, what has made these particular individuals to become perpetrators while others have not? Are there other similarities of indicators of the radicalization process that can be found among these perpetrators? In other words: which factors can be found among these perpetrators that have placed them outside society and made them act outside the standard norms?

The goal of this research is therefore to investigate whether or not there are any similarities between the migrants that are suspected to be guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes. The findings concerning these perpetrators – their 'profiles' – are compared with those who have lived in comparable conditions, but did not commit any of the described crimes. This way, the research aims to investigate the indicators that are contributing to radicalization processes among the research population; being refugees fleeing to the Netherlands from conflict areas affected by the turmoil following the Arab Spring. The central research question of this thesis therefore is:

➢ *To what extent do perpetrators of international crimes differ from 'innocent' refugees, originating from conflict areas caused by the recent turmoil in the Arab World, when looking at indicators of the radicalization process?*

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to start with sketching the research context, so as to be able to gather more knowledge and insight in the background of the research population. Looking at the research question raises some questions that need to be answered first: What does this recent turmoil in the Arab world incline? What makes people flee from this region? When is someone seen as a refugee? What are the numbers and trends of the recent refugee flows coming from this region? What does this mean for the Netherlands? And, apparently, since amongst these 'innocent' refugees there are also perpetrators of international crimes: What are perpetrators of international crimes? What does (international) law say about these people? How are they different from 'innocent'

refugees, when applying the rules? These questions will be answered in Chapter 2: Setting the Context.

After creating the context, theories of radicalization will be addressed in Chapter 3: Characteristics of Radicalization. These theories will be used in order to predict an effect between indicators of the radicalization process and perpetrators of international crimes. In order to test the expected relations as formulated in Chapter 3, a method of research has to be chosen. Chapter 4, Methods to Be Applied, describes the data selection and collection, and the operationalization needed in order to test the predicted relations. Next, an analysis of the data will be given in Chapter 5: Analysis & Results. This leads to results that either confirm or refute the predicted relations. Finally, in Chapter 6: Conclusion, the research question can be answered and recommendations can be made.

1.2   Societal and Scientific Relevance

Although war has been a phenomenon of all ages, it has changed considerably over time. An important change in 'wars' can be noticed after the Cold War. According to Kaldor (2001), a distinction can be made between traditional 'old wars' and 'new wars'. The new wars involve a blurring distinction between war, organized crime and large-scale violation of human rights. These new wars can be distinguished from earlier wars in terms of their goals, methods of warfare, and ways of financing. The goals of new wars are mainly about identity politics. This can also be noticed in the war-torn countries in the Arab world. For instance, before war in Syria erupted, the various identities in the country were not that clear nor were they really important. Because of the war however, being an Alawite or Sunnite has become important, especially in mobilizing people to join certain militant groups. But not only the goals in these 'new wars' are different, also the methods of warfare have changed over time. A combination of guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgency is employed. Acts of destabilization in order to generate fear and hatred are used to intimidate other parties. To finance these acts of war, the various combatant groups are heavily dependent on external resources. This creates possibilities for influence by external extremist parties, for instance al-Qaida (Kaldor, 2001).

An important negative effect this phenomenon of 'new wars' has is the lack of control over combatants to respect the rules of war. This results in an increase of international crimes, like torture, war crimes, ethnic cleansings, and crimes against humanity. Because of this lack of control and organizational chaos, there are many unpunished perpetrators; some of them 'flee' to the Netherlands, are considered refugees and ask for asylum.

Societal Relevance

Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (perceived) security threats caused by terrorist attacks on a domestic level have increased. In response, preventing these possible terrorist attacks became a priority on the policy agenda. Nowadays, also in the Netherlands, the potential threat of terrorist attacks is clearly present on the security agenda. With the Ministry of

Security and Justice raising the level of threat assessment in March 2013 to 'substantial', additional attention and more precise information is highly needed (Opstelten, 2014).

One of the reasons for raising the threat assessment is posed by the new security threats deriving from the turmoil in the Middle East. The number of refugees from countries like Libya and especially Syria has increased rapidly, which feeds the (populist) idea among Dutch (and European) people that these migration flows cause new security threats. This populist idea is most likely partly a consequence of existing prejudices 'Western' people have against these migrants. Since these migrants often hold Islamic beliefs, the link is quite quickly made that they are therefore also automatically Jihadists and therefore a threat to 'the West'.

Without going into a discussion about the veracity of these populist ideas, a proper response for and to the refugees has to be formulated. The 'receiving countries of refugees' need to know how best to deal with 'foreign fighters' and potential militant refugees coming from conflict areas (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2013). This becomes even more important since the AIVD (the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service) has noticed a clear and strong trend of growing radicalization processes since 2003 (Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009). Based on more knowledge on, and insight in, the causes of radicalization processes, policy makers might be better able to act accordingly and prevent these processes to cause serious security threats.

It is very difficult to determine the root causes and the causal relations between the different indicators of extreme and radical criminal acts. Since the pressure on policy makers to prevent these acts is very high, research into these underlying causes seems to be more pressing than ever. Considering the current developments in the Arab world (and elsewhere), and the political and societal pressures for the need to find leads that might prevent terrorism, 'grand theories' and scientific relevance are often subordinate to the pressing societal relevance (Bakker, 2004). This research can offer a contribution to the already existing knowledge, but it is also innovative by looking at an already radicalized group based on similar indicators. By doing so, it might find predictive variables of radicalization among people migrating from conflict areas.

By including the current rising trend of migrants from conflict areas with the 'traditional' radicalization process as a predictor of extreme and radical criminal acts, the analysis can give an innovative and useful new insight in the perceived security threats.

Scientific Relevance

Previous research has found some comparable results of variables that do *not* cause terrorism. One relationship that has often been found is that religion and poverty as such are not causes of terrorism. But how is this the case when looking at the recent turmoil in the Arab world? In the case of rebellious groups in the Arab world, it is said that religion is often used as a mobilizer and legitimizer of their actions. How is this variable 'religion' of influence in the recent fighting in the countries affected by the turmoil in the Arab world? There is a lack of comparative studies which investigate the predictors of radicalization processes among people coming from conflict areas. That is why, in this research, individuals that are

considered already radicalized – because they were, allegedly, able to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity – are compared, in order to find similarities of indicators of the radicalization processes.

The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, popularly referred to as the Refugee Convention, describes in its first article the legal rights refugees have in receiving international protection. Article 1F states that the provision of the Refugee Convention shall not apply to those who have committed international crimes (UNHCR, 2010). The data used for this research is based on individuals that have received this 1F status. For the refugees that fall under this exclusion Article 1F, there are serious reasons to consider them guilty of committing one (or more) of the following international crimes: crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, serious non-political crimes, and acts contrary to the purpose and principles of the United Nations. The International Crimes Unit of the IND is a pioneer in this field of investigating this exclusion clause, in comparison to other European Union (EU) countries. It is one of the few organizations that, in a well-organized and well-structured manner, tracks down the migrants that have committed these crimes (HRW, 2014). Since the data of the 1F labelled individuals, as collected by the IND, have not been analysed before, and since other countries lack a similar database, this research is dealing with an as yet underexposed research population. This means that, based on the IND files regarding the 1F individuals, a refinement of insights regarding radicalization processes might be possible.

2 SETTING THE CONTEXT

In this chapter the context will be laid out in order to have the necessary knowledge for answering the research question. First, a summary of the turmoil in the Arab World will be given, with more in depth information on the background of Libya and Syria. The reason the developments in these countries are addressed in more detail, is because most refugees arriving in the Netherlands come from these two countries. Therefore, more information about the trends in refugee flows due to the turmoil in the Arab World is given. Finally, in order to understand the distinction between 'innocent refugees' and 'perpetrators of international crimes', the legal concepts of the Refugee Convention and its Exclusion Article are given.

2.1 Turmoil in the Arab World

In this research the central question is how perpetrators of international crimes differ from innocent refugees; how can it be explained that some individuals act violently, while others, the vast majority, that live in comparable conditions do not? In order to answer this question and find the variables of influence, an understanding of the conditions these people lived in seems necessary. How did the turmoil affect an individual's daily life? What did it mean to be part of a certain ethnicity? How were the supporters of the regime and the rebels perceived, and how did this influence one's choices? It is important to gather knowledge of the contextual factors of this research population in order to understand how radicalization processes caused an individual to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity or serious non-political crimes. This chapter will provide the background of the turmoil, and insight in its context.

The recent turmoil taking place in Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries is mainly the result of protests and demonstrations, where people are calling for democratization and (more) freedom. The countries in which demonstrations have led to violence are, in chronological order of the start of the first protests: Tunisia, December 18, 2010; followed, in 2011, by Egypt, January 25; Yemen, January 27; Bahrain, February 14; Syria, February 15; and Libya, February 17. In these countries the methods used by the civilian opposition have some similarities. The civilian protesters organized demonstrations, rallies and strikes, accompanied by an effective use of social media in order to inform and mobilize other individuals. The protesters in these authoritarian regimes often were confronted with violence from the regimes' security forces and pro-regime militias. Eventually, in various cases, the protests evolved into a civil war in which, on the one hand, protesters turned into rebellion fighters that tried to defeat the suppressing regime, and, on the other hand, where the regime used heavy force to prevent 'terrorists' from destroying the country.

More often than not Islamic extremist groups like al-Qaeda got involved which in turn provoked fighting amongst various opposition groups. The main reason why demonstrations

and protests were staged was to democratize the political systems, to end the authoritarian regimes, and to achieve more freedom. The turmoil in the Middle Eastern and North African countries, also referred to as the 'Arab Spring', could only have been so influential because the people in these countries were no longer satisfied with the current status quo and were longing for change.

2.1.1 Background: the Spread of Recent Turmoil in the Arab World

The cause that triggered the chain of events which ultimately led to the Arab Spring, is said to be the sacrifice of one person demanding change. The first protests started in Tunisia on December 18, 2010, with the self-immolation of a street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi. This dramatic event triggered protests all around the Arab world, directed against authoritarian regimes, which caused Tunisia to be perceived as the place where the Arab Spring started. Although the protests in Tunisia soon became more violent, they did not escalate into a civil war. Just a month later, on January 14, 2011, the president of Tunisia, Ben Ali, announced his resignation. Although some (violent) protests followed in the aftermath, new elections were successfully held in October that same year (BBC, 2014c).

Other Middle Eastern countries followed soon, starting with Egypt, followed by Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, and Libya. Egypt was the second country to follow the uprisings caused by the events in Tunisia. On January 25, 2011, protests started, demanding the resignation of President Mubarak in order to transform Egypt's authoritarian rule of government into a democracy. Although Mubarak made several concessions in order to stop an escalation of the protests, he was not able to prevent increasing violence. After Mubarak was arrested and sentenced to life in prison, various parties fought for power. The violent protests and clashes between the different parties increased, and the initial goal of transforming the country into a democracy seemed to have lost its priority. The newly democratically elected president Mohammed Morsi, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, was soon again met with new mass opposition protests. The military, led by the minister of Defence General El-Sisi, overthrew the Morsi regime and de facto seized power. Since then, the military has been in control, beating down all new demonstrations. The present situation in Egypt therefore is far from a democracy (BBC, 2014a).

The situations in Libya and Syria are of special relevance here, since they have resulted in the largest refugee flows coming to the Netherlands. These countries therefore receive(d) a lot of media attention, especially since these refugee flows are seen as a pressing issue for the Dutch authorities. Most people of the research population of this thesis come from these two countries. In order to better understand the context of the majority of the research population, the situation (and thus the context of the research population) of Libya and Syria is addressed more in-depth.

2.1.2 Libya

Libya is a large, albeit thinly populated country. 95% of the country is covered by the Sahara desert and approximately ninety per cent of the people live in the coastal areas (Bell & Witter, 2011a). The current population consists mainly of Arab or mixed Arab-Berber origins. Most Libyans are practicing the Sunni Islam faith, but overall the country is considered to be moderate. In the larger cities there are some smaller communities of Coptic Christians and Catholics.

The country is divided into three provinces: Cyrenaica in the east, Tripolitania in the north-west, and Fezzan in the south-west. These three provinces developed quite independently from each other, which has resulted in separate political and economic identities. The capitals of Tripolitania, Tripoli, and Cyrenaica, Benghazi, both fought for control over national leadership, which during the years has caused competition. Fezzan, although less relevant in this rivalry, also has a strong (political) identity of its own. Regionalism in Libya has therefore been very decisive in the development of the country and also in the start of the rebellion in 2011 (Bell & Witter, 2011a).

FIGURE 1: MAP OF LIBYA (SOURCE: ISW)

The presence of various tribes caused a tribal system which still plays a significant role in present-day politics and society in Libya. Names of individuals refer to the tribe descent, which carries a predetermined value. For example, being a descent of the Qaddadfa tribe will probably result in having a higher status, compared to being a descent of the Berber

tribal group. The latter are more likely to be discriminated. There are over 140 tribes, but only around thirty tribes have a significant political influence. The tribe someone is part of, is still of importance to one's identity, and has played an important role in group formation during the recent war (Bell & Witter, 2011a).

The clear distinction between the different regions, especially between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, originated at the beginning of the 20th century. Italy decided to extend its empire oversees into Libya. As a consequence, fights between the Italian colonizers and various tribes took place. After three years of fighting (1911-1914), Tripolitania and Fezzan finally came under Italian rule. The region of Cyrenaica turned out to be too hard to control, which resulted in a relative degree of freedom for the Cyrenaicans. England, which at that time ruled over neighbouring Egypt, felt threatened by the Italians, and therefore supported the Cyrenaicans. In 1923 another long and bloody war between the Italians and Cyrenaica started, in which, almost ten years later, the Cyrenaican leader Al-Mukhtar got killed. As a result, the resistance collapsed and the Italians finally ruled in the third Libyan region of Cyrenaica as well. From this moment on, the Italians had all provinces of Libya under their control (Bell & Witter, 2011a).

After the Second World War, Italy lost all control over Libya and the country was handed over to the Allies. The former rivalries between Fezzan, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, again came to the fore. Eventually, in 1951, the United Nations granted independence to the United Kingdom of Libya, ruled by King Idris I. Since the King came from Cyrenaica province, this caused grave tensions with the people of Tripolitania and Fezzan. They did not wish to be ruled by another region. At this time Libya was one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world, deeply divided and lacking any sense of national identity or national institutions (Bell & Witter, 2011a).

In 1959 the country changed rapidly and drastically due to the discovery of oil. In the following years, Libya became a major world oil producer which brought new wealth to the country. This newly acquired wealth mainly stayed in the hands of the people in power and corruption was widespread, which caused even more frictions between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. In 1969, Qaddafi, a young captain in the Libyan Air Forces who had formed the anti-regime's Free Officers Union, staged a successful military coup against King Idris and seized power. He transferred the political centre from Benghazi (Cyrenaica) to Tripoli (Tripolitania), and built a network of followers amongst the tribes and elites in Tripolitania and Fezzan. His allies mostly consisted of people who had felt neglected by the former King Idris. Qaddafi used the tribal background of individuals to decide whether they were opponents or loyalists. People from tribes that were closely aligned with Qaddafi got high-ranking positions in the government and security forces. This period of 're-tribalization' strengthened tribal identities and caused (old and new) tensions, for example with those with Berber origins (Bell & Witter, 2011a). During the recent turmoil, it were also these tribal identities which caused group formation tensions between them.

In ruling the country, Qaddafi completely relied on his personal loyalist network. This network consisted of members of loyal tribes, especially from the Qaddadfa tribe, trusted military officers, old friends from the Free Officers Union, as well as an extended family. His

children, seven sons and one daughter, got power and influence in all areas. His second son, Saif al-Islam Qaddafi, was seen as the second most powerful individual in Libya (Bell & Witter, 2011a).

On February 17, 2011, the wave of protests that had earlier spread from Tunisia to Egypt and beyond, reached Libya. On this day the first large protests were held in Cyrenaica province, particularly in the capital of Benghazi. Benghazi soon became the epicentre of the protests. Before February 17, Qaddafi was still able to stop protests before they could reach any significance. This was no longer the case in the Benghazi protests. Rubber bullets and teargas could not stop the protesting masses, so Qaddafi ordered the use of more 'effective' violence. This resulted in more than 150 victims over the next three days, and it eventually caused an escalation of the protests into a civil war. February 17, 2011, the first day of violence, was later referred to as the 'Day of Rage' (Bell & Witter, 2011b).

Not everybody working for the government or in the security forces sided with Qaddafi. More and more individuals defected and joined the opposition. These defectors brought along weapons and organisational skills to the rebels, which eventually resulted in the defeat of the Security Forces in Benghazi. The (violent) protests soon spread to other cities in Cyrenaica. Although the rebels in Cyrenaica soon controlled large areas, troops loyal to Qaddafi reorganized and hit back. The counterattack of the Qaddafi troops was successful and the rebels were forced to retreat to the last two cities under their control, Benghazi and Ajdabiya. There the final stance of the rebellion started, although the situation seemed to be decided since Qaddafi's troops were much stronger (Bell & Witter, 2011b).

At the same time, Qaddafi tried to prevent the spreading of the protests to the regions of Tripolitania and Fezzan. He failed to do so. On February 20, major protests erupted in the capital of Tripoli and the fourth largest city Zawiyah, resulting in tensions all over the country between supporters and opponents of the regime. Although Saif al-Qaddafi tried to save what was left of the regime's legitimacy by promising political reforms, it was already too little too late. Heavy fighting between paramilitary forces and protesters could not be avoided (Bell & Witter, 2011b).

Within a month, the United States and Europe completely changed their approach in dealing with Libya. While in the previous decade Europe and the U.S. had tried to normalize the economic, political and military ties with the Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, they were now organizing a military campaign against him. This drastic new approach was partly in reaction to the critique that they had not taken adequate actions in response to the unrest in Tunisia and Egypt (Bell & Witter, 2011c). The decision to intervene by military means did not come easily. After a long debate the U.S. and most European countries eventually were in favour of military actions, authorized and legitimized by the UN Security Council. On March 17, 2011, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1973 (UNSCR 1973), authorizing the use of "all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians. Two days later, the US-led operation 'Odyssey' was launched (Bell & Witter, 2011c), which was later taken over by NATO's operation 'Unified Protector'. The following months were characterized by heavy fighting, all over Libya, with the involvement of NATO and allied troops. Tribal, ethnical, and religious groups had formed various armed militias and were participating in the fights. This

caused violence between different groups on several strategic positions. Attempts to negotiate a peaceful settlement failed.

After more than half a year of fighting, on September 20, 2011, NATO airstrikes stopped a military convoy out of Sirte, carrying Qaddafi. Although it is still unclear what exactly happened, Qaddafi got killed. Just over a month later, on October 23, 2011, the so-called National Transitional Council (NTC) announced that Libya had been liberated. NATO's mission formally ended on October 31, 2011 (Bell, Butts & Witter, 2011).

After the fall of the Qaddafi regime, a period of chaos held the Libyan people in its grip. The first free elections for a new democratic regime were held in July 2012, but the fragmentation and divisions within the country as a consequence of the civil war made it very hard for any central government to rule successfully. The extensive damages to the infrastructure, houses, schools and hospitals still make it very hard to provide the people with their basic needs. National institutions needed for a democratic government are either lacking or corrupt. Violence is still very endemic and the various armed militias, which carry large amounts of weapons, have often turned against each other. There certainly is a need for a new security sector to keep the peace and rule of law, and disarm the various militias that still control large areas of the country. Crime rates have grown dramatically, and the newly elected government has problems (re)organizing the country (Nieuwsuur, 2013). Security issues, regional factionalism, and lawlessness are significant and even increasing problems for the current interim government (BBC, 2013a).

2.1.3 Syria

Although in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya the former regimes and their authoritarian leaders have gone, this is not the case in Syria. The protests and civil war in Syria have been going on for more than three years already, resulting in hundreds of thousands of casualties and millions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) and refugees. The initial protests escalated into a full scale civil war in which the parties involved have become blurred over time and rebels not only fight Assad's troops but also each other.

Syria is an Arab country in the Middle East, which has, at least before the war, about 22.5 million people. More than ninety per cent is Arabic and the remaining population is predominantly Kurdish. Most people in Syria adhere to the Islamic faith. With 74 per cent of the population, the Sunnis are the largest religious group in Syria. 16 per cent of the Syrian people belong to other Islamic groups, like the Alawites and the Druzes. The remaining ten per cent of the population are either Christians or Jews, mainly located in communities in the cities of Damascus, Al Qamishli, and Aleppo. The current President of Syria, Bashar al Assad, belongs to the minority of Alawites (CIA, 2014).

In 1963, a bloody coup took place which resulted in a dysfunctional regime, characterized by infighting. In November 1970, the minister of Defence at that time, Hafez al-Assad, took over control and ruled as leader of the Ba'ath party for the next thirty years. In 2000, after Hafez al-Assad died, his son Bashar al-Assad took over the presidency, a position he has held on to until this day (CIA, 2014).

The Assad family has Alawi origins. During his thirty years in power, Hafez al-Assad was supported by a political and military elite of Alawi origins. This has resulted in the ruling of a Shiite minority over a large Sunni majority. In order to prevent protests from this Sunni majority against the Shiite power elite, Hafez al-Assad made sure a large and wealthy Sunni middle class was established which was economically dependent on a stable Assad regime (Reformatisch Dagblad, 2011). After thirty years of dictatorial presidency under Hafez al-Assad, there was initially the hope his son, Bashar al-Assad, would rule in a more democratic way. He has been educated in England and married an English woman, which makes him more Western-orientated than his father (The Biography.com website, 2014). However, these expectations turned out to be false.

The present Assad regime is still strongly dominated by an Alawite minority. This is particularly striking in the military forces where eighty per cent of the officers adhere to the Alawite faith. Also within the security forces a strong pro-Assad perspective dominates. This results in a more severe military reaction of the security forces against anti-Assad protesters. Were the Assad regime to collapse, this would then also be the case of the armed forces. This is quite different from other countries that had to cope with similar protests, for example Tunisia or Egypt. In those countries the armed forces often took up the role of

protector of the people, which led to an ever-growing wave of defections. After the fall of the regimes, the armed forces were still capable of functioning and tried to restore peace (Reformatisch Dagblad, 2011).

In the wake of the Arab Spring, the first protests in Syria started in March 2011, calling for an end to the state of emergency in Syria, which had been in force since 1963 (NOS, 2011). Under this state of emergency everyone can be arrested without trial and opposition parties are not allowed. On March 15, 2011, also called the 'Day of Dignity' or the 'Day of Rage', the protests turned violent. In Damascus 35 people were arrested, when demanding the release of political prisoners. In Deraa, Assad's security forces opened fire at the protesting crowds, also resulting in several victims. The violent crackdown by the Assad regime in these two cities caused a spread of violent protests across the country during the following months (Aljazeera, 2014).

During the first two months of the protests, eight hundred protesters got killed due to the violent response of the regime. The Syrian Armed Forces tried to suppress the protests in numerous cities. Barricades with machine guns were installed and in various cities, including Damascus, tanks were used (Global news, 2012; Washington Post, 2014).

An important event in this wave of (violent) protests was the defection of some high-ranking officers, backed by their soldiers, of the Syrian Armed Forces. On July 29, four months after the protests started, the so-called Free Syrian Army (FSA) was established. (Holliday, 2012) It installed the Syrian National Council (SNC) only one month later, which served as the political representation of the opposition to the Assad regime. It had been created as an umbrella organization in order to represent all different opposition groups (Aljazeera, 2014). In November 2012, this opposition party was renamed as the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) (Aljazeera, 2014).

In the North of Syria, the Kurds act as a third force participating in the war, represented by the 'Democratic Union Party' (PYD). With around 1.42 million Kurds in the country, they are the largest ethnical minority in Syria (CIA, 2014). The goal of the PYD is autonomy for the Kurds in a post-Assad Syria. In order to achieve this goal, the Syrian-Kurdish militia, the 'People's Defence Unit's (YPG), are fighting against all non-Kurdish militias (Caves, 2012).

Meanwhile, the rebellion against the regime increased in numbers and strength. Assad responded by bombing the city of Homs and other towns in Syria. Hundreds of people died as a direct result of these attacks and the number of Internally Displaced Persons increased substantially (Aljazeera, 2014). The violence in Syria had by 2012 escalated to such an extent that the United Nations defined the turmoil in Syria as a civil war (Global News, 2012). In light of this escalation the Security Council continued discussing the proper response in dealing with the civil war, but Russia and China have since constantly and consistently used their veto powers to counter any form of UN intervention in Syria (Aljazeera, 2014).

At the beginning of May 2013, reports of mass atrocity crimes in Syria were published. One of these reports described acts of violence in the coastal villages of Bayda and Banias. According to this report, the local violence had resulted into acts of ethnic cleansing. The coastal area is populated with a majority of Alawites. In these villages, a massacre of Sunni families had taken place, caused by Assad's Security Forces and the pro-government

Shabbiha militias (Andersen, 2013). This incident is an example of the changing nature of the civil war in Syria. Where the protests and fighting were first directed at the Assad regime, it has by now escalated into a war between all groups present in Syria: supporters or opponents of the regime, Sunnis, Shiites, Kurds, and Jihadists. They have all turned against each other. This development has caused a division between militias following ethnic and religious lines.

In the summer of 2014, a 'new' armed group entered the war in Syria: Islamic State (IS), formally 'Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant' (ISIL) or 'Islamic State in Iraq and Syria' (ISIS). With the chaos in Syria, the disappearance of a monopoly of violence, new opportunities were created for IS to increase its influence over a wider territory. The war in Syria was used to recruit large numbers of people in the northern and eastern parts of Syria. Also a large number of foreign fighters joined the organisation. The armed group IS is nowadays seen as the strongest party involved in the civil war in Syria, and recently in Iraq. The goal of IS is to create a true Islamic state by claiming territory in both Iraq and Syria. The group has been in existence since 2003, and took active part in the Iraq War. The activities of the group in Syria have been known to be very cruel, resulting in fear amongst all other parties in Syria. This created a 'new' common enemy amongst all opponents of a true Islamic State (Amnesty International, 2013.)

Given the violent state of affairs, it does, therefore, not come as a surprise that ordinary men, women and children, from Libya as well Syria, try to escape the continuing violence and the threats to their daily security by leaving everything behind and fleeing – either to other parts of the country, to neighbouring countries, or even to Europe.

2.2   Current Trends in Refugee Flows

Since the Arab Spring started, the number of casualties, internally displaced persons, and refugees has increased dramatically. In Syria, the war has already resulted in over 3.2 million refugees so far (UNHCR, 2014). Most refugees seek asylum elsewhere, since their country of origin cannot provide them with the needed safety, shelter, medical care or food. This rapid increase in numbers of refugees is seen in the Netherlands as well. Since the number of refugees coming from the Arab Spring countries has increased drastically and is still growing, the 'receiving' countries are faced with new challenge to give all of these people what they need.

Looking at Figure 3, a large increase of asylum seekers can be seen in the Netherlands during the last three years (2012-2014), the period characterized by the turmoil in the MENA region. During the period between October 2013 and September 2014, 37 percent of asylum seekers coming to the Netherlands originate from Syria (IND, 2014).
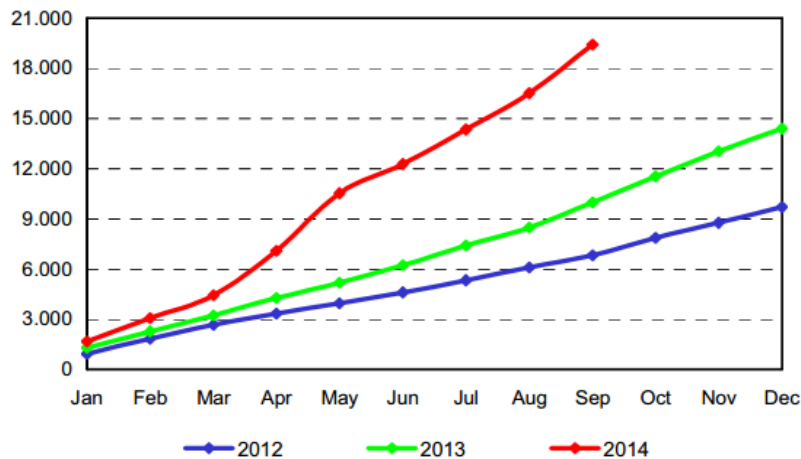
Amongst these refugees are also individuals that have (allegedly) committed war crimes, fled their country of origin for different reasons, and are now asking for asylum in the Netherlands. Because the number of refugees nowadays is so large, it is harder for immigration services to filter out those individuals that have committed international crimes. It is quite possible that some perpetrators of international crimes have not been spotted by the Dutch authorities, but are considered to be 'regular' refugees. Nevertheless, the authorities have been successful in investigating a growing number of suspected 'war criminals'. According to news reports, during the first half of 2014 five Syrians have not received an asylum status given their involvement in international crimes (Trouw, 2014); a number that will most likely only increase fast, given the ever-increasing refugee flows. According to State Secretary for Security and Justice, Fred Teeven, by the beginning of 2014 already thirty asylum seekers had been denied a residence permit, given the suspicions regarding committing international crimes (NRC, 2014). It seems more pressing than ever to gain more knowledge about the background of these perpetrators of international crimes who move amongst regular, innocent refugees.

2.3   Defining the Legal Concepts

In every war there are victims and perpetrators, and sometimes people are even both. More often than not war causes dramatic changes in society. Civilians may run out of food and shelter and the security threat is large. This is why people often feel the need to flee and find safety, either in another region in the country, or even in another country. In the first case an individual becomes an Internally Displaced Person (IDP), in the second case a refugee. Among these refugees are also individuals that have committed international crimes. These people, by fleeing to another country and becoming a refugee, may then not be prosecuted for the crimes they have committed. In the most extreme case, a refugee who finds refuge in a foreign country may again be confronted with the same persons he or she ran away from in the first place. In order to prevent people that have committed international crimes receiving international refugee protection, the United Nations drafted a so-called exclusion article in its Convention on Refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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(UNHCR) was founded in 1951 in order to also draft guidelines on how to handle the international protection of refugees. This resulted in the 1951 Refugee Convention (UN, 1954).

The Refugee Convention contains the following definition of refugees:

> "The term 'refugee' shall apply to any person who: […] owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (Article 1a2, Refugee Convention)

Individuals that fall under the terms of this section of Article 1 have the legal right to receive international protection. But since not all refugees are victims – they can be perpetrators of crimes as well – an exclusion clause has been added under Article 1F. This exclusion clause is formulated as follows:

> "The provisions of this Convention shall not apply to any person with respect to whom there are serious reasons for considering that: (a) He has committed a crime against peace, a war crime, or a crime against humanity, as defined in the international instruments drawn up to make provision in respect of such crimes; (b) He has committed a serious non-political crime outside the country of refuge prior to his admission to that country as a refugee; (c) He has been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations." (Article 1F, Refugee Convention).

This exclusion article, Article 1F, describes the crimes that will result in a refugee becoming a so-called unwanted refugee. These are crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, serious non-political crimes, and acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It is important to have a clear definition of what these crimes entail, in order to 'accuse' an individual of committing one or several of these crimes and giving him an 1F label. In practice this will result in not receiving a residence permit and therefore having to leave the country.

2.3.1 Definitions of '1F Exclusion' Crimes

After World War II the Nuremberg Trials were held in order to prosecute those who had committed crimes that were in violation of international law. This resulted in the Nuremberg Principles, which can be seen as the fundament of international instruments in preventing and prosecuting international crimes. The definition of the term 'Crime against peace' was first formulated in these Nuremberg Principles and was later included in the UN Charter. This definition was used to determine and define different kinds of aggression as crimes against peace, for example crimes against humanity and war crimes. The act of 'crimes against peace' as defined in Principle VI (a) of the Nuremberg Trials is:

> "Crimes against peace: (i) Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances; (ii) Participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the acts mentioned under (i)." (Principle VI (a), Nuremberg Principles)

War crimes are serious violations of the laws and customs of war, committed during an international or non-international armed conflict. 'Laws and customs of war' are laid down in covenants, regulations, customary law and other norms of international law. On the one hand they show the limits of the use of force by humanitarian standards and, on the other, guarantee the protection of victims of armed conflict. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) describes these war crimes in chapter 44, rule 156 of the 'Customary International Humanitarian Law, Volume 1'. These acts may consist of the following:

> "In the case of an international armed conflict, any of the following acts committed against persons or property protected under the provisions of the relevant Geneva Convention: wilful killing; torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments; wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health; extensive destruction or appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly; compelling a prisoner of war or other protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power; wilfully depriving a prisoner of war or other protected person of the rights of a fair and regular trial; unlawful deportation or transfer; unlawful confinement; taking of hostages." (Ch. 44, rule 156, Customary International Humanitarian Law)

In 2002, the International Criminal Court (ICC) was established in The Hague, representing the international community, in order to prosecute individuals that have (allegedly) committed international crimes. The ICC used the Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute as the original legal definition for the various international crimes. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was adopted in June 1998 and came into force on July 1, 2002. It is the most recent international effort to define several international crimes. In Article 7 of the Treaty, the Rome Statute provides the definition of 'Crimes against Humanity':

> "For the purpose of this Statute, 'crime against humanity' means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack: (a) Murder; (b) Extermination; (c) Enslavement; (d) Deportation or forcible transfer of population; (e) Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law; (f) Torture; (g) Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity; (h) Persecution against any identifiable group or collectively on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court; (i) Enforced disappearance of persons; (j) The crime of apartheid; (k) Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health." (Article 7, para. 1, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court)

In addition to the crimes described (crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, and war crimes), serious non-political crimes are also considered reasons for someone not to receive a residence permit. There are various examples of serious non-political crimes, but there is

no clear definition of crimes that fall within this category. An example of a crime which does fit this category is torture. The United Nations Convention against Torture was drafted in order to prevent torture and cruel, inhuman degrading treatment or punishment. In Article 1 of the Convention, 'torture' is defined as:

> "For the purposes of this Convention, torture means: any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions." (Article 1, para. 1, Convention against Torture)

The last act that will lead to exclusion as described in Article 1F of the Refugee Convention is when "a person is found guilty of acts contrary to the purpose and principles of the United Nations". This is another example of a criminal act that is not an international crime, but which will also result in receiving an 1F status. The purposes and principles of the United Nations are listed in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. Article 1 contains the four purposes of the UN. They are formulated as follows:

> "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace; To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace; To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends." (Article 1, para. 2, UN Treaty 1987)

Article 2 lists the principles of the United Nations, in order to achieve the purposes. In pursuit of the Purposes as stated in Article 1, one shall act in accordance with the UN Principles:

> "The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members. All Members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present Charter. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action. The Organization shall ensure that states which are not Members of the United Nations act in

accordance with these Principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII." (Article 2, para. 3, UN Treaty 1987)

The UN may install rules and sanctions in order to achieve these purposes and principles. Once an individual or an organization, or even a state, does not live up to these purposes and principles, or is violating the sanctions and/or rules imposed by the UN, it is guilty of acts violating the purpose and principles of the UN. This means that the actor can be placed on the sanctions list of the UN, which might result in receiving a 1F status.

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF RADICALIZATION

When a person flees from a county where his safety is at risk, he can ask for a residence permit in, for instance, the Netherland in line with the Refugee Convention. An investigation has to determine whether this person indeed meets the requirements of the treaty, or that he has to be excluded due to crimes committed. When an investigation into a migrant's history has resulted into an 1F label, this individual is no longer entitled to international protection, for there are serious reasons to consider he/she is guilty of committing international crimes. These crimes are of such an extreme nature that a perpetrator must have gone through some kind of development, a radicalization process, before being able and willing to commit them. Living in an uncertain and threatening situation like war is a factor which might contribute to this development. These factors of uncertainty and threat are also seen as indicators of the radicalization process. This process describes the steps a person has to go through before being able to commit extreme and radical acts. Although the radicalization process is nowadays quite often linked to acts of Jihadism or terrorism, it can also be applied to individuals who have committed international crimes and have received the 1F label. Among these crimes are those described under Article 1F of the Refugee Convention. Indicators of the radicalization process might give some understanding of the development these individuals went through. In this research these '1F individuals' are considered radicalized and radicalization indicators may therefore give more insight in how they came to behave the way they did.

3.1 Radicalization Process

Most research argues that there are four stages of radicalization an individual has to go through before he is able to commit international crimes (Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009). One can picture these four stages of the radicalization process as different steps leading up a stairway (Figure 4). The first step is the pre-radicalization stage, in which persons are open to radical ideas. Some of them will go one step up, and will sympathize with the radical ideas. This is the stage of self-identification. The third step is the indoctrination stage. This is where people not only sympathize with the radical ideas, but are also willing to act on these ideas. The fourth and final step is for individuals that are part of an extremist or radical organization. In case of an Islamic terrorist organization, this is referred to as the stage of Jihadization. Individuals that have committed war crimes or crimes against humanity, for instance, are in this final stage of the radicalization process (Silber & Bhatt, 2007).

FIGURE 4: PHASES OF RADICALIZATION
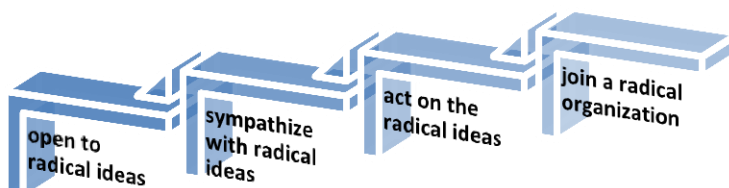
A lot of research has been done in an attempt to explain why people go through processes of radicalization (for instance, Bakker, 2006; Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009; Pligt & Koomen, 2009). Research focuses on identifying the variables that influence someone's decision 'to go up the stairs', all the way up to the fourth step. Identifying these causes has proven to be difficult, given the many demographical, societal, and group factors that might be part of the particular circumstances involved in this radicalization process. Although researchers have found some similarities in comparable cases predicting radical behaviour, it is very hard to find predetermined causal relations between the various variables. As an illustration: does an individual first become a Jihadist before participating in extremist actions, or, the reverse causal relationship, does someone become a Jihadist because of one's actions?

In addition, it is hard to find the exact level of influence of so-called trigger causes, which may determine whether someone will act in an extremist way. The expected causes that may predict radical behaviour, the so-called root causes, have proven not to be predetermined. An individual characterized by factors which are supposed to increase the chances of radicalization, may not radicalize at all. At the same time, an individual that is characterized by factors which are expected to decrease the chances for radicalization might still radicalize (Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009). In other words, individuals without the perceived root causes might still be involved in extreme (criminal) behaviour. This suggests that, although the identified root causes might increase the chances of radicalization, the trigger causes should be addressed as equally important. Therefore, in analysing theories of radicalization, both root causes and trigger causes have to be dealt with at the same time.

After World War II, Nazi leaders were often depicted as individuals with abnormal personalities. According to contemporary research, these people were violent, power-hungry psychopaths without any real human feelings and obsessed with death. Later research compared the results of the personality tests of, one the one hand, these Nazi 'psychopaths' and those of terrorists which were believed to be comparable, with, on the other hand, those of average Americans. The results were shocking. The previously labelled 'psychopaths' turned out to be not so different from the average American. In a psychological sense Nazi 'psychopaths' were even healthier and more stable than other perpetrators of violent crimes (Silke, 2008). According to Silke (2008), there are terrorists that can be compared to the previously described psychopaths, although they are less 'successful' due to a lack of discipline, rationality and determination.

Research has shown that there are some common factors in the backgrounds of radicals. This research will discuss these factors, which will give more insight in and understanding of the people who, after having gone through processes of radicalization, have become perpetrators of radical acts like war crimes or crimes against humanity. Most likely, some specific variables may interact with each other and form a complex combination which pushes someone further into the process of radicalization.

3.2 Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics that will be addressed are age, gender, socio-economic status, family situation, and criminal history. These demographic characteristics have been chosen because earlier research has shown these variables are indicators of the radicalization process and influence individuals to join groups of terror (Bakker, 2004, 2006; Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009; Pligt & Koomen, 2009; Leeuwen, 2005; Silber & Bhatt, 2007). The members of these groups of terror have undergone the same steps of the radicalization process which can be expected of the people who are the focus of this thesis. They also committed serious violent crimes of terror, like war crimes, acts of torture and crimes against humanity. As stated before, for individuals to be able to commit these kinds of crimes, one already has to be radicalized. This makes the characteristics age, gender, socio-economic status, family situation and criminal history, all being indicators of the radicalization process, also of great explanatory value for investigating the perpetrators of international crimes.

3.2.1 Age

The first relevant variable is *age*. According to recent studies, most radicalized individuals are relatively young, with an average age of 25 years (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). Participation in extreme violent actions decreases rapidly with an advancing age (Silke, 2008). An explanation for this can be found in the level of testosterone, which is at its peak between the ages of 20 and 25. This level increases dramatically in one's puberty; for boys somewhat later than for girls, around the age of 16-18. After the age of 30 the level of testosterone declines again and reaches a significant lower level at the age of 35. The hormone testosterone increases aggressive and violent behaviour (Silke, 2008). Figure 5: Age-Testosterone Table, shows the levels of testosterone in relation to age.

FIGURE 5: AGE-TESTOSTERONE TABLE
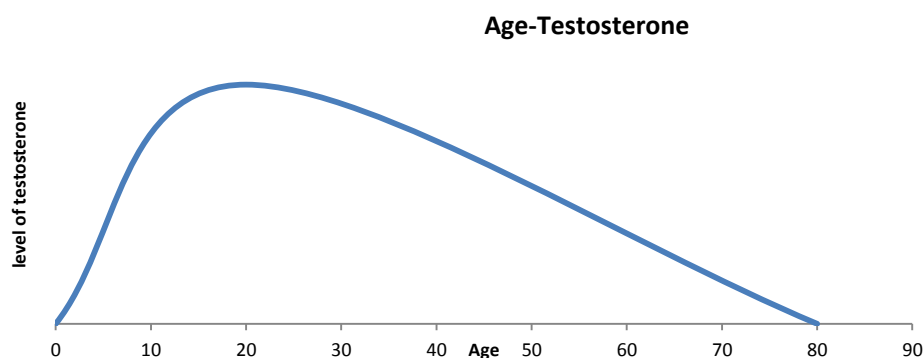
Based on this finding the following hypothesis will be tested:

H1: People between 18 and 35 years old will have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

Other explanations for the age-effect can be found in the perceived feelings of insecurity, discontentment, injustice and emotions the individuals at this age experience. Discrimination and deprivation are examples of these feelings. Feelings like this are more common among youth than among elderly, because young people feel they have to give meaning to their life or even the responsibility to give meaning to the world (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). Hypotheses based on these factors will be addressed in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4.

3.2.2 Gender

In line with the reasoning based on the level of testosterone in explaining the age-aggression effect, the expectation is that males have a higher chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes than females. Numerous studies have confirmed that males commit violent crimes more often than females. In Western cultures the ratio of male versus female offenders is at least 2:1 or even 4:1. In case of more serious offences, this ratio is even higher in the sense that males are the perpetrators of more serious crimes. This could again be explained by the level of the testosterone hormone, which is produced more extensively in the male body than in the female body (Silke, 2008). Other male characteristics that increase the chances of violent actions and radicalization are impulsiveness and the willingness to take risks (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). The second hypothesis therefore will be:

H2: Men have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.

3.2.3 Socio-Economic Status

Obviously not only age and gender determine whether an individual will become a perpetrator of international crimes. An explanatory factor often used is the socio-economic status. This status is based on the level of education, the status of the job, and the level of income, which are all highly linked to each other (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). While looking at the influence of this socio-economic status on criminal offending, we often see that an advanced education, a high level of income and a good job status decrease the chances of criminal offences. This, however, is not the case for people who, due to the radicalization process, become perpetrators of radical or extremist crimes. Persons who radicalize and end up joining groups of terror often are individuals with an advanced educational background (Sageman, 2004). As in the terror groups, members of militant radical groups are also to be expected to have an advanced educational level. Furthermore, Sageman (2004) also did not find a relationship between people that participate in acts of terror and poverty. His research shows that participants of acts of terror were generally middle-class, educated young men.

Looking specifically at the individuals central in this research, other factors also have an important influence. The countries that bring forth members of radical and extreme groups often have a better developed economy and are undergoing a fast modernization and transition process (Bakker, 2004). These factors are also present in the MENA region, where turmoil has erupted. The worldwide globalization produces a fast development of

modernization and a spread of global knowledge. This makes differences in inequality between people from different states more visible. Feelings of being treated unjustly in comparison to people from the West have been one of the reasons why in the MENA region so many individuals have been mobilized. The uprisings are directed against authoritarian regimes which are held responsible for this unequal distribution. The protestors therefore urge for democracy. Often the instigators of the revolution are people who have access to information and knowledge, who recognize inequalities, and who know how to address a larger population. They are thus often higher educated, and since they are able to mobilize a larger crowd they often have a higher social status as well.

The claim that has been made regarding ignorance and a lack of education that would predict criminal offending, does not explain the acts of perpetrators of international crimes in those troubled Arab countries. The large proportion of middle class people in militant radical groups shows that poverty, and personal (financial) gains, are not predetermining factors. It is the knowledge, network, and skills that are needed for individuals to instigate or join militant radical groups, which are of increasing effect. All these factors are more often found amongst people with higher social economic status.

In sum, people who start or join these militant radical groups in conflict zones in the Arab world are expected to have (had) a higher socio-economic status, either already before or during the conflict. Based on these assumptions, the following relationship is therefore to be expected:

H3: People with a higher socio-economic status have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

3.2.4 Family Situation

Contrary to expectations, research has shown that family commitments are not so influential in preventing people to join radical groups in conflict areas. Sageman (2004) found that over seventy per cent of the people that joined a radical group were married and had children. This is surprising, since in respect to other criminal activities family commitments do matter and have a negative effect (Sageman, 2004). The presence of family commitments for perpetrators of international crimes are even more expected amongst people from countries where religion is still very important. For Muslims it is expected, and even often arranged, to marry at a relatively young age. This is also the case in the MENA region. Since most of the people from the Arab Spring countries are Muslim, this correlation is also to be expected. Therefore, there is a high likability that the family commitments have no increased effect on becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

H4: Individuals that are married do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

H5: Individuals with children do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

3.2.5 Criminal History

Previous research has shown that before individuals radicalize they lived ordinary lives, came from a higher middle class background, and achieved a higher educational level (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). In the case of the research population, this 'ordinary' life refers to the time before the turmoil in the MENA region started. Within this profile, a criminal history is also often absent. Only going through processes of radicalization and joining an extreme organization causes them to commit criminal offences like the international crimes described. A criminal background is therefore not expected to be of contributing effect amongst people who received an 1F status (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). If they did get into problems with authorities, resulting in either an arrest or criminal record, it is expected to have happened during the period in which they were already radicalized.

H6: A criminal history does not increase the chances of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

3.3 Social Identity; Religion and Group Membership

An individual's identity is not only based on the demographic characteristics as previously described, but also on the membership of certain groups. These groups can be based on a sport, a job, a hobby or a school, but also on ethnicity, nationality or religion. The memberships of different groups are part of one's social identity and might have a large influence on the lives and decisions of individuals. The influence a group will have on his/her decision-making depends on how this particular group is perceived by outsiders, as well as on the attachment the individual has to the group. The more positive a group is perceived in comparison to other groups, the greater the attachment of the individual to this group, the greater the influence (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). In the case of group formation in the Arab Spring countries religion is an important factor. Particularly regarding Jihadist radicalism in the MENA region, religion is a key element. In these countries these militant radical or Jihadist groups openly state they fight against the Western 'occupiers' which are threatening their ultimate goal of achieving a true Islamic state (Sageman, 2004).

A difficult question to answer is often whether the role of religion already was of such importance it made these individuals join a radical Islamic group in the first place, or that joining a radical Jihadist group caused religion to become important (Bakker, 2004). Previous research suggests the second relationship. Not religion as such, but the promise of companionship make that individuals join radical Islamic groups. Only later on religion gets involved and becomes a legitimizer for the most gruesome criminal acts.

People living in conflict areas often feel threatened, desperate, treated unjustly, and isolated from their friends and family and the society they live in. Most of them therefore meet in mosques, which are primarily places for people to socialize, in order to find support and companionship. Once a group is created through processes of socialization, religion becomes a basic common ground which quite often results in increased religious devotion. It is the starting point for Jihadist radicalization processes, but more is needed (Sageman, 2004).

In this phase of the radicalization process group loyalty plays an important role as a driving factor. It is not an isolated individual, but a number of people together that form a group and start radicalizing together. A long and intense period of social interaction within a small group of friends makes them shift away from old friends and family, while becoming more dependent on this new group. This creates strong loyalties towards each other within the group. This is why new members of a radical group are often not found so much by professional recruiters, but rather by independent Jihadist acquaintances (Silke, 2008).

Within these group processes, it is often seen that members of a group follow the opinions and beliefs of the most extreme member(s). These more radical ideals become the group standard (Sageman, 2004). In Islamic groups extremists often form their ideas based on religious principles. Jihadist groups, which during the last twenty years have grown considerably in numbers, can be seen as an example of this.

The increased role of group identity in an individual's life, polarization and group commitment, create a perfect environment for people to radicalize; radicalization which is highly approved by their new social capital which mostly consists of extremists (Silke, 2008). When formulating a hypothesis based on these theories, it is important to focus on the conflict relevant social groups. These are groups that due to the unrest in the MENA region have become more important in people's lives, for instance due to group threats. A sports group in times of conflict becomes less important while a religious group may become a more important determining factor of a person's identity. In this research conflict relevant social groups are perceived to be those social groups that determine a person's identity and which are affected or under threat due to the conflict. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H7: Individuals that are member of a (conflict relevant) social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.

H8: Individuals that are member of a (religious) radical or extremist social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.

H9: This relationship/effect will be stronger for members of a (religious) radical or extremist social group than for members of another social group.

3.4 Injustice and Grievances

An important factor in radicalization processes, perhaps even a crucial one, is the way in which people perceive certain situations. Perceived feelings of injustice are found to be a strong motivation for people to radicalize (Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009). The so-called Thomas theorem states: 'If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences' (Thomas & Thomas, 1928). This means that people might have specific views of 'reality', which causes them to act in certain ways. When assuming their view on the situation is 'true', they might act legitimate according to that perceived view. Trying to see the situation through their eyes, will help in getting more insight in the choice of actions individuals make.

3.4.1 Horizontal and Vertical Inequality

In studying injustice, a distinction has to be made between vertical and horizontal inequality. Vertical inequality is the inequality *between different individuals* based on class, income, jobs, etc. Horizontal inequality is the inequality between *different groups* within the same society, mostly expressed in economic or social inequality. For instance, people in Libya originating from tribes that were 'friends' of Qaddafi, like the Qaddadfa and Magarha tribes, were favoured for higher-status jobs. Berbers, on the other hand, were seen as not 'true' Arabs and were discriminated against (Zuijdgeest, 2007). This is an example of horizontal inequality. According to Stewart's findings (2000), unrest might start as a consequence of vertical inequalities, but can escalate into horizontal inequality. For example, political inequality can evolve into conflict between ethnic groups (Stewart, 2000). In the evolvement of this situation, the role of the group leaders is very important. They emphasize different aspects between groups and are able to use horizontal inequalities for mobilizing groups. Besancon (2005) adds another factor of influence to this concept. He states that more equality between ethnic groups in conflicts leads to more conflict. When groups look more alike, it is easier to compare them to each other. When the differences between groups are too large, the group does not believe that rebellion can be successful, or does not even consider itself equal in expectations (Besancon, 2005). In that case feelings of injustice are less likely.

3.4.2 Relative Deprivation

As described in the previous paragraph, inequality, vertical as well as horizontal, could be a reason why people feel they receive unfair treatment. This can cause grievances, not only amongst individuals but also between groups. Gurr (1970) builds on this notion. In his book *Why Men Rebel*, he argues that grievances arise out of relative deprivation which motivates rebellion and violence. He describes relative deprivation as a discrepancy between what a group actually has and what they believe they should have, compared to other groups. The hypothesis which can be derived from these theories of inequality is the following:

H10: People who believe they are treated unjustly, have an increased chance to express their frustration through acts of international crimes.

3.5 Insecurity and Group Affiliation

As described, feelings of isolation and insecurity increase the chances for an individual to join a (radical) group. This group will, in turn, give this person a social identity and therefore more self-esteem. When an individual gets more involved, the affiliation and loyalty to the group increase. But it is not only the group that affects an individual's social identity; it is also the other way around. When self-esteem is under threat or under pressure, membership of the group becomes more important and the social identity gets more priority than the individual identity.

3.5.1 Groups Threat and Polarization

Minority groups feel threatened more easily than the majority. This creates more suspicion, not only towards other groups, but also towards other individuals. Minorities often have the feeling they have to defend their rights. The expression 'fight for your rights' in this situation can sometimes be taken literally. This is also the case with suppressed and discriminated groups in the Arab Spring countries, where the authoritarian regimes often ruled unfairly. The people that are part of these groups look critically at how society is organized, and are willing to fight for an equal and just system, in which the chances for the people of the minority group(s) are equally distributed. If they feel this is not the case, they may act violently in order to achieve this goal. To summarize, the perceived threat works as a catalyst that causes an acceleration of the polarization processes between groups (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). This polarization process means that the differences between various groups are aggravated, which may well result in increasing tensions. This can be a catalyst for the radicalization process, since it causes segregation, for instance along religious lines (Bos, Loseman & Doosje, 2009). The next hypothesis, derived from these findings, is:

H11: Members of a group, who feel their group is threatened, have an increased chance of defending their group with violent means, even in the form of international crimes.

3.5.2 Groupthink, Isolation and Superiority

In response to external threats group cohesion is increased, which results in replacing the norms of the individual within the group by the norms of the group. Pligt & Koomen (2009) argue that in radical groups more pronounced and prominent opinions have more influence. Group members adhering to those opinions receive a higher status. The more pronounced and prominent opinions often come from the more radical group members, which therefore results in having more influence in the group's opinion. The more radical ideas of these

individuals will eventually become the standard of all group members (Pligt & Koomen, 2009).

Not only the external threat, also the increasing internal cohesion within a group causes an increased pressure to agree with each other. This idea of 'groupthink' means that creating a group with an uniform opinion is more important than having well-considered, well-balanced opinions. The members of a group look for support for their group opinions and preferences, and are not open to alternatives. More homogenous groups with strong forms of cohesion and loyalty will, as a consequence of this attitude, get isolated more easily. These members will start to feel superior to other groups and individuals and will lose their connection to the 'outside world' even more (Pligt & Koomen, 2009).

The Integrated Threat Theory addresses these feelings of being lifted above other people to a more superior status. Members of the (in)group have a higher feeling of distrust to members of the out-group. They expect them to act in a way which will affect them negatively. As described, feelings of threat will increase group cohesion and feelings of distrust to the out-group even more so. This positively influences the radicalization process in which the members are more likely to act negatively, possibly even violently, to the out-group which is perceived as a threat (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). The final hypothesis based on these theories is therefore as follows:

H12: Members of a group that have more extremist ideas (due to isolation, feelings of out-group distrust and in-group superiority), have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

In sum, getting more involved in groups causes more group cohesion and loyalty. The more the group gets a prominent role in an individual's life, the more the social identity replaces the individual identity. Due to the polarization process and 'groupthink', the opinion of the group will be formed by the most extreme and radical ideas of group members. This causes a disconnection to old friends and family, thus group isolation. Because their own self-esteem is closely linked to the one of the group, they become highly defensive of their group status and increase their distrust of the out-group. A feeling of superiority is created and acting violently to protect the ideals and group identity against the 'distrustful' outside world is getting more likely. In this process, perceived and real threats act as catalysts.

4 METHODS TO BE APPLIED

To test whether or not the hypotheses based on the theoretical findings can be confirmed or have to be refuted, qualitative research has been done. The data that has been used to do so, are retrieved from the database collected by the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND). This database contains, among other, information on 'legitimate' refugees as well as on migrants that are suspected of being offenders of international crimes. Article 1F of the Refugee Convention lists several relevant crimes: crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, serious non-political crimes, and acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It is important to keep in mind the clear definition of what these crimes entail, in order to 'accuse' a person of committing one or several of these crimes and therefore receiving an 1F label.

The international crimes unit of the IND works for the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice, which is ordered with the task to determine if there are (strong) reasons to believe individual migrants are guilty of one of the relevant crimes. If so, these individuals are therefore perceived as being radicalized. Individuals belonging to this group will be used as the research population for testing the previously described hypotheses, so as to be able to show if there are any similar indicators of radicalization processes that can be found among the majority of these individuals. These similarities are then compared with the individuals of the research population that did receive a residence permit. The findings will help in determining whether or not the indicators can be of any predictive value for explaining why people have committed international crimes.

4.1 The Data

By 1997, according to a Dutch newspaper article at least 35 Afghan war criminals had fled to the Netherlands and asked for asylum. By doing so, they not only avoided prosecution in Afghanistan, but also came in direct contact with their victims in the Netherlands. This news report led to an extensive public debate, resulting into questions in Parliament, on how to deal with these people. In order to prevent the Netherlands from becoming a safe haven for perpetrators of international crimes, a year later a specialized team within the IND was founded. In 2001 this special team became the International Crimes Unit, and is still functioning as such (HRW, 2014).

The International Crimes Unit conducts investigations into the backgrounds of 120 to 150 asylum seekers per year. These individual asylum seekers are investigated since they are suspected of having committed grave international crimes. Out of these 120 to 150 suspected perpetrators, approximately twenty per cent, thirty persons, are excluded from the Refugee Convention due to the crimes committed. Since the establishment of the specialized team in 1998, over 810 individuals have been denied a refugee status in the Netherlands on grounds of Article 1F of the Refugee Convention (HRW, 2014).

For reasons of confidentiality only a sample of 22 individuals of the research group that meets the selection criteria has been used. The anonymity of the people that received an 1F label has to be respected in such a way that the data cannot be traced back to any one individual.

4.1.1 Selection Criteria

For this research only a selection of the refugees are of interest in order to test the hypotheses as formulated. This research population consists of individuals from countries affected by the Arab Spring. The selection criteria for this research group are therefore:

1. the individual's country of origin, and;
2. the year this individual fled the country in conflict and arrived in The Netherlands.

The 'official start' of the Arab Spring is December 18, 2010, when Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire. The two criteria resulted in a data selection of individuals that requested a residence permit from 2011 onwards, and originate from troubled areas in the Arab world. The relevant Arab Spring countries that are included in the dataset are: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain. Eventually, after the two selection criteria have been applied and an at random sample has been executed, the research population consists of 22 individuals. Out of this research population, one third, i.e. seven individuals, have received the 1F-label. This is not a representation of the actual percentage of individuals who received the 1F status amongst refugees. Due to reasons of confidentiality, the ratio of people who received the 1F status amongst refugees is not being disclosed.

The unique character of this research population is given with the fact that the International Crimes Unit of the IND, that has provided the data, is an international pioneer in this field of exclusion (HRW, 2014). Based on this unique data file a relationship might be found between radicalization indicators and international crimes; at the same time a comparison can be made between those perpetrators and a larger group of innocent refugees that, although sharing the same background, did not commit any international crimes. In the end, this analysis might serve as a first attempt to make a profile of perpetrators of international crimes.

4.1.2 Collection of Data

A person can ask for a residence permit in the Netherlands in line with the Refugee Convention, when his personal safety in the country of origin is in danger. In order to determine whether this person meets the requirements, an investigation is conducted. For instance, someone who comes to the Netherlands for economic reasons does not receive a residence permit under the Refugee Treaty. The investigation starts with two interviews; a first hearing followed by a detailed hearing. In the first hearing an individual's identity and his travel route is determined. In the following detailed hearing, the motives why someone felt the need to flee are investigated. With the information from these two interviews indicators may come forward that the individual might be guilty of having committed crimes

that could cause him to receive the 1F label. If these indicators have come forward during the first two hearings, the investigation will be transferred to the International Crimes Unit of the IND. If after the first two hearings no indicators are found, the migrant is labelled a refugee and can receive a temporary residence permit.

If a case is being transferred to the International Crimes Unit, a so-called *extended 1F investigation* will be started. In an additional third 1F hearing more information is collected about this person, in order to draw the right conclusions. This supplementary hearing goes into more detail concerning the indicators that came forward in the first and detailed hearings. The information collected during these three hearings is placed in context using additional open source intelligence, for example reports of Human Rights Watch. After all this information has been gathered, a decision can be made whether or not there are serious reasons to consider an individual being guilty of committing international crimes. The next step is presenting the case to a judge, who decides whether the person receives the 1F label or not. When a person has received the 1F label, he does not get a residence permit and is therefore no longer welcome in the Netherlands (HRW, 2014).

4.2   The Methods

All the information collected during the first hearing, the follow-up detailed hearing, and, if applicable, the 1F investigation is used in order to test the hypotheses as formulated in this research. All cases therefore have been analysed based on a 'data processing card'. This card looks for variables and indicators in order to test the hypotheses. The processing card is included in the Appendix.

4.2.1 Dependent Variable & Control Group

The dependent variable in this research is the chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes, after a process of radicalization. Since the research population partly consists of individuals that have become perpetrators of international crimes, they are considered to have already gone through a process of radicalization. It is expected that when there is an overrepresentation of a hypothesized score on the independent variables amongst the radicalized in comparison to the innocent refugees, these variables have contributed to the radicalization process.

To make sure the independent variables correlate with becoming a perpetrator of international crimes, a second group, consisting of individuals that are considered to be innocent refugees, has been included. This group can be perceived as the control group. The main difference between the 1F group and the group of innocent refugees is that the individuals in the latter group have never been suspected of committing any international crimes. After the first and detailed follow-up hearings no indicators have been found that the person might be guilty of having committed international crimes. After these two hearings, the person received a temporary residence permit in line with the Refugee Convention.

4.2.2 Independent Variables

Hypotheses 1 through 12, as established in Chapter 3, can be tested by means of independent variables collected from the IND cases. The vast majority of these independent variables can be traced back to the first hearing and the detailed follow-up hearing. In some cases an adjustment in the collected variables had to be made when an 1F investigation revealed new information. The independent variables that have been investigated are summarized in the following table:

TABLE 1: INDEPENDENT VARIABLES UNDER INVESTIGATION

	Hypotheses	Independent Variables
1	People between 18 and 35 years old will have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Age
2	Men have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes	Gender
3	People with a higher socio-economic status have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Education & Job (December 2010-2014)
4	Individuals that are married do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Marital Status
5	Individuals with children do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Children
6	A criminal history does not increase the chances of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Criminal Record
7	Individuals that are member of a (conflict relevant) social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes	Group Membership
8	Individuals that are member of a (religious) radical or extremist social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes	Religious Group Membership
9	This relationship/effect will be stronger for members of a (religious) radical or extremist social group than for members of another social group	Group Membership & Religious Group Membership
10	People who believe they are treated unjustly, have an increased chance to express their frustration through acts of international crimes	(Group) Treated Unjustly
11	Members of a group, who feel their group is threatened, have an increased chance of defending their group with violent means, even in the form of international crimes	Group Threat
12	Members of a group that have more extremist ideas (due to isolation, feelings of out-group distrust and in-group superiority), have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes	Level of extremist ideas in group/organization

For Hypothesis 3 the independent variable *Socio-economic status* is required. This is done by combining the information of the independent variables *Education* and *Job*. The socio-economic status is normally based on the level of education, the status of the job, and the level of income, which are often strongly linked to each other (Pligt & Koomen, 2009). Because the variable *Income* is not included in the data collected by the IND, the status is defined by an individual's educational level and job status only. For the variable *Job*, the employment that was carried out during the turmoil is included; this means in practice the job an individual had after December 2010, when the turmoil started. Due to considerations

of anonymity, the specific job of an individual will not be disclosed, only the level of job status will be presented.

Hypotheses 10, 11, and 12 are about *perceived feelings*. They can therefore not be as easily operationalized with independent variables as described for the Hypotheses 1 to 9. Therefore, several indicators of perceived feelings have been used. These indicators can be traced back to the data collected during the 1F investigation, particularly in the additional third hearing. This means that only people that have received the 1F label are tested for Hypothesis 10, 11, and 12. These people are considered to be radicalized and therefore have a higher chance of scoring positive on these hypotheses.

As mentioned, for the Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12 indicators are used in order to find the perceived feelings of 'Treated Unjustly', 'Group Threat', and 'Level of extremist ideas in group/organization'. For this, a more specific research method had to be applied. When looking at the variable *(Group) Treated Unjustly*, discrimination is a clear indicator of this. Being discriminated against causes feelings of hate and wanting to fight for one's own rights.

With the second variable *(Group) Threat*, there are several indicators to look for. The first one is when (religious) groups are in conflict with each other. They perceive feelings of group threat. An example of this can be found between the Qaddadfa tribe and the Berber tribe in Libya, since the Qaddadfa tribe has been acting superior to the Berber tribe in society. A second marker is if there are (religious) groups which have become a target in the conflict. For instance, the Sunnis in the coastal areas in Syria have become victims of ethnic cleansings by the Shiite/Alawi Shabbiha militia. A third marker is when a specific group in the war is on the losing side. For instance, pro-regime forces in Libya felt a great threat when NATO decided to get involved and started to crush pro-regime forces. In addition to group threat, feelings of an individual threat may have the same effect. An example is a serious threat to one's own well-being. When looking at the countries the research population is coming from, there is often an absence of free choice due to the dictatorship.

The third variable *Level of extremist ideas in a group/organization*, has some indicators which may determine whether an individual is, or has been, a member of an extremist organization. These indicators are 'isolation', 'out-group distrust', 'in-group superiority', and the presence of a 'radical leader'. An example of a group with extreme ideas is the Khamis brigade in Libya, named after its leader Khamis, one of Qaddafi's sons. He had very radical ideas, which became even more radical when the war continued. When NATO got involved in the conflict, out-group distrust, particularly towards the West, increased. When propaganda, about alleged NATO motives to intervene, spread amongst the members of the brigade, feelings of isolation and distrust grew even stronger. At the same time feelings of superiority increased, when territory was (re)conquered. Being a member of such an extremist group is expected to be of very strong influence on the radicalization process, since this is the last step on the stairs up in the radicalization process. In operationalizing the independent variables of *perceived feelings*, the following scale will be used.

TABLE 2: GRADATION OF PERCEIVED FEELINGS

Scale	Meaning
- -	Indicators are certainly not present; Feeling is clearly absent, thus not of influence on being radicalized
-	Indicators are not present; Feeling is not present, thus probably not of influence on being radicalized
+/-	Some indicators are present; The influence of the feeling on being radicalized is questionable
+	Indicators are present; Feeling is present, thus probably of influence on being radicalized
++	Indicators are certainly present; Feeling is highly present, thus of influence on being radicalized

5   ANALYSIS & RESULTS

This chapter analyses the research population in order to test the various hypotheses. The outcomes of this analysis determine if the listed independent variables and indicators have any effect on whether or not an individual becomes a perpetrator of international crimes. The listed independent variables of paragraph 4.2.2 are factors that might have a contributing effect on the radicalization of an individual.

Because the number of individuals of the research population is 22, with only seven of them having received the 1F-label, the conclusions drawn from the analysis in this chapter have, of course, to be considered with caution. Nevertheless, this chapter has sought to identify two profiles: the normal refugees versus the radicalized refugees. A comparison of these two profiles illustrates where the groups differ, and which variables show similarities. Based on these profiles it can be decided whether or not the findings are in accordance with the formulated hypotheses.

Table 3 gives an overview of the data processing cards of the research population in total. As stated before, (the first) seven of the 22 individuals have received the 1F label, and are therefore considered to be radicalized. The other fifteen are labelled as 'innocent' refugees. The seven individuals that have received the 1F label will be referred to as the 'radicalized', while the individuals with a refugee status will simply be called 'refugees'. In addition, the table distinguishes two groups of variables: the independent variables and the perceived feelings. The independent variables included in the table are: *age* (group), *gender, religion, education, job, criminal record, marital status, children, and group membership* (relevant to the conflict). The perceived feelings included are: *treated unjustly, group threat*, and *level of extremist ideas in group/organisation.*

TABLE 3: VARIABLES AND INDICATORS OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION

	Dependent Variable	Independent Variables									Perceived feelings		
	1F-Label	Age group	Gender	Religion	Education	Job	Criminal record	Marital status	Children	Group membership	Treated unjustly	Group threat	Level of extremist ideas in group/organisation
1	Yes	45-49	Female	Islam	University Degree, Bachelor (Level 3)	High Job Status	No	Married	Yes	Employer and supporter of the Qaddafi regime,	+	+/-	++
2	Yes	30-34	Male	Islam	High School/ Secondary School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Employer and supporter of the Qaddafi regime, Benlashur tribe	--	++	+
3	Yes	30-34	Male	Islam	Secondary School, English course (Level 2)	Low Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Employer and supporter of the Qaddafi regime, Al-Tarhuni tribe,	--	++	++
4	Yes	30-34	Male	Islam	High School/Secondary School (Level 2)	Low Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Employer and supporter of the Qaddafi regime,	++	++	++
5	Yes	25-29	Male	Islam	Military faculty, infantry (Level 3)	High Job Status	No	Married	Yes	Employer and supporter of the Assad regime, Sunni	+/-	++	++
6	Yes	30-34	Male	Islam, Sunni	University Degree (Level 3)	High Job Status	No	Married	Yes	no	-	++	+/-
7	Yes	20-24	Male	Islam	Stopped in second class of High School (Level 1)	Average Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Employer and supporter of the Assad regime	+	++	++
8	No	25-29	Male	Coptic Orthodox Christian	High School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Deeply Religious			
9	No	25-29	Female	Christen, Orthodox	High School, trade (HBO) (Level 3)	Average Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Deeply Religious			
10	No	20-24	Male	Islam (Sunni)	High School, bachelor (Level 3)	Average Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Member of the gay community			
11	No	20-24	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Middle School (Level 1)	Low Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	Pro-Qaddafi volunteer			

12	No	30-34	Male	Islam	Primary education (Level 1)	Low Job Status	Yes	Unmarried	No	No			
13	No	44-49	Female	Christian	Engineering education (University) (Level 3)	High Job status	No	Married	Yes	Deeply Religious			
14	No	25-29	Female	Islam (Sunni)	High School/ Secondary school (Level 2)	Low Job Status	No	Married	Yes	No			
15	No	25-29	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Secondary education (MBO) (Level 1)	Low Job Status	No	Married	Yes	(peaceful) Protestor against Assad regime			
16	No	50-54	Female	Christianity	Until 5th grade (Level 1)	Low Job Status	No	Married	Yes	Deeply Religious, Armenian			
17	No	45-49	Female	Islam (Sunni)	High School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	No	Divorced	Yes	No			
18	No	45-49	Male	Islam (Sunni)	University: English Literature, Arabian and translating (Level 3)	High Job Status	No	Married	Yes	No			
19	No	20-24	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Secondary School (Level 2)	Low Job Status	No	Unmarried	No	No			
20	No	30-34	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Preparatory high school (Level 2)	Low Job Status	No	Married	Yes	Stateless			
21	No	40-44	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Secondary School, until the 9th year (Level 1)	Low Job Status	No	Married	Yes	Anti-Assad protester			
22	No	50-54	Male	Islam (Sunni)	Secondary School, Science (Level 2)	Average Job Status	No	Married	Yes	No			

5.1 Comparing the Profiles

Before being able to determine whether the formulated hypotheses should be either confirmed or refuted, a first comparison between the two groups of refugees and radicalized has been made. Table 4 displays these general profiles.

TABLE 4: PROFILES OF RADICALIZED AND REFUGEES

Independent Variables	Radicalized (1F-labelled) (N=7)	Refugees (N=15)
Average Age	**31.57**	**35.53**
Gender	**1** female, **6** male	**5** female, **10** male
Religion	7 Islamic	4 Christen, 11 Islamic
Average Educational level (from 1 to 3)	**2.29**	**1.93**
Average Job level (from 1 to 3)	**2.14**	**1.6**
Criminal record	-	1
Marital status	3 married, 4 unmarried	8 married, 7 unmarried
Children	3 have children, 4 do not	9 have children, 6 do not

The most interesting results in this table are the significant differences between the radicalized and the refugees in age, gender, level of education, and level of job. Looking at age, the average age amongst the group of radicalized is younger than amongst the refugees. The difference in the female representation between the radicalized and the refugees is striking. Compared to refugees, males are overrepresented in the group of radicalized. In comparing the two profiles, the level of education is another remarkable variable in this table. The radicalized have a higher average level of education than the refugees. Differences in profiles are also found when looking at the average job level of the two profiles; here the difference is even greater.

The independent variable *group membership* is not included in Table 4, but deserves particular mention. For this variable, only (social) groups have been taken into account which are relevant in the conflict the individuals come from. Examples of this are militant groups and brigades, being either a supporter or opponent of the regime, or being part of a religious group.

A very remarkable result, and contrary to what initially was expected, is found amongst the radicalized, thus the people that have received the 1F label. Six out of seven radicalized individuals were supporters of the regime, while none were opponents and/or have been active as rebels. Based on the (limited) data available, it is unfortunately not possible to give a clear and unambiguous explanation of what causes this result. A possible explanation might be that the people who were supporters of the regime, were initially only participating in the fights because they had to, a consequence of their compulsory military service. When the risks of becoming a victim became too large, they were more likely to flee the country than those who initially participated in the fighting based on their own initiative.

Further research would be necessary to explain this remarkable result. For the results of this research it is important to keep in mind that the opposition side of the regimes is underrepresented, which may therefore give a different impression of reality.

5.2 Testing the Hypotheses

Now that the general profiles of the two groups of the radicalized individuals versus the refugees have been compared in order to find either matching or diverging relations, the various hypotheses can be tested. The results will be compared with the formulated hypotheses in order to determine whether they should be refuted or confirmed.

5.2.1 Hypothesis 1: Age

In analysing the relationship between age and perpetrators of international crimes, it is expected that being a (young(er)) adult will have a contributing effect on the radicalization process and subsequently on committing international crimes. The critical age group, as explained in the theory, is the one between 18 and 35 years old. By looking at Table 4, it can indeed be seen that those who are radicalized are of a significant average younger age than the refugees. Out of the seven radicalized people, six are younger than 35 (see Table 3). In comparison to the group of refugees, the age group 18-35 amongst the radicalized is overrepresented. Based on the results one can conclude that the percentage of those belonging to the critical age group of 18-35 in the radicalized population is greater than amongst the refugees. Hypothesis 1 is confirmed:

> ✓ *H1: People between 18 and 35 years old will have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.*

5.2.2 Hypothesis 2: Gender

When looking at the relation between gender and radicalization, it is expected that being a male person will have a contributing effect on the radicalization process and subsequently on committing international crimes. Males are thus more likely to radicalize. Looking at the data in Table 4, it is found that amongst the radicalized group the males are strongly overrepresented. This would mean that being male has indeed a contributing effect on the radicalization process. When comparing the representation of males amongst the radicalized with those amongst the refugees, an interesting result is found. Also within the group of refugees there is an overrepresentation of males, but not as strong as amongst the radicalized. The finding that apparently males are overrepresented in both groups may have to do with the fact that more often than not it are male refugees that flee first, after which they get settled and then try to fly in their families.

The fact that the overrepresentation of males is stronger amongst the radicalized than amongst the refugees nevertheless shows that being male has a contributing effect on the

radicalization process. Hypothesis 2 can be confirmed, although additional research based on a larger research group would be desirable:

✓ *H2: Men have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.*

5.2.3 Hypothesis 3: Socio-Economic Status

The third relation that has been tested is the one between socio-economic status and radicalization. Because the variable *socio-economic status* in itself is not a variable that can be measured in quantitative terms, it had to be reconstructed using other variables which can be measured. This reconstructed variable of socio-economic status is called a proxy variable. The proxy variable has been reconstructed by using the measurable variables *educational level* and *job status*. In order to determine the level of one's socio-economic status, the following scale, as displayed in Table 5, has been used:

TABLE 5: LEVEL OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Scale	Meaning
- - (1)	Person has a low educational level and a low job status
- (2)	Person has either a low educational level, or a low job status
+/- (3)	Person has both an educational level and job status of mediocre level
+ (4)	Person has either a high educational level, or a high job status
++ (5)	Person has a high educational level and a high job status

In order to ascribe the proper scale to an individual's educational level and job status this scale has been applied to each person. Table 3 includes the educational level and job status of each individual, which are used in order to create the proxy variable. The scaling of this proxy variable is displayed in Table 6. With the attribution of this scale, the average socio-economic level amongst a group of people can be determined.

The group of people who are radicalized have a socio-economic status average of 3.57 on a five-point scale. Roughly speaking, this means that their socio-economic status with a level of 3.57 is above average (3.00). When looking at the socio-economic status of refugees, an average of only 2.53 is calculated. This is much lower than the one for the radicalized group, and means a below average socio-economic status.

Within the group of radicalized individuals there is an overrepresentation of individuals with a higher average socio-economic status compared to the group of refugees. The difference of the socio-economic status averages between the two groups is significant, which leads to the conclusion that Hypothesis 3 can be confirmed:

✓ *H3: People with a higher social-economic status have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.*

TABLE 6: EDUCATION, JOB AND THE PROXY VARIABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

	Dependent Variable	Independent Variables		Proxy variable
	1F-Label	Education	Job	Socio-Economic Status
1	Yes	University Degree, Bachelor (Level 3)	High Job Status	++ (5)
2	Yes	High School/ Secondary School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	+/- (3)
3	Yes	Secondary School, English course (Level 2)	Low Job Status	-- (2)
4	Yes	High School/Secondary School (Level 2)	Low Job Status	- (2)
5	Yes	Military faculty, infantry (Level 3)	High Job Status	++ (5)
6	Yes	University Degree (Level 3)	High Job Status	++ (5)
7	Yes	Stopped in second class of High School (Level 1)	Average Job Status	- (2)
8	No	High School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	+/- (3)
9	No	High School, trade (HBO) (Level 3)	Average Job Status	+ (4)
10	No	High School, bachelor (Level 3)	Average Job Status	+ (4)
11	No	Middle School (Level 1)	Low Job Status	- - (1)
12	No	Primary education (Level 1)	Low Job Status	- - (1)
13	No	Engineering education (University) (Level 3)	High Job status	++ (5)
14	No	High School/ Secondary school (Level 2)	Low Job Status	- (2)
15	No	Secondary education (MBO) (Level 1)	Low Job Status	- - (1)
16	No	Until 5th grade (Level 1)	Low Job Status	- - (1)
17	No	High School (Level 2)	Average Job Status	+ (3)
18	No	University: English Literature, Arabian (Level 3)	High Job Status	++ (5)
19	No	Secondary School (Level 2)	Low Job Status	- (2)
20	No	Preparatory high school (Level 2)	Low Job Status	- (2)
21	No	Secondary School, until the 9th year (Level 1)	Low Job Status	- - (1)
22	No	Secondary School, Science (Level 2)	Average Job Status	+/- (3)

5.2.4 Hypotheses 4 and 5: Family Situation

Hypotheses 4 and 5 predict the relationship between one's family situation and radicalization. First, there is an expectation that being married has no contributing effect on the radicalization process and the subsequent international crimes. The group of radicalized individuals contains three married and four unmarried people (see Table 4). Comparing this finding with the group of refugees, a similar result has been found. Amongst the refugees eight individuals are married while seven are not. There is no over-, or under-representation of either married or unmarried individuals amongst radicalized, when compared to the refugees. This would mean that being married has indeed no contributing effect. Because the ratios of married and unmarried individuals amongst the radicalized in comparison with the refugees show no significant difference, it can be concluded that marriage has no contributing effect on the radicalization process. Hypothesis 4 is therefore confirmed:

> ✓ H4: People who are married do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

The second variable that has been used in order to determine the relationship between family situation and radicalization is whether an individual has the responsibility to take care of children. Of the people that have received the 1F label, three have children and four do not (see Table 4). Amongst the group of refugees, nine have children and six do not. Although there is a slight underrepresentation of radicalized individuals with children, the difference of one is not enough to label it as significant. Just like with the variable regarding the marital status, there is no (clear) over- or under-representation of having children amongst radicalized when compared to refugees. This implies that having children has indeed no contributing effect. Based on these findings, the following can be concluded: having children does not have a contributing effect on the radicalization process and the subsequent international crimes. Hypothesis 5 thus can also be confirmed:

> ✓ H5: People with children do not have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

In comparing the findings of Hypotheses 4 and 5 an (to a certain extent obvious) observation has to be made. The people who are married (often) also have children. There is one exception of a woman who got divorced, thus is no longer married, but does have children. The differences in findings between Hypotheses 4 and 5 about the small overrepresentation of having children amongst the refugees can be explained by this one case.

5.2.5 Hypothesis 6: Criminal History

The next hypothesis looks at the relationship between being a criminal offender and radicalization. Based on previous research and theoretical considerations, the expectation is that a criminal history does not have a contributing effect on the radicalization process and

subsequently on committing international crimes. In order to test this expectation, the relationship between having a criminal record and being radicalized has been analysed. In the group of the radicalized, no one has a criminal record. Comparing this with the group of the refugees, only one has a criminal record, which means no over- or underrepresentation of radicalized individuals with a criminal history. Since there is no significant difference between the criminal history of the radicalized and the refugees, the expectation that a criminal history has no contributing effect turns out to be right. Hypothesis 6 can be confirmed:

> ✓ H6: A criminal history does not increase the chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.

5.2.6 Hypotheses 7, 8 and 9: Social Identity

Hypotheses 7, 8, and 9 formulate expectations of a relationship between membership of a conflict relevant social group and radicalization. Conflict relevant social groups are perceived to be those social groups that determine a person's identity and which are affected by or under threat as a consequence of the conflict. The turmoil in the MENA region highlights and strengthens the importance of these social groups for an individual's identity. The threats against these conflict relevant groups are seen as an attack on an individual's social identity. This causes them to act defensively and therefore act violently. This leads to the expectation that being a member of a conflict relevant social group has a contributing effect on the radicalization process. The issue of social identity is therefore approached with membership of a conflict relevant group. Table 7 gives a summarized overview of (conflict relevant) group membership. The results are again derived from Table 3.

TABLE 7: GROUP MEMBERSHIP

	(Conflict Relevant) Social Group	Radical or Extremist group
Radicalized (N=7)	6 yes, 1 no	5 yes, 2 no
Refugees (N=15)	7 yes, 8 no	15 no

First, the expectation has been tested that being a member of a (conflict relevant) social group has a contributing effect on radicalization. Table 7 shows that six out of seven radicalized individuals are member of a (conflict relevant) social group. When these findings are compared with the group of refugees, a significant difference can be found. Amongst the refugees, seven are members of a (conflict relevant) social group while eight are not. There is thus an overrepresentation of members of (conflict relevant) social groups amongst the radicalized. The expectation turns indeed out to be valid. Being a member of a (conflict relevant) social group has a contributing effect on radicalization and subsequently on committing international crimes. Hypothesis 7 can thus be confirmed:

✓ *H7: Individuals that are member of a (conflict relevant) social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.*

Next, the relation between being a member of a (religious) radical or extremist social group and radicalization has been tested. Again, we refer here to radical or extremist groups which are relevant to the conflict. Table 7 shows that amongst the radicalized five are member of an extremist social group and two are not. Comparing this finding with the group of refugees, a significant difference is visible. Amongst the refugees no one is a member of such an extremist social group. An overrepresentation of being a member of an extremist group amongst the radicalized, when compared to the refugees, can be seen. Because of this significant difference in membership of an extremist group between the radicalized and the refugees, the expected relation is indeed the case. Being a member of (religious) radical or extreme social group has a contributing effect on radicalization and subsequently on committing international crimes. Hypothesis 8 can thus be confirmed:

✓ *H8: Individuals that are member of a (religious) radical or extremist social group have an increased chance of becoming perpetrators of international crimes.*

In order to test the third expectation, the 22 individuals researched are being reclassified. Instead of classifying them in either radicalized or refugees, they are classified as either no social group membership, being member of a (conflict relevant) social group, or being member of a radical or extremist social group. Next, the group of individuals that are member of a (conflict relevant) social group are compared with members of a radical or extremist social group. It is expected that being a member of an extreme social group has a stronger contributing effect on the radicalization process and subsequently on committing international crimes, than being a member of a (conflict relevant) social group.

TABLE 8: COMPARING MEMBERSHIPS

	Radicalized	Refugees
(Conflict Relevant) Social Group *(N=13)*	6	5
Radical or Extremist group *(N=5)*	5	none

Of the sample of the research population, which consists of 22 people in total, 13 are member of a social group. From these 13 members of a (conflict relevant) social group, six are radicalized and five are not. Comparing this with members of a radical or extremist social group, five people in this research population joined an extremist social group. All of these five people are radicalized. This means a strong overrepresentation of radicalized people amongst members of a radical social group when compared to the members of a (conflict relevant) social group. As Table 8 shows, there is a significant difference between being a member of a social group and being a member of an extremist group. Being a member of a (religious) radical or extreme social group has a stronger contributing effect on radicalization

and the subsequent international crimes, than being a member of a non-extremist social group. Hypothesis 9 can be confirmed:

✓ *H9: This relationship/effect will be stronger for members of a (religious) radical or extremist social group than for members of another social group.*

5.2.7 Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12: Perceived Feelings

In order to test Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12, a scale has been used in order to label a person's level of perceived feelings. These perceived feelings are (mostly) retrieved from the additional hearing during the 1F investigation. Since the individuals who have received the refugee status did not undergo an additional 1F investigation, less is known about their background and their perceived feelings. This is why the results of the analysis of perceived feelings amongst the radicalized individuals cannot be compared with those of the refugees. Nevertheless, in order to still value the strength of the relations, the results of Hypotheses 10, 11, and 12 are compared with each other. In doing so, the perceived feeling which has the most explanatory value on becoming a perpetrator of international crimes might be found.

TABLE 9: LEVEL OF PERCEIVED FEELINGS

Scale	Meaning
- - (1)	Indicators are certainly not present; Feeling is clearly absent, thus not of influence on being radicalized
- (2)	Indicators are not present; Feeling is not present, thus probably not of influence on being radicalized
+/- (3)	Some indicators are present; The influence of the feeling on being radicalized is questionable
+ (4)	Indicators are present; Feeling is present, thus probably of influence on being radicalized
++ (5)	Indicators are certainly present; Feeling is highly present, thus of influence on being radicalized

In order to test Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12, a similar scale as used for testing Hypothesis 3 has been applied. This scale is presented in Table 9. Scales 1 and 2 mean an absence of perceived feelings, thus a negative score. Scales 4 and 5 mean the presence of the perceived feelings, thus a positive score. A score which is above the average of 3.00 is therefore perceived as a positive effect and shows a contributing effect on the radicalization process. When the score is lower than average (<3.00), it means there is no positive effect between the perceived feelings and radicalization; the perceived feelings have no contributing effect on radicalization.

In the case of Hypothesis 10, the scale determines the level of injustice a person has experienced. For Hypothesis 11, the scale measures the level of (group) threat a person experienced. And lastly, for Hypothesis 12 the scale measures the level of extremist ideas an individual experienced within a group or organisation.

	Treated unjustly		Group threat		Level of extremist ideas in group/organisation	
1	+	4	+/-	3	++	5
2	--	1	++	5	+	4
3	--	1	++	5	++	5
4	++	5	++	5	++	5
5	+/-	3	++	5	++	5
6	-	2	++	5	+/-	3
7	+	4	++	5	++	5
Total		20		33		32
Average		**2.86**		**4.71**		**4.57**

Table 10 displays the level of perceived feelings per radicalized individual. Based on this table, Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12 will be tested. Hypothesis 10 formulates the expectation that feelings of being treated unjustly cause a motive and legitimation for a person to fight for what they believe they deserve. On a five-point scale (see Table 9) the radicalized individuals score an average of 2.86 on feelings of being treated unjustly. Since this score is below 3.00, it can be concluded that feelings of being treated unjustly has no contributing effect on radicalization. Hypothesis 10 is thus refuted:

> **✖** *H10: People who believe they are treated unjustly, have an increased chance to express their frustration through acts of international crimes.*

Hypothesis 11 expects a positive relation between (group) threat and radicalization. Feeling threatened by another may cause someone to fight. Indicators of this feeling are: (groups) being in conflict, being on the losing side, or (groups) becoming a target. Also personal threat can act as a motivation for a person to radicalize and commit international crimes. Looking at the result in Table 10, the radicalized people have an average score of 4.71 on feelings of threat. This is way above the average of 3.00 and may therefore be considered to have a strong contributing effect on radicalization. Hypothesis 11 can be confirmed:

> **✓** *H11: Members of a group, who feel their group is threatened, have an increased chance of defending their group with violent means, even in the form of international crimes.*

The last hypothesis looks at the relationship between membership of a group with extremist ideas and radicalization. Because people within a radical group are often isolated from friends and reality, distrust everything outside the group, create a feeling of being superior to others, and follow a radical leader, indicators of having extremist ideas are: isolation, out-group distrust, in-group superiority, and the presence of a radical leader. Looking at Table 10, once more a high average score of 4.57 is found amongst the radicalized individuals.

Because 4.57 is >3.00, being a member of a group that follows more extreme ideas has again a strong contributing effect on radicalization and subsequently on committing international crimes. Hypothesis 12 can be confirmed:

    ✓ *H12: Members of a group that have more extremist ideas (due to isolation, feelings of out-group distrust and in-group superiority), have an increased chance of becoming a perpetrator of international crimes.*

When the findings of Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12 are compared, the conclusion can be made that feelings of being threatened (Hypothesis 11), and membership to a social group with extreme ideas (Hypothesis 12) have the strongest contributing effect on radicalization. The third feeling, being treated unjustly, has no contributing effect on radicalization.

6 CONCLUSION

The goal of this research was to investigate whether or not there are significant differences between the individuals that have received the 1F label because they (allegedly) have committed serious crimes and are thus considered radicalized, and those individuals that have received the refugee status and are in this context considered to be innocent. The people who are considered radicalized are suspected to be guilty of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes during the turmoil in the Arab world. These crimes are examples of extreme criminal acts which cross 'moral' and/or 'legal' thresholds beyond the 'standard norms'. Previous research has shown that radicalization processes are very influential in one's development to participate in extreme criminal acts beyond the 'standard norm'. Although people in war situations already live in an 'un-normal' setting, war itself is not a determining element, since there are also people in the same situation, and in way larger numbers, that have not crossed these 'moral' and/or 'legal' thresholds. The question therefore emerged: to what extent do these perpetrators of international crimes differ from those who come from similar backgrounds, but who did not commit international crimes? Which differences in the profiles of the radicalized and the innocents have contributed to the radicalization process and subsequently to committing international crimes?

The analysis in this thesis is based on a comparison between the two profiles: perpetrators of international crimes versus innocent refugees. An attempt was made to find to what extent the profile of the group of radicalized individuals corresponds to, or significantly differs from, the profile of the innocent refugees. In doing so, the research has aimed to analyse and identify indicators that have a contributing effect on the radicalization process among the individuals that have committed international crimes. The central research question of this thesis is:

> ➢ *To what extent do perpetrators of international crimes differ from 'innocent' refugees, originating from conflict areas caused by the recent turmoil in the Arab World, when looking at indicators of the radicalization process?*

6.1 Profiling Perpetrators of International Crimes

In Chapter 5, an analysis of the data concerning the radicalized and the refugees has been made. After a comparison of these two groups an attempt can be made to (roughly) identify a profile of perpetrators of international crimes. Such a profile of the perpetrators can be given by specifically looking at those variables that distinguish the radicalized from the refugees. For a start, it is important to keep in mind that these perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes, all lived in the conflict context of the Arab world. For people coming from this conflict region the following variables (might)

have had a contributing effect on their radicalization and, subsequently, committing international crimes:

1. The individual is between 18 and 35 years old;
2. The individual is of male gender;
3. The individual has a higher social-economic status (meaning, in this context, a higher educational level and a higher job status);
4. The individual is, or at least has been, a member of a radical or extremist social group.

An individual's family situation, marital status, children, or criminal history have no contributing effect to the radicalization of an individual. All of these variables where comparably present in both the group of radicalized and the group of innocent refugees.

In addition to these profile characteristics, particularly perceived feelings have shown to have a large contribution effect on the radicalization process. Such feelings the radicalized may have experienced, might be realistic or not. Experiencing a high level of threat, either personal or in the context of a social group, has a contributing effect on the radicalization process and subsequently on committing international crimes. Membership of an extremist social group, causing feelings of out-group distrust, in-group loyalty and feelings of superiority, also has a contributing effect on the radicalization process.

In conclusion, the analysis of this thesis has shown that those who are radicalized and have committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes are perhaps surprisingly, not that different from normal innocent refugees. These perpetrators of international crimes are in many ways the same as any other; they are as normal or abnormal as any other. This conclusion is comparable with previous findings regarding Nazi 'psychopaths' and terrorists. Comparing the personalities of these perpetrators with average Americans showed the same as this research. This finding is very important to keep in mind when deciding how best to respond in practice to radicalized individuals who committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious non-political crimes.

Another important, and to a certain extent unexpected conclusion which can be made is that, at the moment, individuals from the MENA region that have received an 1F label are often supporters instead of opponents of the regimes. This was also seen among the refugees coming from Afghanistan. These findings are important, especially against the background of the – sometimes exaggerated – reactions of the Dutch population and politicians. Amongst the large influx of refugees coming from the MENA region there are perhaps 'dangerous elements', but they are not necessarily the Jihadists.

6.2 Applying the Results into Practice

The theories used in this research have resulted in more understanding of the people who radicalize during the recent turmoil in the Arab world. It is not easy to identify and categorize these perpetrators, to label them with a particular typical *radicalized* profile. This new insight is becoming more relevant when looking at the recent developments in Libya, Syria, Iraq and the Islamic State (IS). As a consequence of the ever growing level of violence in the Middle East, it might be expected that there will be an additional increase of people

fleeing from this region to the Netherlands. This is why a proper response *for* and *to* the migrants is needed. The governments of the countries which offer help and give shelter to these refugees need to know how best to deal with potential militant refugees from these conflict areas. Based on this research, immigration officers have to realize that the perpetrators are people who easily hide themselves amongst the large number of refugees, and also that perpetrators sometimes (or often?) have a different background than expected, either by the authorities or the general public.

For the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND), and especially the 'International Crimes Unit', this research can help to uncover these perpetrators amongst the majority. Although a clearly defined profile of perpetrators of international crimes is not possible, the increased knowledge of those variables perpetrators differ from when compared with the innocent refugees, can help filter out asylum seekers who committed international crimes from those who are innocent and legitimate refugees.

6.3 Reflections on Further Research

As a follow-up to this study, the following improvements could be made in new research. In this research, the people that have fled the violence in the Arab world are mostly those who supported the regime. The people fighting the government, the so-called rebels, are underexposed in this research. This may influence the conclusions which make it less representative for all perpetrators of international crimes in the recent turmoil in the Arab World. A simple way to tackle this problem is to conduct this same research again, but with a larger research population over a longer time period. It takes some time before an asylum seeker has gone through the complete procedure and receives the 1F label. In a few years' time, more cases and 1F investigations will be closed and the relative lack of data, including the (possible) underrepresentation of rebels, could be tackled.

For further research some interesting suggestions can be made based on the findings of this thesis. First, it would be interesting to compare the findings of this research population with people coming from other conflict areas in the world. Are there similarities between the perpetrators of international crimes coming from different conflict areas? Such a cross-cultural perspective might result in a further refinement of the profile of perpetrators of international crimes. Or is the specific conflict context of such an influence that a different profile is more suitable? Secondly, the recent developments in the conflict-ridden region call for a further investigation, specifically in identifying a profile of perpetrators fighting at the side of IS. Since for now they still seem to be on the winning side, supporters of IS do not flee nor are asking for asylum. This category is therefore not yet included in the data collection of the IND. Given the involvement of IS in extreme violent acts, this would be a very interesting group to investigate in relation with the radicalization process.

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8 APPENDICES

> *Data Processing Card*

Variables		Remarks
Age		
Gender		
Religion		
Education		
Job *(Dec 2010-2014)*		
Criminal record		
Marital Status		
Children		
Group membership		

TABLE 11: INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

'Perceived Feelings':

→ Which feelings have contributed in the person committing international crimes?

1. (Group) treated unjustly
Indicators: Discrimination

2. Group threat
Indicators: (Religious) groups in conflict with each other
    (Religious) groups have become target in conflict
    Either pro-regime or pro-rebellions are on losing hand
  Individual threat:
Indicator: Absent of free choice (own well-being at risk)

3. Member of extremist group/organization
Indicators: Isolation
    Out-group distrust
    In-group Superiority