

**Annual EENeT Conference 2012
in Budapest/HU**

**New Catalysts for Violent Extremism
and Terrorism –
Smoke on the Horizon?**

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About the European Expert Network on Terrorism Issues

The EENeT is an independent, non-partisan consortium of terrorism experts from the law enforcement agencies / relevant authorities and the field of science

It is dedicated to a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency analysis and research which is seen as a prerequisite to provide comprehensive insights into the complexity of the phenomenon "terrorism".

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Introductory Considerations to the EENeT Working Paper Series

Dear Reader!

We would like to introduce the 'EENeT Working Paper Series' (EWPS) to you. Before focusing on the content of this issue, we would like to briefly outline the ideas and circumstances which motivated us to publish an electronic based format. The overall objective of the EWPS is to encourage and facilitate the exchange of information and experiences within the heterogeneous world of the EENeT. As you know, the main objective behind the EENeT is to provide a forum, a constantly developing think-tank, where multi-perspective discussions on the phenomenon of terrorism can be held between professionals in the field of counter terrorism and terrorism research. The EENeT addresses both practitioners and theorists / academics at an international and particularly European level.

However, the idea to encourage practitioners and theorists to share their experiences is challenging not least because these professionals work in a broad field of diverse institutional contexts – such as police, intelligence services, academia, politics and the so called civil society. This, however, presents a two folded problem: On the one hand not all research results and confidential information are suitable for publication and should be accessible exclusively to EENeT members only. On the other hand there is an urgent need to share more and more terrorism-related and preventive knowledge with the public, with civil society – not least because countering terrorism is a challenge which confronts society as a whole. As a compromise between these two diverse requirements we have decided to publish the electronic 'EENeT Working Paper Series' (EWPS), which will be accessible to everyone on our website – regardless of professional, institutional or national borders.

The original idea to make the EENeT accessible to a broader group of experts in this way was formulated at the EENeT's annual conference in Budapest in 2012. This conference was an important step in the development of our EENeT community insofar as it was the first time that our annual meeting was organized in an Eastern European country with financial and organizational support provided by the Hungarian National Institute of Criminology (NIC), the Hungarian General Prosecutor's Office and the International Training Centre (ITC) of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior. The location was not selected by chance, but served the goal of involving professionals from the new Eastern European member states in our professional work more intensively and systematically.

In the run-up to the conference a debate unfolded around the question to what extent EENeT should be open for the public and the media. That discussion contributed significantly to the decision to establish the EWPS, the first number of which we are happy to present here to the interested readers.

The EENeT Working Paper Series will contain summaries of conference presentations as well as other findings provided by members or working groups of the EENeT in the periods between the annual meetings, which have been approved for publication by the authors.

The EWPS is not a peer-reviewed journal for two main reasons. Firstly, the EENeT simply does not have access to the resources which would allow us to realize such a process. Secondly, a peer-review would be counter productive to the goal to disseminate new findings quickly and respond on new developments flexibly. Moreover, due to the special character of the EENeT as an informal 'think-tank', we feel it would be of greater benefit to all to encourage a broader spectrum of contributors, sharing their findings and ideas and thus stimulating discussion and innovation.

You now hold the first issue of the EWPS in your hands. This issue partly documents the broad spectrum of presentations and discussions held at the EENeT conference in Budapest in 2012. The issue contains two short studies by East European scientists who have approved their papers for publication.

The article by Erzsébet Rózsa of the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs 'Arab Spring, Arab Winter? Chances of Transition in the Arab Countries' touches on a still unanswered question. Mrs. Rózsa's analyses circles around the thesis that elements of the traditional patrimonial system are more likely to lead to "new neo-patrimonial models" than to a "new democratic development" in the Arab Spring countries.

Miroslav Mareš and Kateřina Tvrdá of the Masaryk University focus on new forms of manifestation of extremist violence in Eastern Central Europe. Recent developments are linked to interethnic tensions in which the Roma population plays a relevant role and to "new forms of extremist organisations and style", especially in the broader spectrum of right-wing extremist milieus.

We hope you enjoy reading this first issue and that you also might be interested in contributing at a later date.

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Steering Committee of the EENeT
(April 2014)

Arab Spring, Arab Winter? Chances of Transition in the Arab Countries

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The series of events commonly referred to as the Arab Spring started in the very end of 2010 and have brought about changes, or rather have set into motion processes, the outcome of which is still unclear. Many have painted a dark picture already referring to the events as Arab Winter rather, but as it was too early to break out in euphoria when it started, it is too early to doom it today when the transitions have not been terminated. In the present lecture the unfolding events shall be analyzed on the basis of three questions: what transitions started in the Arab Spring, what impact these had for the Islamists, and what impact these had for Europe.

What transitions?

Arab traditional, patrimonial societies have been exposed to two major challenges posed by - primarily - Europe: modernization (in the European sense) and globalization. European modernization reached the Arab world at the end of the 18th century and was realized in various forms from colonies through protectorates to military governance and mandates. In this sense even the establishment of kingdoms and sheikhdoms in the Arab Peninsula could be considered as a kind of modernization since there had been no organized state there before. The globalization of the second half of the 20th century was in a way the continuation and expansion of this modernization. Great power rivalry, migration of different peoples to and from, etc. have given a new dimension to the exposure of the Arab world and societies to the outside world, which left a huge impact and initiated a social transformation the extent of which is still unclear.

The Arab societies have become characterized by a duality that has evolved as the result of modernization and globalization, between the two extremes of the traditional social order and western democracy. The transition from one to the other will be a long and arduous process, and as far as it can be seen now, in the meanwhile a mixture of the two is prevailing. In the traditional order there is a hierarchy of the ruler (be it a monarch, a sheikh, a president or a prime minister) and the subjects, where the ruler is responsible for the well-being of his subjects and rules them in a morally (and religiously) just way in return for their accepting his rule. This social contract is formally concluded with the bay'a or oath of allegiance, which is paid to the ruler by the leaders and elders of the community upon his coming into office. As long

as the ruler is capable of carrying out his side of the contract, his rule cannot be legally questioned, and any disagreement is considered a rebellion, which he has all the legal right to put out by any means. However, should he present signs of weakness or lack of ability to keep and preserve order, or to provide for his people, the very basis of the social contract comes into question. (When Tunisian president Ben Ali or Egyptian president Mubarak started to speak of giving reforms to satisfy the people, they practically acknowledged that their rule had been unjust, i.e. they had violated the contract, which thus ceased to be valid and both leaders had to go. However, when Libyan leader Qaddafi was speaking of traitors, etc, and promised to clear Libya from door to door, house to house, he projected the capable leader, whose task under the contract, is to restore order. And the same notion is the basis of Bashar al-Asad's still being in power in Syria and still being followed by a huge segment – even if not the whole – of the Syrian people.)

Within this social order the ruler rules with the help of his clientele and the place of a person within the hierarchy is defined by his closeness to the centre, i.e. the ruler. This traditional structure provides the framework where decisions are made along the traditional lines of decision-making. This is usually referred to as the “real sphere” of power.

However, under the pressure of modernization and globalization alien structures and formats have been introduced. The colonizing powers – France, Great Britain, Italy – came to modernize the Arab lands and populations, and in the course of this they pressed their institutions on them, set the boundaries, introduced the Code Civil, etc. These – foreign and alien - formats were left there after the decolonization, and have even been strengthened by the globalization, which increasingly succeeded to turn these institutions into international ‘norms’. The Arab umma was split into several ‘nation-states’, with boundaries in many places where there had been no fixed borders before; kings were put on thrones and when they were swept away typically by military coup d'états, republics were formed in their places, with parliaments, elections, constitutions, etc. Under the globalizing norms international law, human rights, representative democracy, elections, etc were – nominally - accepted, but all these have remained alien, the “virtual sphere” of power.

As the result, in a process of adaptation, the “real sphere” actors undertook to play the game within the “virtual sphere”, but decision-making and rule have still remained performed according to the traditional order. Parties were established and elections were held, but the ruler's party was always the most populous, usually winning by an overwhelming majority (if not the total) of the votes. The authoritarian nature of the regimes disguised the patrimonial nature of the society and projected a false image – an image, which could be understood and analyzed in the western terms of thinking. This image was

further enhanced by the fact that in the Cold War several Arab countries were the “allies” of the Soviet Union, thus “socialist authoritarianism” was projected onto the “friendly” Arab states, further hiding the truth.

Arab participation and action in international cooperation and campaigns was also characterized by this duality. In 2001, when US President George W. Bush launched the war on terror, the Arab leaders joined the initiative at once. In the terms of their “real sphere” terrorists were fighting against the existing order, therefore, the rulers were entitled to, and even bound to do everything in their power to restore order. In that, the US was a partner and an ally. However, when Bush launched the Greater Middle East Initiative to complement the War on Terror, and wanted to democratize the Greater Middle East, he stepped over into the “virtual sphere”, where his action could not be followed, nor interpreted. Consequently, the initiative was not received well and was widely complained about, especially since democratization in the region would have been equivalent with the termination of the ruler of the same Arab allies, who followed the US call for the War on Terror. In the end, the US had to decide between democratization and stability, the latter implying maintaining the traditional order of power, and democratization slowly faded from the international discourse. However, the democratization discourse may have had a much longer lasting and a much deeper running impact than expected, and it is still not clear what role it really played in the Arab Spring.

The adaptation/transformation of the Arab world and these dual societies under pressure from modernization/globalization is all the more difficult if we take it into consideration that democracy has no one unified, homogenous model either. There have been several models developed from the ancient Greek democracy to the modern age US democracy, which is usually taken as a point of reference. But US democracy is special in the sense that every participant there is an immigrant, while other democratic countries have differences in their models. Yet, generally it should be observed that the process of democratization has taken a long time, decades or even centuries to develop. What’s more, the pattern of organization is strikingly different than in the traditional patrimonial societies: in democracies instead of family ties connecting groups of people, it is independent individuals, who unite in order to realize their joint interests and form parties, trade unions, etc.

What transitions in the Arab Spring?

The Arab Spring surprised everyone. It has clearly shown that in spite of the traditional character, there have been developments influencing state and society. On the societal level, globalization, including urbanization and migration, has promoted and quickened the dissolution of the tribal structures. While in some Arab countries and in the metropolises tribal affiliations have

weakened significantly, or even disappeared, in others and in the countryside they may still have their hold. An Arab 'bourgeoisie' has started to emerge, to a different extent in the different countries and in various contexts. Yet, this new 'bourgeoisie' is very much different from the one which initiated and carried out European modernization: in some countries it is the elite clientele which has been transforming into an entrepreneur middle class (sometimes led by the son or sons of the ruler), elsewhere the middle class emerges within the tribal system itself. While they pose a challenge to the present political elites, they are still too weak to demand a defining role in policy-making. Thus, it is still the present political actors, which can still be described as the elements of the traditional patrimonial system, that are in control, even if they increasingly try to adapt to the international norms, system, etc. Therefore, even „modern” political institutions, e.g. parties are filled by the traditional elements and are operated as the archaic structures. While the ultimate question is if the „traditional” can be reconciled with the „modern”, three years after the Arab Spring it seems increasingly likely that instead of a new democratic development the Arab Spring countries are developing new neo-patrimonial models.

What role for the Islamists?

The Arab Spring, after the first democratic phase, which was marked by the striking absence of the Islamists, seemed to create the conditions for an eventual, new Islamist regional order. This was an unforeseen, although not entirely unexpected development. The Islamists were no new political actors, but up to the Arab Spring had been “managed” by the ruling elites: they had been either suppressed and persecuted, or exiled, sometimes even executed, and at some points and in some countries were even let participate in the political life of the country, either openly or as “independents”.

In the course of the transitions that started – both in the Arab Spring countries and elsewhere – the people's will brought the Islamist forces enjoying a huge public support to governing positions. Thus, the Arab Spring “legalized” the Islamist forces practically all over the Arab world, but especially in North Africa. Their “legalized” position was further enhanced when foreign governments, including the US, the UK, France and others, have started to accept the Islamist parties in government as their lawful and just counterparts. (The only exception has remained the Hamas, because of its resistance to and stand on Israel.)

These developments, however, hid the fact that the Islamists have never composed one homogenous group, but have always been different groups, sometimes with widely differing ideologies. The deepest split has been between their two main trends, the Muslim Brotherhood, which has affiliates all through the Arab world, and the Salafi movements. And the fact that these

Islamist movements, both the Muslim Brotherhood and the other Islamist movements are in transition themselves.

The 2013 events in Egypt took another turn: the removal of President Mohamed Morsi from office, the ban of the Muslim Brotherhood and imprisonment of many of its leaders and activists meant that the Islamist idea could not perform its role and failed in government. While this may be true for its political role, it will not necessarily roll back the impact of the Islamist forces in the society.

Thus, while the question “is it a winter?” in 2012 referred to the increasing role and influence of Islamist movements in Arab politics, by the end of 2013 it has come to mean rather the end of their dream of a new, Islamist regional order.

What impact for Europe?

Because of the geographic proximity, the common history and cultural contacts, but most importantly the increasing number of Muslim minorities in Europe, the continent has been the region most exposed to the spillover effects of the Arab Spring. While such security concerns have not been far from European thinking as proved by the so-far institutionalized cooperation frameworks (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighbourhood Policy, Union for the Mediterranean), their failure to operate and project European influence in the transitions of the Arab Spring was partly due to the loss of European prestige and the rejection of the “normative power of Europe” (“no more dictate”).

Europe, therefore, has no power to direct or influence developments in the transformation of the Arab world. It is relegated to the role of a passive onlooker, in spite of the manifold joint programs and the sizeable Muslim communities, the number of which is estimated at some 20-25 million, but only a part of which is of Arab origin. Thus, European moral, political and security obligations will still remain.

New forms of manifestation of extremist violence: Case study of East Central Europe

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Introduction

New trends in the development of political violence and terrorism can be identified in contemporary Europe. Specific problems interconnected with this phenomenon are threatening East Central Europe. This region has strong legacy of political violence from the twentieth century, both the forms of subversive violence and regime oppression. The goal of this paper is to describe and classify the most important new forms of manifestation of extremist violence in countries of the Visegrad group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia).

Violence against Roma

Contemporary most serious threats are caused by interethnic tensions within a large part of ethnic majority (Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians) and the Roma population. These tensions are a result of a huge complex of problems and prejudices. They are manifested in ethnic riots. They were up to now limited to local level (for example, in Litvínov-Janov in the Czech Republic in 2008 or in Šarišské Michalany in Slovakia in 2009), however, their broader regional spread is possible. There are many right-wing extremists among the rioters, however, also “normal” citizens are active participants in violent crowds (as was seen during the riots in Šlukovsko region in the late summer 2012)(Kučera, Mareš 2013, pp. 58-62).

The Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe described the situation of these riots with following words: “The rapporteur was informed during his visit to Litvínov (Czech Republic) that such a march was organised there on 17 November 2008 by the Czech workers party (DS). A group of 500 neo-Nazis intended to march through Janov (an area mainly inhabited by Roma, which the rapporteur visited). The police managed to stop them, but the street fights lasted hours. Reportedly, the police discovered dozens of weapons in the extremists’ cars“. (Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe 2010, p. 7)

In some ethnic riots (mostly in Hungary and in the Czech Republic) important actors are right-wing paramilitary groups. Their contemporary rise was started in 2007, when the Hungarian Guard was founded. After its ban the New Hungarian National Guard was created. Several other similar groups are active in Hungary and East Central European countries. They declare themselves as non-aggressive units supporting public order. In fact, their marches in Roma settlements provoke ethnic violence (as in the Hungarian small towns)(Mayer, Odehnal 2010: 54-56).

Brutal violence was carried out by Hungarian racist Death Squad. It killed and injured several Roma, probably in the context of the “strategy of tension”. According to some sources (non-confirmed), members of this group wanted to start ethnic war (they hoped that after these killings a Roma uprising would start and in reaction the majority population would support the ethnic war against the Roma with the final goal of their genocide).

This Hungarian case partially inspired also the group of four arson attackers in Vítkov in the Czech Republic in 2009, however, their activity was also similar to the activities of racist skinhead subculture in the 1990s. Use of the so called “Molotov’s” during arson attacks against Roma houses and flats can be observed in Silesian region since the Middle of 1990s. So, it is questionable to speak about “new manifestation” in this case. This small group was affiliated with autonomous nationalism, which is a subcultural and strategic-organisational concept with roots in Germany. The propaganda of “Autonomous Nationalists Bruntálsko”, (i.e. Bruntálsko is a region in Czech part of Silesia). However, the operational “modus vivendi” was not typical of the autonomous nationalism (Mareš et. al 2011, pp. 36-37).

The so called “sponti-violence” in Black Block style is typical of autonomous Nationalists more than the hidden night actions with Molotow cocktails. The violent behaviour of autonomous nationalists was carried out during anti-Roma demonstrations in several Czech towns (in Přeřov 2009, for example) or in the Polish capital Warsaw during the march of National Independence in 2011 (Pankowski 2012, p. 3).

Development trends in right-wing extremist spectrum

The change of the subcultural spectrum and the erosion of racist skinheads came also brought the generation conflict into the right-wing extremist militant spectrum, however, in nonviolent form (despite the fact that some discussions about graffiti as a propaganda instrument of the nationalist spectrum are connected with the intimidation between “the old school skinheads” and new generation of autonomous nationalists)(Vejvodová 2008).

The new generation of right-wing militants uses specific forms of cultural expression. They are connected with a specific life style. Street racist gangs are inspired by brutal lyrics of white racist gangsta rap, for example. The

public hard bass dancing is a new trend which came from Russia. The dancers are mostly members of right-wing hooligan gangs. Direct violence is not used during hard bass performances, however, the behaviour of the dancers could be sometimes perceived as a threat. The “machismo” and aggression are included in hard bass performances (Smolík, Kajonová 2011). Not only members of organized right-wing extremist scene are actors of anti-Roma violence. In Slovakia a member of the local police killed with a gun three members of a controversial Roma family from his town. Speculations are connected with the case from Bratislava – Devínská Nová Ves in 2010. One man (member of an association of shooters) killed the family of his neighbours (including Roma)(Smolík 2011, pp. 105-106). Both perpetrators were celebrated in the right-wing extremist Internet chats as examples of the “right way” against Roma.

Other forms of homegrown extremist violence

On the other hand, the violence carried out by Roma groups can be considered as more dangerous than before. It is connected not only with property crime, but also with hate crimes against the people from the majority population. It is not extremism in the sense of clear antidemocratic goals, it is more an expression of frustration and hate without clear political goals or interconnection with political movements. The actors are aggressive youth Roma gangs. The older generation of Roma try to establish self-defence guards against anti-Roma racist attacks, however, the same initiators are sometimes linked with organized crime and the Roma guards are responsible for several cases of excessive behaviour (Mareš 2012, pp. 294-295).

Left-wing extremist tries to win Roma for their anti-racist and anti-capitalist fight, however, without clear success. The Antifascist action (AFA) is a strong violent and intelligence opponent of neo-Nazi spectrum (in the sense of information gathering and selective attacks against neo-Nazi elites). A modern form of left-wing militancy of small ad hoc collectives (Revolutionary Struggle etc.) is to damage the tollgates, as a part of attacks against capitalist infrastructure (inspired from Germany). Some attacks and names of ad hoc militant collectives were dedicated to Greek and other foreign anarchists in prison (Mareš, Výborný 2013).

Islamist violence in East Central Europe?

Islamist extremism is expanding to East Central Europe from Western Europe (Vienna as one of the centres of Muslim activities plays a specific role) as well as from Caucasus and Central Asia. New Islamist transnational networks were established in this region (without respecting traditional borders). Jewish communities and Israeli tourists and US-tourists are threatened during their

visit to East Central Europe (Prague Jewish City, Auschwitz etc.)(Mareš 2011, pp. 242-243).

However, up to now no Islamist terrorist attack has been carried out in Visegrad countries (the attack in Burgas in Bulgaria in 2012 can be assessed as a warning for these countries). Several Islamist terrorist plots have been stopped, however. The new Islamist Sharia4 movement came in the East Central European countries and mostly in Poland its statements were very militant. This movement is without broader support within Muslim community up to now.

Conclusion

This paper comes to the conclusion that several specific forms of political violence and terrorism can be identified in East Central Europe. They are mostly related with Roma issues and with national disputes. New forms of violence are interconnected also with the development of new forms of extremist organisations and style. Islamist extremism is step by step expanding into this area, including a risk of terrorism.

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