

Salafi Jihadism, Disengagement, and the Monarchy: Exploring the case of Morocco

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Abstract

What meanings have formerly engaged (radicalized) Salafists ascribed to their disengagement and how have they become embedded in their everyday lives? There are two narratives that can explain this question. On the one hand, there is a central inclusive narrative that suggest the institutionalization of the religious terrain in Morocco through the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (mou'assassat imarat al mou'minine) or ICF, which allows the Monarchy to play the king-religious role as the guarantor of religion and other faiths. On the other hand, Salafi Jihadists represent the second exclusive narrative through a religious concept that has taken a violent understanding called "loyalty and disavowal" (Al Wal'a wal Bar'a) or WB. The power of this narrative lies in the ability to divide society into a near and far enemy. Put it another way, to ask how those very meanings affect their everyday lives, a change in Salafi worldview for example allows them to live lives that seemed not possible before far from violence. As a result, there is no one picture of disengagement. Disengagement happens very differently in each case. Specifically, we argue that Salafi Jihadists' disengagement has been informed, and shaped, by the meanings they attribute to their experiences in the everyday life. As such, this thesis is not about process, or pathways, or models of engagement and disengagement it is about meanings each one assigns to his or her experience. In addition to advancing theories of violent radicalization and disengagement from violence, this thesis makes a methodological contribution to the study of the meanings of disengagement through an ethnographic fieldwork in Morocco and Jordan.

Keywords: disengagement, ethnographic fieldwork, inclusive, exclusive narrative, Institution of the Commander of the Faithful ICF Exclusive, meanings, loyalty and disavowal.

Statement of Originality

I hereby certify that all of the work described within this thesis is the original work of the author. Any published (or unpublished) ideas and/or techniques from the work of others are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices.

Abdelkader Filali

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Chapter 1. Let the Field Speak

Introduction

Despite significant scholarly efforts to come up with definitions on radicalization and to identify its causes and the profile of engaged people in radical groups, limited work has focused on disengagement and what happen when people *leave*. This thesis investigates the perceptions, the representations, and the meanings Salafi Jihadists ascribe to themselves once they are in the process to their disengagement. As such our main question is: *What meanings have formerly engaged (radicalized) Salafists ascribed to their disengagement and how do they affect their everyday lives?* For example, we ask how a change in Salafi worldview allows them to live lives that seemed not possible before they disavowed violence.

Our case study is Morocco, the site of a spectacular terrorist attack in Casablanca in 2003, and which has featured a significant de-radicalization program in the last decade or so. Morocco is a unique case in the Islamist world. On the one hand, it represents the most favorable conditions for an Islamic insurgency: structural opportunities (poverty, inequality, marginalization), as well as remote areas that the state can access with great difficulties, such as the highest mountainous terrains in the region, the largest numbers of caves in all neighboring countries, and the deepest forests in all of the North African and Sub-Saharan Sahel. The Moroccan topography is conducive to smuggling, as the Rif mountains in the north are fertile grounds for the drug trade (hashish), with a potential similar to the Taliban opium trade, the FARC drug trade in the northern forests of Colombia and the RUF diamonds in Sierra Leone. And yet no jihadi movement has engaged in a sustained guerrilla movement in Morocco.

The recent escalation of violence perpetrated by jihadist groups in North Africa have seen several of them using hit and run tactics and seeking havens in remote geographical areas. The examples abound: Al Qaeda in the Algerian Sahara deserts and mountains, Ansar Ashari'a in the She'anbi mountains in Tunisia, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group in the vast Libyan Sahara, the Egyptian Ansar Al Quds in the Sinai Sahara, the Mauritanian Group for Preaching and Jihad in the great Sahara, and the Malian Ansar Addine in the Northern Sahara next Algeria. In spite of favorable conditions, there is an absence of Moroccan jihadi groups sheltering in the Moroccan periphery. Geertz (1971) offers perhaps the most in-depth comparative analysis on the subject. He argues that despite the physical barriers to the state's legibility strategies, the *makhzen* legitimacy, or its symbolic power, was remarkably diffused, even on the peripheries. As a result of its historical longevity spanning over fourteen centuries, the Moroccan monarchy has deeply penetrated society, which blocks the incubation of violent and anti-regime movements. It is in fact remarkably ancient (Mann 2014), the oldest monarchy still ruling. Six dynasties have ruled Morocco since the Idrissid dynasty 14 centuries ago, with the monarch representing a center of Islamic political identity

Oliver Roy argues that having Islamist groups as countervailing authority to despotism is not something new. He adds that after 1924 most of Arab states embarked on a process to modernize and bureaucratize its administration, which has marginalized the religious scholars and religious field (1985: 62). The year 1924 signaled the end of the Ottoman empire. Morocco was the only country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region that was not occupied by the Ottomans (AlArawi 1977). The monarchy in Morocco did not embark on a rapid modernization and bureaucratization as most Arab countries in North Africa and Middle East. The historical power of the monarchy is reproduced through a plethora of symbols, signs, rituals that are infiltrated in people's daily lives. The monarchy's legitimacy is non-negotiable, it is taken for

granted. In this line, Loveman (2005) calls it symbolic power, which she describes as the power to constitute the given, to legitimize, which was the subject of a great historical struggle.

Due to the centrality and the institutionalization of religion under the king and the institutions of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) and that the council of scholars as the only source of edicts (*fatwas*) and deep interpretations (*ijtihad*), Islamic groups were given less discursive space. By contrast, the absence of a central religious authority in Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya provides space for the legitimation of violence. The Salafi-Jihadist currents have succeeded in creating alternative social systems that draw young people seeking social status. In the absence of the state in the rural and urban margins, the Salafi Jihadists provided a refuge of these young people to provide meaning for their existence, psychologically, economically and socially.

In the aftermath of 9/11 and subsequent attacks by Al Qaeda and affiliated groups all over the world, there was an increase of individual mobilization and recruitment by Jihadi movements. Al Qaeda's main ideational framework resides in its call for global Jihad to be part of the *surviving and victorious group*. This ideational framework outlines two confrontational strategies: on the one hand, it declares an open war against Arab and Islamic countries (*near enemy*) that are regarded as allies of the West, and on the other hand, it justifies attacks and terror against non-Islamic societies (*far enemies*) (Abu Rumman, 2006). In February 2003, Osama Bin Laden listed Morocco among future targets within the near enemy (Pargeter, 2005). This declaration has been seen as a call for jihad and seems to have stimulated attacks on Casablanca three months later, in May 2003, in which twelve suicide bombers attacked five Jewish and Western targets, killing forty-five and injuring hundreds. The bombers were identified as members of the *salafi jihadiya*.

The Casablanca attacks were an expansion of Al Qaeda ideology in the MENA region. Most of the suicide bombers came from poor neighborhoods and suburbs, and some have called

for linking the phenomenon of terrorism to poverty and marginalization. Browsing the list of those involved in subsequent terrorist acts refutes this, because most of them belonged to stable circles. The majority those convicted in terrorism cases began their practices of “promotion” based on the concept of “forbidding evil” (*Annahyu ala Almonkur*). Thus, morality is often the gateway to the Takfiri-eradication approach, which inevitably leads to the systematic violence (Razrazi et al. 2015).

The Moroccan state has facilitated disengagement by opening windows of opportunity for former jihadists. A combination of endogenous and exogenous mechanisms explain the new policy. The first mechanism is the internal context, which resides in the decision by late King Hassan II to bring the Left opposition to power in 1997 in the so-called *alternance* and has led to the inclusion of the Islamic Justice and Development Party (PJD) in the government since 2011. This represents a unique case in the MENA region, as some of its members were radicals in the late 1970s and 1980s. The exogenous factor is the decision by the European Union in 2008 to grant an Advanced Status to Morocco as part of the European Neighborhood Policy, a policy favorable to trade. The state had an added incentive to ensure social stability.

There is an abundant literature defining what is radicalization, its presumed causes and what paths people take towards violence (Silke, 1998; Hoffman, 2006; Horgan 2008). Some gave the metaphor of a staircase model to radicalization (Moghaddam, 2005). Others are suggesting non-linear models (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008; Wilner & Dubouloz, 2010). Most define radicalization as a process through which an individual adopts views leading to violent acts (Sageman 2007; Neumann (2013)). We argue that in order to understand radicalization and its opposite, i.e., disengagement, we have to go beyond process, and explore *meanings*. Our aim in

this study is to investigate the perceptions and meanings that Salafi jihadists ascribe to their own experiences in the everyday life once they are on the path to disengagement.

‘You Do not Need a Y Chromosome to Become a Jihadist!’

Iman and Sanaa are 28-year-old twin sisters. Iman is a chef at a senior home and plans to obtain a full-time job on the kitchen staff by January 2018. Her main task is to supervise the quality and efficient serving of meals to the seniors. Iman is always willing to try something new in her work and pays attention to details, such as who is served what and whose tray is not completed. She enjoys the buzz of the kitchen and ensures everything is ready at just the right moment. Sanaa, on the other hand, is a homemaker and her plan is to get married and share her home with someone she loves. Iman left school at grade seven, while Sanaa left earlier at grade five. Iman notes: “We want to travel. We want to discover the world. My wish is to work permanently in the same occupation. I have seen a new building for seniors still in construction and definitely I will apply there too” (Interview Imane and Sanaa, Rabat, 2017).

This is a look into the everyday lives of twin sisters who fourteen years ago planned to bomb the Moroccan parliament. It is an image that clashes with the reductionist vision of the phenomenon of Jihadist women. Current studies of female Jihadists depend on information from the virtual world. Interrogating the viability of virtual sources requires asking whether this leads to reliable knowledge. It is my belief that it does not. Deciphering the everyday life of people under study should remain among the main goals of social science scholars. In order to purge the prevailing winds of recent studies, we must explore a general *counter-theory* of female jihadism – one grounded within the framework of terrorism and reliant upon ethnography instead of virtual

sources. Iman continues: “It all started with the death of Mohammed Addurrah, in September 2000 and the second day of the second Palestinian Intifada. We were 11 years old back then.”¹

The death of Addurrah inflamed the passion of the sisters. It is possible that the first legal and moral stirrings of the concept of female Jihadists in the Muslim and the Arab world rose in Morocco. Four months following the May 16, 2003, Casablanca attacks; a series of suicide bombings, Iman and Sanaa’s plan to bomb the Moroccan parliament shocked its citizens and people across the globe. Although they failed, pictures of the sisters, then dubbed the world’s youngest terrorists, were splashed all over the Moroccan and international media. Fourteen years later Iman and Sanaa recalls those days in *La Comédie Café* on Mohammed V Boulevard in Rabat, a few meters from the site of the incident. Sanaa recounts the day of their arrest: “We were overwhelmed by the scene created by the policemen who were assigned to guard us, as they escorted us to the court there were many journalists with their cameras, just like American movies.”

The agreement was that the meeting would not exceed an hour, however, one hour turned into eight, as the conversation went from the café to an ice cream shop and ended at a phone repair store in the Old Medina of Rabat. Prior to the meeting, I had preconceived notions about the distance I would have to keep between the women, and myself and I wondered whether I should or could shake their hands. Iman and Sanaa surprised me when they both warmly welcomed me with a gentle handshake, a gesture that set to the tone for the rest of the meeting, as Iman explained their fate:

¹ Mohammed Addurrah was shot and killed at the age of 12 in the Gaza Strip on the second day of the second Palestinian Intifada, characterized by widespread rioting throughout the Palestinian territories. According to Ensel (2014), “The songs as well as the videos that have been uploaded confirm the iconic status of Abdurrah and demonstrate the significance of the incident as a means for emotional mobilization in anti-Israeli protest.”

People do not understand the risk of exposure to the street's worst forms of exploitation, both physical and psychological at a very young age. We then became a prey in the hands of the true terrorists and extremists to execute a plan that would sink the capital into a bloodbath (Interview Imane and Sanaa, Rabat, 2017)

The distribution of pamphlets and tribute publications highlighting the events of September 11, 2001, were the twins' first step towards indoctrination. When the sisters asked the imam of the mosque in the *Jbal Rayssi* neighborhood of Rabat about the morality of the attacks, it became apparent to those around them of their changing and provocative views. Iman began her question by mentioning her age:

I am a 12-year-old girl. Do you consider the events of September 11th a victory to Islam? Is it permissible to blow up a shopping mall where alcohol is sold? The Imam was firm in mentioning the guilt that would be felt by killing innocent people (Interview Imane, Rabat, 2017)

The sisters' path to indoctrination was accelerated by the teachings of a librarian named Hassan Shawni but known in the neighborhood of *Jbal Rayssi* as Hassan Kishk (in reference to a famous Egyptian blind preacher). A long beard that reached the middle of his chest, his clothes were loose, the shirt falling to his knees and his pants cut at the ankles, in the Afghan style. He was distributing tapes and books under the headings of *Loyalty and Disavowal — Al Walaa wal Baraa WB*, *Chechnya: Pride and Sorrows* and *Nullifiers of Islam*.

We were looking for an Afghan dress. We went to Hassan's library. He was known as Hassan Kishk. His library was filled with Jihadists' books. He was always wearing the Afghan dress, something that impressed us. (Interview Imane and Sanaa, Rabat, 2017)

The Jihadist structure was very masculine, and at all stages the role of women was marginal. The role of Jihadist women, however, shifted from the usual tasks of homemaking and raising children to a woman who would *migrate* to overcome the doctrinal dilemmas of partaking in violence. Migrate in this context has a religious connotation. During this 'migration', the woman takes religious shelter or *hijra*, in order to escape societal sins and complete her transformation.

The Jihadist woman who emerges is one who believes in the Salafi Jihadist ideology of violent and armed action. (Satterthwaite and Huckerby 2013: 2)

What has transformed then in the everyday life of Sanaa and Iman since they were 14 years old? Their indirect answer was meeting me fourteen years later next to the place they had once planned to blow up.

The Context

Mr. B. was born in 1978, in Derb Kebir, Derb Sultan, Casablanca, Morocco. He was the fifth of seven children born to craft worker parents. His parents were able to raise him and his siblings in a decent home; however, they struggled to make ends meet. The family was known for encouraging their sons and daughters to study mathematics. It is the pride of Mr. B's father, who worked hard and invested his earnings in his children, to have raised three engineers and see them prosper. Mr. B. was the only member of the family who chose to study law at the University.

A turning point in his adolescence was the violence that erupted on campus, during which one of his friends was badly beaten by a group of students who represented a religious movement. Following this, Mr. B. frequented debate circles at the university. He saw himself leaning in to Marxist thought because of the struggle he watched his parents endure. To pass his time, Mr. B. devoured books and articles in an attempt to find answers to his constant questionings. In the summer of 2000, he worked at a seasonal job where he met with Mr. T. who introduced him to the world of Salafism (Pargeter 2005). Mr. B. attended lectures held in several private homes. The content of the series of gatherings revolved around purifying the soul.

An eloquent speaker and a naturally gifted debater, Mr. B. had quickly become respected among his circle. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, and the emergence of Al Qaeda's ideology, he was eager to learn more. Al Qaeda's main ideational framework resides in its call for global

jihadism.² This framework outlines two confrontational strategies: on the one hand, it declares an open war against Islamic states (near enemies) that are regarded as allies to the West, and on the other hand, it justifies attacks and terror against non-Islamic societies (far enemies). Mr. B. was able to place all of his frustrations and inner anger within the context of a counter-hegemony to the United States, embracing the loyalty and disavowal principle of *al Wala'a wal Bara'a* (see below). The power of this narrative lies in the ability of those who share this interpretation to have strong ties of loyalty and disavow and create boundaries between themselves and all others who do not subscribe to the same comprehension of the concept (i.e. near and far enemies). Mr. B. described these years as the darkest in his life: "I used to see people all like enemies. I used to see darkness all the time. I could not help it..." (Interview Mr. B. Casablanca, 2016)

On May 16, 2003, Casablanca was hit by a violent attack, which resulted in the death of 45 people. The 12 suicide bombers came from the shantytown of *Sidi Moumen*, a neighborhood in Casablanca. The next day, a group that called themselves *Salafiya Jihadiya* claimed responsibility for the attack. This incident illustrates both an attack against the "near enemies" (i.e. the Moroccan state and society) and far enemies (i.e. a nightclub frequented mostly by Jews and Westerners), according to Jihadists. Furthermore, the attack seems to have contributed to the proliferation of the term *Salafi Jihadism* in Western academia and media.

² The concept of jihad has a specific religious meaning. It is a term from the root *jihad*, which has the root meaning of "using, or exerting, one's utmost power, efforts, endeavours, or ability, in contending with an object of disapprobation." Jihad thus means "struggle," "striving for," and "execution" or "expenditure of effort." The Qur'an uses the term *jihad* several times followed by the phrase "*fi sabil Allah*" (in the way of God). It is a struggle in which the believers (Muslims) are expected to strive for wealth and "person" for the sake of God. (Saeed 2002, p. 73). Jihadism derives from the Arabic word *jihadiya*, which is the global religio-political militancy ideology, and goes beyond a particular country or geography. Groups and individuals that pursue political objectives have used the term of *jihad*. Jihadism becomes a means to revive a form of a lost collective identity. Under the pressures imposed by the global world order, an imagined jihadist world order is reinventing itself.

Mr. B. was questioned by the police. He was confused, as his experience with the Salafis had simply been one of knowledge exchange and he did not believe such events could occur in Morocco. He decided to leave the group but found that leaving was harder than getting in:

It was as if I was in a nightmare surrounded by beasts. I could not believe myself to be entrenched for so many years in an ideology that consumed a decade of my flourishing years. I had for so many years been ingrained with habits, how to speak, how to look at people, how to dress, how to trim your beard, and even how to think. I missed taking my kids and wife to eat outside. (Interview Mr. B. Casablanca, 2016)

Mr. B.'s decade's experience in the field of Salafi Jihadism had profoundly shaped his habitus (Bourdieu 1985). To see the changes in the everyday life of disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadists, it is adept to employ Bourdieu's theory of social practice. His "thinking tools" — habitus, field and capital — are suitable for deciphering the ways in which social fields and individual practices are mutually constituting (Bourdieu 1990).

Bringing Salafi Jihadism back to Political Studies

Salafi Jihadism was, at its origins, the sole business of males. Early theorists and experts focused on the men of Salafi (Khelghat-Doost 2016; Sjoberg and Gentry 2011), while attempts to bring female Jihadists into terrorism studies stripped these women of their agencies (Poloni-Staudinger and Ortals 2013: 36). In 2004, the Moroccan twin sisters Iman and Sanaa Laghriss challenged the conventional perceptions of security agencies, researchers, and observers. In an afternoon, as we saw, the 14-year-old sisters planned to detonate a bomb in the Moroccan parliament, putting an end to the masculinist monopoly over using explosive belts, and to the normative assumption of young girls to be feminine and to live based on notions of innocence and passiveness.³

³ Outside of the Arab world, some Chechen women had begun to wear suicide belts in the early 2000s. Details of the preparation of the Casablanca attacks will be elaborated in Chapter 4

Why is Political Science Interested in Salafi Jihadism?

This is the first question that was asked of us during the period of our pre-field and field research (Interview Pr. Tozi, Rabat 2016). In Morocco, sociologists immensely dominate the work on Salafism.⁴ The field of political science was introduced to the central debate about Salafi Jihadism in order to explain the role of violence in politics. We assess how political violence affects state-society relations, perceptions and policies. Our thesis is a case study of Jihadist groups in Morocco, which are connected to the global Jihadist order.

We argue that contrary to the literature, which has ascribed a lack of agency to the disengaged Salafi Jihadists, power is actually defused at the horizontal level in the relationship between society and the state, and between Salafi Jihadists and others in their place of work and public spheres. Whether this leads to a coopted group or strong state is not really the subject of our focus, but one thing stands clear: the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists have some degree of autonomy to act in their *everyday life*, and still have the capacity to act independently in the face of pressure from within and without. The role of agency emphasizes the importance of acting, making decisions, having ideas and interactions with political actors and elites, and is of great importance. In this context, we articulate the question of how disengaged Salafi Jihadists used their reputations, resources and names (capital) in competing with society's various fields of power (field) and using practices that have been shaped by social structures (habitus). We also see the mobility between religious, economic, and political fields of the disengaged Salafists.

⁴ We attended a Ph. D. dissertation defense at Mohammed V University of Rabat, in the Department of Sociology, under the title "Salafists from Radicalization to de-Radicalization. Path and Process." by Mohammed Misbah.

The Predicament

A specter is haunting the concept of radicalization – the specter of irrelevance. The doctrine of counter-terrorism policies (CTP) and its tangents have dominated the history of radicalization in the last two decades. These tangents are the sum of security approaches, counter-terrorism initiatives, and war on terror strategies. The critical approach has not been able to dislodge the theoretic throne of counter-terrorism policies that have reigned for decades, as it was built on so-called objectivity and rationality. But has CTP's hold been due to its pre-eminence in understanding the radicalization system or has there been resistance from within the institution to accept change? Why is there a lack of insight on disengagement? Can these measures still serve as the dominating exemplar of the pragmatic approach given its shortcomings? We make the contention through our thesis that in order for the security approach to remain relevant in understanding and explaining radicalization and disengagement it must evolve. In particular, it must incorporate the research and scholarship of how the agents perceive their radicalization and their disengagement.

While many alternative approaches can offer considerable insight, this research will focus on the contributions of both rational choice (Horgan's Behavior and Cognition Model) and subjective judgments (Bourdieu's Theory of Practice) and what they can contribute to the understanding of radicalization and disengagement. The study, however, will not make the contention that a fusion of both approaches can dislodge the counterterrorism policies and approaches as the new *lingua franca* of radicalization theory. Rather, it will argue that by exploring the ontological shortcomings of CTP, a combination of rational choice and agents' perceptions approaches can open a space within the discipline that allows for an altogether new methodology, framework, and a more comprehensive approach that can serve the discipline in a way that cannot be otherwise

accomplished. For instance, why do some people develop quick cognitive radicalization, while others move quicker to actions? When we say radicalization, we imply that there is a continuum from moderation. We ask then what is moderation, and how does a radical see it? It is an ideology that fills in the blanks and resonates with the everyday life of radicals.

A puzzle starts to form ranging in pieces from the personal to the structural and from the ideological to the geopolitical. When the puzzle is completed it reveals the Salafi Jihadist. We are approaching the notion of *radicalization as bricolage*. It is the gathering of the pieces of the puzzle, which represent the tools that a Salafi Jihadist uses to fulfil a task: previous works, unanswered questions, open debates in public sphere, edicts, and the remains of geopolitics. Our approach enables an exploration of not only the effects and function of power beyond the technocratic realms but allows a radicalization approach to evolve beyond its traditional encapsulation.

Radicalization as Bricolage

John Horgan (2003) himself argues that studies of terrorism psychology have “derailed” from objective of scientific psychology. To bring clarity and to help the alignment of the field of terrorism, and radicalization studies. We elaborated on another alternative. That is to explain radicalization as *bricolage*, we depart from the contribution of Clark McCauley and Sofia Moskaleiko professors of psychology who came up with the notion of the Two Pyramid Model to understand radicalization. They suggest that cognitive radicalization differs from violent radicalization that leads to terrorist attacks, and that those who engage in violent acts of terrorism represent a very small percentage compared to those who sympathize, adopt or embrace radical ideologies (McCauley & Moskaleiko 2008). Although the model has a high explanatory capacity in similar cases, it remains dealing with only what come next and not the precedent. Why the Two Pyramid Model is important for our thesis because our notion of radicalization as bricolage stands

between the Two Pyramid Model to fill the gap and to explain what came first, contrary to McCauley & Moskalenko (2011) model.

In this line of research, we have noticed a fundamental flaw in the accumulated efforts that have dealt with the phenomenon of terrorism over the past decades (McAdam, 1987.p: 67). Our distinction here stands in between the two extremes. We are dealing with violent jihadi radicalization that leads to terrorist acts. We called it radicalization as *bricolage*. McCauley and Moskalenko (2011) highlighted another path of explaining radicalization that many of those who carry out terrorist acts do not embrace radical ideology at all. They found that there are many dynamics that push people and motivate them to carry violent acts other than the usual motive of embracing the extremist ideology. Accordingly, McCauley and Moskalenko see the distance between the radicalization in opinion and radicalization in action is very large (2011). Between the two perspectives comes our concept, radicalization as *bricolage* as the activity and *bricoleur* as the agent who takes radical opinions, structural grievances, psychological frustrations and makes an unpredicted and surprising product that is a terrorist act. What is important to our contribution is the same observation, which McCauley and Moskalenko made when they described that many of those involved in violence and terrorism suddenly commit terrorist acts at intervals of few days or weeks of adopting a position on a particular issue or cause. We consider that Two Pyramid Model by McCauley and Moskalenko adds to fill the gap in the research that existed before. We see radicalization as *bricolage* as a valuable addition to this field of studies as it will bring the analogy of the Two Pyramid Model altogether.

We have borrowed the term from Claude Lévi-Strauss in his anthropological work in *La pensée sauvage* (1962). In French, *le bricoleur* means a person who uses the tools at hand to complete a task. In this same vein, the violent radical uses all that is available to him to complete

his task. A radicalized person can use structural conditions, such as poverty, marginalization (relative deprivation), ideologies (religious, ethno-nationalist, leftist agendas), and geopolitics (counter-hegemony), to justify doing a task, i.e. acting violently. The term *bricolage* was also used by criminologist Sandberg (2015). According to him, “Breivik’s manifesto and attacks is used to argue that terrorism can be intertextual, representing a multitude of cultural references, and is therefore best understood as a bricolage.” (2015: 178). From a criminological perspective, cultural criminology decodes and explores the cultural forces that are intertwined with the practice of crime. The multitude of oral stories, written memories and narrations in the thesis represent radicalization as bricolage. The bricoleur has two main characteristics: unpredictability and surprise (Levi-Strauss, 1962: 19). According to Claude Lévi-Strauss (1962), the *bricoleur*, by nature, uses the tools and pieces at hand and constructs his or her own world: this is the true face of bricolage or as Derrida puts it “Everything is a bricolage” (Derrida 1972).

A bricoleur by nature searches for joints, nodes, linkages, advice from others, and knowledge. The resources that he uses to complete a task are unique to him. Sandberg (2015: 179), for example, argues that Breivik is a bricoleur who “addresses himself to a collection of oddments left over from human endeavors”. Similarly, in the chapters of clustering of meanings of engagement (radicalization) and disengagement we see cases of bricoleurs who were searching for the resources available to them in order to prove to the group that they can complete tasks by any means. This notion can enhance further research and studies on violent radicalization.

We realized that there is something missing, which makes the whole picture blurry. We suggested the work of Pierre Bourdieu’ (1984) *Habitus* which is used here to be considered as the unconscious acts and mannerisms of Salafi Jihadists identity construction that shapes actions and practices in their everyday lives and how important are the joining of ingredients of radicalization.

We called the joining of the ingredients altogether by radicalization as *bricolage*, which is getting the pieces at hand altogether in order to come up with a final object that is violent radicalization that is the result of getting the puzzle glued. We see it is as a discharge of reducible and compressed hate and aggression energy and the desire to exteriorize this impulsion to cause harm and destroy, whether directed to the self or to the other. The task then is to analyze the processes of bringing the ingrained dispositions and the adherence to values and actions of terrorists from the actors. In chapters 8 and 9 we will highlight in detail the diverse trajectories, which shows the decisions made by the individual at times in a particular social and organizational context.

The rational choice approach claims that it is engaged in positivist science; that it is able to examine the social sciences in the same way physicists are able to track the movements of physical bodies. The claim is contested by critical perspectives, based on an understanding of the subjectivity of agents. The thesis will explore their contribution.

Prior to our pre-field research we were magnetized by the buzzword “de-radicalization,” an official term that attracted both media and academic audiences and has galvanized the study of “terrorism.” A disengaged individual, however, does not necessarily become de-radicalized. As Clutterbuck (2015) argues, “confusion can arise when de-radicalization is also erroneously used as a broad, catch-all term to encompass other, different-but-related methods and techniques aimed at reducing society's risk from terrorism,” whereas disengagement specifically focuses on how individuals or groups separate themselves from terrorism and acts of violence.

Understanding the relation between the two narratives — the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) and the Salafi Jihadist’s Loyalty and Disavowal (*al Wala’a wal Bara’a*) is the key to understanding the meanings each disengaged Salafi Jihadist ascribes to his or her experiences in the everyday life. The dynamic of this relationship suggests how individuals are

radicalized and disengaged by questioning what has changed in their everyday life since their disengagement. Observing the routines, practices and belief systems of the former Salafi Jihadists helps decipher the meanings embedded in the everyday life of disengaged Salafi Jihadists. In the disengagement phase, disengaged Salafi Jihadists combine their Salafi worldview with not engaging in violence in their everyday life. Yet we observe the Jihadi practice in the everyday through signs, norms, practices and symbols, which all reflect the Salafi worldview. We called the continuity of this mannerism and ways of representation as Jihadist career.

Jihadist Career

Through the meanings each Salafi Jihadist assigns to his or her disengagement experience and the changes in his or her everyday life, we have seen acts and manners that are not the product of a thought provoking plan, or more accurately of a rational account, they are acts inhabited by a kind of objective purpose without being consciously organized. This sounds more like we are discussing Bourdieu's habitus (Bourdieu 1977). We treat Jihadi habitus not as a cognitive cause of the acts per se but the outcome of a dynamic embodied results (Wacquant 1992). For example, through their lifetime, the disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadist receive the impact of institutional domains' imprints on their ways of life. As we will explain with details in chapters 7 and 8 Jihadist' career and Jihadist' habitus. The methodological structure and the cognitive load of this study allowed us to bring another alternative to see concepts such as terrorism differently.

Terrorism

Does the fact that the concept of terrorism is misused or employed as a propaganda weapon mean that it should be abandoned as a social science (Al Arwi 2008)? This will not relieve us from trying to reach where is the node in order to unscrew it. For example, the Canadian criminal code

defines terrorism as act committed “in whole or in part for a political, religious or ideological purpose, objective or cause” (Canada definitions of terrorism section 83.01 of the criminal code).

But let’s ask ourselves if it is helpful to have such an open definition that every act can be added. The researcher of the concept of terrorism finds it difficult to define it definitely; the reason for this is not the ambiguity of the term itself, and not the lack of lexical dictionaries of its definition, but the reason is due to the multiplicity and diversity of forms of terrorism, and the numerous dimensions involved in the formation of the terrorist act, in addition to the overlap of the concept of terrorism with concepts of organized crime, liberation and resistance, political violence, conflicts, etc., which led each country or political entity or administration to develop a concept of terrorism consistent with its interest and ideology. The multiple uses of the concept of terrorism, which has become a fertile field for many debates among political scientists, sociologists, jurists, technocrats and media. Each one of them tried to determine terrorism based on its knowledge and methodological tools, and according to its own vision that reflects the nature of the concept, which resulted in a variety of visions and plurality of approaches that contributed to the complexity of the subject.

Because all of these reasons and others, our thesis stands as a contribution, which lead us to argue that focusing on the meanings each Salafi Jihadist ascribe to their engagement and disengagement is easier than trying to come up with hundreds of definitions of terrorism, political violence and radicalization. It is the meanings.

The cost of not having a clear definition of radicalization is not only a lack of efficiency (Coolsaet 2011: 240), but also it prevents us from asking the right questions. One such question is how do we investigate disengagement from violent radicalization? (Dearey 2010; Jenkins 2007). It is widely known that radicalization is the root cause of terrorism. This thesis goes beyond this

generalization, because not all radicals are terrorists or Jihadists, and not all those who are exposed to radical ideas resort to violence because “radicalization is a process, not an end unto itself, and does not necessarily lead to violence” (Global Futures 2006: 6). The term *violent* radicalization is the departing point of which understanding the meanings of Salafi disengagement begins.

It is necessary to re-remind ourselves with the assumption that terrorism identifies, intertwines and differentiates from violence, depending on the context and circumstances. A return back to the history of the two concepts can help us to deepen our views and know the contexts that produced them. The relation between terrorism and political violence emerged in the surface in the specific timing during the struggle of the colonized people and their quest for liberation and independence from colonial powers. It was then the beginning of dealing with the concept of terrorism and giving it the content and meanings that serve the strategies of colonial powers

Political Violence

Political violence may be legitimate and acceptable to society, such as acts of resistance or defense of the homeland, but it becomes unlawful when its purpose exceeds the ideal ends with which it is justified. If its goal is to exterminate a particular ethnicity as in racial and ethnic conflicts. This concept has acquired a more complex situation at the domestic level for many newly independent countries, as well as at the international level. The periods of 1960's and 1970's witnessed the revolutionary tide of Marxist thought at the local level calling for the leadership of the working class and a commitment to defend economic and social issues, and to provide and guarantee the rights of disadvantaged groups. The ideological framing of individuals and groups and charging them emotionally to actually commit terrorist acts is not a novel phenomenon (Rapoport 2005).

The Effect

A nominal search for the terms “Moroccan Salafi Jihadists” and “Al Qaeda and the Islamic State” within university libraries, academic journals and media outlets returns a plethora of results, most of which relate to the phenomenon of foreign fighters, terrorism, insecurity, counter hegemony and jihad. The results reflect the common perception of Salafi Jihadists’ relationship to international terrorism. However, fewer results reflect the wave of Moroccan Salafi Jihadists disengaging from violence and abandoning violent discourse.

This thesis is ethnographic in nature. We will argue that while the ethnographic turn in the study of Salafi Jihadism allows for an expansion of the field, it is a turn that must be made with prudence and caution. It allows us to understand how disengaged members act in their *everyday life* and their own perceptions of their ideological journeys, as well as re-examine our own formulations of what *entering* and *exiting* the world of Salafi Jihadism *is*. That is, by learning the variations in the practices of disengaged Salafis, it forces us to examine how our theoretical and empirical approach to the study of radicalization and disengagement has been painted with a many-colored brush. At the very least, the ethnographic turn can force us to be more reflective of our own discipline’s claims to both positivism and universality.

At the most, it can allow us to understand that the study of Salafi Jihadism is not simply what academics and policy makers say it is, rather it must incorporate analyses from within its members for it to expand its scope. The ethnographic turn must be made with considerable qualifications and acute nuance. That is, we must be careful not to engage in a voyeuristic program of “inscribing social discourse” (Geertz 1973); we must not simply *write it down*. We must keep in mind that when engaged in ethnographic work, we find ourselves surrounded by muddy waters while also realizing that we are not always equipped with the necessary footwear; that perhaps the footwear

does not even exist. One must proceed with the realization that one may never be able to *know* the culture of Salafi Jihadism and all of what influences the subject, and all that does not.

In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Clifford Geertz (1973: 19) warns against the “sudden vogue” of new ideas that “burst upon the intellectual landscape.” He argues that cultural studies too made this initial splash. His warning, for our purposes, is a suitable starting point in that it establishes a fundamental caveat for the ethnographic approach: it is an approach that must be made not only with restraint, but with the firm understanding that our subjectivities will color our understanding of the Salafi Jihadist culture.

This thesis concurs with Geertz in that the understanding of Salafi Jihadist culture is “not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.” Conversing with and understanding Salafi Jihadism can give us additional layers of comprehension, not certainty of meaning. The goal is to uncover the layers that present hurdles to our research progress. Geertz adds that in order to prevent ethnographic work from becoming more “observational and less of an interpretive activity than it really is” one must “sort out the structures of signification” (20) This is not an easy task, as Geertz explains that the ethnographer is faced with a “multiplicity of complex conceptual structures many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render” (19).

Our goal in this ethnographic work is to convey the reality of individuals operating within a culture and who are not always enslaved to the demands of that culture. There are disengaged Salafi Jihadists who operate outside the Salafi world. It remains difficult to know whether a disengaged Salafi’s actions are a direct result of the pressure exercised by his in-group or the result of an individual choice. Infused in Geertz’s writings is the complexity of the structure-agent

debate. It is a dichotomy that Western scholarship continues to wrestle with, and surely, we can apply the same complexity to the study of Salafi Jihadists.

The repertoire of oral histories of disengaged Salafi Jihadists, which we obtained during the course of our research, unveils the realities of unwritten history. James Scott argued for orality in his *The Art of Not Being Governed*: “Such documents, furthermore, are, like all such documents, created in a particular historical context and reflect that context. They are ‘interested,’ historically positioned texts” (Scott 2009). Telling stories, often long ones, of how Salafi Jihadists disengaged and what has been changed in their everyday life is of crucial importance to our thesis. The oral telling of these stories does not insist on one perspective and entails gestures, body language, poems, etc. As Scott (2009) puts it “The reasons for strategic and opportunistic adaptation of oral traditions are manifold. Once it is fully appreciated that any account of custom, genealogy, or history is a situated, interested account, variation over time is the presumed norm.” (Ibid)

The Structure

The dissertation is structured around the meanings each Salafi Jihadist ascribes to his or her experience with disengagement and the impact they have on their everyday life. Through this thesis and through the clustering of meanings, we observe how Salafi Jihadists enter and exit from violence. This does not assume that there is linearity, but understating disengagement cannot be seen without comprehending radicalization.

We began our journey by entering a symbolic tunnel that represents the path from radicalization to disengagement. The beginning of the tunnel is dark and only becoming darker as we witness an individual’s rupture from society. At first, this is not visible to all those around him or her. It is only when he or she is in the final stage of exile that his or her transformation is clear. Nonetheless, at the heart of the tunnel, as the intensity of his quest heightens, we begin to see

windows of opportunity open. As the windows multiply, the tunnel becomes lighter and there is a path to disengagement. We see post disengagement not as an end in itself, but as a continuous process that contains the seeds of Jihadism through what we have called the Jihadist career, as driven by the Jihadist habitus.

As a preamble to the research completed, it would prove prudent to explore and delineate the terminology and methodology used. Following that, we will attempt to outline the general question the meanings of disengagement of Salafi Jihadists by exploring also their meanings of engagement in the first place. When examining disengaged Salafi Jihadists, we do not make the assumption that it is a one-way shift. That is, we do not put disengaged Salafi Jihadists in a supposed position of having no agency or say in the matter.

In an attempt to give clarity to disengagement, the thesis will present its own contribution to understanding radicalization and disengagement through *meanings* of the those who were engaged in violent radicalization and who disengaged from violence. We will continue by exploring several questions that arise in conceptualizations of Moroccan Salafi Jihadism, its shifts from violence into disengagement, its viability as an ideological model, and its effects on the whole of society.

Before delving into such specific queries, it is important to commence by chapter I under the title ‘Let the Field Speak’. It is a general introduction explaining the research question and what makes the Moroccan case unique, and how did the state embark on opening windows of opportunity allowing radicalized Salafi Jihadists to disengage. Chapter 2 describing the basic tenets of the vast literature on radicalization and disengagement. This chapter will explore the existing and most dominant streams of radicalization studies from forensic and criminal psychological approaches, to structural conditions, which encompass deprivation theory, the role of ideology, and counter-hegemonic discourse.

Chapter 3 will introduce our methodology, and the theoretical framework. In order to grasp the prevailing streams of thought on radicalization and disengagement, we must situate them in contrast to our field-based alternative. Our theoretical framework, which introduces both the rational choice and habitus perspectives in explaining with clarity the meanings each disengaged Salafi Jihadists attributes to his or her experience in the everyday life after violent radicalization. In order to grasp the prevailing streams of thought on radicalization and disengagement, we must situate them in contrast to our field-based alternative. It is worth mentioning that this thesis does not use new concepts to address already complex terms such as radicalization and disengagement. However, the essentialization of radicalization provides an interesting example of how the narrative of the “root causes of terrorism” further entrenches disengagement as a less important product of an exit decision. We will employ the work of Bourdieu (1990) to unveil the pitfalls to such conceptual entrenchment and demonstrate the ways in which social fields and disengaged Salafi Jihadists’ individual practices mutually affect each other.

Chapter 4 will be divided in two parts. The first [art will exhibit the world of Salafi Jihadism through ‘A Tale from an Insider’ close to the person behind such a movement. The second part will draw the cartography of Salafism in Morocco and in particular Salafi Jihadism. To do this, we will situate where Salafism first appeared in the continuum of the Moroccan Islamic movement, and second where Salafi Jihadism lies in the continuum of Salafism itself.

After gathering and collecting the data, in chapter 5 we clustered the meanings of 41 Salafi Jihadists in the engagement phase (violent radicalization) into five main themes (Boutique Jihadism; Inclusion in the Exclusion; the Far Enemy, ‘I see only Dark’ and Al Jazeera). Similarly, in chapter 6 we clustered the same 41 Salafi Jihadists in the disengagement phase with different four themes (Resocialization; Social Status; Redemption, and Rebirth).

Chapter 7 elaborates on how the Moroccan state embarked on a disengagement policy through the windows of opportunity and how their opening helped disengagement. We will discuss various venues that shaped the disengagement process. Institutional initiatives, policy settings and political actors managed in time of crises to simultaneously cope with problems and solutions to open up windows of opportunities for the Salafi Jihadists to disengage.

Both chapters 8 gives more details about the findings of our thesis. The Everyday Salafi is such an elaboration of the everyday life in the disengagement phase. We present how the security services perceive such disengagement and the divergent ways in which Salafi Jihadists and security services see it. Chapter 9 develops the finding of chapter 8 into what we have called the Jihadist career. A condensed ethnographic work is also shown here.

Lastly, a general conclusion will be departing from Edgar Allan Poe's *Tell-Tale Heart* of 1843 and draw comparison between the main narrator of the short story and the Salafi Jihadist and their similar justification of committing violent act. The *Tell Tale Heart* introduces us to a tripartite of participants in the life cycle of a crime; the actor/self, the public/audience, and the state. For the perpetrator of the crime, there is a desire to remove something disturbing, and the self provides a rationale for doing so. Next, the actor attempts to convince his audience that such acts are necessary and inevitable. Lastly, the actor turns to the state, in the form of authoritative powers and institutions, to claim innocence by alleging love for the victim. For it was not their selfish desire that drove them to act but the victim's refusal to adhere to the main character's sphere of "loyalty and disavowal." In *The Tell Tale Heart* the vulture-like eye of the other is analogous to the disloyalty of near and far enemies. According to both views, it does not matter how innocent the victims are, there is always a portion of the audience that is prepared to accept those claims.

The Contribution

The most important contribution of our thesis is that it revisits the suitability and effectiveness of contemporary psychological, criminological and sociological models driven by rational choice theories. That is to say our research is not about the *process* (Horgan and others), nor *pathways* (Sageman), and nor *models* (Moghaddam's staircase model) of engagement and disengagement it is about *meanings* each one assigns to his or her experience. Understanding the meanings Salafi Jihadists have ascribed to their disengagement in Morocco and how it has affected their *everyday lives*. This is, to our knowledge, the first study of its kind.

We stressed the difference between deradicalization and disengagement. Deradicalization is a top-down approach – usually involving state institutions/or sometimes civil society groups/NGOs. Disengagement bottom-up/grassroots process which also involves cognitive shifts. It's a focus on each individual and refuses to treat all Salafi Jihadists as a monolith, i.e. it rejects the 'one size fits all' approach offered by other theories. That's why concepts of 'everyday life' and 'habitus' are central to the theoretical framework of this study. The jihadi practice is therefore an understanding of the logic of all reasonable acts without being the product of a thought-provoking plan, or more accurately of a rational account, they are acts inhabited by a kind of objective purpose without being consciously organized. In the same vein, we take care to stress the idea that 'meaning(s)' are plural in every sense of the word such that disengagement can mean different things to different people. Radicalization as Bricolage brings clarity to the concept of radicalization which suffers from having over hundreds of definitions (at present, there is little consensus on a generally accepted definition of radicalization). The meanings, which formerly engaged (radicalized) Salafists have ascribed to their disengagement and how they have become embedded in their everyday lives allowed us to observe the continuity of behaviors, which we call it by the Jihadist.

Radicalization as bricolage and jihadist' career, two promising concept that sheds light on the underpinnings of radicalization and disengagement literature.

Was it 'Revisions' *Muraja'at* or Reflections?

Abu Hafs while in prison in Fez, on April 2007 made the following statement:

I have all the courage to decide that my humble preaching *da'wah* experience was marred by a number of mistakes, because first of all it was a human act merely about infallibility, especially with the enthusiasm of a young man like me, with the power of passion, the fizzing of jealousy, which caused into falling in narrow paths and fatal mistakes. Some have claimed that I took the path of piety *taqiyya*. I am a man of the sunnah and the group *sunnah wal jama'a*. (Interview Abus Hafs, 2016)

There is an almost a structural failure in dealing with the most calls of Salafi Jihadists detainees at that time with the initiatives to observe what was taking place whether it was revisions *muraja'at* that they deny happening or was it correctness *tashih* of previous thoughts. What was taking place is simply a dispersion of visions and orientations of the Salafi Jihadists themselves, in the absence of a theological reference of scholars with the current qualified to lead a broad dialogue in prisons or outside that promotes, discusses, and opens channels. Consequently, this dispersion perpetuated and nourished this structural defect, excluding to some extent cases of Mohammed Fizazi, Abu Hafs, Omar Haddouchi, Kettani, and Chadli; the rest was either non-educated people or some people who were seeking knowledge without any theologians' references. On the contrary, in the Egyptian case, we found out that what was taking place is purely revisions *muraja'at* because it was made by an authority within the Islamic group *jama'a islamiya* (Ashour, 2009). From its inception in the 1970's to 1997 where the Islamic group launched the initiative to stop violence as it presented a difficult number in systematic violence on the ground, militarily as well as ideologically, eventually leading to a systematic intellectual unity of all its members. The Egyptian experience became then a reference for other groups in the world. For instance, the Algerian Armed Islamic Group and its French acronyms (GIA) announced its revisions and

corrections of all concepts, and also recorded them in other books. This was later stimulated by groups such as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) (Interview Abu Hafs, 2015). The Egyptian *jama'a islamiyya* issued books and forced all its members inside prisons and outside to attend the lessons, to listen to the sheikhs lectures, which included mostly subjects like; legitimate evidence for the initiatives to stop hostilities; advice and discernment in correcting the concepts, and spotlight on mistakes of Jihad (Interview Hamada, 2017).

We were reluctant to characterize Moroccan Salafi Jihadists disengagement was because of the so-called revisions. Some of them characterized their moment of change of ideas and ways of thinking as *reflections* for (Fizazi), *auto-critique* for (Abus Hafs), *contemplations* for most of the rest.

My change of ideas was not the result of any orders from a third party, I do stress that this shift was based on personal and individual convictions. There were visits in prisons by security personnel, but the discussions were general and did not address personal conviction, rather, the focused particularly on aspects related to violence, and detainees were not at any moment obliged to embrace certain ideas or attitudes. (Interview Abu Hafs, 2015)

The Moroccan Salafi Jihadists have not presented 'legitimate documents' according to their lexical term to justify their new position. Rather, they merely expressed their transformation through some statements in the media without presenting their new positions in a documented and detailed writings in a form of books. These revisions have not been legitimized to give the necessary religious authenticity; Rather, it was proclaimed and expressed (at least so far) through a package of statements and media that can be interpreted in more than one way, which has lost many possibilities of persuasion and influence in the jihadist circles.

A Cartography of Moroccan Salafism

The Salafi movement is not a single symmetrical structure, but rather an all-encompassing trend. its sub-levels have intersections with the roots of Salafism, that is to say in the Salafi identity,

Salafi reference, and main Salafi concepts such as to act like the ancestors and the companion the *salaf* of the Prophet , but at the same time differentiate and confront from within in a number of jurisprudential issues that revolve within the branches of Salafism. In spite of the caveats and epistemological difficulties surrounding the attempt to draw a detailed and accurate map of the structure of the Salafi movement in Morocco, it is permissible, procedurally to distinguish within the Salafi trend between several Salafiyat. We can refer to three basic groups. It is noteworthy that as we try to cluster the Moroccan Salafism to produce a cartography, we noticed that the model gets wider as we search for details; particularly; attitude towards the guardian of the nation, the political issue, Jihad in this epoqe and its prerequisite conditions, which is contrary to what Salafi Jihadism interprets.

We cannot speak of Salafism in an inclusive form that suggests that they are identical in everything and form unity while they are different in their intellectual and movement paths. That is why in the case of Moroccan Salafi Jihadism we should not rush in our conclusions that what appear to be ‘revisions’ *muraja’at* is still in its infancy, plus it is not institutionalized in a sense from within the Salafists themselves by documenting their correctness path in the form of books and publications, not just statement here and there. Contrary to the Egyptian case, the revisions are institutionalized from within the Islamic Group. It is not possible to argue at the stage that the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists were truly liberated from the weight of their heritage and past to decided firmly that these reflections, contemplations, and auto-critiques to be complete and final.

Although Salafism has become a balancing figure in Morocco’s religious and social equation, its presence in areas of the ‘Moroccan Islam’ can no longer be ignored, but much of the mystery and confusion still encircles many of the details of its inner worlds. Even as the Moroccan Salafists case study witnessed a growth in its studies and research after the Casablanca attacks May 2003,

so far still they did not seem to be sufficient and are mostly limited to the descriptive analysis (Interview Boudinar, 2015). First of all, the Moroccan Salafi Jihadism as a case study is a novel experience that has not yet been developed with sufficient clarity, so that we can distinguish between what happened and to characterize it as ‘revisions’ or other simple, limited and circumstantial shifts that does not reach the level of ‘revisions’ in the true sense of the word.

The traditional Salafism, which was associated with Sheikh Taqi Eddine al Hilali who died in 1987. The sheikhdome, or the status of the sheikh moved Sheikh Abdelrahman al Maghraoui, who founded the Association of the Quran and Sunnah in Marrakech in 1975, but was not able to control all the Salafis. He faced many critiques by a number of other Salafis for suspicious relation and loyalty to the Saudi regime. Sheikh Fizazi back then wrote a book accusing al Maghraoui for treason and labeled him as the ‘Sultan’s scholars’ who was after the Saudi money and then called the ‘Salafi riyale’ in reference to Saudi currency (Interview Fizazi, 2016).

Letting the Field Speak

This field research has taken more than nine months (four visits to Morocco and one visit to Jordan). The gap between the visits allowed us to clearly see what has been changed in the *everyday life* of the disengaged Jihadists. For example, along the course of the research, facts that were not revealed in the first two visits became uncovered later on. Jordan was never part of the planned research. We simply let the field speak. The preliminary findings in Morocco intrigued us to pay a visit to Azzarqa, a small city within a 55-minute drive from Amman, the capital of Jordan. In Azzarqa we met with the man behind Al Qaeda’s project in Iraq: Sheikh Mohammed Al Maqdessi. Studying the Jihadists cannot be solely based on secondhand accounts. It was key to our research to observe the patterns of behaviors of known Salafi Jihadists and *the meanings* they give to their disengagement experiences in their everyday life. We then interpreted the meaning(s)

that guides the Salafi Jihadists' behavior and sought to understand their social world, natural environments and lived experiences and perceptions (Wolcott 2008). We avoided steering or prompting the participants to respond according to the frame of our thesis. Most importantly we sought to avoid the Hawthorne effect (Franke and Kaul 1978), which is a change in the behavior of subjects as a result of being observed as a part of a study.

The heart of the thesis focuses on how disengaged Salafi Jihadists view their own social world and how they understand themselves in relation to society and state, which allowed us to grasp the intricacies and complexities of their daily lives. The fascinating part is the moment we started uncovering the elements of the disengaged Salafi Jihadists' experiences and interactions, which we were not aware of. This in particular is where we think the strength of our thesis lies.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

The growing phenomenon of “terrorism” has resulted in a vast literature that explores various approaches to studying the subject. Despite the complexities related to defining terrorism and the proliferation of subjective conceptualizations masked as objective contributions, the hope for an engaged and more nuanced study of terrorism remains possible. While it is not the sole purpose of this thesis to engage in an epistemological debate, it is imperative to explore the claim that there is a primary definition of terrorism due to the intransigence that this exudes. We understand the pessimism raised by Ranstorp, who notes that “a veritable avalanche of studies has usefully energized the terrorism studies field” (2009: 25). This does not mean, however, that terrorism studies are on the right track.

A great deal of current research and studies on jihadists’ violent radicalization and on disengagement is focused on traditional and conventional rational choice approaches and mono-causal explanations (Dalacoura, 2009). We prefer to categorize the literature on terrorism studies into four main parts: the *psychological*, the *discursive*, the *structural* and the *instrumental*. These categories expand upon the traditional narrative on radicalization and disengagement. First, the *psychological* perspective is manifested through the use of assessments that delve into the roots behind *what turn people to commit acts of terror* (Borum, 2004; Stout, 2004; Silke, 2003; Post, 2007; Antonius and Sinclair, 2013; Sheppard, 2009 and Hudson, 2005). We learned that we were not dealing with one terrorist psychology but of several terrorist psychologies that differed depending on the individual and the organization (Post, 2007). Second, the discursive perspective examines the argument that the ideological meanings and formations of linguistic terms can explain how discourse is created and produced to stimulate young people into the realm of terror.

Third, the *structural* perspective emphasizes the effect of predisposed conditions, such as poverty, deprivation, closed windows of opportunity and state repression on radicalizing an individual. By closed windows of opportunity, we mean the opportunities that institutions block in order to prevent freedom of expression and re-inclusion into society. This line of literature sees marginalization and unemployment of young people as a direct cause for joining jihadist groups. Last is the *instrumental* perspective, which unveils how the discourse surrounding jihad is used by both local actors who use it for political purposes whom we call jihadists entrepreneurs) and Western actors who reduce the “War on Terror” to “religion,” in an attempt to explain the cost and benefit calculations of the participants (Ross, 1993). Organizing the literature into these four parts will help us to see how the puzzle of radicalization can be formed and how disengagement occurs.

We investigate the meanings that Salafi Jihadists attribute to their disengagement experiences and what has changed in their *everyday lives*. We sat down and conversed with those disengaged Salafists in an attempt to understand their habits, their manners, even their tastes and predispositions and consequently, bring the puzzle into focus.

The literature is divided into two main strands: violent radicalization, leading to terrorism, and de-radicalization or disengagement.

Violent Radicalization

Our thesis seeks to establish the importance of capturing the meaning making of Moroccan Salafi Jihadist once they are in their disengagement. Although the study of radicalization and the “de-radicalization” nexus is not novel, there is a lack of scholarship that deals specifically with disengagement (Taylor and Horgan, 2006). Unlike political science, various other disciplines have readily embraced the significance of radicalization in understanding violent behavior. Yet disengagement from violent radicalization, a process worthy of scholarly research, is characterized

by its paucity. The case of Moroccan Salafi jihadism has invariably shown the many meaningful implications of disengagement that support the understanding of such a complex process. This case opens possibilities and alternative ways of thinking about how disengagement occurs. This is done by putting the process of radicalization on a separate track. Understanding what a disengaged Salafi jihadist does in his *everyday life* - how he interacts, how he behaves with his former friends and new friends, as well as in his place of work or “market,” and with state administrations - can open a new level of conversation that takes the subject of disengagement seriously. As we will see in the coming chapters, the subjects under consideration have dynamic *habitus*; the habitus of their milieu (their neighborhood and family, their socio-economic imprints and status), a Salafi jihadi habitus (dress code by cutting the length of their pants to adhere to the Afghan style, long beards, and black solution applied to their eyes called *kohl*) and a market culture and language habitus that dictates who is included and who is excluded.

Gaining access to the Salafi jihadi world requires sensitivity and may be dangerous. That is why we see most of the literature rely on secondary sources. Very few researchers conducted their field studies with jihadists. We were able to meet directly with primary sources in Morocco and were led by the literature to Jordan where we interviewed the man behind the Salafi jihadi literature, Sheikh Al Maqdessi. The method of triangulation led us to him, after local Moroccan Salafi jihadists told us of his influence. The main Moroccan Salafi jihadist figures such as Sheikh Fizazi and Abu Hafs confirmed this finding.

The Big Debates

Why has this debate always involved conflict? The dominant literature in terrorism studies has been constructed around conflict. The online Free Dictionary defines conflict as “A state of disagreement or disharmony between persons or ideas.” (thefreedictionary.com).

An appropriate starting point to illustrate the conflictual narrative is with Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington who both provide a striking example in *The Crisis of Islam* (2004) and *The Clash of Civilizations* (1993). My reading of the literature attempts to elucidate the parameters of each contribution and clarify the arguments presented, the historical context of which is the end of the Cold War era. It will be wise here to start with Huntington's thesis of *Clash of Civilizations*. He predicted that future wars would be fought on civilizational grounds rather than economic or ideological ones: "It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural." (Huntington, 1993: 22). The discourse of clash of civilizations seems to be essential to the conflict between Salafi jihadists and Western elites. This discourse is built on the binary opposition of "us and them," "we and the other," "crusaders and mujahedeen," and serves both camps, mainly post 9/11. Specifically, it has allowed both camps to gain recruits under the banner "with us or against us." Within the same vein, Bernard Lewis published a series of books that dealt with the "historical roots of resentments that dominate the Islamic world," in particular in *The Crisis of Islam*. He argued that structural conditions, such as poverty, oppression, and marginalization, have been utilized by Islamists for the jihadist project. The radical shift according to Lewis lies in a crisis within the Islamic domain.

The accounts of both Huntington and Lewis provide a material understanding of how framing this issue dichotomously shaped political discourse. Their accounts describe a relationship defined by the post-Cold War environment, suggesting that there is a deficit in the Muslim world that stems from the imbalance in power arrangements between "them" and "the West." But is there more at play here? Does the civilizational conflict alone explain the extensive marginalization of Islamic societies?

We can hardly use a natural science framework to explain sociological or political phenomenon. Specifically, in the natural sciences we cannot declare something a law if it is only “probabilistic.” For the theory of gravity to be accepted both as positivistic science and an immutable law and feature of the earth, it cannot only be true *most* of the time, it has to be true *all* of the time. If the theory of gravity was tested repeatedly and it was shown to be true in a mere ninety-five percent of cases, it could not be a universal theory of gravity. Huntington, Lewis and many others alike employ a vernacular befitting more a discussion of the philosophy of logic than political theory. However unintentional it may be, it allows them to present an aura of infallibility and permanence that is misleading. However, there is an alternative literature that provides a different way of answering the question as to why Muslims become radicalized, without falling into this trap. This is not to say that all previous debates and contributions are deemed irrelevant because of this miscalculation. Social theory must be continually subject to constant challenge. It is also not to suggest that for any social theory to be worthy of exploration it must be true in all cases, but that any social theory must not present itself as an immutable fact of nature lest it be condemned as religious dogma or intellectual demagoguery.

We can find similar universalization if we turn our attention to Hans Morgenthau in *Politics Among Nations*. In outlining his Six Principles of Political Realism, Morgenthau (1948) writes, “Political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. The assumption of “objective laws,” that can also been found in Waltz (1979), Fukuyama (1989), Huntington (1993) and Lewis (2004), as being innate to “human nature” is rife with problems. How can we be certain that realists have answered a question so fundamental, one that has long been explored by all traditions, societies and civilizations for millennia while remaining unanswerable by most estimation?

The First Radical Division

An example of an “us versus them” political discourse occurred during The Palmer Raids (1919-1920) (Cohen, 2003). Attorney General, A. Mitchel Palmer, appointed J. Edgar Hoover as the head of the new Radical Division to chase the “Red Scare” in 1919 (Ellis, 1994). Hoover was involved in identifying alleged radicals who according to the authorities represented the Bolshevik threat in America. The fear extended to notions of racial radicalization. Rumors and propaganda positioned the protest of civil rights activists as having been orchestrated by the “enemy,” i.e. the Bolsheviks since 1917. Thirty-eight African Americans died in a race riot in East St. Louis, Illinois in 1918. The next day the *New York Times* published this:

That the negroes of this country are the object of a vicious and apparently well financed propaganda which is directed against the white people and which seeks, by newspapers, pamphlets and in other ways, to stir up discontent among the negroes, particularly the uneducated class in the Southern States. Documents in the possession of the authorities show that among the radical organizations active in this propaganda are the I.W.W, certain factions of the radical Socialist elements and Bolsheviks (New York Times, 28 July 1919)

In the mind of Hoover, the black civil liberties movement is seen as ‘radical black organization for constitutional rights [which] endangered the American social order and carried with it the threat of external subversion’ (Ellis, 1994: 39-59). Considering this, we are re-questioning a concept that has come to also be seen dogmatically: terrorism.

Do We Really Need the Concept of Terrorism?

The concept of terrorism has been manipulated by several actors, including the media and governments, to become a weapon of propaganda. Does this mean that we should abandon terrorism as a social science concept? The answer is negative. Nonetheless, the concept of terrorism must be questioned and looked at from different angles.

Today, at the academic level a whole generation of researchers and policy analysts are engaged in trying to understand why few are pushed to engage in terrorist acts. There are more than hundred definitions (Simon, 1994: 29). Since the attacks of September 11 many theories and definitions have seen the light. Scholars have begun generating new paradigm for terrorism (Copeland, 2001). The research on terrorism revealed a striking fact that many who carry out terrorist act do not expose to extreme thought (Hoffman, 2006), and the majority of them are normal (Sageman, 2008). There are many dynamics that motivate people to act violently. Hoffman defines terrorism as “Deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change. It is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond immediate victims. It is meant to install fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider “target audience”. Despite all the efforts, there is no consensus on a comprehensive illustrative definition, strong enough to guide researchers and decision makers at various levels and in different geographies.

According to the Global Terrorism Index, since 2000, there have been over 48,000 “terrorists” incidents. Most of these attacks did not occur in Western countries. Despite media attention on terrorist attacks exclusively in European or North American countries, the deaths from these incidents are low compared to the rest of the world (Elleke and Morton, 2010).

At the states and governments agencies, we briefly list some definitions from criminal codes in Canada, the United States, the European Union and the Arab Ministers of Justice Convention in Cairo.

In section 83.01 of the Canadian Criminal Code terrorism is defined as an act “in whole or in part for a political, religious or ideological purpose, objective or cause and in whole or in part with the intention of intimidating the public, or a segment of the public” (Government of Canada 2015).

In 2007, a sub parliamentary committee reviewed the 2001 Anti-Terrorism Act and recommended that the scope and parameters of terrorist activity be narrowed, as was the case with the British and the Australian definitions (House of Commons Canada 2007). Having such an open and sometimes vague definition is problematic. This is also the case in the United States. The FBI defines terrorism as, “The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (U.S. Department of Justice 2005). Due to their vagueness and imprecisions, terrorism became an element of political mobilization (Hoffman, 2005). Most of these definitions are specifying that the use of violence in terrorism be indiscriminate and against civilians make them vague. The concept of terrorism has generated a wide-ranging and globalized debate, both in terms of conceptualization, background, or its influence on the state, or in terms of its causes, but the characteristic is that the controversy took on a political dimension right after the attacks of September 11.

For their part, The Arab Ministers of Justice Convention in Cairo, Egypt, in 1998 came up with a definition that encompasses both terrorism and crime (Logan: 409, 2012)

Any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize national resources

The Arab Ministers of Justice definition of terrorism does not differ in its materials from the US Department of Homeland Security (Homeland Security Act of 2002). The latter states under Section 2, Act of 2002 that terrorism is an activity:

That involves an act dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; and is intended to intimidate or coerce the civilian population or influence or affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.

Similarly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) incorporates both the criminal and ideological component of the definition:

The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence (...) against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies (...) to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives (NATO, 2016).

Finally, the European Union framework decision on Combating Terrorism law states that a terrorist act is “Offences, committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population” (EU Rules 2015).

Ambiguity in the definition of terrorism is manifest when elements of the definition of criminality skew our understanding. Distinguishing between a criminal act and terrorist activity is a starting point for a possible definition of terrorism (Peter and Todd 2004: 657-671). In her *Encyclopedia of Transnational Crime and Justice*, Logan (2012) summarizes the problematic nature of subjective definitions: “If a term is so subjective that definitions are by their nature contentious, then perhaps, one might argue, it should not be used” (Ibid). What elements resemble a subjective definition of the term terrorism? First, terrorism is not a new idea and it comes in many different forms (i.e., bombing, group slaughtering, kidnapping, mass killing, plane hijacking etc.) and is practiced by many different and diverse groups (i.e., post revolutionaries (reign of terror in France), anarchists, resistance groups, nationalists and anti-colonial elements (IRA, ETA, PLO, Hamas..), religious groups (Al Qaeda, IS.).

In order to have a clear picture of what terrorism is, it must combine the following elements: the aims of terrorists must be political, and there must be either the use of violence or the intent to use it through menace and threats. The other important element is defining the actors involved and

the nature of the targets, i.e. military, civilians, symbols (parliament buildings, memorials, economic complexes etc.). Logan (2012: 401) cited Hoffman who examined 109 definitions of terrorism and realized that “most of the definitions included elements of violence or force, and many included some elements of psychological impact and methods of combat, strategy, or tactics.”

Beyond the Myth of Radicalization

Debating radicalization allows for a greater scope of understanding of fields of power, discourse, knowledge, and historical factors. This is an understanding that looks beyond the considerations of the media and security agencies’ traditional interpretations. It also looks beyond the idea of radicalized terrorists as non-state actors. It considers the effects of many elements, including structural (deprivation, poverty, repression, marginalization), discursive (ideologies, narratives, religion), instrumental (geopolitics, “War on Terror,” dialectic between “us and them”), and psychological (instinctual human traits, normality, and motivations). How does a person become a radical terrorist and how does this same person get disengaged from violence? Disengagement represents a challenge to the disengaged people themselves and to the academic and research community.

The ways through which radicalization and disengagement have been traditionally mapped provide an avenue for comprehending the parameters of each debate. An attempt to understand radicalization and disengagement has seen the emergence of scholars with varying ontological, epistemological and methodological departure points, albeit with the same aim of producing new approaches that can either explain what radicalization and disengagement are, or how it ought to be seen. In order to understand radicalization and disengagement, we need to grasp both mainstream and critical approaches since they each offer a unique perspective.

The literature presented here can be divided into two main groups, problem solving contributions and critical questioning. The problem-solving approaches have as principal objective the need to find general patterns of social relationships in order to provide ways of dealing effectively with particular situations or problems in our world. Critical perspectives, on the other hand, seek to trace the origins and changing directions of the agency of the individual and their social relationships, in relation to structures, both formal and informal. Accordingly, using each approach, we can develop a distinct understanding of radicalization. For example, the psychological approach seeks to develop a universal and parsimonious theory or explanation for how individual behave (Bjorgo and Horgan, 2009). Conversely, the critical approach emphasizes the role of human agency and the primary impact of structural factors.

Our literature review will encompass the evolving question of what pushes people to be violent radicals and how they disengage. It will do so by bringing new concepts in to the discussion that could help decipher how the *puzzle* of radicalization is put together and how it is taken a part. As indicated previously, it will highlight the four angles of the literature: psychological, structural, discursive, and instrumental.

While there has been in recent years a growing interest among researchers and policy makers alike in the phenomenon of violent radicalization leading to terrorism, there still exists no generally agreed upon definitions of either radicalization, terrorism or disengagement and de-radicalization. Most definitions have relied upon ad hoc understandings generated in large part by experts, either academic or journalistic pundits, responding to incidents of radicalization and terrorism. This has led to a specific focus on individuals' acts against state and society, rather than the root causes of violent radicalization and terrorism, generating ambiguous, vague, and easily misused definitions of such concepts.

In November 2001, the Islamic Research Council held a meeting under the chairmanship of Sheikh Al-Azhar of Cairo (The Egyptian Islamic Supreme Council). The Council issued a statement after three days of discussions in which it distinguished between terrorism and jihad. Terrorism was defined as intimidating innocent people and destroying their interests and their human dignity. This same definition was later adopted by the Islamic Organization of the Muslim World League in the statement of Mecca (Abu Rous A. 2001: 6).

The Psychological Dimension

Terrorist Psychologies

Why does one Salafi become involved in violent radicalization and another does not? The purpose of this literature review is to illustrate how radicalization and disengagement are understood. Also, we highlight contributions from various disciplines, to expand our understanding of why people get radicalized in the first place and how they disengage. We begin by describing the psychological model, which offers a useful guide to understanding the relation between behavior and cognition in radicalization and disengagement. The key insight of this approach is that radicalized individuals “are ordinary people” (Taylor and Horgan, 2006). They are also a very small subset of the population. Marc Sageman (2004) argues that “Ten years of counterterrorism practice has taught us that many people say very violent things, but very few follow up with violent actions” It is important here to highlight that those involved in violent radicalization are not forced to do so. Instead, they reached the stage of being recruited by their own choice, for the benefits of belonging to a group (Mayfield, 2015). Excited recruits willingly adhere to this structure and become even more vulnerable to what psychologist Anthony Stahelski calls the “five-stage social psychological conditioning process (cited in Mayfield, 2015: 14).

Reservoir of the “Psychology of Terrorism”

We assembled a wide range of literature that prepared the ground for further inquiries to be carried out. Before delving into the specific queries addressed here, it is prudent to identify the different waves of terrorism. In an interesting study conducted by David Rapoport (2001) he examined the life course of radicalism in each of the four waves of modern terror for the past 121 years. The ideological shifts discussed include anarchism, nationalism and anti-colonialism (1920s-1960s), leftist groups (1960s-1990s), and the current religious wave (1979 onward). One of the key words in Rapoport’s thesis is *evolution*. According to him, each wave evolves upon the ashes of the previous wave (Rapparot, 2005). This conclusion aligns with another interesting article that could be used as a roadmap. Taylor and Horgan, (2006) consider terrorism “as a process rather than a state of mind” (2006). The term process refers to the whole sets of sequences, steps, and ‘ordered or interdependent operations’ that lead to radicalization. Consequently, involvement in terrorism must focus on the relation between events and individuals that affect their behavior (Taylor and Horgan, 2006).

Randy Borum (2004) highlights the role of psychology as a discipline in understanding and explaining human behavior. In his *Psychology of Terrorism*, Borum recognizes the advantages and the limitations of the psychological approach and cites psychiatrists Jerrold Post’s statement “there is a broad spectrum of terrorist groups and organizations, each of which has a different psychology, motivation and decision making structure. Indeed, one should not speak of terrorist psychology in the singular, but rather of terrorist psychologies”(Borum, 2004). Violence according to Borum goes beyond the dichotomy of “Nature vs. Nurture” and is the result of a complex interaction of what is “biological, social/contextual, cognitive, and emotional factors that occur over time” (Borum, 2004).

The early contributions of terrorist behavior theory were dominated by Freudian psychoanalysis. Feuer's *The Conflict of Generations*, published in 1969 and cited by Borum (2004:19), addresses Freud's Oedipus complex and interprets terrorism in terms of generational conflict rooted in childhood abuse or an analysis of the psychological impact of sons against fathers. Meanwhile, various disciplines such as criminology, sociology and psychology have classified risk factors for general violence into two main groups: the static and the dynamic. Based on this classification, the static risk factors are unlikely to change over time, as they are historical and dispositional residues while on the other hand, dynamic risk factors are "individual, social or situational factors that often change" (Borum, Swartz, and Swanson, 1996: 205-215).

The development of a conceptual framework to analyze the psychological processes of the terrorist arose from within a rich tradition of a criminology literature on gangs. An assertion that the debate is novel allows some of the contributions to maintain a *carte blanche*; or remain unstained by the maneuverings of prior perspectives. This commonly perceived view is based upon the assumption that psychological analysis and psychological factors are the *only* way radicalization and terrorist activities must be understood. Arie W. Kruglanski (2006) argued in his *The Psychology of Terrorism: "Syndrome" Versus "Tool" Perspectives* that the two perspectives "syndrome" and "tool" have "divergent implications." The syndrome perspective considers terrorism as a psychological entity that is characterized by precise traits and sets of root causes differentiating them from non-terrorists. The tool perspective is the means which terrorists use to achieve their goals, real or imagined.

What makes individuals radicalize? Researchers with extensive experience in dealing with the psychology of terrorists and what makes them turn "evil" agree in one way or another on how frightening the transformation from "normal" to engaging in acts of terror is. James W. Jones

(2008) brought the case of Aum Shinriko, the Japanese Buddhist who was behind the sarin gas attack in a Tokyo subway station in 1995, and the extreme religious right that committed violence against abortion facilities in the United States to illustrate this point. Jones attributes an authoritarian nature in religious fundamentalism that sees the world in black and white. These attacks have deep implications on society, and states of alerts are the main themes of the preventive measures that result from these acts. Kimmel and Stout (2006) talked to a group of fifteen American psychologists who pinpointed the effect of counter-terrorism measure and restrictions on personal freedoms and human rights on the mental health of Americans. For example, the lack of understanding and haphazard use of color-coding to distinguish the threat level of attacks impacted the lives and psyche of citizens. Furthermore, countering measures are seen as justified as illustrated in Planje et al (2012), which examined the cognitive, social, and emotional roots of people during security threats and how their views are framed within the concepts of patriotism and security.

The Usual Suspects: What Make Individuals Act Violently?

A common answer to the question of why someone acts violently is that they want to “communicate something.” Many people become involved in violence without having a strong understanding or an ideological basis for their actions. Yet there are predispositions to violence, including anger, repression, and disenfranchisement. Our first interviewee in Casablanca agreed that violence was simply a way to convey a message. The message was letting “others” know about the repressed anger at the injustices of Western states towards the Palestinian issue:

In the beginning I had that rage when I saw the mistreatment of Palestinians. My entire body wants me to act in order to say to the world that we exist and what is happening is wrong (Interview, Mr. D. 2016)

John Horgan (2003) argues that studies of terrorism psychology have “derailed” from objective of scientific psychology. This derailment placed the psychological accounts into a state of ‘ignore[ing] or blur[ring] the variety and the complexity’ (Reich, 1998: 261-279). Walter Reich states that the problem within the psychological analysis of terrorism and terrorists is conceptual. According to Reich, it is hard for the psychologists to “remind readers that only one particular group of terrorists is being discussed and not all of them through recorded history” (ibid). Understanding terrorism is not just a simple procedural task that has to do with policy makers and their legal definitions. Understanding the thin line that separates terrorism from crime is also of great importance.

We come back to the original conceptual debate: “What makes a criminal different from a terrorist?” In the same vein, we also ask the questions that have been asked since the birth of criminology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and shaped people and society’s perception of what “criminal behavior” is: “Why do people commit crime?” and “Why do so many people conform to society’s norms?” (DiChristina, 2012). According to DiChristina, the criminal act is apolitical, whereas terrorism has political causes. In terms of intentions, a criminal’s motivation could include a myriad of motivations: greed, revenge, jealousy, economic and social power, following orders. Yet unlike the terrorist, criminals seldom seek to address the political structure of society; the terrorist’s motivations go beyond the act itself to spreading a wider message. Moreover, a terrorist seeks public recognition while the criminal does not (LaFree and Dugan, 2004). Furthermore, the criminal structure is built on close social ties formed through childhood gangs, school cliques etc. (Brown et al., 2010), whereas terrorist structures are mainly formed under the banner of loyalty and servitude for a political cause.

The Discursive Dimension

Terror is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue” (Robespierre’s “Reign of Terror” in revolutionary France (1793–1794).

As the jihadi linguistic repertoire becomes more popular, it does not represent an empty vacuum of ideas used solely for ideological purposes or to attack those who do-not adhere to the ideology. Instead the jihadi discourse is now a vehicle that impacts the everyday lives of people. Through this social penetration, the jihadi discourse is able to create and produce a representation of an ideology that is manifested through common and shared societal norms. Meanings are implemented by using geopolitics, hegemony, colonization and globalization to formulate, to inspire, and to construct reflections and actions.

Among our findings was that there were copious amounts of jihadi literature spread and distributed in Morocco, starting from the late 1990s. Contrary to what has been reported in previous studies that the work of the Egyptian Qutb (2001) had an impact on the new generation of Moroccan jihadists, we found that there was a greater impact from the work of Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi (Wagemakers 2012), who is the leading theorist, intellectual, and the ideological forbearer of al-Qaeda, as well as the teacher of Abu Mussaab Zarkaoui, the Jordanian jihadist who ran a paramilitary training camp in Afghanistan and orchestrated the civil war in Iraq. The foundational principle of jihadism according to Al Maqdessi is loyalty and disavowal or (*all Walaa wal Baraa*, or WB). Sheikh al Maqdessi’s main work of the concept of WB had great influence on ordinary people to join the jihadist movement by, first, proving their loyalty to the cause of bringing back the lost community, and, second, disavowing those who do not adhere (Al-Maqdessi). 1 Qaeda’s main ideational framework resides in loyalty and disavowal, and outlines two confrontational strategies: on the one hand, it declares an open war against Islamic states (near

enemies) that are regarded as allies to the West, and on the other hand, it justifies attacks and terror against non-Islamic societies (far enemies). Justifying attacks is key in the jihadi mind.

We now turn our attention to Bassam Tibi who provides an investigation of the scale of what he considers to be a fundamentalist threat. In *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder* Tibi (1998) points to the Western democracy and human rights model as a source of stability in the Muslim world, and focused on political Islam as an *ideology* that fomented into fundamental thoughts with strict interpretations. His 2008 work continued with the same vein of analysis and offers explanations as to why non-state actors converge to erect ideologies, such as global jihad and regaining political power of the community *Umma*, with each performing, to varying degrees, a role in the formation and construction of world politics (Tibi 2008). If global jihad contributes to the formation of world order, as suggested by Tibi, then can Western countries be effective in limiting the expression of Jihadists and their shaping of power? What is the value, moreover, of the discursive elements of an ideology converging to form a regime in the pursuit of self-interest and power of a lost community and imagining its re-birth? The contradictory nature of the question is reflective of the paradox of the ideology behind the rise of global jihad. How can we then expect consistent success from an ‘ideology’ resting its foundation on such inconsistencies?

Before such questions can be fully addressed, let us explore a contribution offered by Emmanuel Sivan (1990), clearly outlines the immense role-played by Sayyid Qutb in the formation of radical Islamic ideology. Sivan’s contribution reflects on how academia, following the Afghan-Soviet war, emphasized Qutb as the source of global jihad and Islamic ideology. In the wake of 9/11, the literature on global jihad continued to focus on the role of Qutb. For example, Gilles Kepel-(2002) outlined the ideological formations behind jihad, describing Qutb as the “the greatest

ideological influence on the contemporary Islamist movement” (2002: 27). John C. Zimmerman (2004) also argues for the pivotal influence of the Qutb ideology in the rise of global jihad. Furthermore, Sayyid Qutb’s *Milestones= Ma’alim fi’l-tareeq* (1981), reedited in 2006, is considered to be the jihadi manifesto since its first publication back in 1964. Mohamed Darif (2004) writing about our case study of Morocco, also saw a link with Qutb. He analyzed Morocco’s most active radical Islamist group, reviewing its creation and their presence in Afghanistan, their relations with Osama Bin Laden and their provision of logistical support to al-Qaeda. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, their strategy shifted towards more overt terrorist activities that were influenced, he claimed, by the Qutbist ideology. After carefully examining the numerous sources that placed Qutb as the influential leader of the September 11 attacks, this thesis argues that Qutb’s impact was overstated by scholars. Nonetheless, some academics and researchers characterized this wave of ‘Qutb’-influenced ideology as a counter-hegemonic phase.

According to John A. Turner (2014), Salafi Jihadists reject the international order by calling on the use of resistance based on religious terms to change it. This resistance is to the unequal economic practices and the cultural and materialistic aspects that are allegedly hidden within the liberal international world order, the major conveyor of which, according to Salafi Jihadists, is the U.S. The discursive attempts to define and redefine themselves as resistance to the world order have long been important to jihadi groups’ political activity. Jihadists typically aim to portray themselves as acting on behalf of the Islamic community (*Umma*), rather than political self-interest. It is also important to note how the state frames jihadists and the issues surrounding them. Chapter 4 and 5 tackles how the Salafi jihadists perceive the state and how the state perceives them. It will become clear that their effectiveness in shaping a discursive message has been the

consequence of states, especially hegemonic powers, returning to the principle of “with us or against us,” a binary opposition that meets the interests of jihadist groups.

In the mid of the 20th century the Mujahedeen of Afghanistan were seen as *freedom fighters* by the American president at the time, Ronald Reagan. The Mujahedeen were described as “saboteurs,” “gangs”, mercenaries,” “fundamentalists,” “zoloofs,” “counterrevolutionaries,” and “tools of the western imperial powers” by the Soviet Union, which had invaded in 1979 and overthrown the Afghan regime. Russians (Grachev 1980; Shahrani 1984; Canfield 1984). During the Afghan war of 1979-1989, travelling to and participating in the war was seen as a religious duty to Salafis. Doors were opened as embassies issued entry visas within a short period of time. Mohammed Rafiqi, one of the Moroccan Salafi jihadi figures, recalls when he was 16 years old and travelled to Peshawar in Afghanistan. He says that the trip was facilitated by Western countries, mainly the Americans “In this era jihad was seen as an act of what they call today, patriotism, a duty that is nobler than anything else.” (Interview Abu Hafs 2016)

One of the earliest criminal psychology studies to tackle “justification” is Gresham M. Sykes and David Matza (1957), which found that criminals tend to generate narratives that justify their crimes. In February 2003, Osama Bin Laden listed Morocco among the future targets as the near enemy, which he characterized as “enslaved by America” and, therefore, “most eligible for the liberation”. This declaration has been seen as a call for jihad. Bin Laden’s religious edict or *fatwa* seems to have stimulated the attacks on Casablanca that occurred three months later on May 16, 2003, in which 12 suicide bombers attacked five Jewish and Western targets, killing 45 and injuring hundreds. The bombers were identified as being members of the *Salafiya Jihadiya*, which embrace the al-Qaeda doctrine (Pargeter 2005). The members originated from the suburbs of Casablanca. Since then, most dismantled cells or imprisoned *Salafi* leaders were found to be

previously active in urban areas. Sykes and Matza's theory of Neutralization Technique (1957) is important in understanding how people develop rationalizations that neutralize their feelings of guilt. The narrative of all Wala'a wal Bar'a (WB) is a rationalizing process that justifies and neutralizes the terror and attacks of Jihadists.

In October 2001, 170 states made comments on the events of 11 September 2001 in the United Nations General Assembly. For a full week, the concentration of their work was to come up with a list of root causes for radicalization and terrorism. The list of causes included mostly structural problems (poverty, disease, illiteracy, marginalization, exclusion, political oppression, injustice, misery, starvation, drugs, lack of perspectives, alienation of the young, deprivation etc. (General Assembly of the United Nations. Resolution 70/120). Peter Neumann, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR) in London argues that the study of the roots causes of terrorism was deemed politically incorrect. He posits that "Following the attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001 [...] it suddenly became very difficult to talk about 'the roots of terrorism' which some commentators claimed was an effort to excuse and justify the killing of innocent civilians [...]. It was through the notion of radicalization that a discussion [...] became possible again" (Neumann 2010:480).

Following this UN assembly, a vast literature that emphasized structural issues such as poverty, marginalization, unemployment, state repression and closed windows of opportunity dominated the analysis of radicalization. For its part, the media also contributed to flourishing of the structural approach.

The Structural Dimension

Radicalization has become one of the most debated subjects in recent years, especially with attempts to explain its origins, nature and character. In conference proceedings published by the

International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR), Neumann (2013) refers to radicalization as “what goes on before the bomb goes off”. However, the ICSR does not have a standard definition of radicalization. Similarly, in the Military Committee Terminology Standardization Program (MCTSP), that provides official NATO definitions of terms under a Standard Agreement, the term radicalization, or any of its derivatives, once again, is not defined. The Concise Oxford English Dictionary (COED) also does not provide a definition of radicalization.

However, some theorists like Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko (2008) define radicalization as “a change in beliefs, feelings, and behaviors in directions that increasingly justify intergroup violence and demand sacrifices in defence of the in-group” Claire-Jehanne Dubouloz; and Alex S. Wilner (2011: 418) suggest another definition of radicalization as both a mental and emotional process that motivates individuals to “justif[y] the use of indiscriminate violence.”

Many studies were conducted to understand the process of religious radicalization. What resulted was a one size fits all approach that asserts how an ordinary person could embrace and carry out violent actions against fellow citizens. In particular, it is believed that structural conditions such as poverty, discrimination and marginalization are the main causes of radicalization and that recruitment of radicals occurs primarily among segments of poor societies (Ansari 1984; Anderson 1997; Ayubi 2003; Tessler 1997; Khosrokhavar 2005–These theories interpret violent radicalization and terrorism as a result of external circumstances affecting the decision of individuals, suggesting that these circumstances have an impact on behavior, sometimes in ways incompatible with our the values of an individual. Most of the former jihadists whom we interviewed state that the doors were closed in their face and they felt that they had no other choice but to carry out violent acts. In repressive regimes in particular, where windows of

opportunities are closed and freedom of speech is restricted, belonging to Jihadist groups was perceived as the only available path for some seeking change (Bjorgo 2005). Bjorgo provides a list of possible root causes of terrorism: poverty, illegal and/or corrupt governments, unemployment, state failure and weakness, lack of democracy, absence of justice and equality, repression, external forces supporting those groups and the presence of charismatic and ideological leaders.

According to the structural perspective, individuals, mainly youth, targeted for radicalization have gone through some sort of devastating incident. Once they are in, the newly radicalized are exploited for their feelings of persecution, oppression, poverty and their needs to vent their repressed desires (Ross 1993: 317). Jeffery Ian Ross postulates that the structural causes are found “In the environment and the political, cultural, social, and economic structure of societies.”⁵ He added that structural causes are easier to measure and operationalize in comparison to the psychological and discursive and approaches.

The Instrumental Dimension

Jihad is the result of actors who instrumentalize and manipulate their “rational” choices towards a specific end result (Acharya 2013: 55; Attayyar 2016: 112). Acharya Arabinda (2013) argues that violence associated with religion “comes from the fundamental structures of the belief system of all major religions,” (55) adding that acquiring that belief system plays a great role in the radicalization process. Ronczkowski (2017), in examining the fundamental support of youth

⁵ Social structures refer to the patterns discernible in social life, the regularities observed, [and] the configurations detected. The nature of the patterns and shapes one can recognize in the welter of human experience depends on one’s perspective’ (Blau, 1975: 3). A debate exists over whether or not social structure refers to empirical reality to observable groups and hierarchies dividing a population (the British School as articulated by Radcliffe-Brown and his students) and social structure as a mental construct devised by theorists to explain empirical observation and only roughly reflected in the various empirically observed patterns of social positions and relations (Levi-Strauss and his students).

for jihad, has argued that there is a high propensity for youth who are less educated, poor and have fewer opportunities for economic independence to adopt and embrace extreme groups, as this will increase their chances of being recognized. Involvement in something “more” or “higher” than themselves is seen as a solution to their poverty, hence the adoption of these fundamental values. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) hierarchy used to call newly recruited youth “clean skins” (122), indicating their propensity for being molded. Bassam Tibi (2008), in explaining the nexus between terrorism and Islam, has argued that there is a direct connection or causal effect between socioeconomic status and the involvement with violent groups. In particular, he claims that the increased rates of attacks have nothing to do with the Western world but rather the ease through which recruits are manipulated by an ideology. On the other hand, many authors have emphasized the agency of those jihadi sheikhs that take advantage of structural opportunities and instrumentalize jihad for their own agendas. These men are referred to as jihadist entrepreneurs.

The Moroccan Jihadist Entrepreneurs

A jihadist describes a person infused with a narrative of loyalty and someone who is a part of an organization characterized by a rigid structure with a distinct division of labour. The importance of individuals in this world is determined according to their status, role, and religious knowledge. Mr. M describes his foray into this world:

“From the first moment I attended the lecturing sessions, I was called a jihadist. This had a big impact on my self-glorification. But just after a few minutes, I knew where I belonged and what is meant to prove myself. My task was then to make tea with mint for them. I did not have a religious knowledge (Interview Mr. M 2016).”

A group of five to nine men meet regularly in different locations, from dawn to late nights, in houses, and suburban empty spaces. While the organization itself is rigid, the leadership in these jihadist groups can be well structured to very diffused. Nonetheless, there are rules, regulations, and sometimes sanctions because of a wrong doing, such as being seen with someone who does not fit with the principals of the group. These groups also provided protection within the markets and aided new members in gaining territory through a web of signs and codes. Mr. M continues:

“Whenever I had an issue or a friction with another street vendor over a vending territory, someone comes and just with his eyes I can tell and decipher the codes of menace, anger, and compromise. All of a sudden there are no frictions (Interview Mr. M, 2016).”

Understanding the behavior of the jihadists who switched from being “normal” members of society to belonging to a group that rejects society, and again leaving the group and coming back to the same society is a complex *process* (Bjoro and Horgan 2008. With the proliferation of Jihadist groups and their widespread use of terrorism to carry out attacks in the name of religion, the psychological approach is useful.

Despite the consensus among scholars that there is no specific moment through which an individual turn into a terrorist, the feeling of victimhood generates a sense of revenge, which drives an individual to join terrorist groups that may espouse his or her cause. Second is the evolvement of the individual’s identity into a collective identity, which is subject to their involvement in their new community and the group dynamic. Within these groups, terrorists tend to make decisions with high risks. The more extreme the group becomes, the more the individual becomes ready to act violently. A great pressure is exercised from the leadership and colleagues that compels the newly involved member to identify with the community consensus. The ideological entrenchment is the third pattern. Without clear moral justification for committing terrorist acts, the risk of

dissolving the group becomes imminent. The ideological goal of the group is to create a perfect world where its members are defending the oppressed, and therefore they must sacrifice themselves to achieve those moral objectives. Engaging in terrorist operations is the fourth and final pattern and reflects the highest level of ideological entrenchments.

Disengagement

Fewer studies, on the other hand, have looked at jihadi disengagement processes of how a violent radical person could be brought back to his former state of being “ordinary” (Ashour 2009). It should be noted here that disengagement means in its broad sense the change of attitudes of these groups towards violence, especially violence against civilians. It is important to highlight here two types of radicals: those who hold radical ideas, and those who believe in the call for jihad and arms. In this thesis, we are interested in these violent radicals who were disengaged. While it is believed that the state led de-radicalization programs such as the restructuration of poor neighborhoods, avenues of reintegration and more inclusive policies, they are limited and not sufficient. A number of scholars point to the similarity of terrorists’ disengagement and that of the disengagement from a variety of anti-social behaviors of gangs, and racists groups (Horgan, 2008). Unfortunately, these efforts fall short, as they do not eradicate the real issue of jihadi violence legislations. Jihadi violence legislation is the environment through which jihadi leaders declare edicts (*fatwas*) and mobilize for jihad. As a result, these leaders become the only legitimate source in town.

In the aftermath of 9/11 and subsequent attacks by Al Qaeda and affiliated groups all over the world, there was an increase of individual mobilization and recruitment by jihadi movements. Al Qaeda’s main ideational framework resides in its call for global jihad (GJ). This ideational framework outlines two confrontational strategies: on the one hand, it declares an open war against

Islamic states (near enemies) that are regarded as allies of the West, and on the other hand, it justifies attacks and terror against non-Islamic societies (far enemies) (Khosrokhavar 2005, 2015). In February 2003, Osama Bin Laden listed Morocco among future targets within the near enemy, which he characterized as “enslaved by America” and, therefore, “most eligible for liberation.” (Ashour, 2009). This declaration has been seen as a call for jihad and seems to have stimulated attacks on Casablanca three months later, in which twelve suicide bombers attacked five Jewish and Western targets, killing forty-five and injuring hundreds. The bombers hailing from the suburbs of Casablanca were identified as members of the *Salafiya Jihadiya*, which embrace the Al Qaeda doctrine (Pargeter 2005). Since then most dismantled cells or imprisoned *Salafi* leaders were active in urban areas.

Literally overnight with 9/11, Al Qaeda and its growing franchises in the Islamic world attracted the attention of the academic community in trying to explain these defying sub state actors. Yet, studying former jihadists or clandestine and underground movements remains for most academics inaccessible and far too dangerous. This is the task undertaken by this study. In doing so, the thesis through the capturing of the meaning making of disengaged Salafi Jihadists aims at generating new questions and pushing the intellectual boundaries of academia around the relationships between jihadism, disengagement and the monarchy, asking: Are there specific empirical jihadi cases we can study to observe its disengagement from violence? The case of Salafi Jihadists in Morocco proves to be one such case. Some prominent religious leaders such as Mohammed Fizazi, Omar Haddouchi, Mohammed Rafikki and Abdelkrim Chadli delivered rigorous speeches, lectures and announcements encouraging jihad and at the same time triggering the development of an endogenous radical ideology in Morocco (Alonso and Rey, 2007).

This study focuses on the attacks on Casablanca, which took place in 2003. The Casablanca attack is a case of urban violence, which illustrates both an attack against the “near enemies” (Moroccan state and society) and “far enemies” (a night club frequented mostly by Jews and Westerners), according to jihadists. The event has since contributed to the widespread use of the term Salafi jihadism in western academia and media (Migdalovitz 2010). Much literature has focused on structural opportunity factors as the main contributors to the ignition or recruitment of vulnerable and angry adherents to jihadi groups (Tibi, 2010).

Understanding the *meanings* rather than the *how* and *why* of violent engagement helps us assess the influence of gradual processes of socialization. To better understand violent socialization, one cannot rely on either psychological approaches such as those offered by Horgan’s (2008: 82-94) profiles of radicalization to pathways into terrorism, or by those offered by the literature on political violence which focuses on differentiating between violent and non-violent radicalization (Bartlett and Miller, 2010: 4-20), and the perception of vulnerabilities such as socio-political and economic frustrations as well as personal victimization (Silber and Bhatt 2007).

Horgan focused his work on how terrorists leave their incubators groups. This represents a high level of separation resulting in changes of an individual’s roles and identity outside of the organization, yet there are terrorists who leave their groups without abandoning their beliefs and extreme views. This is one of the most important reasons we chose to focus on disengagement instead of de-radicalization. Commenting on disengagement, it is a behavioural change that is usually associated with a change of a violent behavior Horgan (67, 2009) added:

Despite some important contributions in the 1980s and early 1990s, little is known even today about what happens for the individual terrorist to leave terrorism behind. Consequently, there is no available evidence that may serve to inform policy that is in

any way related to thinking critically about what could be developed to facilitate or promote disengagement at any level.

On the other hand, de-radicalization is change that can be observed at the cognitive level and be seen as a psychological process that leads to a change of attitude by reducing the individual's commitment to act or participate in violence (Bjoro, 2009).

It is arguable that in the disengagement process, the jihadists have more agency than de-radicalization, where top-down programs and policies are imposed on them (Interview Abu Hafs 2016) The Jihadists make decisions that can be classified as rational to leave the groups temporarily or permanently.

The predominance of psychoanalytic approaches to terrorism is a serious misinterpretation of the terrorist's psyche. These approaches focus on terrorists as psychopathic, and see terrorism as abnormal behavior, but this perception quickly collapses at the theoretical level (Silk 1998: 51). This may seem overwhelming to many, but there is a consensus among researchers on the subject of terrorism that terrorists are normal individuals and not psychopathic (Taylor and Horgan 2006, Sageman 2008, Bjoro and Horgan 2009, McCauley and Moskalenko 2008, 2009).

This thesis aims to make two important contributions on the process of disengagement. First, it can enrich our understanding of the disengagement of jihadists, which is socially assumed in the everyday life but under-theorized. Second, disengagement is often discussed as a general trend, while this project will focus on an ethnographic case study in the little-studied case of Morocco.

The aim is to work on bridging the existing gap that exists between the world of Salafi jihadism and the psychological and criminological literature. The question that is explored here is about the meanings and what has been changed in the everyday lives of the disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadist. More importantly, however, is the question of whether or not disengagement is an

end in itself or a means towards a different career? We call it this end as the Jihadist career that will be explored in the coming chapters.

This thesis seeks to establish the importance of the Salafi jihadi world as being representative of important areas of discussion in our understanding of disengagement as *meanings*. The literature points to the many meaningful implications that windows of opportunity can have in defusing the tensions of hardline jihadists. As a medium, these windows of opportunity have opened the possibility to rationally disengage from inciting or embracing violence. The world of jihadism immersive qualities can take the Salafi Jihadist to alternate universes that can disturb present realities. Understanding and observing what the Salafi jihadists in their everyday life can do, how they interact in the social reality, and their dispositions can open a new level of conversation that will help us to closely see the world of the disengaged.

Chapter 3. Methodology and Theoretical Framework

As stated in the Introduction, we are investigating the meanings that formerly engaged (radicalized) Salafists ascribed to their disengagement and how have they become embedded in their everyday lives. We conducted this research in its natural settings attempting to make sense of the meaning making process that people bring to their everyday lives.

The research employs a qualitative approach to allow for an in-depth study of the *meaning(s) that Salafi Jihadists ascribes to their experience* and collect data using three techniques: unstructured interviews, participant observation and documentary evidence. The qualitative method is based on an interpretative epistemology that assumes social reality to be dynamic, constructed and evolving (Marsh and Stoker, 2002), and primarily seeks explanation of causes from individual cases (Mahoney and Goertz, 2006). The approach helps observing social and human phenomenon in their natural environment using ethnographic techniques, to understand the meanings Salafi Jihadists have ascribed to their disengagement and new lives.

Our research is not of a theological nature. That is to say that we did not engage into theological texts in order to grasp what is true or wrong. Any invocation of the canonical literature (Quran or Hadith) found in our work will only be to show how some principles, such as Loyalty and Disavowal (*al Wala'a wal Bara'a*, WB) have been appropriated by actors. In other words, we do not assume the role of a religious exegete. On the contrary, we only do so as part of a general explanation of how WB has been interpreted by Salafi Jihadists.

In comparative research, the case study of the meaning(s) that Moroccan Salafi Jihadists ascribe to their experience of being disengaged from violent radicalization and the changes in their everyday lives is a useful method of testing hypotheses and developing new conceptual frames.

Single case studies can generate, formulate and test hypotheses (Mahoney, and Rueschemeyer, 2003).

An assessment of Salafi Jihadists' changing perception of each other, as well as, their own ideological commitment is best determined through an ethnographic search. Consequently, ethnography serves as an appropriate research method to account, assess and interpret "fairly rigorously certain direct physical evidences of the behaviors of, and the relationship between, various types of political actors" (Manheim and Rich, 1986: 153). Capturing the meaning making will offer a way to measure for the consequence(s) of disengagement of the Salafi Jihadists from violent ideological commitments. We conducted a field investigation based on direct encounters, observations, conversations, and coexistence in their everyday life. We were cautious to avoid self-projective and generalizable judgments. Hence, the effectiveness of field investigation is a spontaneous learning. Letting the field speak and listening well to what the field says are the departing notes for an in-depth search.

The literature on Salafi Jihadism predominately focuses on political and geopolitical structures and provides a limited analysis. Many recent studies lack sociological context, as if everything started or ended with the death of this leader or the demise of this or that organization. Our topic offers a broader perspective. It means that when we start study something, our basic assumption is that we simply do not know what factors affect the lives of those we study. Conducting research based on in-depth ethnographic fieldwork is therefore essential to our thesis. We spent a lot of time talking and observing members of the Jihadist movement and living with them mainly in the cities of Rabat, and also in Casablanca, and then we expanded our coexisting research in Jordan. With regard to what is produced within the history of movements, there is a clear shortage of cross-cutting works, as well as perspective-based works. In this thesis, we present

a complex, multilayered understanding of the nuances of jihadist society from a strong ethnographic perspective.

The bulk of the information became available through conversation and observation, which we have verified as accurate from more than one source, and later - after the emergence of trust, we were careful when we found that participants in the research spoke with the desire to impress or conceal the facts. We explored in particular the context of disengagement with violent extremism and analyzed the reality and life of Salafi Jihadists, especially the challenges posed by manifestations of their religion within society. In our ethnography of Jihadist disengagement, we found that our respondent had a distinct way explaining their own behavior.

We explored daily routines and narrative materials in order to understand the content, and the context of their stories, which were narrated in the form of developing a plot that goes back in the past, telling what is happening in the present time and anticipating the future with various linguistic aspects of the narrative (Lieblich et al., 1998, 12). Other scholars have sought to understand the experiences and meanings that Salafi Jihadists attribute to their disengagement (Abu Rumman, 2006). *I am Salafi* is a book published by Abu Rumman through which he dealt with middle level Jordanian Salafi Jihadists (well educated doctors, teachers and engineers) (2006). Other works discussed high level members of the Islamic Group (Muslim Brotherhood) in both Algeria and Egypt (Ashour, 2008).

Our ethnographic approach sought to understand the inner culture of the disengaged Salafi Jihadists (Wolcott, 1995). We attempted to reinterpret the participants' interpretations of their own action and the meanings they generate while being violently radicals and while disengaged. Ontologically, there is no unique or singular meaning or reality but individuals holding their own ways and views, which makes reality(s) and meaning (s) more open to interpretations (Rubin and

Rubin, 2011). The construction of meanings can be seen in their reconstruction of social reality in the everyday life in specific places (neighborhoods, workplaces, markets, streets, public administrations), where particular power structures are everywhere through norms, habits, and discourses.

This thesis relies on primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the encounter of the man who was behind the concept of Salafi Jihadism, a concept that still remain disouted in the media and academia. We also focus on the book of *Cult of Ibrahim* or Religion of Ibrahim *Millat Ibrahim* written by Al Maqdessi where he laid down his jihad manifesto, which dealt in detail with the doctrine of al *Walaa wal Baraa* (WB).

Procedure and Setting

In order to obtain first-hand ideas and information, we embarked on a nine month and 17 day journey to Morocco and Jordan from Winter 2016 to Summer 2018. We talked to disengaged Jihadists (and security officers) in six cities of Morocco (Tangier in the North; Rabat and Casablanca in the West; Fez in the Centre; Marrakech in the South and Oujda in the East). Specifically, we were interested in grassroots' disengagement from violence (behavioural disengagement). As such, the study argues that disengagement of Salafi Jihadists is shaped by the political environment of a particular point in time where the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful's inclusive narrative opened windows of opportunity, which coalesced with a comprehensive security approach to incite Jihadists to disengage from violence. We kept the focus on grassroots Salafi Jihadists, rather than known figures (with an important exception).

Recruiting Participants

Having established relationships with key Salafi Jihadists in both Morocco and Jordan, researchers, grassroots Jihadi members and their neighbours, recruiting participants was made

easier. The sampling criteria for the selection of our participants followed two precepts: (a) they had been called by security authorities for investigation for suspicious activities related to a direct or indirect implication in the Casablanca terrorist attacks; and, (b) they provided a degree of belonging and commitment to the Salafi jihadi circle. Our university Ethics Board approved the study procedures. All participants were given verbal and written explanations of the study and provided written informed consent and confidentiality agreements.

The meetings with participants can be classified on a continuum from a set of scripted questions posed in the same order to researchers, directors of research centres; to a completely informal conversation with no interview guide, which is suitable for ethnographic fieldwork, because it enabled us to react, respond, and discover issues on which the interviewer has no knowledge (Patton, 2002). Conversational interviews offer the flexibility to pursue new ideas and information in different directions (Rubin and Rubin, 2011). As the research progressed, the role that respondents ascribed to us evolved, from an undercover agent, to a researcher, a criminologist and, in some cases, a friend.

The disengagement of former Moroccan grassroots Salafi Jihadists is a unique case study. Whereas studies tend to adopt a top-down/trickle-down style to understand what is known as de-radicalization, a bottom-up analysis of the disengagement of grassroots actors is rarely used. This is our contribution.

Data Collection

Participants

Designing a particular group of participants was mostly spontaneous (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995, 74). During this period of field research, we were able to observe, to discuss and to interview mainly grassroots Moroccan Salafi Jihadists, some leaders of the movement, researchers and

intellectuals. Among the leaders who were released from Moroccan prisons were Sheikh Fizazi, with whom we were in contact since his release from prison in 2012; Mohammed Rafiqui also known as Abu Hafs, Director of a research center; Samir Boudinar, the head of the Centre of Research for Humanities and Social Sciences; Mohammed Tozi, director of the Moroccan School of Governance and Economy; Mohammed Abbadi, president of the Mohammadiya League of Scholars *Rabita Mohammadia des Oulemas*; as well as Driss Kanbouri and Montassir Hamada, both scholars of the Islamic movement in Morocco.

In the course of our research, we found out that there an alternative and influential Jihadist school had to be explored. This led us to visit Zarqa, in Jordan, in order to meet with Mohammed Abu Rumman, Director of studies and the Center for Strategic Studies at Jordan University. A former member of the Jordanian Islamist movement, and the author of many books and articles, Abu Rumman published his book *I am Salafi*, where he investigated mid-level Jordanian Salafi Jihadists, among them Dr. Monif Samara ,who studied in the Philippines and was suspected to be linked to the Abu Sayyef Group. Dr. Samara was our direct link to Sheikh Al Maqdessi in Zarqa.

Meeting with individuals who declare implicitly or explicitly their membership or belonging to the Salafi Jihadi group is difficult, because of suspicion developed towards researchers in particular. We noticed also the paucity of a Moroccan body of Jihadist literature. There is no prior work or academic studies that has been focused on the grassroots of Salafi Jihadists. The term Salafi Jihadism itself dates from the publication of Gilles Kepel's *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (2002) and the Casablanca attacks of May 16, 2003.

In collecting the data from 62 interviewees, we adopted unstructured interviewing techniques to capture a greater breath of data (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003). As we started collecting the data, we observed that each disengaged Salafi Jihadist makes his/her own meaning in the everyday life.

We found new areas of inquiries and reshaped and constantly reviewed our understanding of the subject. Next, we began with data investigation and management by rereading detailed stories and notes from each disengaged Salafi Jihadist. We identified two types of narrative structures: core narratives and vignettes.

We first located how much meanings are actually available in the language structure of written or oral texts (Gee, 1991). In *A Linguistic Approach to Narratives*, Gee identified segments that enable us to see how stories are told and represented. The core narrative follows a temporal ordering of past and present actions. Second, we found segments of the stories and characterized the lives of the Salafi Jihadists before disengagement. These portrayals capture well the meanings and represent what Miles and Huberman (1994) and Van Maanen (1990) called vignettes. In managing the data, we found that most of the evidence we gathered had a significant core narratives and vignettes.

In the core narratives, when we observe the trajectories of many disengaged Salafi Jihadists, we see that there is what we call an exile from within his or her family. This confrontational process comes back in their stories. To put in another way, how s/he sees the family as representing a wrong religion by describing their lives, their fears and solitude in the neighborhoods and how they decided to exit society. Along radicalization and disengagement, we located the vignettes through which we see in their trajectories how the exile within the family pushes young individuals with much vulnerability towards a stronger and more inclusive setting. The boundaries between delinquency and violent radicalization are thin. These young individuals often become preys to all kind of deviant behaviors from drug trafficking to banditry. From their trajectories, we noticed that they were searching for power, and a kind of dignity that comes to cure the social wounds

(Interview with T. Rabat). This feeling of exclusion from society has nourished the Salafi Jihadi ideology.

As we continued exploring these trajectories that were hidden in the core narratives and the vignettes of each individual, we realized how the duration within the Salafi Jihadi world had shaped their lives and experiences of each Salafi Jihadists. The narration of stories offers the researcher with the challenge of putting together something reasonable and coherent (Van Maanen, 1988, 75). The disengaged Salafi Jihadists' ways of meaning making through oral testimonies and stories is located in their language and their mannerism in the everyday life.

Clustering of Meanings of Engagement (Radicalization) and Disengagement

The identification of the two narrative structure in the meanings of each Salafi Jihadist (core and vignettes) helped us come up with clustering of these meanings into two different chapters; one dealt with a cluster of meanings of 41 interviewees in the engagement (radicalization phase) and the next chapter dealt with the same respondents and their cluster of meaning (disengagement phase).

Data Analysis

The data that was extracted from the fieldwork was subjected to interpretation. Interpretation serves to decipher questions of meanings and context. We revisited our data and content analysis to create and organize a list of the most pronounced themes. When we identified the themes, and interpreted the narratives of each participant, we placed them within categories. For instance, personal and sometimes private stories were placed in a "personal life" category, while the everyday interactions and relations with others was placed in a "social life" category.

Validity

The ethnographic process of this thesis can be reassessed with regards to the extent to which we conducted a methodologically rigorous study. Our engagement in the field facilitated the development of interpretation and reinterpretation and provided the ways for understanding and contextualizing the meanings each participant brought to our thesis. We maintained a balanced study by having an “insider” within the Salafi Jihadist current (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

We were able to ensure that we had reached an appropriate level of data saturation, which allowed us to capture the main themes of this study. In addition, we had an in-depth dialogue with one of the main theorist of Al Qaeda who not only facilitated our research as the mentor of the “Islamic State” most influencial members, and also served as a sounding participants for several interpretations that we have advanced. This helped validate our findings in Morocco. Consequently, through a triangulation technique, Sheikh Al Maqdessi helped us find other alternatives in the future research. The final product can be decribed in the form of a “*tale*.”

Basic Characteristics

This thesis explores the meaning(s) that Salafi Jihadists ascribe to their experience of being disengaged and the changes to their routines and belief system. Face-to-face interviews, observations and contact on an almost daily basis with former Salafi Jihadists, most of whom were from the Salafi masses, supported our understanding of the most fluid system of thought in Islamic movements, Salafi Jihadism. That is to say, we were focused on those Salafis who had just acquired the title and had no influence on the movement’s discourse or debates. Instead, they were the recipients.

The interviewees in Morocco were comprised of two young adolescents, fifty adults from the ages of 22 to 37 years old, and twelve adults between 45 and 59 years old. We also interviewed

eight Moroccan researchers who work in academia and research centers, and four independent journalists with an expertise on Salafism and Islamism. We also had a lengthy interview with the director of the counterterrorism brigade. In Jordan, we had twelve interviews, two of them were with Salafi Jihadists and the other ten were with university researchers. Prior to our field research in 2016, we conducted pre-field research in 2015 in Morocco, the purpose of which was to draw a concrete map of the field and readjust the hypothesis. It also served a training purpose, allowing me to hone how the questions would be asked, as well as familiarize myself with the “culture” of former jihadists. The overall aim of the field research was to illustrate the nuance of the meanings former engaged (radicalized Salafi Jihadists attribute to their disengagement experience and what has been changed in their everyday life. This illustration is only possible by documenting their everyday lives. Five of my interviewees were in Afghanistan, and Pakistan. One had a military training in Khost camp in Afghanistan. One respondent had a connection with Mohammed Atta (9/11 plotter) while in Homburg Germany, and one was connected to Abu Sayyaf Group in Philippines.

Our method of data collection is based on an analysis of primary Jihadi literature that had an impact on the Moroccan grassroots jihadists. It aims at collecting all relevant primary and secondary sources written in Arabic, French and English, especially the primary sources that have interrogated and explained disengagement. This thesis is neither theological in nature, nor a legal or juridical treatment of jihad in the context of conflict and peace. It is about those who made radical readings of verses, texts, sayings, and decontextualized historical conditions of the religion. Our task is to contribute to the progress of disengagement research.

According to Peter Hall (2003, 393), for social sciences to progress we must draw our judgements “based on a three-cornered comparison among a theory, its principal rivals, and set of

observations... These include predictions about the events that can be expected to occur, the sequence of those events, and the public and private position actors are likely to take, as well as many other features of the relevant causal chain. Hall contends that systematic process analysis could assess the validity of theories capable of giving “explanations of broad events and/or outcomes.” This begins with formulating a set of theories that identify causal variables and how they interact with one another, or the processes that lead to a specific outcome. We then use the validity of these theories to derive predictions and make observations of relevant cases. Our ethnographic research helped us to interpret the whole sets of circumstances obtained through field research into an in-depth exploration. This has further allowed us to evaluate more complex causal processes as Hall puts it “To move beyond modes of explanation that turn on statistically significant coefficients and relatively thin causal theories towards one that contain more extensive specifications of causal processes” (2003).

Clifford Geertz called anthropological data collected either through fieldwork or literary analysis “really our own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to.” Similarly, Harry F. Wolcott (2008) argued that ethnography is more than just a method or practices, it is a way of seeing through the lens of culture. Employing a Derridean slant, Geertz points out that our subjectivities are also coloured by the subjectivities of those we study. Geertz adds that in order to prevent anthropological work from becoming more “observational and less of an interpretive activity than it really is” one must “sort out the structures of signification.” This is not an easy task, as Geertz explains that the ethnographer is faced with a “multiplicity of complex conceptual structures many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render.”

It would be fruitful to clarify that our research enabled us to go beyond the current state of affairs of terrorism, radicalization, and disengagement studies. We have sought to break down the state of stagnation that is radicalization research (Sageman 2014; Pemberton and Aarton 2017). The literature review served to be a comprehensive survey of the current publications in radicalization and disengagement and aided us in determining patterns and scope. As we suspected, disengagement from violent jihadists groups has not really been a topic of concern post-9/11, rather we see de-radicalization as a term that has taken much attention. It was in the form of state-based top-down programs to de-radicalize violent radicals. We believe that it would be very useful to trace how individuals leave violent groups and the changes in their everyday lives, as a reflection on their social reality.

Theoretical Framework

Since the events of 9/11, the subject of terrorism studies has witnessed a profusion of literature that focuses on radicalization and extremist ideologies. After the 2005 London bombings, a top –down bureaucratic notion called de-radicalization was developed to incite radicals to disengage (see, for instance, the work of Ashour on Egyptian and Algerian Islamic fighting groups, 2009). The literature on de-radicalization tends to focus on state repressive measures and the charismatic leadership of Islamic movements, but as we explain in this thesis, there are substantial limits to this approach. Very few studies have discussed disengagement, a bottom-up behavioral shift from violent radicalization (Horgan, 2005, 2009). A disengaged individual by nature could be still ideologically radical (cognitive), while having renounced the use of violence (behavioral).

Current studies of disengaged terrorists from violence hence reveal only cursory insights into how ingrained social and cultural dispositions influence post-disengagement. This has resulted in

only a basic understanding of what is radicalization and disengagement. To grasp how the disengagement of the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists occurred it is highly important to study the role of individual and structural factors and how disengagement itself shapes the meanings that disengaged Salafi Jihadists ascribe to their everyday life. Operationalizing both the work of John Horgan, outlined in a rational choice perspective in *Psychology of Terrorism*, and of Pierre Bourdieu's *Theory of Practice* helps us see *how* social and cultural dispositions interact to form the everyday life of the Salafi Jihadists in the post disengagement era.

Horgan's rational choice and Bourdieu's interrelated concepts of field, capital and habitus reveals how disengagement is seen. Seen in terms of the manners of talking, negotiating, walking, dressing, and gesturing manifest themselves in the social world. We mainly focus on Bourdieu's *habitus* to realize the continuity of the Jihadi dispositions even in the post-disengagement phase. This helped us see the Jihadist career. We borrowed the term "career" from Howard Becker's *Outsiders* (1963). The disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadists want to be labeled as Jihadists placing them in a new status. To be labeled a Salafi Jihadist, one need only to be interrogated or called by the police and this is the beginning of an image of a Jihadist career. The subjects at the heart of this research are the meanings Moroccan Salafi Jihadists ascribe once in their disengagement, yet are likely to be completely aware of the unique blend of social influences upon them and how these have mixed with their personal ingrained dispositions to influence their everyday life (Jihadi habitus).

Because of a paucity of guiding research on the topic of disengagement and because most of the research is this topic emphasized on known figures of Jihadists leadership, this thesis aimed at touching the grass roots of the Moroccan Salafi jihadists. By this we mean those street vendors who were implicated in the violent discourse either by showing loyalty to the Jihadi group or

attending night sessions or physical training after dawn. They were *cognitively*, and *behaviorally* ready to future violence. That is, during the interviews we were observing what has been changed in the everyday life of the disengaged individuals.

Shortly put, the disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadists are individuals who joined the violent Salafi Jihadi group voluntarily or involuntarily (e.g., through friendship, loyalty, the power of the ideology), who practiced violence or believed in violence as a mean of change either in Morocco or outside, and who left the group and its ideology of violence. The entry into and exit from violent jihadi radicalization is key in understanding disengagement. Most of our interviewees did not object to be recorded and they were open to tell their stories.

The recruitment or the visits was based on recommendations through our private contacts and thenceforth asked each interviewee to recommend others from their network. To protect their confidentiality, we used initials even though they did not object using their full names. For the known figures, we did state their names and locations. Today, these individuals are living in the society once they condemned and regarded it as a near enemy.

The tripartite model of John Horgan: becoming, being and disengaging is an important step in understanding the disengaged Moroccan Jihadists, yet transitions and connections between these stages were not clearly addressed. This has created some hindrances in grasping the whole view. Here comes why Bourdieu's habitus will help making clarity between Horgan's stages. The habitus helped us see what is coming after Horgan's third phase that 'leaving and disengaging' is not actually the end, its is a beginning of what we call the jihadist career that continue in time and can be noticed via a jihadi habitus in the everyday life.

In seeking to understand how the institution of the commander of the faithful ICF's narrative interact to shape and contain the Salafi jihadi discourse al Wala'a wal Bara'a , it is necessary to

utilize a holistic theoretical frame that takes account of modalities of power and rationality and agency in the social world and to operationalized into empirical application. The work of both Horgan and Bourdieu provide such a frame. Bourdieu's theoretical project explains the social influences of what people do and why they do what they do, and how what they do contribute to the reproduction of these social influences through cultural resources, processes and institutions. Bourdieu conceives of sociology as an eminent political science in that it is crucially concerned with and enmeshed in, strategies and mechanisms of symbolic domination. We transcend an irreconcilable difference between rationality. We expand on Bourdieu's notion of habitus to decipher the layered social and embodied structure that guide actions of the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists. How to explain prior experiences, through ingrained social and cultural dispositions matter for action? Why do Moroccan Salafi Jihadists' preferences and decision-making principles are diverse when leaving violent groups? Probably this is one of the shortcomings of Horgan's rational perspective, which the habitus can cover. The habitus here is treated not as a cause of action but also as a dynamic embodied outcome of a culturally and socially inculcated dispositions (Wacquant, 2004). Political violence researchers have realized that actors' calculations and decisions making do not follow a blank slate probabilistic logic, but instead look into prior experiences. Actions of the Salafi Jihadists are the products of a continuous social processing unfolding over time, which involves embodied, ingrained dispositions, which are absent (or implicit) in rational choice.

In crisis situations rational choice takes over (Ermakov, 2013). Crisis situations are responsive to the realm and tools of rational choice because they induce an amplifiable level of consciousness (Ibid). Everyday routines are favorable to the theory of practice. "The champions of rational choice action theory believe that social agents are conscious and knowing subjects with full knowledge

of the facts (Bourdieu, 1998, 24). The rational choice actor is mentally unburdened by the limits of his or her practice. It is clear and transparent. On the other hand, the theory of practice investigates the rationality of actors embodied in a practical sense informed by habitual experience. The habitus then is spontaneity without conscious or will. Consciousness is indeed the dividing line with the realm of action investigated by the theory of practice. Rational choice takes over in times of crisis while the theory of practice reserves for itself “institutional terms” as conjunctures in which a shared sense of rule regulates patterns of relations and expectations.

Not everybody is in a position to be rational in the sense postulated by rational choice. Actors are more or less equipped to be deliberately instrumental and self-reflexive. The capacity is a potentiality inscribed in their habitus. The shift to rational choice is conditional on preexisting dispositions. That is why the habitus is the central concept of Bourdieu’s theory of practice. Bourdieu’s practice came to expand on the perception that seeks to interpret the actions by means of mental processes that are thought to “guide” the body to an intentional purpose. The rational choice theory argues that actors’ actions are interpreted by the maximization of profit motives based on prior knowledge, thus making social behavior the result of rational and informed calculation that is the result of explicit and conscious knowledge. As a result, the mind becomes, according to this perspective, the cause of the actions. Bourdieu (1997, 75) sees no justification for interpretation of the rational choice of social actions through beliefs and desires of individuals; it is an instrumental interpretation that postulates that actions are due to a relationship between means of ends. Bourdieu refuses to interpret social practices with psychic or mental mechanisms such as ‘ghosts’ within the bodies of social actors, and that human activities are not caused by internal ‘mental’ images. He objects to the doctrine of will because it deceives that intentions of the actors are transparent to him or her and freed from the external constraints. The practices

produced under highly conscious rules would be devoid of all that defined them as practices, that is, the uncertainty and ambiguities that result from the fact that such practices are not based on conscious and permanent principles but on practical and non transparent calligraphy, on subjects that vary according to the logic of status. The Jihadi habitus is the embodied Jihadi self, meaning that it is not only composed of the body of the Salafi Jihadist, but also of the mental presumptions, that is, of all mental elements that are unintentional and unconscious. The consciousness that is part of the components of the Jihadi habitus in that sense is unconscious consciousness. It is this characteristic that allows the emergence of a kind of unconscious freedom that allows forgetting the origin of the fact that actors believe that their perceptions of society are natural.

Rational choice theory analyzes in this case the Salafi Jihadi actions as the product of mental states that are carried out within the skulls of individuals and directed to rational ends and controlled by explicit mental entities (such as duty of jihad, jihad utility). Bourdieu would argue here that the actions of a Salafi Jihadist are socially constructed norms and standards, in which he or she cannot have a clear and conscious knowledge, even though he or she knows through his or her body these existing standards. Ways of dressing, manners of walking and talking, and body gestures, for a Salafi Jihadist are standards for the winning community. This winning community has been constructed and imagined by a discourse wrapped in Quranic verses. When Salafi Jihadist are asked to describe the embodied rules in their bodies. They would suggest that this is the way the ancestors used to be. Describing the rules then embodied in the jihadi bodies by socialization and education is almost impossible for the Salafi Jihadists themselves because it requires a very large distance from those ingrained dispositions and rules, even when they come to express them, they are in their minds as natural and intuitive rules and norms. It is this implicit knowledge of the jihadi standards, rules and manners that make the nature of what they do clear and obvious.

In this sense, Jihadi practice in the everyday life is not characterized by an intention or rational. It is based on automatic disposition devoid of advance planning and rational calculation; it is a continuous settlement between the field and the habitus, which makes it a form of rational exercise. The jihadi practice is therefore an understanding of the logic of all reasonable acts without being the product of a thought provoking plan, or more accurately of a rational account, they are acts inhabited by a kind of objective purpose without being consciously organized. According to a Jihadist these acts are understood and coherent because they are issued by conscious decision that follow Horgan's *process model*: being, becoming and disengaging. According to the rational choice perspective elaborated by John Horgan, the Salafi Jihadists are aware of the rules that guide their behavior and are able to express them in clear and explicit discourse formulation. However, Bourdieu would reply that rules, through which a researcher explain the behavior of the Salafi Jihadists on one hand, and the ways and manners followed by them in the exercise of their everyday life is not the same nature.

We can argue that the Salafi Jihadists can be regarded through a *process* model used by them for *practical* purposes. The sphere of jihad cannot be understood in the framework of 'pure jihad' that is purifying oneself from sins. Thus, the type of jihad we are investigating here must be placed within the context of the practical logic that is of the surviving and victorious group *alfirqa al Najiya* and *atta'ifa al mansura* and that the ultimate punishment for not adhering to the practice of jihad consequently one becomes an apostate or *murtadd* is excommunication *takfir* (near enemy). Jihad in this sense takes place in the framework of broader jihad strategies based on an ideology of al Wala'a wal Bara'a WB that encourages unity of the community and favors the reproduction and accumulation of symbolic capital (the victorious group/ social status).

The Jihadi habitus is a pattern of dispositions that the individual conceals during his or her

existence. In other words, jihadi habitus is a collection of cognitions and actions and manners produced by successive generations living in a specific type of existence. It is the fact that social structures regulate inter and intra group relations produce the principles that generate the jihadi habitus, which tend to reproduce these structures in a modified and arbitrary manner by introducing them into a symbolic relationship.

Thus, the habitus embodies a system of implicit acquired preparations and a phenomenon that acts as a pattern of calligraphers generating strategies that can be objectively identical to the substantive interests of the individual without being consciously aware of them as goals. This means that a jihadi habitus represents a set of modes of existence, manners, action and thinking of the Salafi Jihadist acquired through learning process related to his or her group and community. These modes vary according to the social class and the capital available to it and the position occupied by the individual within the field. In this sense, the jihadi habitus structure at the same time social behaviors and actions and the position occupied by the Salafi Jihadists in social space in the post disengagement phase. If Bourdieu calls for the abandonment of “theories that treat the practice, implicitly or explicitly, as an automatic reaction”, the rejection of automatic theories does not require that the objective purposes and constructs of actions and activities need to be reduced to the awareness of actors consciousness (Bourdieu, 2000, 71-128). Horgan (2007, 2008), Post (2005), Sageman (2004, 2006, 2007), McCauley and Moskalenko (2014) argue that the choice of individuals to the way of the practice of terrorism is rooted in their early social development, which produced early intellectual defects and their tendency to commit suicide and murder in the name of their beliefs and doctrine, and give to this religious formation gives their acts sacred meaning, denigrate other opinions and interpretations. The more they become extremists and fanatic in their discourse, the more they think they are marked and labelled in the intensity of their religiosity.

Moderation becomes and appears for them as weakness and disloyalty (Post, 2004).

In the same vein of Horgan, McCauley and Moskalenko (2014) suggested that there must be a distinction between “hardline views” and “extremist action.” They concluded in their *pyramid model* that the radical shift toward “carrying radical ideas” is a psychological phenomenon that differs from the radical shift to “extreme action.” They described the “pyramid opinion,” which consists of people who share fast-paced levels of hardline ideas, and secondly exhibited the “pyramid of extreme action” ranging from the level of negativity to engaging in human rights activity to violent action. The pyramid represents an engineering form with a broad base of people who holds the same views but is inert. At the top of the pyramid, there are very few people who are motivated by these views to carry out an extremist act. We observed through these models that the full picture is not as clear as they pretend to be. Distancing ourselves from the rational frame and gradual and procedural processes prompted us to see the everyday practice of the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists in the social reality after disengagement.

How then to differentiate between the Jihadists’ consciousness and social reality? In order to overcome this paradox, Bourdieu suggested that the social world has an ‘inner bilateral nature’ and is based on the idea of ‘objective collusion’ between the social world and our acquired dispositions and preparations for action, thinking, manners and perception. This ‘objective homogeneity of the collective jihadi thinking or a jihadi class habitus resulting from the homogeneity of conditions of existence is what enables a disengaged jihadi practices to be objectively homogeneous without any strategic calculation or based on standard conscious and mutually adaptive in the absence of any direct interaction, or rather in the absence of any conscious coordination (Bourdieu, 1980, 8-9). In this sense a jihadi habitus exempts the Salafi Jihadi himself from thinking consciously, rationally and reflexively in what he or she will do, since the habitus

embodies the primary of proper and appropriate practices and because he or she tends to ‘choices’ compatible with the condition that it produced and makes the individual possess what he prefer, and prefer what he possess.

This congruence between the readiness of the Jihadi habitus and the social reality is what enables a Salafi Jihadist in the radicalization or disengagement phase to respond immediately and without reflecting on the events and situations they face. The practical characteristic of social practices is that Jihadi dispositions that produce practices in the everyday are structurally linked to these same practices. We were preoccupied with factors that contribute to the regularity of practices and behaviours of Moroccan Salafi Jihadists, and thus stabilizing the social relations that form the social fields. We question then what guarantee the application of a standard or conceptualization in the same way by different people at different times and in different cities in Morocco. According to Bourdieu, this guarantee cannot be provided by standards or calculations, but by existing practices. He rejects the thesis of self-doctrine, which refers practices to calculations, rational decisions, and conscious intent as mental processes, which make what is happening in the minds of actors a reason for their behaviour (or compatible) with social norms and standards. Bourdieu insisted that strategies implemented by actors in their practices are not rational and rationally calculated, but rather a result of their long-term integration or of the necessities of interactive situations in the form of cognitive readiness.

What would Bourdieu tell us in the case of disengaged Salafi Jihadists is that their jihadi habitus produces practices characterized by instinctive actions, although they are reflective practices, that are not subject to rational reasoning and calculation, they generate results that in many cases correspond to the results obtained by calculations and rational thinking. He would explain this paradox by stressing the ontological correspondence between ‘objective structures’

and ‘mental constructs’, that is between the social reality and symbolic preparations that make up the jihadi habitus and which are acquired by living with jihadi groups and saturation in the ways of thought, action and sense. This practical logic is based on the sense of belonging to jihadi group that makes those who are loyal to the field of jihad- those who have a habitus adapted to the world in which they grow up (match between objective and mental structures)- eloquent and skilled jihadists who easily achieved their goals within the ranks of the group. These jihadists do not need to build conscious strategies or resort to intentional actions because they have the grasp of jihadi practical knowledge. They know the key concepts; they have a accumulation of verses from Quran and saying of the prophet. And that because also their actions are adapted to the ‘rules of the jihad’ prescribed by various Salafi sheikhs mainly Al Maqdessi in which they participate in it. Their immersion in the world of jihad forces them to respond to urgent practical situations since they have neither the means nor the time to be rational. Thus, practical sense is not merely the practical perfection of ‘being, becoming, and leaving” as John Horgan suggest, and following the rules of salafi jihadism in a particular social sphere with a taken for granted sense. This naïve and irrational knowledge represents the relationship of engagement in practice between the jihadi habitus and the associated field.

The Salafi Jihadist does not need to interpret the rules to explain why committing a violent act, or performing such task, or even implementing the desired action in the expected manner. He or she is able to manage his situation without an interpretation and without the need for an analogy because there is a kind of practical understanding inherent in the positions he or she occupied. This practical understanding, which expresses itself in the accomplishment of existing practices, is a kind of implicit knowledge.

How does a street vendor dressing in Salafi Jihadi clothes, wearing traditional eyeliner *kohl* and talking or trying to speak like a sheikh want to commit terrorism/ martyrdom? “Martyrdom” for him or her is to get out of the human to become supernatural being. The hereafter is rooted in his or her mind through the preaching and interpretation of the sheikhs who penetrate their unconscious imprints and trigger their inner dispositions at a time when the boundary between the real and the unreal is between life and death, so shaky that the self-sacrifice becomes easy. At this moment, the imagined death sweeps the self to the point where actual death loses its meaning.

Reconciling the Irreconcilable

This thesis provides an insight into two perspectives: *Rational Choice Theory* (Horgan 2005) and Bourdieu’s *Theory of Practice* (1977). In the case of the Moroccan Salafi Jihadists, Rational Choice Theory assumes that those jihadists made rational decisions to disengage from violence based on their cost and benefit analysis which they contemplate during their time in prison or outside. It is important to note that these theorists do not ignore the issue of decisions made under constraints. Conversely, Bourdieu’s notion of habitus sees disengagement as a behavioral and cognitive shift being shaped by dispositions reflecting social and cultural backgrounds.

Rational Choice Theory refers to actors seeking to maximize their interests (Coleman 1990: 14). When people’s beliefs and intentions are consistent and focused on the value of outcomes, they assess alternatives and other venues to manoeuvre through (Tsebelis 1990; Bates et al. 1998). In his analytical model called *the process model*, Horgan (2005, 2008, 2009) argues that it is crucial to analyze the situations that make certain individuals more likely to respond to terrorist groups. He believes that the transition to and away from terrorism is usually a gradual process, involving a series of steps including “becoming” a terrorist, “being” a terrorist, and lastly “disengaging” from terrorism (2005, 69). Horgan was influenced by Clarke and Cornish who

developed a rational choice theory of criminal behaviour (Horgan 2005, 70). According to Clarke and Cornish (1984), offenders seek to accomplish beneficial results by making rational decisions. Horgan confirms that in the criminological discipline rational choice theory is well developed: ‘Outside contemporary criminology, however, they have not translated well across to efforts at understanding terrorism’ (Horgan 2005: 70). Yilmaz (2014) is perhaps the first researcher who translated Clarke and Cornish’s Rational Choice Theory into terrorism. In his study of the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK), Yilmaz introduced a decisional process through which he explored “the entering, staying, and the exit phases of political violence” (44).

If we design an approach based solely on rational strategies that favor the cost and benefit and assessment of alternatives for the case of the Moroccan Salafi jihadists to be released from prison, we would be ignoring other parts of their decision-making process. Strategies according to Crotty (1991: 91) must not be simply optimal at any moment, they must be good for survival overall. While rational decision-making and gain seeking do partly explain the disengagement of the Jihadists, we should look at other explanations and dig in to the micro-level of why these decisions are considered optimal. Drawing from our interviews in Morocco and Jordan, the Salafi jihadists do talk of their focus on outcomes and alternatives that would lead to their release from prisons and allow them to start a new life. However, their cultural, social, and class dispositions provide further insight. Almond (1991) warned against a possible normative distortion within rational choice which we sought to avoid:

Rational choice analysis may lead to empirical and normative distortions, unless it is used in combination with the historical, sociological, anthropological, and psychological sciences, which deal with the values and utilities of people, cross-culturally, cross-nationally, across the social strata, and over time (36).

The original rational formulation stresses a conscious calculation of gains and outcomes weighted by the Salafi Jihadists’ expectation to be released from prison or escape their

organizations to live with their families and start over. Even for those jihadists with no release date, their conduct sometime reflects disengagement, or disbanding affiliation with terrorist groups, according to the authorities. This observation begged the question, “How do Salafi jihadists perceive the authorities and security services and vice versa?” Our interview with the Director of the Counter Terrorism Unit, Mr. Habboub Mohammed (2016) reveals that the intention is not to get into people’s head and ask them not to think and believe in certain ways, but rather to have jihadists disengage and disaffiliate from violent groups.⁶

Can Salafi Jihadists’ cost and benefit evaluation be described as “rational disengagement”? Anthony Downs (1957, 4) defines rational action as “reasonably directed toward the attainment of conscious goals” The ultimate objective here is to succeed at explaining the Salafi jihadists’ rationale to disengage, usually communicated through sending signals to the authorities that declare shifts and revisions of their prior intentions and belonging to terrorist groups. The limitation of this framework is that it neglects other constraints that are culturally and socially acquired, most importantly, the issue raised by North of the “unintended consequences” of the actor’s choices (1990: 7, 9). To overcome this limitation, we ask *how* and *which* mechanisms have induced the Moroccan Salafi jihadists to disengage, as well as what has been changed in their *everyday lives*. This can be achieved by reconciling the macro-perspective of rational choice theory with the micro foundations of dispositions; the culturally and socially acquired ways of thinking, moving, and talking. Bourdieu’s work on habitus and field (1984: vii) prove to be of a considerable

⁶ Mr. Habboub Mohammed is the Director of the Counter Terrorism Unit, which is a sub unit of the Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation (CBIJ), known in Morocco as the Bureau central d’investigation judiciaire (BCIJ). The latter operates under the General Directorate for Territorial Surveillance (Direction générale de la surveillance du territoire, DGST).

value “when the task is to identify behavioral patterns that pose a challenge to an instrumental and external view of rationality” (Ermakoff 2010, 529).

Understanding the effect of context on rationality is vital for grasping radicalization as a process (Taylor and Horgan, 2006). Horgan (2005, 69) outlined a process model of terrorism that sees the terrorist moving from phases of ‘becoming’, “being” and “disengaging” as they were used in gang involvement and criminal activity as it has been highlighted by the development of rational choice theory of criminal behaviour (Cornish and Clarke, 1986). John Horgan’s work was among the first to use the criminal tools to understand the spectrum of behavior under terrorism. Understanding both the rational behaviour of individuals with the *habitus* of individual makes our task fluid in detecting the *everyday life* of disengaged individuals from violence. Pierre Bourdieu would not allow such a combination to occur and he saw in the rational choice model a contradiction to his *Theory of Practice* (1984).

Psychological aspects and their changes play an important role in the direction of the individual towards terrorism, especially when these psychological underpinnings are exposed to some disorders that take the form of severe psychological fluctuations and these symptoms may be due to a psychological interpretation of material conditions and ways to treat injustices (Moghaddam, 2005: 161-169).

Many studies have been undertaken to understand the religious violent radicalization processes (Tibi, 1998, Tozy, 1998, Darif, 2004; and Migdalovitz, 2010). As a result, what we see is a one-size-fits-all approach that suggests how an ordinary person could embrace and carry out violent actions against fellow citizens. It is believed that structural and material conditions such as poverty, discrimination and marginalization are the main causes of radicalization and recruitment

of radicals among segments of poor societies (Khosrokhavar 2005, Ansari 1984, Anderson 1991, Ayubi 1991, Tessler 1997).

When John Horgan (2005, 2008, 2009) developed his “process model” in understanding terrorism, he tried to reconcile the circumstantial political and psychological theories of terrorism that explained the phenomenon from an individual level through the accumulation of experiences in the life of the terrorist, including his or her childhood. According to Horgan, terrorism is a complex phenomenon that cannot be answered exclusively by instinctive or situational factors, but through a combination of both factors (2005). He believes that one’s beliefs, social upbringing, life experiences, feelings of dissatisfaction and the ability to imagine other alternatives to his or her life all play a role in his or her involvement in terrorism. Horgan here has described the meaning(s) of habitus yet he did not name it as such. Horgan framed habitus in most of his works. In 2009, Moghaddam revised his “Staircase to Terrorism” (2005), and this time by invoking the dispositional factors “My contention is that terrorism can be shaped 100% by situational factors, but it can also be shaped 100% by dispositional factors”(Moghaddam 2009: 110). We can see here that psychologists mainly Horgan and Moghaddam spoke of dispositions, which they imply that it was in fact the habitus. When for example how individuals facing structural issues such as poverty and unemployment, they psychologically interpret their material conditions by manners and ways of talking and dressing. By this interaction, it seems in the first time that there is a contradiction of how one outcome can be explained by one factor and its contrary. Moghaddam did not mention the habitus per se but we understand that he was emphasizing the interaction of both a rational behavior and a habitus.

Chapter 4. Part I. Exploring the World of Salafi Jihadism:

A Tale from an Insider

Our research question is situated in understanding and capturing the meaning making of Moroccan Salafi Jihadists once they are in their disengagement. We do this by observing what has been changed in the *everyday life* of those jihadists. We found that there were two main narratives guiding our subjects, one *inclusive* and the other *exclusive*. The Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) —the faithful being Jews, Christians and Muslims) — is a centralized royal religious institution in Morocco promoting an *inclusive* narrative that is less prone to the supremacy of one religion over another. On the other hand, Salafi jihadism, through its principle of loyalty and disavowal (*Wala'a wal Bara'a*, or WB) remains exclusive. The foundational principle of this narrative is that those following the WB are loyal and are part of the group and those who do not adhere to the WB are disavowed and to be considered “near enemies.”

Avoiding Stagnation and Conceptual Stretching

For a discipline to remain relevant it must persistently be refreshed by doubt and self-criticism. The process of nuancing keeps it both ready to reaffirm itself while also ready to be humbled by its own shortcomings. Newton's *laws* were immutable only until Einstein revealed them to be incomplete and their constitution was amended. Whatever resistance the revolution in physics once faced quickly dissipated in the face of its own self-recognized evolution. The discipline of terrorism studies must evolve (Horgan 2005, 2008, 2009; Coolsaet 2011; Reid 1997). Our thesis does not discredit or exhibit previous works and research as irrelevant; on the contrary, the goal of our social investigation is to continue the discussion as Bruce Hoffman puts it (Hoffman 2007).

Our aim is to avoid what Sageman (2014) warned about, namely, the “stagnation in terrorism research.”

Throughout the literature review in Chapter Three, we were able to explore the ways in which radicalization and disengagement have been assessed and defined by psychologists, sociologists, governmental agencies, and officials. We also investigated how different perspectives serve to enrich future studies. The literature also brought to our attention that a lot of time has been consumed on definitional arguments, sometimes to the point of discrediting works in other fields: “Thus we seem back at square one: the key problem remains that within and between approaches, there is no consensus on the interaction between the many different factors” (Ross 1993). Instead, we see the continuation of the causal models raised by the first generation of the 1970s and early 1980s literature on the subject.

Nonetheless, the multitude of definitions and expert contributions from various fields has led to the notion of different types and degrees of radicalization. This notion helps us to move beyond a dichotomous conceptualization of radicalization and disengagement and avoid the increasing concern with the stretching of the concept. We suggest a clarification to differentiate between two main types of radicalization: intellectual/ideological radicalization and radicalization in action, i.e., someone who holds radical ideas and someone who acts violently.

Embarking on the Journey: The Puzzle

Despite over a decade of government funding and thousands of newcomers to the field of terrorist research, we are no closer to answering the simple question of ‘what leads a person to turn to political violence’ (Sageman 2: 2014).

The same question can be asked and reformulated for those leaving violent groups: “what leads a violent radical terrorist to disengage?” Understanding disengagement means examining the

underlying dynamics of the friction between the Moroccan Salafi jihadists and state institutions, mainly the ICF. Similarly, in understanding radicalization, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) have argued that the focus should be on both radicalized actors and those they are radicalized against because most of the mechanisms that induce engagement and disengagement are the result of the action and reaction that develops between them. Thus, terrorism should explicitly be explained as a “dynamic process where elements of action and reaction must be taken into consideration and in which effects are diffuse and change over time” (Crenshaw 1995; Coolsaet 2011). There is no single Salafi jihadist profile and there is no single pathway to radicalization.

We discussed four approaches to the study of terrorism in Chapter Three: the psychological, structural, discursive, and instrumental. While these approaches enlightened terrorism studies and points to the complexity of the jihadist world, it is difficult to detect and determine how and when each approach is applicable or, as Acharya (2013) puts it, “it is difficult to determine whether these variables could be individually or collectively implicated.”

This is why the literature on radicalization and disengagement is fragmented and fraught with flawed generalizations. To be able to unveil the puzzle of radicalization and disengagement, we developed a working concept of radicalization as a *bricolage*. We borrowed the term from Claude Lévi-Strauss who posited in his *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) that the *bricoleur* is someone who uses the means and tools at his disposition. According to Lévy-Strauss (1955: 17), the human mind can operate in two modes of knowledge: “that of the savage mind and the scientific mind. The bricoleur operates in a world with no rules and with whatever is at hand. He creates meaning(s) to explain the complexity of the world through disassembling and reassembling structures, not hesitating to change the shape and form whenever it seems necessary.”

Lévy-Strauss's concept of *bricolage* and the *bricoleur* is useful to our study. The Salafi jihadists, from the street vendors to those who were implicated in the Casablanca attacks, were *bricoleurs par excellence* in the sense that they used whatever they had at hand to form a radical way of thinking, from the tapes and lectures of sheiks in Morocco, Jordanian theorists (particularly sheikh Al Maqdessi), journalists, and leftists. These jihadists managed to make sense to these ways of thinking no matter the shape, rules used or even logical reasoning behind it. What mattered was if the final product made sense to him or her. The end result is a radical *bricoleur*. We will elaborate more in our subsequent chapters on radicalization as *bricolage*.

Our thesis connects and tries to understand the unconscious factors in the Jihadists' behavior. We are determined that their actions are the result of their personal and social upbringing and not simply the product of sexual repression, as implied by Freud. An individual is a biological, psychological and social unit that is integrated and interactive in a very distinctive manner in the social world.

How can We Then Explain a Salafi Jihadist's Internalized and Culturally and Socially Acquired Behavior?

Our actions in the social world revolve around the principle of dispositions, which are acquired culturally and socially, forming the physical ground upon which the multiple links between our social motivations and our actions are bonded (Bourdieu 1984). This is known as our *habitus*. The theory of *habitus* refers to acquired habits, our conscious possession of them and the ability to act on them. In Bourdieu's terms, a *habitus*, is the way of thinking, feeling, moving, and acting that are rooted in the shared condition of everyday life. It represents a central principle in the vision of individuals, and helps us answer the question of why the Salafi jihadists are associated with certain modes of dress and behaviour. In particular their appearance includes a long beard and eyes marked

with *kohl*, a black powder that was used by the followers of the prophet Mohammed. We also ask why Salafi jihadists use a different tone of voice, and gestures when they talk and debate amongst themselves. And why do most of low-ranking Salafi jihadists work in the informal economy as street vendors, or construction workers and live in shanty towns and suburbs of big cities such as Casablanca, Tangier, Tetouan, whereas, high-ranking Salafi jihadists belong mostly to middle class. The actions of a Salafi jihadist reflect a social history and come to be seen as natural, because they believe they are the holders of truth (Tozy 2011; Darif 2005; Interview Hamada and Kabouri 2016). The values that the Salafi jihadists were brought up with affect how their body moves, their ways of talking, even their pitch voice, and with time these dispositions and backgrounds become internalized. Understanding these behaviours in turn helps us to understand Salafi jihadists' acquired ways of thinking and their process of disengagement.

Based on our field research and conversation with disengaged Salafi jihadists, we discovered what we call a *dynamic habitus*. We found that low-ranking Salafi jihadists who live in shantytowns and work in the informal economy (mainly street vendors) have three modes of being. First, there is a family and neighbourhood habitus, which is the sum of dispositions, acquired socially and culturally and affects how a Salafi jihadist moves, thinks, talks to the corner grocer, and communicates with others. Second, we have a jihadi habitus, which is a vast repertoire of dress codes, norms, body movements, language, and tastes. This sphere necessitates a facial physiognomy (a “serious” look, long beard, *kohl* around the eyes) and appearance that is subject to distinction and sometimes external influence (Afghan dress, grey, black and white short attire). Third is the market habitus, which comes into effect after disengagement. The market here does not mean a place where goods are distributed. Rather, it is a kind of popular market, where people

compete for spaces and influence. We will elaborate on the impact of this *field* in our fourth and fifth chapters.

How do the three habitus relate? They do not match, yet the disengaged jihadist manages to integrate with all three in order to reintegrate with society in a very dynamic way. The inculcation of cultural and social manners shape the behaviours of Salafi jihadists, which they retain even in creating their new selves: “Agency remains important, in that habitus linked to social origins is always inflected by individual quirks and choices” (Edgley 2016: 21).

Exploring the Dynamic Process

There is a growing sense that studying disengagement obliges us to focus on the mechanisms that trigger people who were violent radicals to disengage (Horgan and BJORJO 2009). We argue that in fact, Salafi jihadists’ rational choice to disengage focus on their instrumental behavior rather than triggers and can be reconciled with the impact of psychosocial factors and the cultural embeddedness of individual rationality.

Salafi jihadists’ acquired dispositions are permanent ways of thinking, acting, and even dealing with the universe and others. Their habitus affects various aspects of their lives and intervenes even in ways of human behaviour in housing, nutrition, employment, education, culture, entertainment and consumption (Bourdieu 1977, 1984; Wacquant 1992). The jihadi collective history reproduces itself as actions that are continually subject to various conditions and become the fabric of Salafi jihadist behaviour. Jordan and Weedon (1995) have argued that “All signifying practices, that is, all practices that have meaning, involve relations of power. We are either active subjects who take up positions from which we can exercise power within a particular social practice, or we are subjected to the definitions of others.”

The signifying practices of the disengaged Salafi Jihadist help them to maintain continuity, sustainability, and influence. For example, they adapt to different spheres of the neighbourhood, from inner suburbs or *sidi moumen* in Casablanca to the sphere of Salafi jihadism and then to the sphere of the informal economy, as working as a street vendor in the market (*souk*) equip disengaged individuals with the ability to shape their social world.

How does the social world influence Salafi Jihadists' rational decision to leave their groups? While it is true that the Salafi jihadists whom we spoke to were released from prisons because of their rational disengagement. They knew that windows of opportunities opened up by the state were accommodating their ambitions and negotiation ceiling. There is a part of their everyday lives that emerges from this thesis which is of important consequence. That is their abilities to *travel* through various habitus and manage to cope with the conflicting nature of each sphere of influence. A contributing factor was that they were not self-pathologizing and chose not to recall their past.

Setting the Stage

The black flags are common sight throughout the whole region. Are we ready for confrontation and are we able to devise solutions and developmental and intellectual approaches that take new generations away from the era? The events in the Middle East have confirmed that the region is a reservoir of an "extremism" coupled with much of the "violence" practiced by groups and organizations that are dissatisfied with all aspects of our era of "debauchery" and do not accept the other "infidel" and believes that "guidance and salvation" of the world requires the destruction of all existing "misdoings" and on its ruins the "State of the Islamic Caliphate" will be based and set up by the "survivor group" and remain rightful, and those who are loyal to it are protected and will get no harm ". it is handled by "the Emir" and the "guardian" crowned by their

grace chosen by the group of people of "solution and contract" *Ahl Al Halli wal ekd*, and no one disobey his rule except infidels and deviants until God inherits the land.

Here we must have the courage to admit that these terms tickle the feelings of the general Muslims who could not confront as a result of the shortening guidance and advisory bodies, educated people engaged in their side battles and the fear of intellectuals to engage in anything related to religious heritage.

It has increased the association of people with this lexicon and its historical symbolism their need to escape from the humiliating reality and live in the confines of the oppression of the systems and conspiracy of the West supporting them and the resulting widespread unemployment, and poverty.

The word extremism and its adjectives (fanaticism, violent radicalization, fundamentalism and terrorism) are commonly used in the media and in the political field to express a state or an emotional attitude that makes an individual reject the intellectual and value system of his society. This rejection often turns into a hatred of all the customs and religious practices especially moderation where the story begins to show religious mannerisms "Blindly imposing what the Salaf used to practice and think. They take others in an escalating line that exceeds the acceptable limit and ends with the rebellion and exiling from society. When the "brother" recognizes directly or through other means to his "brother in God" (another extremist) or a group of brothers "conciliators, God willing" or other "brothers" (extremists) share his view of society and a sense of superiority and conciliation and the inferiority of society and astray begins a friendship that brings together the desire to "redress" them for the "reform and salvation of the nation "and" revenge religion "from near and far enemies and more importantly the rulers" *Fajara* ". The group

strongly believes with an overwhelming feeling that they have been chosen to carry out the sacred mission and communicate the message.

Therefore, they strive to perform what they see as an oath and a promise, moving quickly from the stage of isolation from the “ignorant society” to the stage of confronting “heresies” and “pagan” practices with viciousness and violence. The principle of graduation falls in the indoctrination, as well as the gradual decline in the means of changing ‘evil’. They see people with shaving beards, people who dance and like music as disbelievers. When the ego complex reaches its climax and a network of extremists become the hardliners in interpreting texts. Gradually, a process of displacement in their individual and collective behavior, becomes clear in their violent and aggressive acts, which ends with "martyrdom" operation.

The growing sense that society is inferior and foolish in exchange for their superiority leads extremists to refuse to coexist with the “people of misguidance” and refuse to dialogue with them, but it is in the language of power and prevalence and every extremist organization believes that it represents “*Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama’a*.” The rigid thought is valid. As such, for every time and place, it is the only source of certain knowledge that does not require evidence and is not debatable.

Each Muslim who does not pledge allegiance to the group and “does not condemn its religion” and does not adopt its propaganda methods, his blood and money are permissible. Behind it and from here begins an endless story of recruiting and interpreting texts to serve the goals of (Mujahideen for the sake of Allah), who belongs to them and who is committed to them will be rewarded heavens.

In such an atmosphere and under these headings and with those motives and means, understanding and interpreting the Qur'an and Sunnah becomes the prerogative of the “group of solution and contract” led by the “Emir.” Their “Jihad” does not distinguish between a child and a

man and between the mosque and drivers and a battlefield. It is certain that the group will embark on the preaching and empowerment of closed-minded aggressive exclusion and will come up with a lot of convulsive *fatwas* that allow murder, spread hatred and antagonism and will inevitably spread reductive religious concepts.

Most of the research on Salafi Jihadism is that it touches the surface and does not probe the interior of the movement. The movement in accordance with its structure and system has a degree of secrecy and reservation, which makes the task of researchers difficult and only the process of external monitoring and observation. The disintegration of the Salafist identity from the inside, observing how it is formed, the factors contributing to it, the reasons for abandoning it, the benefits of this identity.

This research used a qualitative approach through a rational psychological approach and the theory of practice, thanks to in-depth interviews with dozens of members belonging to the Salafist jihadist movement and some of its symbols in a language that is unbiased and noncomplimentary but addresses the phenomena and discusses the hypotheses. We monitor the formation of the Salafist identity in theory through the literature of the Salafist Jihadist, especially the writings and writings of Sheikh Al-Maqdessi, and practically since the beginning of the process of "polarization" of individuals to the submission of allegiance and inclusion to the group; *al jama'aa*.

Through the theories of psychology, we deconstruct the identity of the individual and his belonging to the group, thus forming a collective identity within a parallel society where the individual studies, marries, receives work and gives birth to children within a homogenous and socially cohesive society. This is why the idea of eliminating it is not feasible. We review the tools of attracting Salafis to individuals and their mechanisms of organization, terms and conditions of

membership and organizational structure from the "family" to the Guidance Office, in addition to means such as battalions, camps, seminars, trips and others.

We conclude that the Salafist identity was reinforced by the rules of "allegiance, obedience, trust, commitment, and belonging." Identity was the lifeline that saved the existence of the Salafis in the promotion of internal cohesion. On the other hand, internal changes were excluded, which benefited the conservative or organizational trend in excluding the stream of reformers or public action, that is the conflict that threatens the group internally. Salafist internal conflicts pose the greatest threat to the group from the security crackdowns. This is what emerged from the schisms between the sheikhs and the followers, leading to blocs and the takeover of streams on the leadership council, resulting in withdrawals and confessions, apart from individual resignations for other reasons.

We have revealed through interviews with current and former members and leaders of the Salafist movement about problems in the Salafist structure such as conflict of powers as well as disagreements over interests, privileges and influence. This broke the division between the old guard and the youth in the vision, political and ideological strategy and the relationship with the regime. The cognitive relationship between the Salafi and other elements is unbalanced and often subject to attraction. Because the current is not organized, the stalemate in the hierarchical structure and hierarchical structure does not exist to the extent that there is dissonance and accusations among members at the expense of cognitive vitality because of personal loyalties.

Salafist movements did not receive some objective methodological study based on their treatment, not as a purely religious situation, but as a sociological phenomenon in which social, political, religious and cultural are mixed. This phenomenon is often reduced to its motor side without penetrating the depth of its intellectual and organizational structure, let alone addressing

its political and social contexts. Which deprives this phenomenon of the opportunity to be subjected to objective criticism, which can be derived from new rules to explain their behavior. In general, two schools have dominated the field of Salafi movements extensively during the past two decades.

The first group is what we might call the “self-criticism of the Salafist movement,” a group led by theorists that belongs to the same movement and emerged from its womb. Some may still be close to the mainstream of the Salafi trend and belong to it intellectually rather than organizationally. Perhaps the most important features of this group either critical or demagogical, arguing that they are closer to reality, as the saying of “people of Mecca know its reefs.”

Within the framework of an extensive research project to circulate "self" criticism of the Salafi “peaceful” trend. And is guided by a kind of self-criticism of the Salafi movement to reform and improve its course, and to remove them from their religious space and push them into the civil sphere. However, the dilemma of this group is that many are not prepared to strive for correction.

The second school is the Western school that has been interested in the Salafist movement for the past two decades. Its presence increased strongly after the attacks of September 11, 2001. It is a school that can be divided into two main streams. The first is the European Orientalist movement, which began to study the Islamic phenomenon in general since the early 1980s In addition to the rise of Islamic awakening in more than one Arab country. The interest of this movement reached the Islamic movement to its peak with the occurrence of the Algerian tragedy between the regime and the Islamic Salvation Front in the early nineties.

There are many names belonging to this school, including - for example - the French researcher known Francois Bourga, who is one of the most Western researchers close to the Islamic phenomenon monitoring and analysis. His research contributions continue to be an important

reference for Islamic movements in the Maghreb and North Africa. "The Failure of Political Islam" (1994), which dealt with the Islamic movement from a comparative perspective, was later followed by his other writings, the most important of which was "The Globalization of Islam" (2004). This "French triangle" is complemented by well-known scholar Gilles Kipel, the author of the vast research production, which reduces Islam in its religious groups and movements, without giving a blind eye to its cultural and moral essence.

The second trend within this school is the stream of "reducible and superficial ", a trend that, in the background of its study of the Islamic movement, is the attack of September 11, 2001. We can imagine how this affects its vision and understanding of the Islamic phenomenon and its complexities. Over the past two decades, American research centers have been working to monitor some aspects of the Islamic movement, most notably the Rand Corporation, a profitable research institution serving the purposes of the US Department of Defense and State Department, which served as the intellectual reservoir of neoconservatives in their dealings with Islamic movements. As well as the Washington Institute for Near East Studies, the political arm of the Israeli American General Committee (AIPAC). These institutions, in their analysis of the Salafist movement, are based on several false assumptions. First, this movement is new to the Islamic community and its roots are in the Arabian Peninsula, especially Saudi Arabia, and by nature it is a violent and radical movement, with no difference between moderates and extremists. That is, it is a pre-meditative vision that only serves to prove the common view of Arabs and Muslims as an essential source of hatred and anti-Westernism. Second: The only approach promoted by these institutions in dealing with the Islamic movements is the approach of security and intelligence, not political. While working and interacting with them and meeting them at several scientific conferences and events, we found that the knowledge of some of the Salafist Movement does not exceed a short visit to

this Arab country or to achieve a reputation and research personal gains. Or a story cut by a taxi driver in Amman or a baker in Casablanca.

What might lead to optimism is the emergence of a new generation of young Arab and foreign researchers, who combine the systematic and sober training and recognition of the complexities of this Islamic phenomenon. The Islamic movements have many problems, and they - like other Arab movements - have made many mistakes. These problems and errors with a degree of objectivity and research integrity is something, and targeting them as a political and ideological discount is another thing.

While Arab researchers should be more familiar with the complexities of this phenomenon, since they live with it and know the complexities of their societies, many of them fall into the trap of reductionism and superficiality, not to mention ideological prejudices. The crisis does not lie in these trends, which stand biased from the Islamic movements, and sometimes Islam itself; but those who adopt their thesis from the Arab researchers and intellectuals, who exercise a kind of self-Orientalism on one of the important phenomena in the Arab world, the Islamic phenomenon, without any commitment to objectivity or facts Scientific and historical.

What distinguishes Salafi Jihadism from other Salafiyat is not the declaration of ignorance of all contemporary societies, and not the declaration of disbelief as the systems governing not the revelation of God, but the declaration that armed jihad is a one way of change (p. 98). Sulturism, Salafism, or other terms such as Tawheed, Tradition, Revolution, Islamic University, and Sunnism, etc.

The emergence of the group represents a dynamic extension of the oriental Salafist reform, in terms of its sharp confrontation with the Kemalist model. The researcher supports the view that

links the direct emergence of the Brotherhood to the overthrow of the caliphate and the advancement of secularism.” "The emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt represents a dynamic extension of the Eastern Salafist reform, and some see it as a reaction to the overthrow of the Islamic Caliphate.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, three important events have raised interest in Islamic movements. The first was the events of September 11, 2001, when the attention of politicians and those interested in the West became Islam, and many studies and studies, In the same context, the term "terrorism" is the frontline of the media, and the term "Islamophobia" is widely spread. The second event was linked to the US invasion of Iraq and the formation of the political façade in Baghdad, according to the "sectarian quotas" in July 2003. The Islamic parties led the front of politics and government. Religious books invaded the Iraqi street. No visitors found libraries in Baghdad and other cities in Iraq A heavy presence only for religious books.

Then there were major events since the end of 2010, when the “Arab Spring” was launched, resulting in the rise of political Islam. Its leaders took power in Tunisia and Egypt, with a clear presence of Islamists in all the Arab countries that have witnessed and witnessed movement since 2011 until now. The reading of specialists that the preoccupation with Islamic movements in the Arab world will take time not short. We begin to question a third thesis that stands between the two previous groups, a thesis that raises the slogan of originality and modernity together; a compromise based on heritage is a method and a content, and depends on modernity technically and form. This thesis was adopted by the Islamic movement in an attempt to get out of the theoretical dilemma, especially after entering the political work and the consequent theoretical reviews that led to the thesis of Islamism (Islamization of modernity).

For example, after a period of time, the Islamic movement began to be convinced of the contradiction between the civil state and Islam (hakimiyyah of Sayyid Qutb), democracy (the will of the people) with the Shura (the will of God) . Consequently, as a result of these reviews, they concluded that the institutions of modernity need to find their concerns through the mechanisms available from municipal councils, parliament, civil society, etc. But this assimilation of democracy does not mean that the Islamic movement succeeded in digesting all the elements of modernity, but thought that it was fully capable of its free will to choose its traditional repertoire of technical achievements of modernity and to discard the rest of its modernist philosophy. Democracy was thus accepted as a procedural mechanism for sorting out the ruling political project.

Secularism was categorically rejected as incompatible with the Islamic precepts (the universality of Islam) and the same with individualism on the grounds that it contradicted religious values (chastity, charity ...) and helped to seduce and expel sin. So after a long experience of nearly twenty years of the Islamic movement in political action (opposition and ruling), did this thesis withstand the challenges of the reality and the substantive requirements. The wide scope of the revisions reveals that the thesis of the Islamic movement, which was formulated under the pressure of political reality, was only a trench of its theoretical dilemma. These new revisions reveal that its discourse seemed to take the idea of secularization very slowly and unconsciously and thus failed to Islamize the elements of modernity as it believed. Second, this transformation reveals that modernity is indivisible and does not accept the choice between its components or the differentiation between them and the neglect of what seems to us contrary to our cultural referential. Modernity imposes itself on us consciously or unconsciously, and we must take it and assimilate it. Therefore, the thesis based on the logic of will / awareness in the selection of

components of modernity expressed their failure, because the latter infiltrated into the ideology of the Islamic movement surreptitiously without awareness and will because the reality of the objective and historical imposed on this introspection.

As we saw, a review of the radicalization and disengagement literature reveals that violent radicals are induced by structural (macro) and psychological (micro) “root causes” In the case of Morocco, however, little is known about how prior experiences influence their decisions to disengage. There are few examples of approaches that have taken into account the social reality and experiences of disengaged Salafi Jihadists.

As Wacquant pointed out:

describing the basic tenets of the vast literature on radicalization and disengagement. This chapter will explore the existing and most dominant streams of radicalization studies from forensic and criminal psychological approaches, to structural conditions, which encompass deprivation theory, the role of ideology, and counter-hegemonic discourse.

Cumulative exposure to certain social conditions instills in individuals an ensemble of durable and transposable dispositions that internalize the necessities of the extant social environment, inscribing inside the organism the patterned inertia and constraints of social reality (1992: 13).

In criminology and sociology, the habitus has been used to analyze gangs and social change. Alistair Fraser (2013: 71) belonging to Glasgow street gangs is bounded by a street habitus that is reinforced through “both linguistic and physical devices.” In the same vein, Sandlberg and Pederson (2009) argued that territorial identification can be seen as linguistic devices and are woven into how drug dealer engage in group discussion. The same discursive patterns can be seen in the case of Salafi jihadists. Qualitative methods such as observations, interviews, and triangulation are suited for open-ended research question (Corbin and Strauss 2008), and therefore allowed our thesis to be explored in depth.

There was a concern that the voices of grassroots disengaged Salafi jihadists would be lost in our research. Conversing with and listening to their stories, as well as observing the very moments in their everyday lives we wished to see the change in, broadened our perspective. Ethnography was used as a tool to deeply penetrate into their social reality. The research trajectories discussed in Chapter 5 are a clear example of how “doing and living ethnography” enlightened our thesis.

Conceptualization

The concept of jihad religiously and historically has faced ideational and political challenges. Some have restricted the use of violence and call for arms in very particular cases. Others proclaimed that jihad is a way to regain a lost community. The ambiguity associated with determining the boundaries of jihad has resulted in the proliferation of alternating views.

The legal Muslim philosopher Tariq al-Din Ahmed Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328) argued against the idea of a defensive jihad. Instead, he viewed jihad as an indispensable element of legitimizing rule (Knapp 2003). He is considered to have laid much of the fertile ground for contemporary radical Islamic intellectuals (Sivan 1990), who firmly suggest a jihad without borders. These intellectuals include Sayed Qutb (1964), Mohamed Faraj (Jansen 1986), Abdellah Azzam, and Abu Moussab Assouri (Cruickshank and Ali 2007). The defensive view of jihad (Dar al Islam) also had its impact on contemporary Islamic theorists such as Ahmed Al-Bouti (1988).

Muslim philosophers, such as Abu Nasser Mohamed Al Farabi, on the other hand, are among those who built his philosophical understanding from mostly Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics. Al Farabi articulated his internal jihad following Aristotle’s six basic morals: the bestial, the immoderate, the incontinent, the continent, the moderate and the divine. Al Farabi focused on the top two: continence and moderation, and translated them to mean fighting both inner and outer darkness. Jihad covers this duality of hostility toward the darkness of the inner soul, and hostility

against the outer world (Butterworth 1990). In Al Farabi's *Aphorism*, the distinction was made between war or *harb* and jihad. Al Farabi resisted all attempts to use jihad or the "virtuous warriors" (*almujahid all fadil*) out of its context. Parens (2006) also noted that Al Farabi was cautious in the use of words and their translations. In particular, defensive and offensive jihad is constructed around the dialogues of a just city and cannot be part of unjust wars (Parens 2006).

The twentieth century has witnessed anti-colonial movements in the Arab and Islamic World. It has been made clear that a "lesser jihad" is needed to defend the lands from invaders. The recurrence of organic and lesser jihad is of much importance. The post-independence era of the 1950s is considered a time of deception from those who initiated the lesser jihad against the colonial powers, the national forces. The friction between the national forces and the masses gave rise to an intellectual discourse that in its totality constructed a manifesto and declared an open front of the struggle within the house of Islam, *dar al Islam*. It was Sayed Qub's *Milestones*, published in 1956, that initiated the jihad manifesto. Later, in Mohamed Abdalsalam Faraj's *Al Farida Al Ghaeba* (1978) and Abdullah Azzam in *Defense of the Muslim Lands: The First Obligation After Imam* (1979), jihad was not seen as defensive, but according to both authors, it had to be offensive and an obligation that was lost by the contemporary generation. On the other hand, the work of Al-Bouti in *Jihad and How Do We Understand It* opposed offensive jihadism. Al-Bouti suggests a different reading of jihad, one that is *organic*. Some observers linked his assassination in 2013 to his teaching of a jihad that is different from the offensive position.

The push and pull between offensive and defensive jihad cannot be deciphered without understanding the impact of a set of external factors that were introduced by the colonial powers. Salafi jihadists argue that the reason for the weakness of the Muslim World is its deviation from earlier Salafis or righteous ancestors during the golden age of the prophet Mohamed and the first

four Caliphs. According to the Salafis (those who embrace the return to the original teaching of the righteous fathers, Salaf), in their state of powerlessness, the call for arms was the only way to regain their dignity. Consequently, we see the exploitation of jihad and its framing, even going beyond Muslim geography – Global Jihadism - to constitute the Muslim community (*Umma*).

Jihad

In a search of the term *jihad* we found the following distinctions. The word “jihad” derives from the Arabic verb “jahada,” which means to strive for self-purification. For example, someone who smokes and wants to quit could say, “I am doing jihad to quit smoking.” It does not refer to war or holy war, as war in Arabic translates to *harb*. The definition of jihad in the Oxford dictionary, however, is as follows: 1. a war or struggle against unbelievers, and 2. (also greater jihad) the spiritual struggle within oneself against sin. The word jihad appears in the Quran thirty-five times, but only in four verses does it explicitly mean protecting land and honour.⁷

Jihad has many forms: jihad of the heart and soul, jihad of the tongue, jihad of knowledge, jihad by the hand, and jihad by the sword. Jihad of the heart or the soul (*jihad bil qalb/nafs*) is also called the greater jihad, as it is one’s inner struggle of good against evil. Jihad by the tongue (*jihad bil lissan*) is presenting Islam with evidence and scholarly research. Jihad by knowledge and pen (*jihad bil qalam/ilm*) is the quest for science and discovery. Jihad by hand (*jihad bil yad*) is performing actions such as charity, feeding the poor, and supporting one’s parents. Lastly, the lesser jihad, jihad by the sword (*jihad bissaiif*) can only be undertaken if it fulfills the conditions

⁷ Jihad is an Arabic term from the root jhd, which has the root meaning of “using, or exerting, one’s utmost power, efforts, endeavours, or ability, in contending with an object of disapprobation.” Jihad thus means, variously, “struggle,” “striving for,” and “execution” or “expenditure of effort.” The Qur’an uses the term jihad several times followed by the phrase ‘fi sabil Allah’ (in the way of God). It is a struggle in which the believers (Muslims) are expected to strive with their wealth and “person” for the sake of God (Saeed 2002: 73)

prescribed and legalized by the Council of Oulama scholars. Furthermore, the call has to come from the king as the commander of the faithful (Interview Tawil 2016) and the only person legitimized for giving the signal to the population at large for self-defence, i.e. when engaging in combat due to attacks from outside, and fighting against injustices and evil that destroy society, such as drugs, crime and violence on a large scale.

Mujahideen

Mujahideen are the ones who engage in jihad. This term has been used in Western media to describe Muslims who fought the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets. Former United States President Ronald Reagan called them *freedom fighters* (Martin and Barzegar 2010), while Soviet officials viewed them as “saboteurs,” “gangs,” “mercenaries,” “fundamentalists,” “zoloofs,” “counterrevolutionaries,” and “tools of the Western imperial powers.”

Jihadism

Jihadism is derived from the Arabic word *jihadiya* and is a global religious-political militancy ideology, which goes beyond a particular country or region. Groups and individuals have utilized the term of jihad to pursue political objectives. In this sense, jihadism becomes a means to revive a form of a lost collective identity (Abu Rumman 2014; Abu Rumman and Abu Haniyya 2009). Under the pressures imposed by the global world order, an imagined jihadist world order is reinventing itself. Jihadism represents the intellectual reference of the global jihadist movements. This discourse is not only fueled by the speeches and statements from jihadist leaders or the nihilistic murders they endorse, but it is also prompted by the exclusion of the other and a keen passion for expelling even Muslims from their system of beliefs, dividing the world into “us” and “them.” They see themselves as the survivors and others as the sinners who live in dark shadows (Abu Rumman 2014).

Salafi

The reason why the adjective Salafi is so popular among Islamist actors is that it connotes doctrinal purity and therefore affords a degree of religious and political legitimacy to whoever describes himself as such. For this reason, the term Salafi is often better understood as a bid for legitimacy than an indication of a specific political program. Salafi connotes both a method and a creed (Haykel 2009; Wagemakers 2012). When someone labels himself as a Salafi, we can assume a way of life and manners of behavior, deportment and dressing in society. According to Salafis, wearing Afghan like clothing is necessary to be a “true” Muslim. Using Bourdieu’s habitus, we will observe these dispositions that have been culturally and socially internalized since the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets. Salafi also connotes a belief system that carries a responsibility for Muslims to strive and purify their nation from “alien” practices (Abu Rumman 2014, Wagemakers 2012).

Salafi Jihadism

Abu Muhammad al Maqdessi articulated the doctrine of Salafi jihadism in the early 1990s and propagated it through his London-based disciple Abu Qatada al Filastini (Wagemakers 2012; Attayyar 2009, Abu Rumman 2014). The first written reference to the Salafi Jihadist movement or all haraka all jihadiya all Salafiya appeared in an interview with Ayman al Zhawahiri, the current leader of al-Qaeda, published in the London-based Jihadist magazine *al ansar* in 1994⁸. The New York Times and the Washington Post did not use the term Salafi or Salafist until 2000. The concept of Salafi jihadism gained traction worldwide after the bombing in Casablanca on May 16, 2003.

⁸ Ayman al dhawahiri, “mawqifna min Iran-al radd ‘ala tuhmat al ta’awun bayna al haraka al jihadiya al Salafiya wa Iran al rafidiya (Our position on Iran-Response to the Allegations of cooperation between the jihadi Salafi movement and Rafidi Iran), *al Ansar*, no. 91 (1994)

We must therefore be particularly careful not to conflate theological orientations and social movements. A social movement by definition presupposes a set of political preferences. Theological categories, however, are usually vague and ambiguous in their political content. The notion of global Salafi, takfiri or the Salafi Jihadist movement, while appealing as a collective noun, is in fact very problematic because the actors subsumed in this category do not share political preferences (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1218). Salafis around the world work for different political agendas. This is one of the main reasons why the Salafi movement has proved to be and will remain frustratingly difficult to analyze.

What remains glaringly absent from existing scholarship, however, is a focus on the micro of the disengaged Salafi Jihadists. With what tools can we dissect the smallest singularities of each individual? Rational perspective is of much importance, yet alone cannot bring the whole picture. We need a tool that would zoom the tiny particularities of each Salafi Jihadist. Bourdieu's habitus in particular is of great help. In the case of the Moroccan Salafi jihadism, specifically, there exists a complete lack of scholarship focused on the post-disengagement era and its contextual environment on a seismically active region, whether from scholars of Sociology, Criminology, Political Science, or Security. Our thesis hopes to fill this gap by furnishing new and important knowledge about the everyday life history, and power dimensions involved in the routine practices surrounding the question of who is that man? And the big question asked by people they are interacting with is "Are they still dangerous?"⁹

⁹This question in particular is asked by regular people in many cities of Morocco.

Chapter 4. PART II. The Birth of Moroccan Salafi Jihadism: The Cartography of Salafism

Researchers date the birth and the rise of the concept of “Salafi jihadism (*Asalafiya Al Jihadiya*)” to 1994 (Abdul Jid and Al Adhama 2015; Abu Rumman 2014; Abu Rumman and Abu Hani 2014; Attayyar 2013; Assabbagh 2007). This year is linked to the trial and sentencing of a group of monotheists who went by the name *all mowahhidine*, whose founder was sheikh Mohammed Al Maqdessi. While in prison, the first blueprints of al-Qaeda theoretical framework were formulated by Al Maqdessi (Wagemakers 2012):

We have declared our strict positions without fear. We began labelling the Arab states as states of infidels, the representative council (parliaments) as a council of infidels, and the religious illegitimacy of states. Public trials were important to us (Interview Sheikh Al Maqdessi 2016).

A complex relationship was woven between Jordanian Salafi jihadism and global Salafi jihadism. The rapid dissemination of the ideology was made easier through the prison network, which appears to have worked well to deepen the members’ convictions to the ideology and strengthen their organizational and personal ties. The connection between Jordanian Salafi jihadism and global jihadism was easily made, and the money was also coming from the jihadists of Europe.

The Ideology is Leader Driven

Who is Sheikh Mohammed Al Maqdessi?

My name is Issam Mohammed Taher Mohammed Mahmoud Souleiman Al Hafi Al Otaibi. Al Barqawi is my nickname in relation to my village of Barqa in Nablus, Palestine. I was born 3rd of July 1959. Al Maqdessi is an honourable name I acquired because of Al Quds (The Dome of the Rock). At the age of three, I moved with my family to Kuwait, where I completed my elementary and high school studies. I then enrolled in a university in Sarajevo to study engineering, but due to the language barrier I decided to return to Jordan. After that, I joined the University of Mosul in Iraq

and studied for two years at the Faculty of Science (Interview Sheikh Al Maqdessi 2016).

Al Maqdessi also decided to leave school in Iraq because of the dissonance between his university life and his religion, especially the mixing of female and male students on campus. Ibn Baz, the Mufti of Saudi Arabia, promised him a scholarship to study in Saudi Arabia. This is how he met Ibn Baz and other well-renowned jurisprudence scholars.

The relationship between Al Maqdessi and Islamic organizations began with his affiliation with “the Surouri current,” founded by Syrian-born Mohammed Bin Surour in Kuwait, after Surour split from the Muslim Brotherhood and was deported to Saudi Arabia. After a while, Al Maqdessi disagreed with the Surouris, instead favouring the teachings of Egyptian scholar Sayyed Qutb. He was also influenced by Mohammed Eid, a close friend of Qutb and one of five of his followers who were asked about his position in the famous letter called “The Joy of the Soul” (*Afrah Arrouh*). Later, Al Maqdessi joined what is known as the Juhayman Al Otaibi group, and was influenced by their Salafist faith as well as educated by a number of their elders. However, because of their non-atonement policy towards those who once belonged to the police and the army, he was forced to leave.

In the mid 1980s, Al Maqdessi visited Afghanistan and Pakistan. Looking back on that time he said, “the doors to Islamic youth for jihad in Afghanistan was made easier by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (Interview Sheikh Al Maqdessi 2016)”. Al Maqdessi joined the Mujahedeen inside Afghanistan at the “Sada Camp,” which was run by Abdullah Azzam, where he received his military training before his disagreement with Azzam and others in the camp because of their affiliation to the Muslim Brotherhood. Al Maqdessi later joined the Al Qaeda camp in Khost, where he was responsible for the camp “jihad wad” unit, which trained Special Forces. Following this placement, he was sent to the “Farouq Camp” by one of the emirs of al-Qaeda.

The Evolution of Exclusion

The Community of Al Jama'aa and the Rejection of the Notion of Citizenship

The concept of the “group” is one of the most basic concepts in the recruitment and polarization strategy of the Salafi jihadists. This is unlike traditional Salafism, which does not adopt the project of collective action through a group or emirate, instead viewing these actions as heretical. Salafi jihadism, however, insists on joining a “community,” particularly an armed military organization working to successfully establish “the Islamic Caliphate” through the use of force against “infidel” regimes and officials.

The leaders of these communities use several names, such as al-Qaeda or the “solid base.” In connection with the emphasis on the group in Salafi jihadi ideology, Qutb (1955) believed that to abolish the state of “ignorance (*Al Jahiliya*),” a stronger “organic social grouping” was required. Qutb placed an emphasis on excellence and the ascension of faith of these “social groupings.” Therefore, the Salafi Jihadists consider themselves the “group of Muslims” and see all those who do not support or follow them as outside of this community, i.e. “outsider offenders (*Al Firqa Addalla*).”

The radical currents of the term “group” as the surviving community, by virtue of its firm doctrine of “infallibility” and “truth,” led to the rejection of any concept of coexistence with or acceptance of the ‘other’.

The Black Flag: The Inclusion in the Exclusion

“This flag resumes everything, there is no such theory as this!”
Al Maqdessi, Zarqa 2016

Radical religious groups rely on a complex conceptual system. This is a system that is intertwined with doctrinal postulates, which are based on an intellectual and ideological linguistic dictionary

inspired by the Islamic religious heritage. The aim of this conceptual system is to strengthen the group's polarizing powers and legitimize their violent practices (Wagemakers 2012; Kanbouri 2015). Addressing the concepts used in the conceptual system of Salafi jihadism will help us understand these groups and their "recruiting system strategy" (Meijer 2009). The Salafi jihadist conceptual system is based on a selection of religious meanings that completely contradict the moderate principles of Islam. This is especially the case when supporters of these groups distort the values of the Islamic religion and resort to killing innocent Muslims and non-Muslims in the name of Islam.

Before dismantling the 'conceptual apparatus-of extremist movements, some questions must be asked: what are the most important rationales and concepts that make an individual shift from a circle of moderation to a more rigid circle? How does an individual join the "group" or "cell" and embrace its literature with total sanctity? Why does the radical view "others" as a threat? The answers, ironically, entail a feeling of inclusion in what is an extremely exclusive atmosphere.

The black flag used by Jihadist groups, is built on the monotheistic concept of *tawhid*, according to the Salafi jihadists. *Al Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB) is one of the requirements in order to fulfill *tawhid* (Al Zawahiri 2002; Al Qahtani 2003). Ayman Al Zawahiri, formerly second in command of al-Qaeda and now the emir, wrote the reference book on *tawhid*. In his view, the feeling of a shared identity is built on the notion of the unity of God. Tawhid is divided into three main sections: Oneness of Lordship (*tawhid arroubibiya*) or worshipping God in his actions; Oneness of Godship (*tawhid allouhiya*), or the worship of God by the actions of worshippers; and Oneness of the Names and Attributes (*tawhid al assma'a wa assifat*), or the faith in the names of God and his attributes (Haykel 2009, Al Dhawahiri 2002). The Salafi jihadist's claim evolves around an emphasis on a return to the beliefs, practices and behaviors of the first "three" generations of Muslims, who were the generation of the prophet Mohammed era (Haykel 2009).¹⁰ This group is called The Pious Ancestors (*salaf-Assalih*). For them, there are only two sources of authority: the Quran and the Sunna (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Mohammed), and they reject any intruding practices (*bida'a*). Salafis believe that Muslims who do not follow and perform such instructions are outside the religion and they may face excommunication (*takfir*) (Haykel 2009; Amghar 2007).

¹⁰ The three generations refer to the Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed: "The best people are those of my generation, then those who come after, and then those who follow."

“Salafi jihadism is based on the certitude that people adhering to political constitutions, regimes, governments, political institutions (parliaments, parties, and judiciary), military and security apparatuses in the Arab and Islamic world are all infidels and are subject to excommunication, and that the only principle that helps us here is the *al Wala’a wal Bara’a* (Interview Sheikh Al Maqdessi 2016).”

“Us and Them” and “Axis of Evil” versus *al Wala’a wal Bara’a* (WB)

The ability to represent things as “other” has been pivotal to the articulation of threat and danger in the Western experience. The boundaries of a state’s identity are secured by the representation of danger. This can be seen in President George H. W. Bush’s response to the Persian Gulf crisis in 1991: “In the life of a nation, we’re called upon to define who we are and what we believe” (Campbell 2008). *Al Wala’a wal Bara’a* (WB) uses the same rhetoric: *all Wala’a* in a way means “with us,” and all *Bara’a* “against us.” Both discourses are securitized. On the one hand, we see the construction of a vocabulary that wraps threat in the preservation and protection of freedom (free world). On the other, we see a securitized religious principle that views religion as being threatened. It is under this circumstance that we observe the birth of Salafi jihadism and the radical reading of the Quranic verses and texts (Wagemakers 2008).

The Birth of Salafi Jihadism

“They did not find explosives with me, but they consider my idea explosive.”
Al Maqdessi, Zarqa 2016

The statement refers to Sheikh Al Maqdessi experience of being arrested many times. During his time behind bars, he tried not to lose the confidence of his supporters and keep up with their developments while also actively keeping from provoking the security services. The first seeds of the birth of Salafi jihadism as a concept surfaced after the bombing of Al Oulaya, an American military barrack, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on November 13, 1995. Seven American

soldiers were killed, and it was found that a cell of four Saudis were behind the attack. They were caught and executed; Abdulaziz Al Ma'atham was the mastermind of the operation.

It was the first time my name appeared in the media when the confessions appeared on Saudi TV announcing that they sought my edict the *fatwa*. In fact I met with Abdulaziz in Jordan frequently. He did not seek my blessings and advice. (Interview Sheikh Al Maqdessi 2016)

The foundational text for Salafi jihadism, *Millat Ibrahim*, was published in 1984. What distinguishes this particular radical current from other Islamic movements is the reliance on the concept of “loyalty and disavowal,” previously discussed, highlighted in the black flag’s note. The Al-Qaeda leaders Bin Laden and Al Zawahiri pointed out that by neglecting this fundamental pillar of us against them, the enemies of Islam seek to destroy the Muslim *Ummah*, to deceive it, to seduce it, and incite it in disasters and calamities.

According to Al Maqdessi (Interview 2016): “Loyalty and disavowal (WB) is not only a matter of being, it has its origin in faith, because it is the heart of monotheism, you see the images of deviation from the WB in the alliance with the West, and infidels taking our lands before our eyes.” Therefore, the issue of WB to the radical groups has become a necessary prelude to see the atonement of current regimes and governments as blasphemy, and hence signals the permissibility of taking up arms and turning against them. We ask the question: Why do Salafi jihadists’ faith in the doctrine of WB manifests itself in the harming of “others” by self-detonation?

From al Wala’a wal Bara’a (WB) to “Management of Savagery”

Wagemakers (2012) posited that Al Maqdessi made a radical reading of the concept of WB, which was uprooted from the social realm and elevated to a jihadist level. Mohamed Bin Ali (2012) posited that the WB has three main dimensions: the social, the political and the jihadist. The social dimension refers to both the educational and religious value of the doctrine. The political dimension results when Salafi members incorporate elements of their politics into the belief

system. The jihadist dimension is the practice of *takfir* or excommunication of the rulers and regimes. The act of *takfir* leads to jihad which manifests in the calls to overthrow those regimes.

Sheikh Al Maqdessi's reinterpretation of WB had its main impact when Mohammed Khalil al Hakaymah, known as Abou Bakr Naji, published *Management of Savagery* in 2007 (Nesira 2014). In the words of Al Maqdessi, "The Islamic State (IS) of Al Baghdadi managed to construct its theoretical frames while using my explanation of WB. It is through books such as the *Management of Savagery* that WB is taking a real and concrete path (Interview Al Maqdessi 2016).

The jihadist strategy included in this book is considered a plan of war. These plans are based on demolishing the foundation of the current political realm and building a generation of "jihadist youth" to work in two interrelated phases: "the sting of exhaustion" and "the management of brutality." The pivotal point of the book is the introduction to the concept of "management of savagery," which refers to "loyalty of faith," i.e. a state where each member in a group receives loyalty from the rest of the members. The aim according to Naji is to exhaust the enemy through escalating antagonization, the culmination of which will achieve several goals, such as the "exhaustion of the corrupt regime" (45-67). When this cycle is complete, the group's capabilities are to be upgraded and the "state" will be psychologically and practically ready for the next Islamic Ummah to emerge (89-112).

'My Story with the Central Intelligence Agency CIA'

I think the most accurate research encyclopedia that really touched on the main ideas I was working on and the sources I got, and my intellectual quest, was done by the CIA. They were almost accurate in profiling my work. It is in their encyclopedia of jihad that they could draw the flow of the origins of my ideas starting from Ibn Taymiyyah across Ibn Qayyim Al Jawziyyah and Mohamed Ibn Abdulwahab until the work of Qutb. (Interview Al Maqdessi 2016).

In the CIA Encyclopedia of Jihad, Al Maqdessi is on the top of the list of influential jihadists, followed by names such as Bin Laden, Abu Qatada, and Qutb. Al Maqdessi's course of life from Kuwait to Saudi Arabia to Jordan indicates his plans to live differently. His work was not written in an academic style or in the sophisticated and metaphorical Arabic language style. He knew that the work of Egyptian jihadi theorist Sayyid Qutb intended to reach a certain category of people. Concepts such as *Al Jahiliyyah* (state of ignorance) and *Al Hakimiyyah* (governing in the name of God) were too abstract and detailed in a manner that made them confusing.

In Afghanistan, I joined *wade* camps where Mujahedeen were militarily training, then Khost camp where I was appointed responsible for jurisprudence and then *Al Farouq* camp. I met sheikh Omar Abderrahman, Oubaiyda Al Manshiri, Abou Hafs Al Massri, Abou Mouss'ab Assouri, and Ayman Al Dhawahiri. We had to think logistically of finding a way for Sheikh Omar to be deployed somewhere. (Interview Al Maqdessi 2016).

Sheikh Omar Abderrahman was given a life sentence in a Federal Medical Center in North Carolina because of the attempted 1993 World Trade Center bombing (Daniel and Simon 2002; Atkins 2008). "Different direction" in Al Maqdessi's statement meant going global.

How did this New Way of Thinking Travel to Morocco?

For a long time in the academic and research world, mainly in North America, there was a consensus that Sayyed Qutb's *Milestones* (1964) was a sort of jihadist manifesto (Zimmerman 2004; Tibi 1998; Kepel 2002; Carré 2003; Worth 2001; Esposito 1992). When we embarked on our field work, we were equipped with this literature, however, while conversing with the grassroots Salafi jihadists in Morocco, the name of Sheikh Al Maqdessi was dominant. This led us to travel to Jordan and meet face to face with the sheikh. One of the methodological tools we use in our thesis is triangulation, which in our case meant the confirmation of the credibility of the sources. Once the low ranking Salafi jihadists (mainly street vendors) mentioned the name of

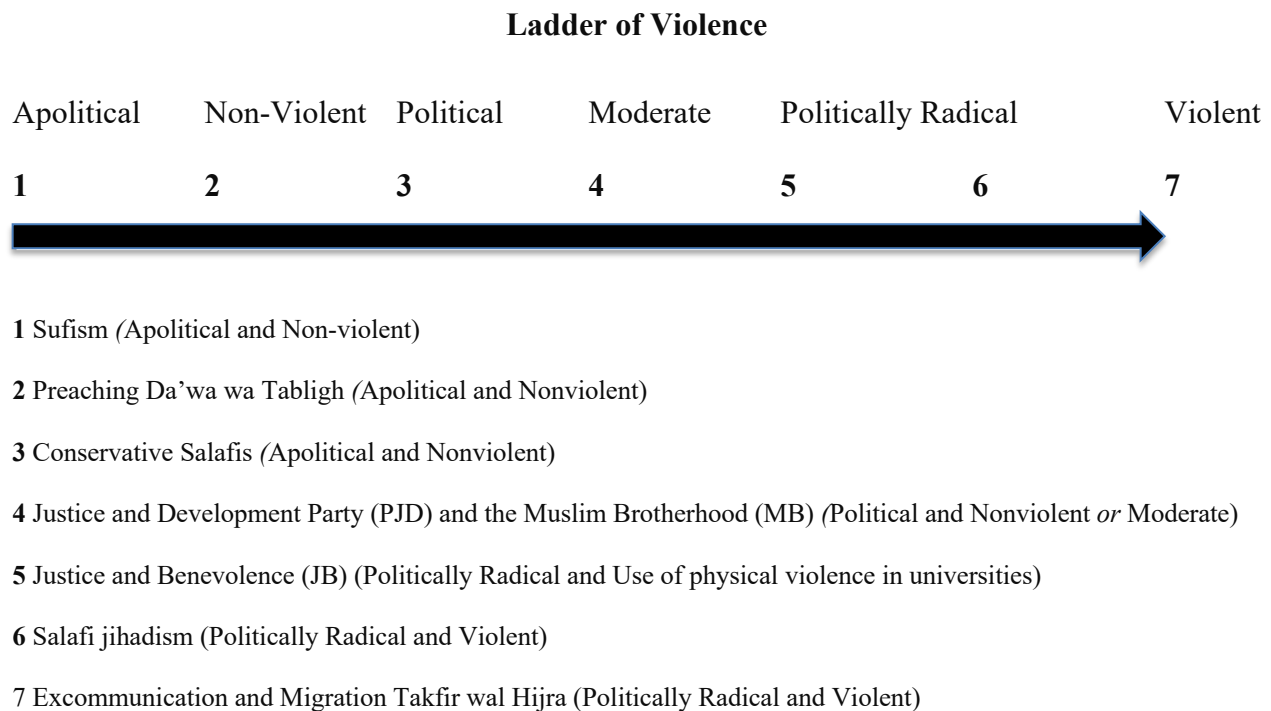
Sheikh Al Maqdessi, we asked the main jihadi figures (Interview Sheikh Fizazi 2016; Sheikh Abou Hafs 2016) why his name was so prominent and why no one had mentioned Sayyed Qutb. Abu Hafs explained: “The books and writings of Sheikh Al Maqdessi were all around the mosques. Every Friday prayer books of the Sheikh are sold.” In Zarqa, Jordan, Sheikh Al Maqdessi informed us that his letters and books have been travelling to Morocco since the 1990s.

The Moroccan Salafi Jihadist’s Infrastructure

Salafism was launched to demonstrate the advantages of a return to the past in contrast to the path towards enlightenment and modernity. It may also have been used to demonstrate the rejection of innovation and at the same time provide an epistemological reading of political and social phenomena such as the colonialism era. During French colonialism, the Moroccan resistance sought the introduction of National Salafism (*Salafiya all Wataniya*) at the intellectual and political level, the main ambition of which was the nation-state. National Salafism was a reaction to the cultural strangeness of Western colonialism, which according to the resistance, stripped Arab and Islamic culture from their identities. Instead, they proposed a cultural and educational project to rebuild their identities from the basis of Islamic heritage. However, it is important to note that the resistance did not deny the West, but rather developed a program to reconcile modernity and Islamic civilization.

It is undeniable that there was an infrastructure in place that played the role of the incubator for the 12 suicide bombers responsible for the Casablanca attacks and other incidents. There were individuals in this infrastructure who provided for and fed potential radicals to be intellectually, mentally and ideologically qualified for terror. The religious and intellectual current of the Orient *mashrek* (Middle East) finds resonance in Morocco. It has historically been known for its cultural

and social diversity (Al Jabiri 1998; Abou Allouz 2009). The following figure outlines the Islamist movement (if we consider the continuum with nonviolent to highly expressive violent).



In terms of this figure, Salafi jihadism falls under the politically radical and violent category. Moroccan Salafism, on the other hand, can be broadly classified into two main categories: the conservative element and the jihadi element, which are elaborated upon below. There is no political Salafism or *haraki Salafism* in Morocco, at least as an organized entity such as the Noor Party in Egypt (Darif 2005; Abu Rumman and Abu Haniya 2014). Overall, one can speak of two religious ideologies in Morocco: (1) Salafi jihadism and (2) Excommunication and Migration (*takfir wal Hijra*). Mostapha Shukri founded the latter current in Egypt (Darif 2005; Tozy 2009), and of the few elements found in Morocco, authorities arrested a supporter named Bendaoud Khamli. Khamli was indicted under the Moroccan criminal code for burying his mother near his home in the city of Nador instead of in a public cemetery, because he considered society

to be an infidel (Interview Kanbouri 2016). There is, however, no organized Excommunication and Migration group (Darif 2005).

Similarly, Salafi jihadism exists ideologically in Morocco but not as an organized group. It had the most impact following the 2003 Casablanca attacks. The 12 suicide bombers were identified as embracing the Salafi jihadi current. The Salafis are ideologically affiliated rather than organizationally (Abou Allouz 2009; Misbah 2016). As mentioned above, the Salafi current is divided into a conservative Salafism stream represented by Mohammed Al Maghrawi in Marrakech through the Association Da'wa for the Quran (*Sunna Adda'wa lil Qura'an wa Sunnah*) (Abou Allouz 2009). The second current is Salafi jihadism that calls for jihad against the West, in particular the United States.

The Jihad element includes sheiks or preachers, such as Mohammed Fizazi, Hassan Al Kettani, and Abou Hafs, who provided their blessings for the September 11 bombings and regard the declaration of jihad against Americans as a legitimate duty, while also offering their support to Osama bin Laden. Sheikh Fizazi, in particular, considered bin Laden to be the 21st-century companion of the prophet Mohammed (Darif 2005; Tozy 2006). These sheikhs were originally *imams* (men who lead prayers), who directly or indirectly promoted the call and provided blessings for jihad by spreading their ideas through audio and video tapes. They consider themselves “theologians” (*oulama'a*) and part of a scientific movement, the “science” being the performance of their religious duty by promoting virtues, preventing vice and advising the nation. It is important to note that these sheiks were not the head of organizations. However, a group directly influenced by these sheikhs and Salafi jihad ideology and literature from abroad, such as the books of Sheikh Al Maqdessi, did form and was called the “group of Miloudi Zakaria” (Kalpakian 2005). Members of this group were not advocates or activists, but youths fascinated by the jihadi project that wanted

to do something to prove their belief. This level of Salafi jihadists is of great importance as they represent the grassroots of Salafi jihadism.

When we examine the Salafi jihadi ideology, we should make the distinction between the preachers, who often call themselves the *jama'a and Sunna group (ahl as Sunnah wal jama'a)*, and the grassroots individuals who joined these groups. But by all standards they cannot be considered an organization because their relationships are woven instead of being hierarchical.

The Phenomenon of the Populist Religious Radicalization

Curiosity, Desire, Wholesale Adaptation

Salafi Jihadists are fighting a war of ideas. The search for identity prompts some people to embrace extremist thinking as they believe it to be the answer to their anxieties. Allowing others to take and reshape their identities represents an abduction of the self. Before wearing an explosive belt, the violent radical was carrying explosive thinking. A terrorist operation involves a simple equation: a sheikh or a preacher plus a financier and carrier. Thus if we want to prevent attacks, we must eliminate the fertile ground as those “who want to kill a mosquito must dry the marshes.” Kalpakian (2005) notes that the recruits for the 2003 Casablanca attacks used whatever was available to them, *bricolage* ideology and experiences to come up with the idea for the bombings. This required the transcendence of self to the level of an imagined collective community. Radicalization as *bricolage* allowed us to understand the cognitive process these individuals undergo, from showing curiosity to participating in the collective community to wholesale adaptation to the ideology.

The behavior of the 12 suicide bombers of the Casablanca attacks is not specific to a certain society or culture. We aimed to reflect the 12 bombers in a universal mirror, where terrorist acts are conducted by individuals who became attached to ideas that are not their own, instead being

inspired by these ideas and turning them into a weapon. The terrorists Eric Rudolph (Centennial Olympic Park Bombing, Atlanta, 1996), Seung Hui Cho (Virginia Tech Shooting, Virginia, 2007), Hassan Nidal (Fort Hood Shooting, Texas, 2009), Anders Behring (Norway Attacks, Utoya, Oslo, Norway, 2011) and Alexandre Bissonnette (Quebec City Mosque Shooting, 2017) all fall under this framework.

We believe that all of the individuals listed above used the tools available to them to construct their own worlds, which is the true face of bricolage. Under the changing circumstances of what constitutes a terrorist attack, it is becoming more difficult to talk about a specific “profile” of violent radicals. The president of the Center for Research and Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities in Morocco, Samir Boudinar (Interview 2016), argued that the phenomenon is becoming hybridized.

The Search for a Catalyst

I was 14 years old and lived in *Souk Laghzal* a neighbourhood in Oujda. A group of friends and I were meeting with one of the teachers and his friend from *Asr* prayers (between noon and evening prayer) at 9:30 PM. Before our meeting, we had a seminar with another teacher to memorize the holy Quran and examine other books. We told our parents that we were reviewing math instead. At 9:30, the teacher saw us talking with the other teacher and he became furious. He asked us firmly if we were thinking of joining his seminars. We wondered why. Four years later we knew that the other teacher represented a different group in our quest for that person, the feeder. (Interview Mr. W. 2015. Oujda. Morocco)

The term “the feeder” in Mr. W.’s statement comes from the Arabic language *Al moughaddhi*, someone who gives food, and metaphorically means the catalyst. While interviewing the former Salafi jihadists, we came close to gaining a full picture of the number of texts, books, opinions, messages, lectures, words, poems, legends, which built the mind of the terrorist and coloured the way they saw the world. Someone who decides to kill others, either by shooting or stabbing, or to kill himself with the victims through cars and explosive belts, is commonly a person

who is filled with deep faith and discipline before committing his or her crimes. He or she is taught that they are someone who represents the absolute right, the supreme divine will, that they are a soldier who executes the earth's purpose. In order to understand who this person is and why he or she insists on killing and sabotaging the security and the lives of people, we have to go into his or her mind and try to see the world through their eyes.

We did this by seeing, touching and smelling their world and through learning from the books and literature that form the conscience of the terrorist. Many of these books reference al-Qaeda and interpret heritage texts to their advantage, changing their meaning and weaving a spider's web of deceit (Darif 2005). The process of indoctrination is all consuming, yet with every revelation of a crime committed by a juvenile, we see the same expressions of surprise by the closest people to the perpetrator, such as their father or the mother, siblings, friends and neighbours. This is proof of the extent of alienation between people, even despite our physical proximity.

There are those who compete with mothers and fathers to raise the next generation of children. The parents no longer monopolize their children's education, particularly their understanding of religion, patriotism and the hardships of life. The breeders and the feeders consist of people we may not know, yet they still interact with youth and through them the younger generation formulate their vision of life, their plans for how to live and to be eternal. The spread of this discourse in public spheres begins with stories and narration of fictions that later become a core aspect of an ideology. Understanding this process is seldom explored in the field of research on radicalization and terrorism.

The Narrative not the Ideology

What are the cultural narratives associated with jihadists' violence and aggression and how are the codes of collective violence embedded in these narratives? In this chapter reflects on acts of terror committed by individuals in the name of Islam. These terrorists were considered brainwashed by the power of a religious ideology, yet we argue that it was cultural narratives that produced and maintained that power. Producing a narrative is not an easy task, especially since they are often wrapped in a sacred discourse, articulating a religious ideology that takes the meaning out of context and politicizes it. That is why we argue that the Jihadist entrepreneur disappears in the process of narrative production and that only the sacred codes are left. A scholar can be easily dragged into this intellectual slippery slope by maintaining that Salafi jihadists are carriers of a religious ideology. An interpretation of text from the Quran can be politicized and does not necessarily represent a genuine and pre-existing reality of the conditions and the circumstances through which that particular text is revealed. In this instance, the politicization of a whole discourse is what makes the divide between 'with us or against us' and loyalty and disavowal *Wala'a wal Bar'a* (WB). It is not because the narrative is politicized that we have us and against them, it's because the narrative itself is polarizing. It is a choice made the Salafist jihadists.

Roland Barthes argues that narrative texts are no longer "carriers of values" (1974). It is this particular relation that resembles: the text and the reader that matters. In particular, the reader disappears and only the codes are dealt with (1974: 19-20). In our example, the loyalty and disavowal principle (WB) becomes a container of codes that refers directly or indirectly to religious and social norms and values taken from Quranic text and weaves them into a narrative.

As a result, these currents are consciously aware of the efficiency of their beliefs and system of perceiving the truth. But their project is considered to be an embodiment of what Islam tells. While in reality it is only readings and interpretations and expressions of how to understand and read the religious jurisprudence.

The scholarship in the field of radicalization tends to over-explain root causes. Instead of asking what the individual root causes are we ask what micro-linkages can we find between the rise of “jihad” and anti-Western hegemony in the region. The narrative surrounding the “War on Terror” is that it was launched as an assault against, and in response to, jihad. Was it, perhaps, the other way around? That is, could the rise of “jihad” be attributed to a response to the ‘War on Terror’ narratives? The perpetrators of jihad see themselves as reacting to Western narratives and policies. In other words, how has the ‘War on Terror’ brought about a rise in so-called ‘Jihadist’ movements in various manifestations?

This is not to suggest there was no jihad before the ‘War on Terror’, but that launching the War on Terror has given significant legitimacy to the narratives surrounding jihad. The War on Terror has given rise to a counter-narrative, one that is able to use it as an example of encroaching Christian imperialism. This counter-narrative then employs a religious call to arms not for the sake of, or as a result of the religion, but for the social mobilization and sentiment of the mass. The counter-narrative uses the power of a moral and ethical pressure that only a religious invocation could generate. It is a counter-narrative because it *relies* upon the narrative of the “War on Terror” to legitimize itself and to make its narrative more robust. This counter-narrative of jihad as a response to the “War on Terror” has fueled the rise of many militia movements and the emergence of what we call “jihadists entrepreneurs.” It is not *jihad* that has taken place. Nor is this the Global South theorizing back. This is the Middle East *politicking* back to the rhetoric of ‘War on Terror,’

which has modified the use and meaning of political violence in Morocco. Simply put, it is the global, regional and local contexts that created the seeds of terrorist acts.

Are there specific empirical cases we can study to observe direct causal linkages between these two narratives? *Salafi Jihadists* in Morocco might prove to be one such case, since the jihadist movement was not observed in the region until after the War on Terror was launched. This observation provides us only with a correlation; but there are further links, which suggest cause.

As we argued earlier, researchers of Moroccan Salafi jihadism must decipher the two main narratives through which radicalization and disengagement are connected, namely, a dominant *inclusive* narrative associated with the royal Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (*mou'assassat imarat al mou'minine*) and an *exclusive* narrative centered on “loyalty and disavowal.” Further, We strive to draw attention to the relationship between both narratives. It is apt here to highlight how the public and popular perception of terrorism has changed over time. Under Maximilien Robespierre, a key figure in the French Revolution and France’s “Reign of Terror” terrorism was associated with revolutionary spirit. In 1793, Robespierre stated that “all the virtuous aspects of the revolution are impotent without terror to enforce them (Vardalos 2009).” The Bolshevik revolutionaries, in and after 1917, also proudly proclaimed the use of “state terror” to vanquish their enemies. The same was true of actors involved in post-war national liberation movements. Che Guevara in his message to the Tri-Continental Summit in 1967 said: “We must carry the war into every corner the enemy happens to carry it: to his home, to his centres of entertainment; a total war. It is necessary to prevent him from having a moment of peace, a quiet moment outside his barracks or even inside; we must attack him wherever he may be.” (West and Raman 2013).

Three decades later Osama bin Laden warned the US in his declaration of war letter in 1996: “The only reason we have not attacked you yet is not because of your security precautions. It is simply because we are not quite through with the preparations. The minute the preparations are through, you will feel the attacks in your own homes.” If we reverse Che and Bin Laden’s warnings, we could not differentiate who said what. While the narrative is the same, the ideology is not. Nonetheless, narrative plays a key role in violent radicalization.

However, the line of the literature that focuses on the religious ideology, as a main cause of radicalization does not paint a full picture. When interviewing jihadists, we noted that their behaviors and way of thinking had little to do with the “Islamic religious ideology.’ What we noticed instead was the creation of a narrative to justify violent acts.

Chapter 5. Clustering and Mapping the Meanings of Engagement (Violent Radicalization)

The Path of Salafi Jihadi Conformation

In our field work, we found that while mapping each Salafi Jihadist's own perception, there is no one trajectory per se for each individual questioned during our research. They are individuals who belonged to the Salafi Jihadi thought and most of them are without degrees. They have sometimes gone through petty crime and massively experienced precarious employment before engaging. Others were with an important cultural capital, having continued higher education, who agreed to grant us interviews when they were aware of the academic purpose of our work.

The breathlessness of a utopia of belonging to the surviving and victorious group *alfirqa al Najiya* and *atta'ifa al mansura* and that the ultimate punishment for not adhering to the practice of jihad consequently one becomes an apostate or *murtadd* is excommunication *takfir* (near enemy) has given the way to the project of the birth of Salafi Jihadism. Jihad in this sense takes place in the framework of broader jihad strategies based on an ideology of *al Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB) that encourages unity of the community and favors the reproduction and accumulation of symbolic capital (the victorious group/ social status). To study this "utopian" project is to elucidate an important part of mapping and clustering disengaged Salafi Jihadists' own perception making. This brief assemblage of trajectories corroborates the trends observed by each individual. The desire to acquire a status of inclusion within the "victorious group" and to have a theological training, inspired by Salafism, constitutes the main motivations of the candidates to join the world of Salafism. This departure to "the surviving group" is also a way of assuming a certain way of

life whose ritual requirements have become incompatible with their families, neighborhood, and society.

Jihad according to Salafi Jihadists is not understood in the framework of “pure jihad” that is striving and purifying oneself from sins. It goes beyond that. Being a member of the surviving and victorious group *alfirqa al Najiya* and *atta’ifa al mansura* and that the ultimate punishment for not adhering to the practice of jihad consequently one becomes an apostate or *murtadd* is excommunication *takfir* (near enemy). Jihad in this sense takes place in the framework of broader jihad strategies based on an ideology of *al Wala’a wal Bara’a* (WB) that encourages loyalty and unity of the Salafi community. Departing to a world they perceive as better than the one they left.

We found that while interacting and observing our interviewees about their motives for engaging and adopting violent radicalization, which believes in the inevitability of violent action as a mean of fulfilling the promises of the ancestors, the Salaf is often with an honest answer: “I really don’t know how it started, but this is my story from the beginning.” The following is the cluster of 41 interviewees each one ascribing different meanings of radicalization. These themes include: *Boutique Jihadism*, *Inclusion in the Exclusion*, *the Far Enemy*, and *the Exile (I see only dark, and Al Jazeera)*

Big Themes of Radicalization and Involvement:

Core Narratives

Boutique Jihadism

At the simplest level, boutique is therefore a technical metaphor for a cognitive process: the shopping through, thoughts, discourses and ideas. The use of this metaphor transcends its concrete use applied to the physical action or the activity of purchasing goods from shops, to

become the cognitive activity in search for suitable ideational offers. When considered as a cognitive activity, the first thing that can be said about *boutique* jihadism is that it is about selecting and choosing thoughts, ideologies and ideas. The importance of such metaphor is that it sheds light on a crucial moment within which individual finds what feeds his or her ambitions, desires, intent, history etc. Put is simply, it tells early radicalization. The following are summarized versions of the early search for jihad.

Mr. F, Rabat, 2016

Mr. F described his trip activity through choosing among the Islamist currents, as a search for an explanation that can be mild, moderate or extreme. He was able to come up with this simplistic explanation as a result of our long conversations and observations.

You know sometimes, you do not find answers here or there. You keep searching. You hide your intentions. But something inside is asking for more. It does not feel satisfaction. This urges you to chase something feeding your appetite, feeding your degree and threshold of resisting the pressure (Interview Mr. F 2016)

Mr. H3, Marrakech, 2016

Behind the famous square of Marrakech in the south of Morocco, I met Mr. H 3,¹¹ an orange juice street vendor on Jemaa el-Fna. In our pre-field research, we observed Mr. H 3 from afar, seeing a man who rarely smiled and did not make eye contact with his customers. The vibes and rhythm of the square did not mean anything to him. The smell of its spicy foods and the storytellers and snake charmers did not shake his instincts. He was reluctant to speak with me, even after I showed him a selfie, I had taken with Sheikh Fizazi in Tangier. I had to wait until 10 p.m. to help him push his trolley. Along the way, we began to talk.

For me it all started with my encounter with an old friend who was doing charitable work in an organization especially during Ramadan and asked me to help feeding those fasting. Then I helped in few occasions and realized that this is not what I should do. I

¹¹ Some initials, and alphabets are with numbers for the similarity of names in various cities.

begun searching for some answers. Finally, I met with someone who used to live in another neighborhood, a discreet man who slowly opened the door for me to embrace Salafi Jihadism (Interview Mr. H3 2016)

Mr. M4, Casablanca 2016

Mr. M 4 had a visible mark on his forehead as a result of frequent prayers. He remembered his earlier days of delinquency, “I used to roll a joint in just a few seconds, I used to be the fastest and the heaviest smoker of good hashish.” His shift towards Salafism began in Marrakech, which was known for its conservative Salafi figures like Sheikh Maghraoui. This line of Salafism, however, did not satisfy Mr. M 4’s search. He met with someone who used to be called among closed circles as Rabbani in reference to Burhanuddin Rabbani, the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (1992-1996) and the founder of Taliban.

This guy Rabbani took the name so seriously, he became so arrogant, he told me that he is from the victorious group. This notion of victorious group magnetized me. Whenever and wherever he saw me he used to ask, “Are you thinking?” and continue his walk. I became like a slave just waiting for his signals. Then I found myself with the ‘victorious group’ (Interview Mr. M4 2016)

Mr. T, Oujda, 2016

It was not a direct recruitment! You know. It is like when someone gives you an injection in the beginning and you keep asking for it. Don’t misunderstand me! I am not talking about addiction. I am talking about the power of ideas. It all started with this very moment that moment of the first injection. Look, a terrorist before carrying an explosive belt he was carrying an explosive thought. The equation is simple: A Sheikh that preaches and a guy with money that finance and buy stuff and a ‘mule’ that detonates (Interview Mr. T 2016)

Mr. T’s description of the “terrorist equation,” from inoculation (or “injection”) to detonation, was in congruence with most of the literature on organized violent groups such as the IRA (Horgan 2005), Red Brigade (Jamieson 2004) and the PKK (Yilmaz 2009). Mr. T. is a university graduate, he liked literary works, and then changed to jurisprudence.

Abu Haf Casablanca, 2015

Ordinary boys under extraordinary powers, that is probably the whole description that could summarize most of our interviewees. Eight is a recurring number in the life of Sheikh Abu Hafs. Who does not to be labeled as Sheikh. At the age of eight, Mohammed Abdelwahab (Abu Hafs) went to Cairo in Egypt with his father to meet Sheikh Abdelhamid Kishk at the Muslim Brotherhood headquarters. The sheikh was one of the most prominent lecturers on Islam and gave Friday sermons critiquing Muslim regimes and leaders. Eight years later, at the age of 16, Abu Hafs went to Peshawar in Afghanistan during the collapse of the Soviets. After the Casablanca attacks in 2003, Abu Hafs was condemned to 30 years in prison, and was released after serving eight. Sheikh Abu Hafs was invited to different research centres in Europe and Jordan. He became known for his expertise in the field of Salafism and Salafi jihadism, in particular. On October 7, 2016, Abu Hafs was a candidate in the Moroccan parliamentary elections.

Before anyone can judge me, he has to see me closely...how an eight years old boy could face such extraordinary exposures to different thoughts and ideologies. I was exposed to numerous ideas. At the end, I found the notion of Jihad so appealing. So, going to Afghanistan and fight against the 'infidels Soviets' was just another chapter for me (Interview Abu Hafs 2016)

Mr. K2, Casablanca, 2016

He was 19 years old at the time of the 9/11 attacks, after which he attended a series of lectures and gatherings with friends. His *shopping* was fast and selective.

It took me one month to change my dress code and my manners and become a Jihadist. I did find what I was always looking for...'This is it' I said to myself. This reminded me of the stories we used to hear of Afghanistan Jihad against the Soviets. After the Casablanca attacks in 2003, I was called by the police and asked about my "suspicious activities (Interview Mr. K 2016)

Mr. A2, Marrakech, 2016

Mr. A2 does not have a vocational or higher educational background. He was approached by one of his friends to join a lecture circle at someone's house. At this meeting, Mr. A2 was exposed to a world he did not think of previously. These lecture circles presented a challenge to Mr. A2. The condensed content of the lectures created confusion regarding the significance of how he used to see things and what was required from him in the present. During the first two weeks of his engagement with these circles, he describes his sentiment as follows:

As if I was in a hurry, I was searching for something to confirm the compressed frustration inside me. I want to grab something, just like this, you know what I mean. In some worse thinking I thought of proving to the group who I am. I have to show them what I can do (Interview Mr. A2 2016)

In the third week of attending lecture circles, Mr. A2 felt that he was being watched by other members of the group:

Yes, I am not a well-educated, but I felt that during those lectures that the older guys were directing their advice to me. As if they are asking me to purify my belief again. They were insinuating that my faith is corrupted. My friend did not want me to ask numerous questions all the time (Interview Mr. A2 2016)

Mr. M1, Marrakech, 2016

His beginnings were in an ordinary family that has nothing to do with extremist groups. He used to pray and fast like everybody. In 2004, the young Mr. A2 who was a laborer, decided all of a sudden to become religiously different, by letting go of his beard and short trouser and began to listen to his religious sermons and embrace the ideas of jihad.

I grew up in a conservative family. My father used to teach us about morals and respects for others. He used to listen to Mohammed Abdelwahab, you know the Egyptian classical singer. I can recall even the title of that song that used to be on and on in the radio "Oh flowers...! who will buy you...!?". After an incident of the funeral of one of our neighbors. I saw the man in the house presenting his condolences. He said to group of people that the funeral in the cemetery was wrong and it has lot of invented misdoings '*Bida'a*' that has nothing to do with our ancestors the Salaf. I followed the man asking for more clarifications and told me to visit him in his house

after the Maghreb prayers. That was the first thing that awakened my commitment to follow the Salafi line of thought. To be among the surviving group was the catalyst point (Interview Mr. M1 2016)

Mr. K1, Marrakech, 2016

His name insinuates immortality. His father was a reader of the historical Islamic leaders' biographies. He gave his son the name K; the immortal. Mr. K1 was an admirer of martial art.

My name in a sense was a burden to me! As I grew up, I felt that there is something for me there, somewhere here or there. I did not know. I was curious. I attended students debates lectures in the university campus. It did not satisfy what is inside me. I was looking for something big. Then I saw some programs in Al Jazeera Chanel where the debates were around the state of ignorance the Muslim society was facing. Then the name of Sheikh Al Maqdessi came to my attention. It was the most easy and clear stuff I have ever read (Interview Mr. K1 2016)

Mr. A4, Rabat, 2016

After getting acquainted with new friends he used to play football with them. He became regularly praying with them in a small mosque.

Meeting my new friends in a soccer field changed my life. Since the idea of jihad inhabited me, I tried many times to prove to my new friends my magnanimity and nobility, but that did not impress anyone. I could not back then give up what I was looking for. I was looking for something that makes too much noise. You what I mean!? I recall that within few weeks I started exaggerating on everything saying this is wrong, this is haram (Interview Mr. A4 2016)

Iman, Rabat, 2017

For me it was a bigger question. The death of small Palestinian kid Mohammed Addurrah made me think of something that is beyond my imagination. I wanted something that could answer my never-ending questions. There were questions about Palestine, about selling alcohol, about what seemed to me back then as an evil society I was living in. Probably Sanaa was not like me. She was always in the back. She is quiet and she is loved by my mother not like me. I had many arguments and frictions with my mother (Interview Iman and Sanaa 2017)

The Inclusion in the Exclusion

Exploiting vulnerability, frustration, anger and rebellion of young people by radical groups through targeting, recruiting and spreading their ideology. This could be summarized by

inclusion in the most exclusive environment. Lost, the young search for nourishment, which make them easy prey to either deviate in delinquency or fall into the clutches of radicalization. There is a thin line between violent radicalization and juvenile delinquency. The group uses an internal propaganda and persuasively convince and remind members and new recruits of the righteousness of their acts while identifying the fraternal sentiments, which bring them together (Cordes, 1987, p. 318-336): Loyalty and disavowal WB plays a key role in the inclusion of its new recruits.

Mr. R, Tangier, 2016

His friends used to call him “Taliban” in reference to Afghanistan. He exchanged his ideas so openly, and recalled:

At the age of 18 years old, someone with a beard came to me and two of my friends and gave us printed pages. I have never read pages of jihad with such simplistic and easy language in my life. Three years later we knew that those printed copies belonged to a book called Millat Ibrahim by Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi. The one thing that attracted me most is loyalty to the group. It was you know like Godfather the movie. It is the code of honor. Once you pass that you become their new brother (Interview Mr. R 2016)

Sanaa, Rabat, 2017

Can you imagine! Twin small sisters with a father who left us like this and a working mother, and a dispersed family! We were a prey to anyone that comes along. I was asking bigger questions than my age. At home I had no one to comfort me and to listen to me. I was in between to be a delinquent or else. You know this else...joining them. Who are them? You probably ask. They are those who showed me the way and embraced who I was....I wrote a letter to an imam asking about the morality of carrying out suicide operations in one of the supermarkets in Rabat (Interview Iman and Sanaa 2017)

Mr. A4, Tangier, 2016

As if you are lost in the jungle, and all of a sudden someone comes from nowhere and save you. Of course, I would not call it now ‘saving’. During that time, I felt the sentiments of brothers in blood that was too strong, when you are welcomed by a smile and warm shaking of hands. I was totally involved with the group. Everything we used to do was in a group; prayers in groups, sport in group, working and watching over each other (Interview Mr. A4 2016)

Mr. A3, Rabat, 2016

At first when I was young, I started looking for someone who understands me, because nobody at home did. I was kind of exiled at home. I felt it was a prison. Then suddenly, you find new friends. I did not have any knowledge of religion. So I started reading a lot the books and booklets they used to give me. But did not understand much. I was a man of action. I cannot stay in one place for just an hour... (Interview Mr. A3 2016)

Mr. S, Marrakech, 2016

I used to admire one of the dealers on the old medina. I have seen him how he treated his friends. He was a hero to me. A librarian I used to help asked me to pray with them the Fajr prayer (dawn prayer). He described to me the good feeling of praying at that time. Then there I found warm people tapping on my shoulder, smiling to my face, and did not punish me verbally for my mistakes... This is how it all started (Interview Mr. S 2016)

Mr. M5, Oujda, 2016

Here in the east, we are a bit tough in terms of showing our feelings of brotherhood and friendship. I used to play billiard every afternoon. Right in the corner, there was a man with his candies and nuts trolley. Every time I pass by, he greets me with respect and smile. I asked him one day, if he needs someone to help him and he can pay me. He immediately accepted, because he knew me for a long time. Then we went to his house where he had dinner for others. That was my first time listening to an easy discussion with deep connotations. The atmosphere was very welcoming, the thing I did not find in the billiard (Interview Mr. M5 2016)

Mr. O, Tangier, 2016

The following excerpt is from Mr. O, who was engaged in the close lecturing circles, they call them courses *dourous* a plural noun for *dars* a small lecture that is based on religious questions and issues.

In a hot summer, and at night I went for a walk with a friend of mine who came from abroad. He introduced me to three of his old friends. They were with their beards, talked so quietly and whenever we spoke of society. They jump in the discussion with completely different mood. I was very attentive to what they were saying. That walk during that night was the beginning of the seduction of the Salalifi world. I immediately became their friend. They opened for me the doors of many things, which I did not have before (Interview Mr. O 2016)

Mr. A7, Oujda, 2016

Developing feelings of belonging and inclusion could be one of the most frequent tropes told by our interviewees. In particular, as the data reveals features of the role played by being and socializing in the streets, narrow alleys, and crowded neighborhoods.

You spend all your life with friends that show you only the wrong way. But one day you see the light through someone you met in the butcher shop and you ask him how his father is. That innocent question turned my life upside down. I entered a world I have never thought of. My previous studies and understanding of life and realities completely gone. He had magic in his words. I found myself embraced in this environment without questioning (Interview Mr. A7 2016)

Mr. D1, Casablanca 2017

Things are not quite clear in the beginning. The way I was experiencing life and events back then was totally different. I used to love music and watching movies in the cinema. My almost daily time was outside. We used to take candies from the grocery shop in the corner. We had fun. After, 9/11 I became anxious to find ways to questions, delicate questions. What is going on. This was beyond my intellect. My close friend took me with him to visit his aunt. There we met with the man who taught us what he called ‘real religion’ (Interview Mr. D1 2016)

“The Mother of All Illness /America the Far Enemy.”

The claim that young people who are attracted to radical groups or belonging to them are brainwashed, impoverished, destitute, unemployed, or marginalized is misleading. This claim never help our understanding and evaluation of why young people are radicalized. When they join radical groups, they find themselves weaving past narratives that regard extermination of the enemy and the establishment of the caliphate as duty. The following stories shed light on how shaping anti- American discourses over injustices in “war on terror,” Al Quds, Palestine and other crisis facilitated radicalization among young people.

Mr. M, Oujda, 2016

In Oujda in the east of Morocco, we interviewed Mr. M. Dressed like most of the Salafis, he had a trimmed beard, and according to him, he acts like the companions of the prophet. Mr. M was a second-year law student at Mohammed 1st University:

In my neighborhood, I used to be a good football and guitar player. It all started as a reaction to the Palestinian uprisings. I felt that it is not fair. I knew that the Marxist perspective did not offer me a satisfying explanation. Even the writings of Qutb did not fulfill my search. In the late nineties, I became confident that al Maqdessi is the one...the true enemy of humanity is America. I watched many debates on Al Jazeera Chanel where you can see clearly that anything happening is because of America. What should I do then?! (Interview with Mr. M 2016).

Mr. M3, Tangier, 2016

Plague is America! You know the poem of Mahmoud Derwish the Palestinian poet? When we used to hear this poem, we were so sure that something is about to happen. In the local market, I met with a street vendor who told me numerous stories of how America is plotting against Muslims, and how Americans themselves are participating in the evil by supporting their leaders. America the enemy was my first window to encountering the world of Salafism (Interview with Mr. M3 2016)

The interviewees provided us with lucid stories and account of involvement and the ways through which they experienced the events at that time. It is small steps and sometimes trivial problems that lead people to where they ended up. These accounts reveal how they were motivated in the first place. Researchers and observers often do not pay attention to these small points.

Mr. H2, Marrakech, 2016

I had nothing to lose! Americans were in Mecca! They tarnished the holy place. We were the generation that witnessed all Gulf wars and America is fabricating wars in the region for a long colonialization. You have to read what Sheikh Al Maqdessi said about the presence of America in the holy place. It was clear! To be a *mujahed* is to fight against America the enemy of mankind. I was not the only one with such voiced ideas. There were many in the public places and cafes and markets. But I did not want to be reckless! I had to go the next level. Follow the lead of Sheikh Al Maqdessi (Interview with Mr. H2 2016)

Mr. I2, Fez, 2016

Fez is situated in the center of Morocco. It is the city of the oldest University in the world built by lady Fatima Al Fihriyya back in the 9th century. The University had various chairs in many categories in science, jurisprudence, literature, mathematics and astronomy. How come a city with such history, and tolerance would have in the coming centuries violent radicals who believe in blood and nothing more (Interview with Abu Hafs 2016).

I was convinced that most of the illness in the Muslim societies is coming from America. By the end of the 90's there was only one subject that is the mother of troubles in the world must feel what others, poor, and oppressed people are going through. We were so preoccupied by any *fatawa* coming from any Sheikh. The hot blood in me made me so eloquent publicly in debates with people in markets, outside mosques. Till the time where I stopped frequenting the same old mosques. I changed my dress. I have seen the Afghans on magazines and how they dress. I became a believer of Salafi Jihadism and ready to act ! (Interview with Mr. I2 2016)

Mr. D5, Fez, 2016

Reaching a point of no return. I said to myself I have to go beyond a supporter of anything against America to a direct action. You know it is not the idea per se that was triggering me. It was the constant news and oral histories that come from Afghanistan and Palestine. There was no turning back. I had to make my life glorious through making the enemy sees me. Jihad was the word. Everything is Jihad! (Interview with Mr. I2 2016).

Mr. M, Casablanca, 2016

Some people tried to convince me to be part of Justice and Benevolence *Al Adl wal Ihssan* group. But it did not feed my desire to be part something big. I used to see these Islamic groups as traitors because of their weakness to declare Jihad and to fight America. The world of Jihad was the moment that changed my life. I changed in my ways of dressing, talking, eating, walking, everything. You know I used to love a girl. She was surprised just within one week that I could not have an eye contact with her. She went crying. You know I was not mean or evil but I was in a different world. (Interview with Mr.M 2016).

Mr. B, Casablanca, 2016.

You are from my generation! Do you remember those stories that used to come France about that Lebanese fighter Ibrahim Abdullah who planted many explosive bombs in French railways! How come!? I was wondering that a Christian could do that against imperialistic forces!! I had many fantasies about a chance to do what he did against

America this time. My friends and I used to call the virus. As a code between us we used to exchange by saying ‘when do we dissect the virus!?’ I felt that me becoming a Salafi who believes in Jihad as a mean to change the world is because of America (Interview with Mr.M 2016).

Mr. D7, Casablanca 2017

One night I went to the University campus, where the students were singing ‘engaged songs’ with the Palestinian cause. I was so deeply involved in the enthusiastic atmosphere of the night. Coming home, I was wondering how I can make something or become someone famous. I imagined myself with a sword cutting heads of American presidents one by one for all what they did to us. I remember when I was 14 years old, one of my teachers asked us to come to his house for revisions. It became clear that his intention was not helping us but to prepare us as sympathizer of one Islamic current. We did not continue visiting him by inventing excuses. Jihad was the key, and this is how I entered (Interview with Mr.M 2016).

Mr. M2, Marrakech, 2016.

Believing or not I used to drink alcohol and frequent women. I was like this for years, always in debts. We had a new neighbor in our area. He was a carpenter, but he was the most knowledgeable person I have ever met. I used to spend long hours standing in his shop while he is working. He knew history. His stories about the life with no value if not exploited in the right actions, but not any right action he meant. The far enemy has friends living with us they are near enemies and must be purged. The standing in his shop became the addiction (Interview with Mr.M2 2016).

Mr. B, Casablanca, 2016

if you don’t understand me by now this means you did not live our golden epoque! I worked as a butcher and did not like the smell! I looked for any other jobs! You know I did not have a degree. Then I stated selling orange juice in a small trolley. I was good with hygiene thanks to my butcher job. Every afternoon I use to rush to be first in locating good positions in markets, during school breaks and so on. I built a good relation with someone who used to sell sausages. I trusted him. We talked always. He was good with politics. I became raged about America and its wrongdoings and injustices. We became close friends. Few weeks later and was dressing like him. You know what comes next? ...the doors of victorious group are open for those who are ready, really ready (Interview with Mr.B 2016).

‘I See Only Dark’

Joining violent radical groups comes as a result of a set of elements that trigger the individual to take a path. There are those with pre-deviant behaviours in their adolescence, their

low self-esteem, constant quarreling and conflict with others. Radical groups play around being lost and isolation factors felt in adolescence, by sowing the seeds of division and dividing society into two camps, in which the victorious camp and the wicked camp living in the state of ignorance. This leads us to the second point, which is the feeling among radical Salafists of superiority and ego of possessing the truth, at the same time demeaning others, the inferiors as a mean to restore self-confidence and self-esteem by strengthening feelings of power for those members belonging to the community.

Mr. Y, Rabat, 2016

I grew up in the heart of Rabat, a middle-class neighborhood and we were fighting every Friday evening after school with other students living in the margins. We were so tough, and violence was in our blood. While going to the mosque I take with me my anger and hate for those who do not follow rituals properly. I started reading small books explaining what is meant to be true back then. I felt I own the truth, and everyone is wrong. More than that I was calling them *kuffar* you know literally *Kuffar*. I did not see any light but darkness (Interview with Mr.B 2016).

Mr. K, Tangier, 2016

Mr. K expressed his feelings as follows:

the first day I wore my white hat, and my long jellaba was quite a day. I felt I am entering into a new family.” I did not see himself as a victim of circumstances, or as being triggered by past events. Nonetheless, being part of the victorious group served as an incubator. For me bearing the title of Salafi made me think of myself as in the right, while others were wrong. The word loyalty, all Wala’a, meant a total submission to the right path, while all Bara’a makes you angry all the time. I see non-Salafis as dark evil (Interview with Mr.B 2016).

When we met Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi in Zarqa, Jordan, he highlighted how his book *Millat Ibrahim* made the concept of all Wala’a wal Bara’a WB easy to grasp. “You do not have to be an academic to read the book,” Al Maqdessi noted. Loyalty and disavowal are key components to the Salafi Jihadist thought. (Interview with Al Maqdessi 2016).

Mr. M3, Tangier, 2016

My only fear was my mother's advice to me that was a heavy load on my shoulders. She used to tell most often that she was scared that I would do anything bad really bad. She said once that she saw on me a volcano of hate and anger! You know I was not a disobedient *maskhot al walideen*. On the contrary I wanted to purify them from darkness and ignorance. That what I have learnt in the private discussions in a one of my friend's house. Within the group, I was always breathing hardly and my heart beating so fast. You know like suspense in the movies. But this was real (Interview with Mr.M3 2016)

Mr. D, Casablanca 2016

It is said that if someone knows lot of stuff. He will suffer. And I knew lot, I read lot and I suffered a lot. Yes I did not finish my university degree but since I was young I was aware of most what was going on around me and my neighborhood. Don't judge me here that I am arrogant, but this is reality. Reading Marx, Lenin, Qutb did not do anything to me. It is the clarity of our Sheikh Al Maqdessi that captured my attention. After that, I became so preoccupied with the question if I am in the victorious group or not. Everything else was only black you know like dark night (Interview with Mr.D1 2016)

Mr. M2, Casablanca, 2016

My experience in joining Salafi group and in then defecting later is the experience of many who have entered this world. My parents fought most of the time as my father was an alcoholic. My relationship with my father was strained, which led me to adopt anti-social behaviors from a young age. In adolescence, my deviant tendencies developed, increasing the gap between my family and me. Then I gradually accumulated feelings of confusion, anger and prejudice. I met some old friends I used to be harsh on them few years ago praying in someone's house, I immediately joined them as a way to vent these feelings. Slowly, my loyalty to them increased and I saw everyone else in darkness (Interview with Mr. B 2016)

Mr. AG2, Oujda, 2016

When I was walking, I saw people dead in front of me. Don't think I was a paranoiac. Take it as it is I used to see people dead. I had anger coming from inside me I could not control. We were a middle-class family. We were so satisfied. But that breathing so tense whenever I see people with no beard or wearing jeans and cutting their hair, I could not explain back then. What is wrong with this society. They don't want to practice Jihad (Interview with Mr.AG2 2016)

Mr. M5, Fez, 2016

To be honest with you. I don't remember how it started. I saw Bin Laden on Al Jazeera twice, and I talked to some friends about it. From there we expanded our discussions till we meet someone who was selling vegetables who explained to us how right this

is. Gradually, we entered into a phase of discipline whether dawn prayers, sports, and work. We were told that work is not important as long as we can satisfy the minimum. I became aware how ignorant I was before. “Now!” I said to myself back then I can serve a cause. You know that Al Jazeera had a great impact on me in terms of seeing everything so blurry and not clear (Interview with Mr. M5 2016)

Mr. F, Casablanca, 2016

I laugh most of the time about my entire 13 years that went with no purpose. I recall how I was naïve when I followed a friend of mine to have dinner in one of his relatives. The dinner turned to be a tiny lecture about morals and state of affairs of society. They were listening to the man with long beard, who was a great debater. He did not smile or having an eye contact with others. In one of these moments his eyes came to my eyes. That look I have never forgotten. I felt that he was telling me “you are the chosen!”. After that I was simply a follower with no brain. I see what they see and hear what they hear. I was living in hell so as my society and family (Interview with Mr. M5 2016)

Mr. A3, Casablanca 2016

In a big city like this one you have to find ways to survive especially if you don’t have a degree like me. You don’t know where the fate is taking you. I confess I was not an angel, I played a lot, had many sexual encounters before, stole some stuff from the markets. Yes, this is me. I was purified when I joined a group who were volunteering to help the poor in our neighborhood. The only problem with that was their dress. Without any hesitation I found myself dressing like them, talking like them. Few weeks later, that volunteer work stopped, and it was a signal that we have to go higher level. That higher level was to condemn the state of darkness of first our families and society (Interview with Mr. A3 2016)

Mr. S2, Tangier, 2016.

I am not going to give you boring details about my life. It was so slow. Others call it ‘normal life’ I called back then life of wrong direction. I was so sure that something would come my way. You are thinking probably now that I was looking for it. But it came to me. Yes I was prepared in a sense! Imagine it came during a wedding party, where one of the guests chatted with me and said ‘men dancing with women! That is evil!’. I said to him: ‘I know them they are brothers and sisters dancing with joy..’ He sarcastically replied no this is *haram* and left the party. The next day he said to me “how was your hell night!? You know when someone talks about hell. This is serious. We became close friends in a dark tunnel (Interview with Mr. S2 2016)

Our overarching research goal was to understand the meanings former engaged (radicalized) Moroccan Salafi Jihadists ascribe to their lived experiences once they disengage and leave the group. Identifying two types of narrative structures: core narratives and vignettes helped us

observe their stories following a temporal ordering of past and present actions (Gee 1991). We found the core narrative structure in most of the four themes highlighted above. Interestingly, we located in their stories descriptive segments that focus on a significant information, which create in-depth insight about past crucial moment. This structure was called vignette (Miles and Huberman 1994; Maanen, 1990). As a result, meanings were captured well, and the picture becomes more complete. For this reason, the fifth theme was the impact of Al Jazeera Arabic Channel representing the vignette. While interviewees were telling their stories from the past and the present (core narrative), a descriptive segment surfaces (vignette) as the following cases in a theme we called simply *Al Jazeera*. We carefully observed their narration of past events, past friends, new friends, past hobbies and all of a sudden, we got diverted by those vignettes.

Vignettes

Al Jazeera

Mr. F, Rabat, 2016

And then one night I watched a program on Al Jazeera, I felt that the guest was talking right because he diagnosed well the reality. The next day, I had to find if that program was recorded on another outlet to show it to my friend (Interview Mr. F 2016).

Mr. T, Oujda, 2016

Since I watched the hard talk on Al Jazeera, it became clear to me that I was right. It was not only me who was thinking that way (Interview Mr. T 2016).

Mr. A2, Marrakech, 2016

The tapes and speeches of Bin laden on Al Jazeera, was the moment that changed everything. I started seeing the man like a prophet you know (Interview Mr. A2 2016).

Mr. A3, Rabat, 2016.

I will never forget the moment when the presenter of that program on Al Jazeera unveiled the harsh truth that we were deviated from the right path. It was something to see that I was not the only one (Interview Mr. A3 2016).

Mr. M3, Tangier, 2016

You know that night, I was glued to the television in the café like everybody else on Al Jazeera. We did not have back then a satellite at home. Too see Bin Laden talking and threatening America!(Interview with Mr. M3 2016).

Mr. Y, Rabat, 2016.

To see a guest with such knowledge talking so emotionally about the way Muslims lost their ways and civilization because of near enemies living with us. Al Jazeera was that ignite that shook my body and mind...” (Interview with Mr.Y 2016).

Mr. I2, Fez, 2016

A friend of mine asked me to watch a program with him in Al Jazeera. I was not a great fun of news and debates. But that man was something, I could not help myself resisting such clarity of ideas (Interview with Mr. I2 2016).

Mr. M2, Casablanca, 2016.

I felt Al Jazeera was the spokesman of oppressed Muslim people. It was an important point in my life (Interview with Mr.M2 2016)

In February 2003, Osama Bin Laden listed Morocco among the future targets as the near enemy, which he characterized as “enslaved by America” and, therefore, ‘most eligible for liberation’. This declaration has been seen as a call for jihad. This religious edict *fatwa* seems to have stimulated attacks on Casablanca three months later on May 16, 2003, in which 12 suicide bombers attacked five Jewish and Western targets killing 45 and injuring hundreds. The bombers were identified being members of the *Salafi Jihadiya* (Pargeter, 2005).

Mary Beth Alter et. Al argued while analyzing the course or the curve of radicalization positing that it consists of three phases; first joining the extremist group, and then engaging in its activities and then defecting (2014, 2017). John Horgan outlined the same three phases in his study of Irish Republican Army IRA (2005) and Jamieson (1990) in her study of Italian Red Brigade. It is impossible to understand disengagement without comprehending how engagement happened in the first place. Next, we will see how these same interviewees from different clustering themes of radicalization were disengaged in another mapping and clustering of disengagement.

How did *Salafiya jihadiya* translate WB in to relating with society and state? Let us briefly revisit what happened on May 16, 2003, to begin answering this question. In the aftermath of 9/11 and subsequent attacks by al-Qaeda and affiliated groups all over the world, there was an increase of individual mobilization and recruitment by jihadist movements. In February 2003, Osama Bin Laden listed Morocco among the future targets within the near enemy, which he characterized as “enslaved by America” and, therefore, “most eligible for liberation” (Pargeter 2005). This declaration was seen as a call for jihad and may have stimulated attacks on Casablanca three months later, in which 12 suicide bombers attacked five Jewish and Western targets, killing forty-five people and injuring hundreds. The bombers were identified as members of the Salafi *jihadiya*, which embrace the al-Qaeda doctrine. They originated from the suburbs of Casablanca. Since then, however, most dismantled cells or imprisoned Salafi leaders were found to be active in urban areas.

The following brief technical description of the attack will serve to aid in grasping the origins, nature, and the profile of the executors. It will cover ideological recruiting, as well as logistic planning, and lastly the details of the actual attack itself.

Technicality of the Attack

In the movie *Casablanca* (1942), Rick Blaine played by Humphrey Bogart told Ilsa Lund (Ingrid Bergman): “I am not good at being noble, but it doesn’t take much to see that the problems of three little people don’t amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world. Someday you’ll understand that.”

It all began in a shanty town on the periphery of Casablanca called *Sidi Moumin*, also known as *Karian Toma*. This neighborhood is known for its difficult terrain, because of its small alleys and narrow roads. The houses are made of plywood and corrugated metal, with plastic covers around their windows. In a grocery shop owned by Abdelrazzaq Al Retaoui meetings of the cell

were happening twice a week. When the judge asked him, prior to his sentencing, about his level of education Abdelrrazaq answered that he did not pass the fifth grade (Kalpakian 2005). Before the attacks, Abdellatif Amrani and Mohamed Mehni conducted meetings which consisted of Quranic memorization and lessons explaining Islamic texts. Yousef Kawthari was responsible for overall training. He divided the group into four units of four people (Attaoui 2003). The ideological training started with attending lectures by the following sheikhs: Mohammed Fizazi Omar Haddouchi, El Miloudi Zakaria, and Abdelkarim Shadli. The attack had jurisprudential blessing of Sheikh Fizazi who was in touch with the Hamburg cell of al Qaeda (Kalpakian 2012). The recruits then moved from ideological training to field training (Hoffman and Reinars 2014). This required recruiting Rashid Jalil, a martial arts instructor, who trained the group at a camp in *Ouad El Malih*, near the shantytown of *Karian Toma*. Next came explosive making. Mohammed Hassoun, an English teacher, translated a downloaded CD from the internet on the subject. The first experiments at making an explosive failed as the content was mixed with a converted gas canister bomb. The “Community Amir” Abdelhaq, also known as *moul sabbat*, a shoe store owner, bought the ingredients for the explosive mixture (Hoffman and Reinars 2014). These explosives were packed in 88 cans and stored carefully. Friday, May 16, 2003, at 9:35 p. m., the group left the shantytown of *Karian Toma* and travelled to the heart of Casablanca. There were four targets: the Jewish Community Center, the Farah Hotel, Casa Espana, and Bouzianto Restaurant. Forty-five people were killed that night.

The Casablanca attack is a case in point of urban violence and illustrates both an attack against the “near enemies” (Moroccan state/society) and far enemies (a nightclub frequented mostly by people of the Jewish faith and Westerners). The event has since contributed to the widespread use of the term Salafi jihadism in Western academia (Migdalovitz 2010) and in the media.

Chapter 6. Clustering and Mapping of the Meanings of Disengagement. The Change of the Salafi Worldview

Big Themes of Disengagement

Understanding the meanings each respondent gives to his or her engaging with the Salafi circle and group and what drove them to pursue and believe in violent radicalization will help us understand how it all started. The systematic association with the idea of violence is one of the keys to understanding violent radicalization today, because violence here is not a means and a tool to an end, rather an end in itself. Importantly, with the meanings each former Salafi Jihadist attribute to his or her disengagement experiences in the everyday life tells us one thing is that dialogue and intellectual confrontation with them rarely work, it can sometimes lead to reinforce one's views and support their positions. Thus, evoking the meanings rather than root causes of radicalization is of great contribution. We will observe now the same 41 interviewees who meanings of their radicalization, but this time giving meanings to their disengagement. The clustering of meanings in the disengagement phase include themes of *resocialization*, *social status*, *redemption* and *rebirth*.

Resocialization

Mr. M4, Casablanca, 2017

Mr. M4 still wears his Salafi uniform, he cut all ties with his former friends, and resumed his friendships with those he left behind:

My dear friend, whom I spent most of my childhood and adolescence with is now owning his business and has a happy family. He used to advise me harshly not to befriend my *new friends*. We used to pray together. True jihad for him was always how to quit smoking, and drinking. He supports his parents. He has kids. Thanks to him I

regained my space in society. I am back socializing with my old friends with my relatives and family (Interview with Mr. M4 2017)

Sanaa, Rabat, 2017

I want to pursue an ordinary and normal life of raising a family and making a home. I am quite different from my sister. All what I want to live with a husband and having kids and be happy. I am not asking for miracles here, just gaining back my lost life, which went in non-sense. Well I am not 60 years old; I am still young, and I am doing well. My mother loves me, everybody respects us in the new neighborhood and this something. I have lot of friends especially the social media (Interview with Sanaa 2017)

Mr. K2 Casablanca, 2017

Do you see me now how things change so fast. I have a family and very good brothers and sisters in law. I have made big steps into living with people I shared with them happy and sad moments. I think it was quite a experience. Was it because of age or immaturity!! You know I have never talked about my feelings and my secret confessions, but you are the only one who heard this mixture of thoughts. You know. It feels good when you finish your work and coming to your neighborhood and people know you from your childhood (Interview with Mr. K2 2017)

Mr. M1, Marrakech, 2016

Coming back to society and smiling again was something. Other neighbors did not notice that right then, because it was gradual. You know. You are not going to believe when I said to my parents that music is not forbidden in religion, and that listening to the Egyptian singer Mohammed Abdelwahab and especially 'Oh Flowers...! Who will buy you...!?' became my favorite. Can you imagine, I became a lover to my city the beautiful Marrakech, the red city, the city of joy (Interview with Mr. M1 2017)

Mr. A4, Oujda, 2017

I missed lot of my time just talking nonsense to people. I realized after all these years how I was preoccupied with stuff that most of my old friends were not. I am praying and fasting like anybody else. I did not change anything and those who were pretending to hold the truth are in the same place. We don't see each other. I become now mature. I have a new life with its commitments. I have to work to satisfy my kids needs like any father (Interview with Mr. A4 2017)

Mr. S, Marrakech, 2016

I still see the dealer I used to admire. I even one day I told him that he was my hero when I was young. He laughed so loud and told me 'no that is a bad choice'. I am having good time with my relatives. We visit each other on several occasions. I found out with age that those people of addiction are the sincerest people better than the ones

who pretend to be pious and angels. Having tea with the grocer and playing with kids in the small alleys. That is life (Interview with Mr. A4 2017)

Mr. M, Oujda, 2017

Now when I see young people playing guitar or doing arts, I don't see them as before. I am working with a private company and I am making descent salary. The boss and his sons like me and trust my work. They even invited me with my family to their house. I felt then the amount of pressure I had before because I was judging people and society wrongly. This the mistake, we were young, and no one could understand us up till now. We were simply young (Interview with Mr. A4 2017)

Mr. D5, Fez, 2017

Time is a good test for everybody. The real people, you see them in tough moments. I say this because I was deceived by some people who used to bombard me with principles of honor and manhood. I am with my only friend from school. We have families with kids and visit each other. My family is very supportive. When the mosque was asking for volunteers to clean it, I took my kids and helped the entire day. I am happy *hamdulillah* (Interview with Mr. D5 2017).

Mr. D1, Casablanca, 2017

When I look back in time, I laugh out loud about tiny stuff that should not happen. I was so adventurer. I was imitating adults. I liked those who talk while shouting and making their points. Now all that stuff has changed. I became quiet and raising my two kids in peace. I know my parameters. I don't put myself in useless debates. I am praying back to the same mosque in my neighborhood. I help my wife at home with cleaning and the usual thing you know. This is me (Interview with Mr. D1 2017).

Mr. D, Casablanca, 2017

My exposure to books and lot of reading helped me to regain back my place within my small and big family, and that counts. I no longer consider myself the only holder of the truth on the contrary, I found out that I need to know more in this life and that is to love people and don't judge them. It is Allah's job to judge and not me and nobody else. I help people in need and advice young kids to study well and select their acquaintances. because this is the key to deviation. No! I don't see myself as a stranger. I live like others (Interview with Mr. D1 2017).

The theme of resocialization bases its foundation on developing trust as it is central to those disengaged. The interviewees developed better coping skills and were able to have good relationships with people in their surroundings. They are having conversations and communicate effectively about everything. It took us several months and trips to finally gain their trust.

Social Status

Mr. H3, Marrakech, 2017

In Marrakech, Mr. H3 said that he is respected and became aware what does that entail in the small alleys and popular markets. It entails proving to others as much as he can the true meaning of living with the community again:

After years, I become knowledgeable in jurisprudential affairs. I gained the knowledge of Allah that made me protect myself from deviation. You have seen me how I am treated in the market with respect. How do I know that? Well, I can see that in people's eyes, both clients and brothers in that place. In some past incidents that happened to me here in the markets because of either supplier of goods or clients, it is my friends in the market that interfere and help things out (Interview Mr. H3 2017).

Abu Hafs, Casablanca, 2016

Abu Hafs was invited to different research centres in Europe and Jordan. He became known for his expertise in the field of Salafism and Salafi jihadism, in particular. On October 2016, He was a candidate in the Moroccan parliamentary elections. He is becoming a media figure over subjects that treat issues of radicalization, and religious affairs.

I had so many frictions with the Sheikhs about how I deconstructed the Salafi ideology, how I became well aware of its weaknesses. I spent 8 years in prison. I used that time for reading critique books and literature. I feel there is a kind of competition between us the so-called leaders of the Moroccan Salafi Jihadism. I travel as a guest speaker in research centers in Europe and Jordan. I gained some kind of fame regarding my 'attacks' on the other Salafi figures (Interview Abu Hafs 2016).

Mr. A4, Tangier, 2017

I am no longer lost as before. I took distance from previous friends. I have my small family. People see me as someone they can do business with me sometimes even when I do not have a capital. In my neighborhood they invite me and my family to their occasions. I feel that my experience taught me one thing that I was deeply involved in wasting my time and my parents time who suffered a lot because of my previous commitment. I did not feel so much important as now when I left behind me heavy loads of conflicting ideas and thoughts (Interview Mr. A4 2017).

Mr. M5, Oujda, 2017

I told you before about the East and Oujda in particular. We are bit dry in terms of having communications with others. Probably this how others in various part of Morocco see us. The funny story is just some few weeks ago an old friend while we were walking by a billiard place, he suggested if we can play a game like the old days. I immediately accepted. He thought I was joking. With this dress, we played and laughed three games. That was something! I am very demanded in my work. Sometimes I decline on many good offers. But look, these people still wait for their turn, and call me again can you see that (Interview Mr. M5 2017).

Mr. A2, Marrakech, 2017

Mr. A2, a sports shoe vendor. He also has a presumed reputation despite he is a street vendor. We observed his conversion from the religious field to the economic field, where he accumulated trust from new suppliers and customers. His friends in the market call him the “scissor” to connote his sharp business dealing skills.

As you can see, I am a salesman. The business of sports shoes is slow these days. Me and two other brothers are planning to rent a big store where we can expand. You can see here everyone is getting up early to guarantee his place, his territory in the market. In the beginning people make it harder for me to start from a small business. You see now I am well of *hamdulillah*. There are some people who were tough here, but they all become good to me. They trust me a lot with millions *hamdulillah* (Interview Mr. A2 2017).

Mr. A7, Oujda, 2017

The only light I see now is not letting down people, my family and my old friend again. My clients are asking for my services. They trust me because for them I don't cheat in my work. I perform well. I don't pretend or invent stories. This helped me to gain back my self-confidence and the feeling that I exist, and I contribute to something. I see that on how they come to my house with their cars waiting for me outside to do reparations in their houses (Interview Mr. A7 2017).

Mr. I2, Fez, 2017

You still see me with my Salafi dress. You call it the Afghan dress. This has nothing to do with my reputation here in the old medina. I entered in this business recently. It is a hard business as it deals with handling olives and oil with care. Walking and selling my products is of great fun, as I become so popular. I have regular clients. They don't even try or test my product. They buy and pay right on time. The experience I had before in a way polished my skills and I am aware now how to overcome that past. Having this reputation in my business is my great capital (Interview Mr. A7 2017).

Mr. M3, Tangier, 2017

I think working hard for your family and kids in the true Jihad. Don't get me wrong. The only one who will punish me and blame me is *Allah* no other else. I wake up early morning, I start my work so independently, the shops like the work I do with them. They pay me on time. One of the shop owner once told me 'how come I pay you on time while I do pay others on time...!!' That is what I am talking about. It is not mainly about trust. It is something else (Interview Mr. M3 2017).

Mr. M, Casablanca, 2017

You remember when I told you about that girl, I used to love that I did not have eye contact with before. Well I did not marry her, but we talk now with an eye contact, and we ask each other about the kids and life. I am so happy to see myself with such respect in my neighborhood and in my workplace. My kids are going to school one of them wants to be a doctor, the one she wants to be a teacher. Now I live with all of this (Interview Mr. M3 2017).

Mr. Y, Rabat, 2017

I can see even if I was brought up in a middle-class family, I don't feel this joy now because of that but because I built a good reputation of coming back to society and being respected only for that. That is great. I told you before I used to see people as *Kuffar*, I don't have this feeling now. I regret it. I should not lose what I have acquired now; the respect and the look of belonging. That is something I missed in my entire life. Was it adolescence! Was it rage over nothing? I don't know. This is gone (Interview Mr. Y 2017).

Mr. D7, Casablanca, 2017

I don't see the dark now. I see hope. I see that the only judge of this is Allah and not me or others. Who sows hatred reaps destruction! I want to raise my kids to love people. I will never waste what I have accumulated now in my work place and even inside my family. Doing business even it is small in this huge city is not easy. It requires sharpness and most importantly a good reputation, and I am living with that. A good reputation is my capital now and I don't want it tarnished (Interview Mr. D1 2017).

Redemption

Many of my interviewees felt that they let down themselves, others suffer from the pain and shocks of the past and start blaming themselves for being wrong. Society and its members give those individuals opportunities for reintegration into society again, by dealing with those who have been disengaged and considered those retuning back as being born again into a tolerant society

and by avoiding treating them as “terrorists.” Embracing them and enhancing their re-union with society are the tangible and concrete approaches that can be done. In this same vein, community is able more effectively to contain disengaged violent radicals than any other approach. When we observe all these young people, we find them were struggling with problems similar to what many young people around the world face even with differences in labels and descriptions.

Mr. F, Rabat, 2017

Before, I was looking for answers, trying to be an adventurer who is travelling the seas and the oceans. Now this community I used to hate with all its people is welcoming back. I did not see any kind of rejection from society. These are my friends, my people, my neighborhood, and my city. I feel so overwhelmed by the embracing of the society to me. I feel sometimes crying secretly for the wrongdoings and harsh judgement I had on everything that was different from Jihadi groups (Interview Mr. F 2017).

Mr. T, Oujda, 2017

When I gave you the example before about the addiction and injection of Jihadi thought, I meant it because addiction has an end. I think society played a great role in helping me getting out of this world. I am not wearing the ‘Afghan dress, or Salafi’ I am wearing jeans. I missed being me, far from dictations of others. Society is a big incubator of its sons and daughters. I live the moments with joy. I go with my friends to beaches and cities I have never visited (Interview Mr. T 2017).

Mr. R, Tangier, 2017

There is no more *Taliban* as they used to call me. Some still want to joke and call me that name. I take it so lightly. I know someone they call him ‘*shinwi*’ the Chinese’ because he first looks like an Asian and second because he is a good *bricoleur* of everything. Why I am saying this to tell you we are living in a big family that is our small society; the neighborhood, the butcher, the grocer, the shoemaker, and the baker, as if we are one (Interview Mr. R 2017).

Mr. O, Tangier, 2017

It is said that you see good people in hard times. This is what happened to me, where everybody in my neighborhood felt sorry for what I did before. There are those who sympathized with me. When I returned back. Returning back does not mean coming back from prisons or police stations no! Coming back of my soul and intellect that is my good return. I have seen people hugging me and giving me love and affection because as one of them said ‘our son is back to us! (Interview Mr. O 2017).

Mr.H2 , Marrakech, 2017

The present for me is the past of my future. I want this present to be a lean page for my kids after. I fight everyday harder and harder to reconcile with myself. This is the hardest efforts I think in human life; reconciling with oneself. You see a society that is not asking anything from you, but just be good be the one they used to know in the past, who used to help the mothers of S, J, T etc. when they called me for services. That is the great capital I want it back (Interview Mr. H 2017).

Mr. B, Casablanca, 2017

Ideologies are done! It is time for true Jihad. That is love of your people and do your best to be close to them in harsh time. I have to be grateful to the worm welcome I am having everyday a good time with my people. Everybody is helping everybody. Everybody is not the judge of others. My attitudes are changing accordingly. I am building my own house, and do you know when I spoke about it to my friends and neighbor everybody came one day and helped. It was the day of putting cement on the ceiling. Everybody helped with smiles on their faces. They saved few thousands Dirhams (Interview Mr. H 2017).

Mr. K , Tangier, 2017

The most important cultural component is what one of the street vendors in Casa Barata in Tangier termed the “repentant society.” In Mr. K’s case, society and old friends did not reject him once he showed attitudinal change. He started drinking tea with neighbouring traders and making jokes with new friends. He recalls one day, while joking with some of his friends, one of them called him a “murderer.” His other friends did not sit idly by; instead they jumped in and defended him. Mr. K’s change in attitude and behaviors is made easier mainly due to an accepting community (Interview Mr. K 2017).

Mr. AG2, Oujda, 2017

Once the repented is disengaged, his neighbours will be the first to welcome him back. This is what happened to Mr. AG2 who used to sell fish in Rabat, “I could not believe that I am of such importance, till I saw my neighbours warmly greeting me.” Mr. AG2 remembered that there was a time when he was not greeting anyone (Interview Mr. AG2 2017).

Mr.M5, Fez, 2017

Mr. M5 invented his own ways of maneuvering in order to survive. After coming to the realization that the obstacle holding him back in the past was a lack of understanding of himself, Mr. M5 made it a priority to view every day as an opportunity to discover himself, his skills, and his surroundings: “I am not asking for miracles. The policemen and the auxiliary forces respect me. I do not give them a chance to chase me. I respect my parameters (Interview Mr. M5 2017)

Mr. A3 , Rabat, 2017

I said before that I was looking for someone who understands me. I think I found that someone; it is me. The digging towards finding myself is through society that accepted me back with no conditions. Then I sat with myself and started critiquing my past attitudes and my rage over nothing and my constant quarrels with others. Now I see what went wrong. It is a mix of everything. But I assume great responsibility. So happy about my actual situation, and you can tell (Interview Mr. AG2 2017).

Rebirth

While there is a huge focus on why people become radicalized and get in the death trenches, fewer studies have debated life after engagement in violent radicalization. Our interviewees called this a phase rebirth and self-actualization.

Mr. M2, Casablanca, 2017

I am getting back to studies and fulfil my dream of becoming a lawyer. Now that I am with my family, this does not prevent me from pursuing my target. My parents are very supportive and everybody else. The change that I see in me is not particularly on me going back to school, but it is this small thing that people don't see but only me who detects those tiny novelties. For example, watching a movie with my wife is something new. She played a key role in making me like things that seemed not possible before (Interview Mr. M2 2017).

Mr. K1, Marrakech, 2017

Life goes on that is my summary of all this. I take my kids to play football in the new field. I meet parents and lot of people. I realized that I was missing laughing like the old days. Some of the jokes are sometimes so provocative but I don't show any negative attitude towards anyone. This means a lot since I feel people's better now. I can see them more clearly. You know there are ups and downs in life but this will not stop me to be happy. I am confident, the future is going to be good for my kids and for me too (Interview Mr. K1 2017).

Imane. Rabat, 2016

Iman wants her disengagement to lead to a life where she can achieve great heights in the culinary world, she wants a be a chef in a top Moroccan restaurant.

I applied to many jobs now. I have more chance to be accepted in a new facility for seniors. I am so competent. I take care of details. You know this is food, we don't take it easily. It is about precision and high prudence. I have been trained for this. It is a competitive field, but some people promised they will help me. As for the rest, I enjoy

having coffee and a pastry here downtown Rabat. I love ice cream. My favorite dish that I am good at anything to do with fish (Interview Mr. Imane 2016).

Mr. D, Casablanca, 2017

I always wanted to have a pizza with my small family in the that shop. Before, that shop was for me a symbol of imperialism. I don't see that way now, first of all there are lot of people I know who work there, and second, because it is convenient for me financially not like other shops that are expensive. I don't want my kids to feel that they are not getting out like their friends (Interview Mr. D 2017).

Mr. M2, Marrakech, 2017

One day I firmly decided to take my wife to eat ice cream. The thing that I couldn't do it before because it was deemed 'too sensual' you know what I mean... Also, this has to do with having a good wife that stands by me and simplifies life for me. Even in hard times, she is next to me and feels me and suggest easy solutions. That is amazing how I completely was out of touch before (Interview Mr. M2 2017).

Mr. M3, Tangier, 2017

Most importantly now is that I don't let anyone decide for me or tell me how to think and what to do. Everything is clear. I have to pay my rent. I am saving some money with the help of some relatives; I am going to buy an apartment. You know those for social habitat programs. Because rent is a waste of money. I am working six days a week and have one day with my family. We visit our relatives constantly. I like those social gatherings around tea and sweets. (Interview Mr. M3 2017).

Mr. B , Casablanca, 2017

My new job is quite easy; I wake up early and I am done afternoon. After that, I take my trolley to sell some sweets and dates. I love this job, because it gives me exposure with others from different background. I make good money. My house is well furnished. My kids are at school. Last month I bought a desktop for them to do research and sometimes they play game. Their mother takes care of this, as she is good with math and technology (Interview Mr. B 2017).

Mr. S2, Tangier, 2017

I always say to myself how age is very decisive in terms of healing the wounds. It is that feeling of a breath from deep inside trying to find all the answers to my questions. Sometimes we neglect those small details. In fact, they are the crucial points. Caring about my wife and my kids, listening to them and helping people outside with what I can. I have to give back to my community. I have to be productive and time will tell (Interview Mr. S2 2017).

Mr. F , Casablanca, 2017

I told you that I wasted my 13 years in just trying to impress others and be included. All that is gone, the people that I thought were ‘bad’ in fact are the ones who helped me to come back again, and we never I encounter a hard situation. They are the first to come. It hurts me sometimes when I think that way. The good side of this is that I have been promoted in my work and I am just doing well hamdulillah (Interview Mr. F 2017).

We have seen through this clustering how those very meanings affect the everyday lives of Salafi Jihadists. Change in their Salafi worldview for example allows them to live lives that seemed not possible before; the example of the guy who wanted to take his family to Pizza Hut is a good example of meaning affecting change in everyday life), another example is about the guy who wanted to take his wife to eat Ice cream but couldn’t before because it was deemed ‘too sensual’).

We take care to stress the idea that meaning(s) are plural in every sense of the word such that disengagement can mean different things to different people. So, for example, for the twins – Iman and Sana – the meanings ascribed to disengagement is very different than it was for ‘The Scissors’ Mr. M in Tangier. In fact, even for the twins themselves, Iman and Sana each ascribed very different meanings to their disengagement. Sana wants to pursue a traditional/ordinary/normal life of raising a family and making a home whereas Iman wants her disengagement to lead to a life where she can achieve great heights in the culinary world – she wants to be a chef in a top Moroccan restaurant. Each actor has a variety of desires/ambitions animating their disengagement, ambitions which can be only unlocked after disengaging from radical ideologies.

How have ordinary Salafis been constructing images of their day-to-day life practises? Scott (2009) argued in favor of orality: “Such documents, furthermore, are, like all such documents, created in a particular historical context and reflect that context. They are “interested,” historically positioned texts:(166) ”. Telling stories of how a street vendor, construction worker or a butcher who sympathized with and joined *Salafiya jihadiya* in the beginning and then gradually changed

their views, allows us to note the changes that occurred in their everyday lives. The oral telling of these stories does not insist on one perspective but it entails daily routines or as Scott puts it, “The reasons for strategic and opportunistic adaptation of oral traditions are manifold. Once it is fully appreciated that any account of custom, genealogy, or history is a situated, interested account, variation over time is the presumed norm” (Scott 2009, 1). As apparent through the narrative thus far, the purpose of my research I employ the pseudonym Mr. when conversing with the interviewees.

In the alleys of Casa Barata in Tangier, in the narrow avenues of Derb Kabir, Derb Sultan in Casablanca, in the old Medina of Marrakech, in the old market *souk alhad* in Rabat, and in *bab sidi abdelwahab* in Oujda, we met several bearded men clad in traditional loose fitting Pashtuns, or Afghani dress. Most of them are street vendors selling everything from orange juice to sausages, sports shoes, vegetables and fruits, electronic accessories, praying carpets and religious books, while others were construction workers and butchers. Around me, the Islamic chants *anasheed* are heard from afar, calling for purification and unity around the prophet Mohammed and his companions.

Disengagement from violence, either by believing in it or by physically engaging in it, is not an easy decision to make. When role models such as the main figures of Salafi jihadism publicized their self-critiques and announced their corrective line of thinking from inside prisons, regular Salafis on the outside were confused with the new realities.

These feelings of displacement were also seen in the case of the Red Brigade in Italy. When Alison Jamieson (2007) interviewed Italian terrorists in prison, she met with Adriana Faranda, who was a former member of the Red Brigade or *Brigate Rosse*. Part of Jamieson’s findings is the lack of understanding and the complexity of the disengagement process. Adriana Faranda described her

disengagement as follows: “When you remove yourself from society, even from the most ordinary things, ordinary ways of relaxing, you no longer share even the most basic emotions. You become abstracted, removed. In the long run you actually begin to feel different. Why? Because you are different (2007).

We also see a similar theme emerge from an interviewee in Northern Ireland. John Horgan (2005: 75) conducted an interview with a member of the Provisional IRA who held a senior position. He was captured and charged with attempted kidnappings, murders, and arms possession. He was released from prison in 1994 as part of the British Government’s early release initiatives. His involvement and his hierarchical mobility from being a foot soldier in the IRA to holding a senior position was facilitated mainly by an encouraging atmosphere from the leadership, contrary to our case of Salafi jihadism:

I found myself... I think in conscience, anyway, becoming more and more...committed. Well, I suppose really, our understanding of conflict, or our politicization, is something that grows and it continues to grow throughout our lives. And I know it varies of course, but for me anyway, the sight of the B Specials [a paramilitary reserve police force in Northern Ireland] and the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police service of Northern Ireland] beating nationalist people off the street in Derry was a big factor in joining the Republican movement. (Horgan, 2005: 75)

The importance of the main Salafi figures becoming disengaged can be seen through the real impact they had on those Salafis at the initial stages of radicalizing and becoming involved. In a non-hierarchical organism, such as Moroccan Salafi jihadism, disengagement of regular sympathizers is an individual act triggered by the revisionist currents of the main jihadist figures. Repentant societies also play a great role in accommodating feelings of abstraction and alienation that result from this process. “More than 10 years ago, I used to see people like enemies. Now I understand that believing in the WB (loyalty and disavowal) is wrong (Interview Mr. Mohammed 2016).” Mr. Mohammed adds, “I no longer frequent the same mosque and the same friends.”

Labeling Salafis as *radicals* is a problem. At first glance we see Salafis as members of Moroccan society who have tendencies to avoid contact with the West and non-Muslim societies in general. Yet there are members who interact daily with all segments of Moroccan society. They are active in preaching for non-violence and follow the teachings of the companions of the prophet Mohammed. These members are called the traditional or conservative Salafis. The lack of distinction between different Salafi groups is a great challenge to researchers, and to public and security policy makers.

After the Casablanca attacks in May 16, 2003, many Salafi jihadist sheikhs were condemned to 30 years in prison because of “their hate speech, their jurisprudential blessings, and inspiring sermons.” Some of them were released in 2012. Four years later, in 2016, we interviewed them. We asked Sheikh Mohammed Abdelwahab known as Abu Hafs, “Where do you situate yourself in the word of Jihad today?” Abu Hafs replied by emphasizing that his reformation was based on a *jihad solidarity* with other Muslims who are suffering occupation and mistreatment.

A construction worker we met who skillfully apply finish plaster on walls, asked us to join him at his place of work. It is there he told us his story while exuding an emotional creativity. We did not interrupt him, instead we allowed the conversation to flow. He embraced the Salafi jihadist thought because he was a dreamer: “I am no longer praying with the same friends, in the same mosque.” Instead, He summarized his day-to-day routines as taking his family on Sunday to the park or paying a visit to his relatives. These were activities he had not done for a decade and a half. He wishes to attend university and study the arts. At the end of our meeting, he exhaled: “Yes I am divorced from hate speech, I want to breathe the air, and I want to take my kids in a trip around Morocco.” (Interview Mr. O 2017).

Although it may seem as if Mr. O has completely disavowed Salafi ideology, yet when someone is disengaged from a violent group or an organization, it does not necessarily mean that he is de-radicalized. The British Scotland Yard programs initiated de-radicalization as a concept in 2005 after the London Bombings (Speckhard 2011). Since then de-radicalization became a buzzword. In the Moroccan Salafi jihadist experience, we are dealing with a different context. It is an individual experience. Disengaged Salafi Jihadists are leaving behind sets of norms, and feelings of belonging to the group through dissolving strong social ties and values. The process of disengagement is both cognitive and social. My 62 interviewees underwent a shift in their everyday routine and belief system. At first, this was due to the sociopolitical context, in particular the king's initiatives, such as the 2004 Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the restructuring of the religious field. However, the most important cultural shift is what one of the street vendors in Casa Barata in Tangier termed the "repentant society." In Mr. A's case, society and old friends did not reject him once he showed attitudinal change. He started drinking tea with neighbouring traders, and making jokes with new friends. He recalls one day, while joking with some of his friends, one of them called him a "murderer." His other friends did not sit idly by; instead they jumped in and defended him. Mr. A's change in attitude and behaviors is made easier mainly due to an accepting community. Garfinkel (2007) outlined the psychological factors involved in the personal transformation of religious extremists ("change often hinges on relationships with a mentor or friend who support and affirms peaceful behavior"), and those who disengaged are working for peaceful change.

In the theme of redemption and repentant society, we will discuss what Horgan (2008) called the "repentant community." Each individual experience of disengagement has its own contextual workings. What worked for one individual does not automatically insinuate success for someone

else. Repentant societies play a great role in accommodating feelings of abstraction and alienation that emerge from the process of disengagement. The cases of the member of the Red Brigade in Italy and the senior member of the IRA in Northern Ireland presented above show that disengagement can work better when state programs such as de-radicalization are not implemented from above, but rather from below.

The Salafi jihadist has double constraints. The first one is within the current of jihadism: his attachment to the ideology, to the people he used to befriend, to the influence of global jihad in the *mashreq* (Jihadist theorists in Jordan, including Maqdessi and Abou Katada, and other theorists in Egypt and Afghanistan). The second constraint is outside the current, which is the view of society and how one is perceived by other institutions such as security services. Even with these structural barriers, there is always space for the particular individual to manoeuvre and act.

Once the repented is disengaged, his neighbors will be the first to welcome him back. This is what happened to Mr. J who used to sell fish in Rabat, “I could not believe that I am of such importance, till I saw my neighbors warmly greeting me.” Mr. J remembered that there was a time when he was not greeting anyone.

We were in contact with Sheikh Mohammed Fizazi since my last year of a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Toronto in 2012. Upon his release from prison in late 2011, I asked him for his involvement in research on the question of “de-radicalization,” as the word had come into popular use at the time. In the next chapter, we will present the trajectory of Sheikh Fizazi and others in detail, but we will also mention here a few insight from my face to face encounter with him in Tangier. Before returning to Morocco, Sheikh Fizazi used to be the Imam of Al Quds Mosque in Homburg, Germany. Mohammed Atta, one of the masterminds behind 9/11, used to

attend his Friday prayers. Sheikh Fizazi was known for his sermons and speeches, as well as his blessings for the Casablanca attack. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Our stay in Tangier was very constructive, as it allowed us to immerse ourselves in a neighbourhood with a number of Salafī jihadists. We frequented the cafes, markets, alleys, public baths and the mosques. We spent a whole day with Sheikh Fizazi, starting with Friday prayer at Tariq Ibn Ziad mosque in the Casa Barata area, to a Maghreb prayer in a car parking space, to the Acassiya Café on Moulay Ismail Boulevard, then again a lecture and Isha prayer at the Oumayyad mosque, and finally, a late night visit to a mountain where we could see the whole of Tangier city, Morocco's city of lights. Observing Sheikh Fizazi's everyday interactions with people, and how he intervened to solve social issues and disputes between husbands and wives and even bigger problems, such as business affairs between partners, provided us with insight into what his normal was.

Sheikh Fizazi is the Imam of Tariq Ibn Ziad mosque in Casa Barata. The capacity of the mosque can reach to 3000 people on Friday and Ramadan prayers. The sermon of that Friday that I visited was mainly about wisdom, its types, and how one acquires it. Sheikh Fizazi preached that recognizing one's failures and misconducts is the start of wisdom and necessary in order to see reality clearly. Upon finishing the prayer, people gathered next to his car. He carefully gave his time to each person, offering his insight. During all of this, he was constantly cracking jokes. As we were getting ready to leave, a woman pushing her trolley with two kids greeted him and informed him that she is getting money and the groceries every month. While turning on the engine of his Tiguan Volkswagen, that same woman said "What could happen to me if you did not interfere!" Sheikh Fizazi had clearly helped this woman and so many others.

A week later, we returned to Tangier to observe Sheikh Fizazi from afar. We had the chance to meet with the same woman. She described Sheikh Fizazi as the saviour, and added that it is not her alone that believed this. Even at a distance, we saw the Sheikh attend to his usual interactions, remaining for quite a long time after each prayer to listen, comfort, and solve day-to-day problems.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, the meeting with Sana and Iman was not supposed to exceed one hour, but it continued for eight hours and thirty-seven minutes. They began the meeting by asking us what our questions were, to which we replied, “We do not have questions.” It was an opportunity for a careful and in depth observation of how Iman and Sana interacted, with the waiter in the café, the owner of the phone repair shop, walking the alleys and entering the old Medina, then passing by Parliament. Most importantly, we appreciated the spontaneity that tempered the stories Iman and Sana told us, especially the stories of the production companies, from Lebanon and Syria, that contacted them in order to make a documentary, and how happy they felt when they earned \$3000 from a director.

It was a joyful night when we took the money and we bought whatever we wanted. We achieved our desire to have a sumptuous meal of fish that we dreamt of for so long. We see now ourselves as happy as 15 years ago. We underwent training to become a chef and to have independent life. For me to get married and have a family is my aim in this life (Interview Iman and Sanaa 2017).

The observations and the meanings posed above demand attention. They have been posed here not only as descriptive of the process of individual disengagement, or to critique other analyses or contributions, but mainly as an impetus for further ethnographic work. We avoided the pathologizing of jihadists and emphasized the fluid and ongoing nature of the disengagement process. The 62 interviewees represented the dynamics within Salafi jihadism and its vast spectrum. When conversing with former Salafi jihadists, we realized how crucial the content of the ideology was, in particular Loyalty and Disavowal, *Al Walaa wal Bar'a* (WB). We were also able to observe how highly personalized the process of disengagement was. Most of our questions

were based on the *how* of disengagement. This allowed us to see broadly the everyday life and the changes of routines and belief systems that occurred in those disengaged from Salafi jihadism. We argue that the three variables necessary for disengagement were only present in the second phase. Personalized disengagement of Salafi jihadists was not an easy task. It opens the door to dishonor from the Salafi jihadist community and mainly those who were directly implicated in the Casablanca attacks. The importance of major Salafi figures being disengaged is related to the impact they had on their followers through the initial stages of radicalization.

It started with this documentary I watched that called those who carry cocaine into young people's belly and that are caught in the airport. One reporter gave them the name of 'mule'. I said to myself, 'Was I just a mule this period I spent with some of my previous friends? This was after I have seen the story of this female student from Cayenne, Guyana who died after ingesting dozens of 'oval plastic eggs' in a flight to Orly in France, a cocaine dumpling was torn in 21-year-old Martinican girl's belly causing her death by overdose (Interview Mr. T 2016)

The story of Mr. T shows that struggle can happen at the horizontal level too. Mr. T is in a dynamic struggle between him and his former friends over material privileges, and therefore, horizontal hegemonies based on each individual's capital inside society. Mr. T compared himself to a "mule," a term security official use to identify a carrier of illegal items, primarily drugs. In the same way, Mr. T was a carrier of an "illegal" *dogma*. Continuing with this analogy, traffickers often send several mules to increase their chances of their product reaching "safe ground." Mr. T also felt dispensable:

Whoever wears a beard, a shawl, and wears a kashaba and a sport uniform with a black leather jacket over it, believes that he is the prophet and that the conditions of the country will only be repaired by him and his ideology? They disbelieve those who like? They believe that they have the keys to heaven and hell. They think that they alone have the truth and the rest are in darkness. Are you going to ask me why I still keep this clothing? (Interview Mr. T 2016)

We did ask and his immediate response was, "it makes me feel proud." Mr. T's "mule" analogy is central in his discussions, dialogues and arguments with others. His interactions with

“colleagues,” customers, suppliers, and officials often led to the statement, “do you think I am a mule?” We were curious as to why he connected so deeply to that analogy, and discovered it boiled down to tensions he had on the horizontal level, between him and his colleagues. This moment illuminated the weight assigned to horizontal powers. Mr. T’s desire not to be labelled a “mule,” whether a carrier of an explosive device or explosive thought, made him aware of the motivations of those who recruited him in the beginning:

Our strength is that we were able to have face-to-face contact with Salafi Jjhadists from street vendors to influential al-Qaeda theorists. What did the state do to help disengagement is our next chapter that will bring clarity to the question of disengagement and the changes made to the everyday lives of disengaged Salafis.

Chapter 7. Windows of Opportunity and Disengagement

Since the inception of research and studies on radicalization and terrorism the focus was on why people join these organizations (Post, Sprinzak, and Denny 2003; Bloom 2005; Bjorgo 2005). Yet, very few studies have committed to the question of what happens once someone leaves these groups. The exceptions are Jamieson (2007), with the former Italian Red Brigade; Horgan (2005; 2009), with the former Provincial Irish Republican Army (IRA), and Yilmaz (2014) with the former Kurdish Labour Party members in Turkey. It has been highlighted through this thesis that violent radicalization is a dynamic process (Crenshaw 1995) and that in order to understand terrorism there must be a framework that takes into consideration the *action* of the radicals and *reaction* of governments (Ranstorp 2007; McCauley and Moskalenko 2008). We have argued that disengagement of Moroccan Salafi Jihadists has to be understood within its relation to two main narratives: the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF), which is the centre of the *inclusive* narrative and Salafi jihadism's *all Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB), the *exclusive* narrative. At critical junctures, institutions open their windows to opportunities and solutions to the problems of confrontational politics, and then both the problems and solutions come together as a favourable political force (Kingdon 1984). Kingdon postulated that the coupling of problem solutions within a favourable context is more likely when a "policy window" is open. We see disengagement as a response to the opening of a window of opportunity by the ICF. The inclusive characteristic of the ICF facilitates a change in the attitude of the Salafi jihadists. Consequently, jihadists in prison and on the outside follow a new trajectory of action, outside the purview of violence.

What Happened?

Morocco was hit for the first time by a terrorist act in 2003. Forty-five people were killed in three separate bombings, including 12 suicide bombers in Casablanca, who were labelled as being members of *Salafiya jihadiya*. Salafi jihadism emerged for the first time as a concept after the attack and was linked to the expansion of al-Qaeda. The cell members came from a popular neighborhood of Casablanca, which worried citizens of Morocco and government officials and led them to focus on the problem of radicalization. In the words of John Kingdon (1984), a window of opportunity had opened to address the critical juncture created by the coupling of the streams, i.e., the problem of terrorism and radicalization (the problem stream), the proposition of solutions and feasible options such as combating marginalization in fragile neighborhoods (the policy stream), and the political anxiety surrounding al-Qaeda expansion (the politics stream). Actors who push and promote specific solutions are called policy entrepreneurs.

Kingdon (1984: 21) noted that a window of opportunity could be triggered by external and internal events, such as crises, incidents, and actions of political entrepreneurs. The Institution of the Commander of the Faithful has given an institutional scope to both religious and political matters. An institutional ethnography of the ICF is necessary to decipher its capacity to open up its windows for actors in time of crises and peace as well. King Mohammed VI, as a main actor and policy entrepreneur, played a key role in shaping the course of the three streams and linking the problem of terrorism and radicalization and their policy solutions together with political opportunities. As a result, we observe the implementation of three main policy changes: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Instance d'Équité et de Reconciliation, or IER) in late 2003-2004, the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) in 2005, and a comprehensive security approach in 2007.

What Do We Know So Far?

Disengagement might not be as straightforward as the literature suggests for Salafi jihadists, because as they exit their groups and enter the social world, they come in contact with a set of expectations that may run counter to the expectations of their radical ideas and beliefs. They may adopt their internalized social and cultural dispositions (*habitus*) to new mechanisms of society that were once seen as the “enemy.” Interviews have revealed that same like radicalization, disengagement is generally a gradual, though on occasions very rapid.

As they go through disengagement, Salafi jihadists experience to varying degrees a conflict between the three sets of engrained expectations and their corresponding *habitus*. First is the expectation of the family and neighborhood. The second is the expectation of the Salafi jihadist world. For example, after disengagement many former Salafis continue to demonstrate mannerisms and ways of dressing, such as Afghan dress and *siwak*, that expose them as Salafis. Third is the expectation of the social world, which includes how they react and behave in their informal places of work, such as popular markets, and street vending, and how they interact with state institutions.

According to our field research, we see radicalization in the context of Morocco as associated with beliefs, ideas and practices that are far from what is usual and commonplace politically, socially and religiously. These beliefs, ideas and practices are not linked to violent physical behavior. One of the former Salafi jihadists, a college graduate from Oujda city in the East of Morocco, Mr. T, summarized his view on radicalization:

Salafis were always here, if radicalization is associated with physical violence or the threat of violence, it becomes terrorism. Extreme thought to violent patterns of behavior from attacks on freedom, property or lives or the formation of armed organizations used against society and the state is then the real terrorism. Terrorism is, in short, a physical or moral process that contains a kind of oppression of others in

order to achieve a certain goal. This goal always has to be political even though we wrap it into religion or other ideologies (Interview Mr. T 2016).

A terrorist attack is more likely to happen when a stage of thought, belief and theoretical perception moves into a stage of practical and behavioral violence, which expresses itself in physical forms of killings, bombings, and the use of various means of physical violence to achieve a political objective. Behavioural and psychic violence is usually the result of a saturation of prejudice from the past in thoughts, convictions and beliefs. How can the accumulation of such charged beliefs and behaviors be defused before they climax in to an attack? As Mr. T explains, the opening of windows of opportunity diffuses the tension in the context of Morocco:

It is in this intensity; we see the Monarchy's ICF as opening doors of wisdom to include those who one day had extreme thoughts and recruited the youth to bomb properties. The reform of security services was an indicator of a dynamic approach (Interview Mr. T 2006)

The windows opened by the monarchy represented an opportunity for Salafi Jihadists to review their thoughts, and for sheikhs to explore and interrogate sacred texts according to changing realities. That is why context matters.

Context Matters: Interrogating the Texts

One of the earliest commentators on the interpretation of the Quranic texts is the well-known Abu Ja'afar Attabari (838-923). In *The Commentary on the Quran Jami' al-bayan 'a ta'wil 'ay al-Qur'an*, commonly called *Tafsir al-Tabari* (1968) Attabari was able to authenticate the truthfulness of narrations and comments in the Qur'an and included his critical reasoning of each era alongside the context for his interpretations, which he believed were imperative. The dynamic nature of society necessitates the adaptability of textual interpretation in order for the jurisprudence to remain relevant. Context is important to determine the meaning of religious text and to explore its abilities to accommodate new realities (Daniel 1997).

In the same vein Abou Hafs points out that:

It should be noted here that scholars of jurisprudence, ancient and modern, were concerned with the codification of reference rules to deal with the text before the judgments and sentences were extracted. One of the methodological rules that concerned the scholars of the intent and motives of Islamic law (often called the science of *maqasid all shari'a*) was the importance of considering the context to determine the meaning of the text and to explore its capabilities to accommodate new facts. Islamic history has recorded that many jurists changed their interpretations of jurisprudence to accommodate the social, cultural, even psychological contexts surrounding the text. (Interview Abou Hafs 2016)

Abou Hafs was among the interviewees who pushed us to use disengagement instead of other terms: “What was needed from us is not the changing of ideas, not to adopt violence, and here I talk about arms and weapons.” He continued:

You cannot compare a long experience that has had many consequences and psychological in particular, because I grew up in a certain environment and carried certain ideas, I have no hand in, and directed into a certain direction that was not my fault. I started from myself to change my whole intellectual structure in terms of freedom and civil state, criticizing the Islamic heritage, criticizing the state of the caliphate. This means more than changing the position of a specific point. This is a complete review that has drained me for many years, during which I read thousands of books. It is unfair for anyone to confuse my review with review of people who have not read a single book during their imprisonment. (Interview Abou Hafs 2016)

Many researchers and theorists ascribed a certain political agenda to the Moroccan Salafi jihadists, perhaps similar to other countries or experiences from the *mashreq* (Middle East). However, the situation in Morocco is very different as the Salafi movement in Morocco does not have a hierarchy or an organized entity, as it is the case in Egypt with the Annour Party (Darif 2005). Those who belong to Salafi jihadism in Morocco differ often in contradictory ways:

After a long series of intellectual reviews that laid the groundwork for what we were before the arrest, the so-called Salafi jihadism, with its literature, its form and its expansion from the *mashreq* (Middle East and the Gulf countries), I divorced myself from all this. We are now concentrated on characteristics of national dimensions and rely on national symbols. Since I left prison, what led me to move away from other sheikhs is my intellectual readings inside my cell, I became open to the world of ideas and literature. I read the Russian theatre. All this had great impact on my attitudes, visions and perceptions. I tried to build my own experience and interact with many

people and I became involved in a political party and participated as a candidate in the parliamentary election (Interview Abu Hafs 2016).”¹²

Existing studies have examined leaving violent groups based on the notion of de-radicalization, as seen in the cases of Egypt and Algeria (Ashour 2009), as well as the UK (Lindekilde 2015; Coogan 2002; Horgan 2008; Moghaddam 2009), Argentina, India, Peru, and Colombia (Alexander 2002). Omar Ashour, for example, has examined the macro effects of state repression, social interaction, charismatic leadership, and selective inducements on the deradicalization process. According to him, there are three levels of de-radicalization: the behavioural, ideological, and organizational. In a critique of de-radicalization, Lindekilde concludes that it is a form of neoliberal governmentality (2015, 232). De-radicalization programs were meant to control individuals who had a past of violence.

However, these studies, as well as others did not examine the effects on a micro level. The leadership and the grassroots Salafi Jihadists are not a homogenous group, and thus it is very important to examine ingrained expectations. This micro observation can only be successful when we observe the changes in the everyday lives of these individuals. Indeed, in our field research and our ethnographic work, we found that the form of the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) structures the everyday life of the disengaged Salafi Jihadists, which in turn influences their personal sphere of power (Smith 2005). In *Institutional Ethnography*, Dorothy Smith (2005) has argued that this form of ethnography should examine the ways in which the everyday practices of people and their way of talking and producing texts, are embedded in a set of social or “ruling” relations. In order to understand the dynamics of the ICF and the Salafi jihadists’ narrative of WB, an examination of the ordinary daily life of a disengaged jihadist is necessary. Therefore, instead

¹² My Interview with Abou Hafs. Casablanca 2017.

of asking the question of whether the ICF used windows of opportunity as a way to co-opt or contain jihadism, we are asking how did Salafi jihadists take advantage of these windows. Observing the experiences of grassroots Salafi jihadists will tell us how the inclusive ICF narrative was able to surpass the Jihadists' WB. It becomes apparent that through their accumulated experiences and systems of ingrained dispositions, an ongoing generative and adaptive process was formulated: "Generative (if not creative) capacity inscribed in the system of dispositions as an *art*" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 122).

Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF)

"The Commander of the Faithful" is not a new idea in Morocco. The ICF finds the root of its institutional and historical interpretation in antique practices dated back to the first monarchy, the *Al Idrissid to the Alawi Dynasty*, and is a reflection of the delicate and difficult balance struck between modernity, national culture and a religious specificity in the country (Palazzoli 1974). Morocco was able to maintain its independence from the *mashreq*, despite the power of ideological and military influences of the empires that ruled it in the name of Islam, because of its unique and entrenched religious experience. In *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, Levi Provençal (1944) posited that Morocco, through the monarchy, was the only Islamic state that branded itself a nation. It is this interaction between religious and political identity that has enabled Morocco, more than any other factor, to become a nation with its own civilizational features that combine its spiritual components, on the one hand, and openness to the universal human thought on the other (Provençal 1944: 12-45; Sabila 1999). Accordingly, John Waterbury (1970: 214) argued that the principality of the ICF embodies a temporal authority in the deliberative sphere, in which the political is intertwined with the religious dimension, and whose breadth extends beyond the boundaries of the elite.

No Grey Area

The adoption of the title of the Commander of the Faithful by the Moroccan monarchy was to express the political and spiritual autonomy of Morocco from the Mashreq, where the Abbassid, Fatimid, and Ottomans were establishing control by creating dependent relationships. During the Al Moravids, Al Mohads, and Al Saadi dynasties, the sultans title of the Commander of the Faithful gave them religious legitimacy (Al Moravids, the commander of the Muslims in the 12th century, commander of the faithful from Al Mohads 13th century and onwards) (Jabri 1988; Darif 2000). The title of Commander of the Faithful is enshrined in chapter 19 of the constitution of 1962 and repeated in all constitutional amendments (1970, 1972, 1992, 1996). In the newest version, written in July 2011 it is described as follows: “The King is the Commander of the Faithful, the symbol of the unity of the nation, the guarantor of the permanence of the state, and is keen to respect the constitution, and has the maintenance of rights and freedoms of citizens and groups and bodies.”

What is unique to this amendment is the constitutionalization of the change in title from the Commander of the Faithful to the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful ICF (Interview Tawil 2016; Interview Boudinar 2016). The constitutional transformation of the ICF is based on the split of chapter 19 from the previous constitutions into articles 41 and 42, where both the religious and political have been combined to a specific system of functioning.

It is this combination of religious and political powers that allowed the ICF to intervene on the issue of Salafi jihadism in the country. Signals sent from the cells of Salafi prisoners renouncing violence and aspiring towards change is what led institutions such as the ICF to broaden their scope and tools for accommodation. One example of a window of opportunity that opened is the royal amnesty. The royal pardon is one of the judicial tools that serves to contain and include Salafi jihadists. The royal pardon can be seen as an institution in itself as it activates its

mechanisms of amnesty to include detainees serving prison sentences, under the framework of combating terrorism (Interview Tawil 2016).

Royal Pardon as the ICF's Tool for Inclusion

How can we know whether an outcome or a pattern stems from an institution? We first need to reflect in the concept of institution. According to North (1990), "Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction." One of the main functions of institutions is that they provide "structure" to understanding life. They can be formal or informal. They are the frameworks in which human interaction takes place. Institutional arrangements built the tracks that individual trajectories are bound to follow. Life courses are considered not as life histories of persons but as patterned dynamic manifestations of social structure. These patterned dynamics operate in societies and are governed intentionally or unintentionally by institutions (March and Olson 1984).

How can historical institutionalism help us to see the impact of the ICF in shaping the behaviors of Salafi jihadists and inducing them to disengage? Historical institutionalism notes that the examination of a political phenomenon is best comprehended "as a process that unfolds over time" (Hall and Taylor 1996). It also stresses that many of the outcomes, formal rules, policies and patterns are embedded in institutions. Historical institutionalism, as Katznelson (2009) puts it, looks at the beginnings, development, concatenation and causal effects of the modern state as an organization of institutions. We seek to understand how the ICF's context and processes establish situations within which Salafi jihadists' action takes place and through which they profit from the opportunity. We also ask the *when* question, the answer to which explains how particular moments and events in time affect the outcomes for, in our case, the Salafi jihadist.

“An Idea whose Time has Come”: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, IER 2004

The Moroccan Truth and Reconciliation Commission Equity and Reconciliation Commission known for its French abbreviation as IER was the first truth commission in all MEAN countries. Its stated aim was to investigate human rights violations since Morocco's independence in 1956 to 1991 (Bellakziz, 2012). Even if the commission was meant to deal with past human mistreatment but its structure helped in diffusing the states of despair among Salafi Jihadists (Abu Alloz, 2006). The core feature of historical institutionalism is centralized around the notion of path dependence which claims that events that happened in particular moments of time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring later in time (Hall and Taylor 1996). Changes occurred during the critical juncture of the 2003 Casablanca attack. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in late 2003 under the IER, an umbrella organization reporting to the Constitutional Council for Human Rights (CCHR), established in 1990. This was the first commission in the whole of the MENA region and the Islamic world to explore human rights violations in the post-colonial period — in this case, from 1956 to 1999 (Hazan 2006; Linn 2011). After the “Arab Spring,” and the July Constitution of 2011 in Morocco, the CCHR was constitutionalized under the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR). The 2011 constitution departed from the recommendations of the IER.

Civil society played a significant part in this process. Human rights organizations submitted applications and letters to request amnesty for detained Salafi Jihadists. The NCHR then worked with the CCHR to activate the amnesty mechanism for detainees for whom requests were submitted and who expressed their desire to benefit from the amnesty. One of the most important recommendations of the IER was the call for an emphasis on good security governance. In late 2007, when the final reports and recommendations were made available to the public, we observed

a shift in the security services to a comprehensive security approach. This will be elaborated on in detail in chapter 6. Path dependence helps to explain the shift and the windows of opportunity that were opened by both endogenous factors (Casablanca attack, May 16 2003) and also exogenous factors (the European Union granted Advanced Status to Morocco in 2008).

A royal decree (*dahir*) codified the conditions of royal amnesty. According to the judicial code, the Committee on Criminal Affairs and Pardon (CCAP) is the primary body responsible for determining those entitled to benefit from the royal amnesty. Therefore, it is the committee's jurisdiction to visit prisons and examine the history of the prisoners and their actions, using a series of considerations to draw conclusions on the basis of which they offer a list of amnesty to the king.

Actors such as the Salafi Jihadists take advantage of the royal pardon as a way to reduce the cost of being behind bars (Siobhan 2005, 68). The reason for the royal amnesty includes what is spoken and direct, and what is unspeakable and undeclared. The first is reflected in the royal response to pleas for amnesty after the majority of detained Salafi jihadists declared their commitments to the principles of the nation and the rejection of extremism. The second part is the state intention to dissolve the Salafi Jihadists' files through amnesty. This is especially for those Salafi jihadists who exhausted all judicial appeals and have no other means of leaving the walls of prison other than the royal pardon.

The disengaged Moroccan Salafi Jihadists were successful in adjusting to the new conditions and opportunities in their fields of powers (situations). When this is recognized, we do not see disengaged Salafi jihadists in their everyday life as being the "enemies of the state and society" or a "social danger." The twin sisters Iman and Sana, after being released, were treated as victims who were taken advantage of. They did not feel themselves trapped between their urban jihadist past and their new life after the royal pardon:

We can see sympathy from people either in jail or outside. In our popular neighborhood, we are respected. Many did not judge us as evil. We were fortunate because we happen to be caught in all this during the Mohammed VI era. In a different time, we could still be in prison for life (Interview Iman and Sana'a 2017).

Since 2011, the king has issued royal pardons for the release of the sheikhs of Salafi jihadism, including Kettani Hassan, Abou Hafs Rafiki, and Haddouchi Omar, who were arrested after the events of Casablanca as the main instigators of the extremist Salafi ideology. Following their release, there was another initiative to release sheikhs Hassan Hattab and Soumah Abdelrazzak. There are, however, instances of conflict between the sheikhs themselves and between the sheikhs and their friends in prisons who described them as intelligence pawns (Interview Abou Hafs). The intention of the state is to dissolve the Salafi Jihadist rank and file by means of royal pardon for those who exhausted all judicial appeals and have no other means to leave the prison.

We realized how institutional forms of the ICF are structuring the everyday life of Salafi Jihadists (Smith 2005). But the question remained, what was to be done to fight against the structural conditions that lead to the nurturing of radicalization in the suburbs of big cities? The solution came in the form of a new national initiative for human development which was launched on May 18, 2005, under the acronyms of the *Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain* INDH.

National Initiative for Human Development, INDH 2005

The mission statement of the National Initiative for Human Development INDH is to improve the rate of human development through participatory and decentralized approaches involving civil society, local communities, and central authorities. This initiative has become a tangible symbol of an improving social environment. It focused on combating rural poverty and social exclusion in urban areas, eliminating vulnerability and implementing horizontal programs of human development.

I am managing my own project because of the support I had from the INDH. It helped me reduce my social deficit, and I was able to access the basic services in my neighborhood. The thing we did not have before. I do not say that everything is good but I generate income and no one is asking me about when and where and how to control my life and family's future (Interview Mr. D)

Of the Shantytowns, They Came Out With Their Explosive Belts

Fourteen young people, including two brothers, came out of their homes in the shantytowns at night, with no voice but that of poverty and marginalization. They were loaded with extremist ideas (Hemdi 2003). Hatred and fear made them hate the world that had given them nothing but a tin roof that protects against neither heat nor rain, and the narrow lanes of their streets that spewed drugs and crime (El Idrissi 2003: 51). Their explosive belts were to be used against “infidels” and “Christians,” the death of whom would allow them to cross quickly to the other world, where the indescribable bliss of martyrdom awaited them (Farah and Finn 2003). The state knew that the factors of poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion are among the most important to attract young people and generate and spread Jihadists’ ideas (Interview Boudinar 2016)

The tragic events and resulting trauma that shook the city of Casablanca and all the hearts of Moroccans on the night of May 16, 2003, did not result in the adoption of strict and deterrent laws, and reformation of the religious field in order to immunize Moroccans from all kind of ideological indoctrination (El Idrissi 2003:51). Rather, the state endeavoured to uproot young Moroccans from the social and economic conditions that may lead them to fall into the grips of violent radicalization (Interview Boudinar 2016). The date between the Casablanca attacks and the launch of the National Initiative for Human Development signifies the developing state understanding of what causes young people to be caught up in radical Jihadist movements (Hemdi 2003).

In May 2005, after a speech by the King Mohammed VI in which he recognized that Morocco ranked 124 out of 177 countries by the United Nations Human Development Program for 2005, he was committed to launching the INDH with the aim of raising Morocco's Human Development Index ranking and countering terrorism (Mohammed VI 2003). The governor responsible for the coordination of INDH, Nadia El Guermai, pointed out:

The authority in Morocco takes into account ideological and socioeconomic factors in its approach to the phenomenon of extremism; ideological through the launch of the reform of the religious field, the opening of intellectual windows with Salafi Jihadists and socioeconomic through the royal Initiative for Human Development since 2005 (Interview El Guermai 2016).

We have argued in our thesis that violent radicalization has to be understood as an action and reaction dynamic. Unless the root causes of the spread of extremist ideas are addressed in a holistic way, any other security, or judicial treatments will be limited to confronting the phenomenon. Religious radicalism and political currents, which do not have a clear program, feed on the vulnerability and poverty of their subjects. Mr. S, a former Salafi Jihadist declares:

The initiative transformed citizens from waiting for charity from certain people and organizations to people who can produce wealth and live in dignity. I think such initiative has prevented other currents whether religious or political who trade in the suffering of people. I am a true example of how I was used and exploited by some people who tried to convince me that I must be loyal to them and they will help me with my trolley. See now I have my own shop, and a happy family" (Interview Mr. S 2016).

Morocco has been engaged in the fight against radicalization in all its forms through an open and integrated socioeconomic, political, and religious policy that succeeded in its framing to combat extremist models that are incompatible with the resulting cultural and religious reality (Khamlichi 2005, 2009; Khalfi 2011).

Religious Reforms: The Institutionalization of the Religious Field

The control of religious affairs became increasingly important after the state and its citizens realized that leaving the issue to “out of control” actors could lead to unexpected and dangerous consequences, especially with the rise of edicts and statements linked to radicalization (El-Ayadi, Rachik and Tozy 2007; Interview Tozy 2016). In most of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region political systems are caught in an area of religious dislocation, which has become a threat to stability and opened doors to violent legislation (El-Ayadi, Rachik and Tozy 2007; Chebaki 2007 and El Katiri 2012). Consequently, Ahmed Abbadi, the Secretary General of the Mohammadiyah Association of Scholars, called for vigilance against “specialists in planting explosive mines” in the hearts and minds of citizens (Interview Abbadi 2016). He pointed out that Morocco tightened its grip on foreign *fatwas* by stipulating in the constitutions that the ICF is the head of the supreme council of issuing fatwas: “It is the state duty and right to regulate the area related to the teaching of religion and fatwas in order to put a barrier for religious intruders and protect citizens from certain views that do not conform to Morocco’s choices in religion and religiosity.”

Restructuring the Religious Field in 2005

Over the last three decades, Morocco has witnessed several attempts to modernize the religious establishment and to restructure the “religious field,” a concept introduced by Bourdieu (1981) and applied to Morocco through the work of researcher Mohamed Tozy in the early 1980s. These reforms included a comprehensive religious plan launched in 2005 (Hmimnate 2005). Prior to this plan, there were several other attempts to modernize the religious field beginning in 1961, through the establishment of the Ministry of Fatwas and Islamic Affairs and the Supreme Scientific Council and the Regional Councils.

The reform of the religious field comes immediately after the attacks on Casablanca in 2003. These reforms paved the way for the control of the religious field and put an end to all those who were trying to canonize fatwas. But how did the Salafis see these reforms both in and outside of prisons? According to Abu Hafs, these measures accelerated the transformation of the intellectual system of the Salafis who then entered periods of self-criticism and reflection (Interview Abou Hafs 2016).

One of the cornerstones of containing the risks of violent and rigid wave of interpreting religion was made through restructuring the religious field. In this context a rearrangement of the sectors, which supervised religious activities. The restructuring included the following; the creation of the directorate of Mosques, establishing a directorate of traditional education, implementing a structure of the Higher Religious Scientific Council (22 April 2004), the organization the scientific body in charge of issuing Fatwas (April 22, 2004), reorganizing the Association of Moroccan Scholars with the Mohammedan Association of Moroccan Scholars (30 April, 2004) (Abu Allouz,:31, 2006). At the level of media, Radio and TV channel Mohammed VI of Quran was launched. Also Dar Al-Hadith Al-Hassania Foundation to become the Dar Al-Hadith Al-Hassania Institute was created (24 August 2005). Lastly, rehabilitation center and training of imams, and female guides was established in 2006) (Abu Allouz,:33, 2006). Two years later, the Moroccan Scientific Council in Europe was established in November 2008 and three months later the Charter of Scholars' Plan had seen the light with the establishment of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the printing of the Koran in 2010 and creation of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the advancement of the welfare of of religious actors (Abu Allouz,:34, 2006), (Nakagawa, 2015).

The elements of restructuring the religious field in Morocco were through strengthening the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful , a long-established institution that gives Moroccans a historic depth of stability and spiritual security, and deny the militants any religious legitimacy in their political rhetoric wrapped in a religious and sacred language (Nakagawa, 2015).

The King and the Salafi Jihadist

Abdelkarim El Shadhli, a former detainee who was sentenced to 30 years in prison, was released after serving eight years by a royal pardon. Following his release, El Shadhli led an initiative called “Reform and Serving the Nation” on the anniversary of Morocco’s declaration of independence, which confirms that the pardon involved a commitment to the national project and a reverence for the history of the Kingdom of Morocco. Abu Hafs was also among those who received a pardon. In his document “give us equity” Ansifouna, Abu Hafs openly declared his recognition of the state and rejected all means of violence. This royal amnesty included 400 Salafi detainees who were involved in the Casablanca attacks. Mohammed El Fizazi, who was also sentenced to 30 years in prison and released under the pardon, led a prayer in March 2015, at the Tarek Ibn Ziad mosque in Tangier. This prayer was significant because King Mohammed VI, once again showing the commitment of the state to disengagement, attended it.

Sheikh Mohammed Al Maghrawi, leader of “conservative Salafism” and the head of the da’wah to the Quran and Sunnah, returned to Morocco in 2005 after his nearly two-year exile in Saudi Arabia. Al Maghrawi was exiled following the Moroccan judiciary ordered closure of the Quran traditional schools, which belonged to his association. In a media statement, Sheikh Maghrawi did not hesitate to invite members of his association to support the Justice and Development Party (PJD) the actual governing party in Morocco, and explicitly called for a “Yes Vote” on the constitution of July 2011. Samir Boudirnar, the president of the Center of Studies

and Research in Social Sciences and Humanities stated that: “Salafism and Salafists were always here and there. They have never shown danger or threat (Interview Boudinar 2016).”. The actions of the former Salafi members, following their pardons, showed the power of the state and monarchy in reformation.

First Union of Salafis

His long beard falls to the middle of his chest, and his clothes are loose and covered by a long robe for men called *jellabah*. His thoughts have undergone great changes, especially while in prison on charges of “incitement and theorizing of terrorism,” before he was released on a royal pardon (Chebaki 2007 and El Katiri 2012). He is Abdelkarim Shadhli, also known as Abu Oubaida. Shadhli was a known supporter of al-Qaeda, he considered Osama bin Laden as “the reformer of the century” and believed the September 11, 2001, attacks in America were a “legitimate duty.” Shadhli was a member of the Islamic Youth Organization and also contributed to the establishment of the Islamic group *Al Jama’a Al Islamiyyah*. After leaving *Jama’a Al Islamiyyah*, he turned to the *Attawhid wal Islah* movement, the advocacy arm of the PJD (El Katiri 2012).

Shadhli refused to name his changes in thought as “intellectual reviews,” instead considering them, “stops, for rationality and realism.” However, he acknowledges a number of intellectual changes that resulted from his time in prison and were contrary to his initial thoughts back in 2001 when he entered a cell. Inside prison, Shadhli and a group of other Salafis questioned their thoughts and critically interrogated their ideas about diverse subjects such as the monarchy, politics and society. They were determined to withdraw from their former ideas and encouraged each other to participate politically. Shadhli recounts: “We called for the inclusion of young people in political life, in a kind of revision of what we understood wrongly at a previous stage before we entered prison.” Once out of prison, Shadhli founded the National Assembly for Integration and Reform

(NAIR), which works to reintegrate former detainees into society and provide them with jobs. Later, he also joined the Popular Democratic Movement Party (PDM).

In April 2017, Abdelkarim Shadhli announced the establishment of the first Salafist union. In a press release, he confirmed that: “The union will open its doors to the Salafis who have not found a foothold in other unions and will defend their rights to work and to find work as well.”. He explained further:

The move to union work came to correct the image given to the Salafis as being suicide bombers and criminals. This is our first experience as Salafis in Morocco, and we will defend the working class as any union, and we are in the field. We welcome all Salafis from all sectors of the labour force, stressing that the work plan of the union is like any other union. It is the first time that Salafists have entered into work unionism, in the context of a courageous defence of the rights of workers in companies, factories and contractual jobs. (Shadhli 2017)

Salafi Jihadists Rationality: The Cost of Continuing and the Cost of Disengaging

Core members in the Salafi jihadist world may be more likely to feel the need to reassert their status than more peripheral members. Members at the fringe of Salafi jihadism find it easier to drift in and out of the group because of the exclusion they face within the group. They therefore feel less allegiant to the group, and their cost of staying is higher than the core members. Pyrooz et al. (2013) reported a robust relationship between what they have called “embeddedness’ and continuity in the world of gangs). According to them, members weakly embedded within the gangs can easily and faster disengage and desist from gangs than those who are strongly embedded. Our inclusion and exclusion equation fall within the same line as the findings in crime and delinquency studies. The more inclusive and favorable a Salafi jihadist group is, the stronger individual ties become. Peripheral members of the same group disengage faster than the ones at the core, as they feel less included and less important. The same dynamic is observed in criminology (Armitage and Conner 2001; Moffin 1993).

One of the street vendors who used to be a sympathizer said:

You do not need to be an educator or a researcher to understand that there are core members and peripheral members. Also, the only thing that can help you situate yourself with them is simply time. It is time that made me realize the mirage. You know why I gave you this image of a mirage? Because I saw it. Ask me how? Because one day, I have seen one of the core people in the market in a nice car, laughing and being cheerful with people (Interview Mr. H 2016).

Converting to Nonviolence

Employing Kingdon's concept of "windows of opportunity" (1984), we aim to engage in an examination of how state procedural and institutional opportunities have challenged the importance of continuity in Salafi jihadist group membership. Further, we strive to draw attention to the relationship between both state opportunities and disengagement of the Salafi jihadists and its influence, first on institutional arrangements around the inclusion and expansion notion of citizenship, and second to seek a greater understanding of the degree to which such relationships dominate other considerations. In the case of Salafi jihadism, there is a widespread disapproval of the notion of many institutional and political concepts, mainly citizenship and democracy (Al Maqdessi 1984). We also seek to emphasize the extent to which the opening of windows of opportunity can be understood within the context of the state's ability to contain radicalization. Employing both the rational choice theory of Horgan and Bourdieu's habitus frameworks better positions us to interrogate how windows of opportunity challenged the Salafi jihadist *al Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB).

Why have Moroccan Salafi Jihadists embraced "windows of opportunity"? The case of disengagement is an example of how converting to non-violence, facilitated by the institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF), helped Salafi Jihadists to disengage or at least to give signals of revisions. The ICF uses its "soft power" to preserve its historic legacy (path dependency) through its ability to contain and centralize the religious field. The ICF also applies its "hard power" to

thwart attempts of any other actors to infiltrate the religious field and question its religious and political primacy.

It is postulated that separate streams of problems, policies, and politics come together at critical periods (the 2003 Casablanca attack), then solutions result, and both problem and solution are joined to create favorable political forces (Kingdon 1984). To use Kingdon's argument in this context, the coupling of the problem solutions with the favorable environment is "most likely when a 'policy window' is open," either by the compelling nature of the problem or by events in the political realm, for instance a policy discourse or political actors who responded positively to the problem (Truth and Reconciliation Commission IER, National Initiative for Human Development INDH, restructuring the religious field, royal amnesty, and the European advanced status granted to Morocco in 2008).

We recorded our interviews to reflect the particularities of the disengaged Salafi jihadists and their various regional characteristic expressions. We made sure to format their stories, to order them, and to complement them with deep readings, while preserving a language, style and voice that only belongs to them. The intimacy and trust that was created between us allowed us to collect "confessions." We tried to capture the particularities of their lives, to understand and highlight the hinges and tipping moments. We also sought to know the intimacy of the main figures of Salafi jihadism. They were no longer these icons of the clandestine world known to the general public, but became men with complexities and sometimes even contradictions.

The disengaged Salafi jihadists are not cut off from society writ large. They rely on society and state institutions in times of need. This relationship is threatening to those who see the lines of enmity being drawn. Yet, Salafi jihadists fight for existential reasons like any other ordinary citizen. Furthermore, most of their arguments and verbal attacks are among themselves and those

at the very bottom of the hierarchical scale, whom Michael Lipsky named “the street-level bureaucrats” (1980). It is more generally policemen, auxiliary forces, municipality clerks, etc. who have a space for maneuvering with the disengaged Salafi jihadists in the streets and popular markets. This state of affairs leads to the image of impersonal and anonymous rules which are supposed to apply to all, on the one hand, and the existence of human relations imbued with subjectivity, on the other.

In order to go beyond the purely narrative stage in our ethnographic work, we provided explanations and analyses of institutional openings of windows of opportunity through which the personal events of the disengaged individuals unfolded. The examination of the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) helped us see the ways in which Salafi jihadists’ everyday practices, manners of dressing, and talking are embedded in an existing set of social and ruling relations (Smith 1987, 2005). Examining the daily reality of the disengaged Salafi Jihadist requires us to ask how those individuals perceive their own disengagement, and how the security services see them as well. An elaboration on these perceptions is detailed in Chapter 8 and their trajectories are presented in chapter 9.

Chapter 8. Disengagement in the Everyday Life

In Chapter 4 we identified different streams of the Salafi cartography in Morocco and discussed the nature and origins of each kind. We made an important observation about the fluidity of each type, emphasizing that Salafists are not fixed in time and space. Instead, they evolve and take the shape of the context they find themselves in. Despite their notable differences, they appear to be naturally organized into one inclusive unit that follows the guidance of the Quran and Sunna. Chapter 3 also introduced cases of radicalized and disengaged individuals in Morocco. A major part of the literature on deviance and gangs' engagement and disengagement equipped us with the necessary tools to understand how difficult the process of disengaging from a violent organism to the mainstream society is. Chapter 5 and 6 discussed clustering of meanings of engagement (radicalization) and disengagement and chapter 7 dealt with "windows of opportunity" as an opportune moment in time for release from violent radicalization. We discovered the various institutional windows of opportunity that opened and stimulated the Salafi jihadists both in prisons and actively operating outside to take advantage of this moment of recourse. We also introduced the notion of "Jihadist careers," borrowing the concept from Howard Becker's *Outsiders* (1963). It helped us to comprehend the continuation of the ingrained dispositions of jihadist behavior and manners (Bourdieu's *habitus*) in the post-disengagement era. Chapter 6 examined how the disengaged Salafi jihadists perceive themselves and how other services and institutions (mainly security services) perceive them as well. Following this chapter, the singularities of the disengaged trajectories will be addressed.

In order to defuse the complexity of these perceptions, we focus mainly on ordinary Salafi jihadists (street vendors, construction workers, etc.). Nevertheless, the symbolic figures, such as Sheikh Fizazi and Abu Hafs, remain of great importance. We discover what has been changed in

their everyday lives, in terms of routines and belief systems. For a Salafi jihadist who is a street vendor and who has a middle or high school education, to see the main Salafi jihadist figures arguing over the same subject and coming to different conclusions has created confusion and pullbacks. As an example of this, we explore the case of Sheikh Al Maqdessi, a jihadist theorist who withdrew from his ideological positions and negotiated for the release of Jordanian pilot Mu'ad Al Kassasbeh from the Islamic state.

From within Morocco and elsewhere, academics, researchers and journalists have argued that the literature of the famous Egyptian theorist Qutb influenced the ideology of Moroccan Salafi Jihadists (Cooper 1993; Darif 1999; Tozy 1999; Chaarani 2004; Soto 2005). Similarly, others believed that jihadism in other parts of the Muslim world is also the result of Qutb's jihad manifesto (Haddad 1983; Tibi 1998; Shehadeh 2000; Kepel 2002; Chaarani 2004). As mentioned earlier, findings from my fieldwork suggested that it was not Qutb's literature that had influenced Jihadist thought. Rather, it was the Jordanian-Palestinian Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi.

One important aspect of our methodology was triangulation, through which we employed multiple perspectives to establish consistency in our findings. We relied on the interviews of a tripartite of Salafi jihadist figures: the Moroccan Salafi Jihadist main figures, the ordinary Salafi Jihadists, and the primary source of the literature of all *Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB), Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi in Jordan and traced their dynamic effects. We must consider that perception may not correspond to reality. This means that a subject could exaggerate incidents. Yet the observer's task is to interpret what has not been said, to give clarity to the meanings carried by manners of talking, gestures, and intonations. The observer's task then is to translate what others perceive. To strive for a solid analytical and methodological framework is what makes observations well developed over the course of fieldwork. The accuracy of the interpretation is

further solidified by the size of the sample, for example, we collected observations through questioning interviewees in six different cities in Morocco, and in Jordan. This method is defined as an approach in which different approaches to research objectives are crossed in order to increase the validity and quality of the results (Denzin 1978; Creswell 1998; Patton 1999; Patton 2002).

The objective was to scan for the consistency of the findings raised by disengaged Salafi jihadists, whether they were from someone selling sausages in the alleys of Marrakech, a juice seller in the popular market in Tangier, or a plaster worker in Fez. This consistency did not mean seeking consensus, rather we sought to understand how the information they provided complemented the different aspects of the thesis. Furthermore, our quest for the validity and credibility of data prompted us to travel to Jordan.

Everyday Salafi

The everyday life of the Salafi incorporates both routine practices and a belief system. Once those routine practices and belief system, otherwise known as a structured moral code, are repeated and accepted by others, the result could be structural transformations (Giddens 1984). Giddens contended that routine practices are the connecting point between agency and structure. He saw routine in a literal sense as a basic element of day-to-day social activity. Human agents have an inherent capacity to understand what they are doing while they are doing it, which also means that the agent possesses the ability to use and deploy different levels of power and confront with the influences deployed by others in the flow of day-to-day life. This is the logical connection between *agency* and *structure* that Giddens highlighted. The continuity of the routines and belief system, as seen in the 62 interviewees, is reproduced in an influential manner and through an interaction with structures in a dialectical way. In the words of Giddens (1984: 16), “Those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors. This is what I call the dialectic of control

in social systems.” This is the logical connection between *agency* and *power*. Thus disengagement from violence must be reflected in day-to-day interactions. What has been changed in the everyday lives of those Salafi jihadists who once believed in violence? What has been changed in their daily routines: habits, power relations, and norms, and their belief system in terms of thought, doctrines, and ideology? This is among many reasons why we were careful not to use the term “de-radicalization,” a process that is bureaucratically imposed.

Thick description, or provision of cultural context, must be made with prudence and caution. Nonetheless, it will allow us to understand a particular person or informal institution and re-examine our own formulations of *why* disengagement from violence is successfully taking place in Morocco. By learning the variation of Moroccan Salafi jihadist practises, it forces us to examine how our theoretical and empirical approach to this study has been painted with a coloured brush. At the very least, the ethnographic turn can force us to be more reflective of our own claims. At the most, it can allow us to understand that jihad cannot be simply defined, and in order to be understood, we must incorporate the analyses from within the *Salafiya jihadiya*. The ethnographic turn must be made with considerable qualifications and acute nuance. We must be careful not to engage in a voyeuristic program of “inscribing social discourse” (Geertz 1973, 19); we must not simply *write it down*. We must keep in mind that when engaged in social science, we find ourselves surrounded by muddy waters while also realizing that we are not always equipped with the necessary footwear; that perhaps the footwear does not even exist. One must proceed with the realization that one may never be able to *know* Moroccan Salafi jihadists. Whether native or outsider, one may never know all the parts of his own culture, and all of what influences the subject, and all that does not. We are dealing with a complex process that is disengagement from

violence. As complex as radicalization is in the beginning, it is more complex at the end when signs of disengagement appear.

The key when meeting with the interviewees and observing them in their *everyday lives* was not to speak to them but dialogue with them. Through our conversations, we were able to map the dimensions of their rational disengagement into three parts. The first part deals with disillusionment. A number of Salafi jihadists, mainly street vendors, who first fantasized about *jihad* later felt disillusioned about it. The second part exhibits the role of a repentant society in making disengagement possible, i.e. a society that re-embraces its individuals again. Lastly, among the 62 interviewees, seven of them reject violence but still believe in jihad as a means of liberating occupied Muslim countries. They do not believe in revisions. We called these seven, “Jihadist hardliners.”

We must note here that we are not dealing with an armed Islamist movement. As explained in the cartography of Moroccan Salafism in Chapter 3, we are exploring a case of a non-armed Islamist movement that was in its initial phase of ideological building at the time of the Casablanca attacks. With an armed movement, it is clear who the leader is and who the soldiers are. Armed movements are also easier to negotiate with, because of their hierarchy. In the case of Moroccan Salafi jihadists, it is harder to strike up negotiations as there is no hierarchy and no one leader.

In our study, we covered the period between the 2003 Casablanca attacks to the present. In order to understand the perception of security services, this period will be divided into two phases: 2003 to 2007, and 2007 to the present. The first phase was not successful due to the implications of the Terrorism Act, which was enacted 11 days after the bombings, and the ongoing impact of 9/11. The Act increased the applicable penalties for offences committed through terrorist activity, and established special procedures aimed at facilitating the task of the judicial authorities at the

stages of investigation and instruction. The 2001 and 2003 events had a deep influence in shaping the climate of this sensitive period. The second phase is from 2007 to the present. This is where first signs of disengagement emerged, including abandoning of hate speech. Salafi jihadists wrote letters from inside prisons renouncing and rejecting ideas endorsed in the past.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, there is no Salafi jihadist entity that is organized in Morocco. The main Salafi jihadist figures disagree more than they agree between themselves on various subjects. Jihadists that called for arms against their rulers and aimed to destabilize the regime were caught, sentenced heavily and imprisoned. The Moroccan case is not as clear as it seems. It is an obscure case that has intertwined the intellectual, judicial and political currents. If other experiences of Jihadists from different countries in the MENA had clear processes, the Moroccan experience was caught between the Orient (Mashrek) and the West (Maghreb). The only thing that unites Morocco with other MENA jihadist groups is their sympathy with global jihadist currents and their position towards regimes. Besides this, they are divided in their perceptions and processes.

Within the chaos of the jihadist current in Morocco, any new member can climb the ladder of *mashyakha*, the highest ranking in the religious hierarchy, and move from a regular member to a *sheikh*. (It is important to note that both words are borrowed from the Gulf and Middle Eastern states). In order to do this, one must simply be well informed on the creed, especially chapters in the Holy Book that have to do with faith (*iman*), apostasy (*kufir*), and governance (*hakimiya*). The most important step is to memorize passages from the writings of Al Maqdessi, Abou Katada or Sayed Imam. It is only then that one could be labelled a sheikh.

This research involves sitting and meeting with people who were engaged in either acting violently or glorifying and encouraging violence, and therefore, the desire to represent their inside reality is tinged with the tension of being face to face with a former jihadist. Furthermore, this

thesis comes at a time where considerable attention remains on public policy measures concerning radicalization and security.

The concept of disengagement has been a site of contestation, with the questions who have become disengaged, and what kind of disengagement has occurred eliciting several responses. However, it is not the concept of disengagement that is contested, it is the changes that occur in the everyday lives of Salafi Jihadists, mainly the *what* (routines) and *how* (belief system).

The Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) and the Religious Field

A remarkable development immediately after the Casablanca attacks, where many skeptical actors, mainly leftists previously critical of the legitimacy and roles of ICF, became the strongest defenders of the institution. Some left-wing movements are now defending the ICF against the insistence of the Islamic movements (the brotherhood and the Salafis trends), which were raising the slogan of “Islam is the solution” (Elahmadi 2006). They realized that “state control over the religious sphere, and exclusive monopoly of its capital, is less harmful than the private entrepreneurs’ control of the sacred (Islamic groups), because they have at least control over the public in religion, which is usually exploited, the state does not intervene in the private space, unlike religious groups that insist on exercising control over it (Belkeziz 2012).

Meanwhile, Islamic currents defended the ICF against the old ambitions of the leftists’ movements regarding the inevitability of the ‘separation of religion and state’ in Morocco, the establishment of a constitutional monarchy that dominates and does not govern, and the slogan “Islam is the problem” (Al Arwi 2009). This project frightens most religious actors who work outside the official religious institutions (from the brotherhood to Salafis), and stands alone among other factors behind the gradual transition of most of them to work within the framework of official religious institutions.

In the light of development of the “Moroccan Spring,” which coincided with the ‘Arab Spring’ February 2011, some of the actors, which call for the development of the ICF in parallel with the voices Justice and Benevolence JB that sought to improve their existence in the street and to spread their influence outside the borders of the homeland, especially towards Moroccans abroad and in deep Africa. Even within the leftist class, we find more fair readings, defending the ICF today, much better than some of the Islamic scholars of the institution, and some of the Islamic movements that claim to defend the institution. We also find a rich connotation of one of the most prominent figures when he asked, “did the left and the secularists finally discover the benefits of the ICF and the importance of the king performing his religious duties stipulated by the constitution?”

Recognizing at the same time that this institution guarantees to Morocco and to Moroccans some form of nationalization of Islam, which is a collective property that cannot be delegated except on the level of a particular faith that relates to the connection between the believer and God. It provides a form of neutralization of religion in political conflicts; it is an indispensable neutralization in order to build a political space in which politics is practiced in accordance with its civil rules (Bellakziz 2012).

In order to assess the Institution of the Commander of the Faithful, Historical Institutionalism will bring light to its role in the institutionalization of the religious field. The basic premise of the “New Institutionalism” is that formal institutions affect political outcomes and adapt to changing societal conditions (Hall and Taylor 1996; Lecours 2005). This adaptability is one of the main features of the ICF as it includes all segments of the society, even the most opposing religious group, such as Justice and Benevolence (*Adl wal Ihssane*, or JB), which is a tolerated but not officially recognized organization. JB still plays the role of a religious incubator for several people

searching for an Islamist movement to accommodate them. Instead of falling prey to the radical groups, JB embraces them and de-intensifies their radicalization.

As we saw earlier, the title of Commander of the Faithful marked the independence of Morocco from the Orient *Mashreq* (Bouasria 2013). Since the King is seen as the Commander of the Jewish and Christian faiths as well, when the Vichy government asked King Mohammed V, the grandfather of Mohammed VI, for the Moroccan Jews to wear yellow stars, he responded by ordering 20 yellow stars for him and his family. Benjamin Stora (2002) argued that the French administration tried to restructure the social milieu of Morocco during colonization, but they could not. On the other hand, Algerian society was restructured and as a result, the French settled with a Jacobin Republic in Algeria and a legitimist monarchy in Morocco (Stora 2002). In Morocco, the nationalists focused on the symbolic importance of the king, condemning the French for infringing on Morocco's historic autonomy and sovereignty.

The Moroccan monarchy is not a 20th-century creation or part of the Sykes-Pico arrangements to the emergence of new Arab states or the maneuvering of T. E Lawrence, a British intelligence officer serving in the Middle-East during the First World War, coordinated the operations of the Arab rebellion against Turkish rule. It is rather something different and unique, and remarkably old (Mann 2014). It is the oldest currently reigning monarchy. A continuation of six dynasties that have ruled Morocco since the Idrissid dynasty 13 centuries ago (Laroui 1977), where the monarch represents a centre of Islamic political identity (Combs-Schilling 1991). The current Alawi dynasty has been in power since 1666. As such, it is argued why the Salafists failed to take away the monopoly of religious representation.

The Institution of the Commander of the Faithful (ICF) and Loyalty and Disavowal (WB): “History Matters”

Since the Casablanca attacks, the WB has been used by jihadists as a phrase to help frame any phenomenon that incites violence against local governments, local people as the near enemy, and against the West as the far enemy in the name of jihad. On the other side, the anchor of the ICF frames the religious debate on the notion of moderation, thereby defining the religious agenda and channeling the outcomes. Consequently, ICF is dynamic rather than static, which prevents any actors from hijacking the religious field.

We notice from this overview the inclusionary and central religious role that ICF plays. The Salafiya jihadiya in Morocco find it hard to mobilize people as their main ideational framework resides on loyalty and disavowal. The WB does not recognize the notion of citizenship. This is one of the most important findings of my field research. The ICF’s main ideational framework, on the other hand, is based on the notion of inclusion of all segments of Moroccan society, even the most opposing forces through its history.

This cohabitation between the ICF as an institutionalized religious field and individual behaviors is at the heart of historical institutionalism. To better explain this relation, we will invite the work of Pierre Bourdieu’s field theory. We know that Bourdieu’s work was not focused on political institutions, yet his model of the relationship between self and structures presents a coherent and compatible understanding with historical institutionalism. According to Béland (2005), the concept of *field* refers to a highly stratified system of power relations, which are regulated based on rules and laws. That is why the field is a place of a continuous battle for power between actors. Departing from this theoretical frame, the religious field, like any other field, is socially constructed of rules and goals, which in turn influence and shape actor perceptions. Beland suggested that when actors learn and adapt to the rules of the game, they in fact learn how to

behave and how to succeed in any specific field. Consequently, this learning process is the *habitus* (Bourdieu 1993), which acts as the link between behaviors and field structures.

We employed Bourdieu's theory to understand how the ICF with its rules and frames (field) directly impacts the ideas of actors and individuals (*habitus*). ICF is the arena of an enduring religious battle for power with other religious actors. The learning process of this battle is the product of the internalization of the ICF's rules.

Path dependence is used to explain the historical process of the ICF, its central religious monopoly, and why it is hard for other actors to have a place in this centrality. According to path dependence, "history matters" (Pierson 2000). In our context, the institutional procedures of the ICF made at some critical junctures in the past centuries are more important to explain political outcomes than recent events (Harty 2005), such as the creation of the ICF. The monarchy's survival can find its theoretical parameters on Gramsci's and Foucault's notion of how power is constituted. Monarchical powers are reproduced through symbols, signs and rituals that are infiltrated into people's daily lives. The symbolic power (Tozy, 1980) of the king as the central figure of religion was remarkably diffused, even on the peripheries. Rooted in a religious authority, this symbolic power could be routinized by the thin bureaucratic apparatus wielded by the palace and ritualized through the invocation of the name of the ruler on Friday prayers. Geertz posited that even when rebelling against the central government through military confrontation or refusal to pay taxes, areas of the *siba*, or non-state space, would paradoxically still respect the symbolic legitimacy of the state.

The King, the Salafi and the Policeman

The relationship between this tripartite of actors, i.e., the King (ICF), the Salafi (a disengaged Sheikh Fizazi), and the policeman (Abdellatif Al Hammouchi, General Director of National

Security, and the comprehensive security approach), is built on the notion of reconciliation. As we mentioned, the image of King Mohammed VI attending a prayer led by a former Salafi Jihadist, Sheikh Fizazi, in 2014 is regarded as a pivotal moment. Furthermore, Sheikh Fizazi recalls his days in prison when Hammouchi used to visit him personally and opened dialogues with him and others imprisoned Salafis.

The ICF is our independent variable. The ICF impacted agency, from the perspective of how institutions shape the actions of actors. It did this by offering opportunities to the Salafi jihadists in prisons to review their ways of thinking. The image of King Mohammed VI attending Sheikh Fizazi's prayer service is reflective of how institutions, such as the ICF, adapted to circumstances by employing "institutional incentives" (Lecours 2005: 9). An example of this is the 2004 Truth and Reconciliation Commission. King Mohammed VI's speech at the launching of the TRC called it the "good pardon," a statement derived from the Quran. The "windows of opportunity" opened a space for conversation even though the time frame of the TRC does not cover the second security phase. The atmosphere of this institutional design impeded any further repressive legislation, unlike other MENA countries.

Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol (2002) in *Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science* argue that path dependence is the dynamics of self-reinforcing or positive feedback processes in apolitical systems. The outcomes at a critical juncture trigger feedback mechanisms that reinforce the recurrence of a particular pattern into the future. Therefore, events that occur immediately after a juncture are crucial. Historical causation is when dynamics triggered by an event or process at one point in time reproduce themselves. In path dependent processes, the order of events may make a fundamental difference in the outcome (timing and sequence). Path dependent processes can explain political change as well as inertia. For instance, path dependent

processes may operate to institutionalize specific political arrangements that ultimately prove vulnerable to some displacing event or process, emerging at a later stage in political development. We saw this in the incorporation of Islamic movements in political participation in Morocco, for example. The political participation of the Justice and Development Party (JDP), with its Islamic orientation is considered a force of stability in a time of economic, political and social hardships and changes. Islamist populism played a role in channeling the desires for stability and integration (Zemni and Bogaert 2006). Incorporating the JDP was a pragmatic policy in the process of transition. The JDP for its part avoided any confrontation with the regime. This has resulted in an equilibrium that satisfied the demands of the base and the needs of the monarchy's stability. And the JDP found an opportunity to work publically rather than clandestinely.

The reformulation of the religious field in Morocco under the umbrella of the ICF opened opportunities for radicalized Salafi jihadist with long term sentences. The religious field interacted hand in hand with the political field. This intertwining of relations between religion and politics is carefully analyzed by Ryan Rebe (2010). He argues that democracy is a product of existing social institutions. He critiques modernization theory, which insists that in the absence of modernization, religion continues to play an important role in government around the world. Rebe concludes that the regulation of religious competition is no less significant than the regulation of political competition. Social regimes drive political regimes, and religion continues to be the most influential social regime in modern society. The findings from this research support the idea that democracy emerges from societies that develop institutions to protect minority religions and decrease the amount of religious influence over legislation. These institutions arise from religious competition that produces a stalemate where no one religious group is able to dominate the others.

Absence of Legislation of Violence

The absence of legislation of violence by religious figures also is of considerable importance. This means that the centrality and the institutionalization of religion under the king, with the implementation of the Council of Scholars as the only source of edicts *fatwas*, impeded any kind of maneuvering by other Islamic groups and individuals and limited their existential space. For example, in Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, legislation against violence is present because there is no central religious authority that organizes the religious field.

The Moroccan Salafis are extreme in their preaching and conduct, but they were never considered dangerous. Even the rate and the level of violence are not intense in comparison to other cases of violence in the region. As a result, there is no existence of legislation against violence as a means of political expression. The challenge that confronted the movement is that the religious field is historically managed and watched by the monarchy. This is problematic for the Salafī jihadists because they are caught between embracing the WB principle and maneuvering within the Moroccan religious field, which mostly limits them to individual debates. According to Munson (1993: 159), “the Moroccan monarchy is not just the key institution in the Moroccan political system, it is also the key institution in the Moroccan religious system.”

Jordan is another example of a monarchy, in particular the relatively contemporary Hashemites, descendants of the Prophets Mohammed, but it does not hold such religious centrality because of a lack of historical precedent. Jordan is also becoming a hub of global Jihadist literature. With no higher religious authority, the religious field is an arena for a battle of power between several religious currents. That is why Zarqa city, which is one hour and ten minutes from the capital of Amman, is known for its proliferation of jihadist theorists. In Morocco, there is no such organized body of Jihadist literature or prominent theorists who are able to mobilize, legitimize

and legislate violence. A street vendor in Tangier recited passages of Maqdessi's book *Millat Ibrahim* as if he were reciting poetry. As mentioned earlier, tracing this literature led me to the city of Zarqa in Jordan to interview Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi.

Despite the number of Moroccan foreign fighters joining global jihadist movements, the rate of Salafi jihadists becoming disengaged has increased significantly since 2007.

The Security Approach

In the MENA region, the term *dakhiliya*, which means homeland security or Ministry of Interior, has the connotation of a dark and feared institution. What kept the regimes in the region so resilient and robust for a long time is their monopoly over the means of coercion (Bellin 2004).

In Morocco since 2000, the image of the Ministry of Interior, which is at the heart of security, has taken a different direction through the appointment of civil engineers, public servants, and other technocrats to lead the ministry. Prior to this, the Ministry was kept under the iron fist of the monarchy. This shift towards civilians being put in charge of this large and important institution played a role in how other actors perceived it. We sought to find out these actors' perceptions as well as how security services perceived the disengagement of Salafi jihadists.

Our application to interview a lead technocrat at the Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation (BCIJ), a sub-unit of the DGST, and under the direction of Abdellatif Hammouchi, did not take long. The BCIJ has 340 agents divided into two main brigades: the BLCT and the Counter Crime Brigade (BLCC). The headquarters of the BCIJ is in Sale, 10 kilometres from Rabat. We asked the head of the BLCT, "How do you perceive the wave of Salafi jihadists disengaging from violence?" Mr. Habbob Cherkaoui explained that in the beginning every attack necessitated a different way of thinking in terms of strategies and perceptions. Every individual or collective enterprise with the purpose of destabilizing the social order and threatening public safety by means

of intimidation or terror is regarded as a real threat, and therefore needs to be confronted by preemptive measures (Interview Habboub 2016). Signs of disengagement are intercepted, analyzed, assessed, and lastly an action plan is put into place to guarantee the follow through.

The First Phase (2003-2007): Security Based Approach

Prior to the Casablanca attack in 2003, Morocco and in particular, the monarchy, was not overly concerned with the threat that al-Qaeda posed. After the attack, the Salafi leaders, who used to preach via new media, lectures and Friday sermons, were rounded up and jailed. Some observers see this rampage as robust and repressive. The whole of society was mobilized against the attack. The Islamic movement was seen as directly responsible, even moderate organizations such as the Party of Justice and Development (PJD). Avenues for disengagement in this phase were very narrow. *Salafiya jihadiya* came to the surface in both domestic and international media. The atmosphere was poisoned by heavy charges from civil society, which founded associations such as Association of Families of May 16 Victims, led by Souad Khammal, who lost both her husband and son in the bombings, and the Association of May 16 Victims, led by Cherif Zarouki and Mohammed Mahboub, formerly the head waiter at the Spanish Club, one of several attack sites. Also, the Moroccan Organization against the Culture of Hatred and Racism and Réseau Maillage Maroc emerged as a consequence of mobilization condemning terrorism (Interview Hamada 2016; Interview Kanbouri 2016).

This phase shows how difficult and unsuccessful disengagement can be. It was necessary at this critical moment to search for a human approach and to find someone who understood Salafi jihadism. During this period, the security services were also witnessing a restructuring of their day-to-day interventions. At the age of 39, Abdellatif Hammouchi was put in charge of the DGST, the youngest head in the history of the organization. His expertise and professional background

were on Islamic movements and extremism. One of many important challenges Hammouchi faced was tackling three other bombings in Casablanca in 2007. Even though the attackers and a policeman were killed, the recurrence of the attacks following 2003 was a concern. These events prompted Hammouchi to explore solutions outside of the security approach. As a result, he opened dialogues with the Salafis inside prison. Sheikh Fizazi has admitted to being indebted to Hammouchi for his release, “I hope he will continue his fruitful efforts to release the remaining Salafis who have not been involved in blood lust. I owe him for his good testimony in my own personal affairs (Interview Sheikh Fizazi 2016).”

The Second Phase (2007 to the present): Citizen Participatory Approach

The second phase began with a search for a new approach, which we deemed “the Hammouchi approach.” The main parameters were to understand the Salafi Jihadists, assess their motives, and take action. Moreover, one of the major elements of the approach was not to ask the jihadists to abandon their ideologies, but to renounce and reject all forms of violence.

The new approach would have an impact on both the Salafi jihadist main figures, and the grassroots Salafi jihadists, who felt the reverberations of the change from a robust to comprehensive approach. This change resulted in a revision of the Salafi jihadist ideology (Interview Hammada 2016). The second phase also saw the relaxation of prison policies. The Salafis were granted full access to libraries with new media outlets.

The flexibility of the security services has been labelled as self-critical (Interview Kanbouri 2016), revisionist (Interview Abou Hafs 2016), and corrective (Interview Sheikh Fizazi 2016).-The agency of the Salafi actors was key to their ability in declaring their disengagement. They were not coerced to adapt their ideology or brainwashed in any way. In Chapter 2, the cartography of Salafism in Morocco enabled us to see that the *Salafiya jihadiya* started with simple relations, such

as personal contacts through kinships, and as these ties increased, other individual were brought in. Disengagement followed the same pattern.

In other words, the more Salafis were not viewed as a threat to state and society, the less tense relations became. When the al-Qaeda project ceased to present an alternative in the region, the existing Salafi jihadists were absorbed into the Moroccan system. The climate of the second phase furnished the ground for the rational disengagement of Salafis in prisons. All in all, the ICF, combined with a comprehensive security approach and the rationality of Salafi jihadists in prison, helped the disengagement process. However, this process also shone a light on a significant problem, which was that the DGST lacked judicial police status.

The Central Bureau for Judicial Investigation BCIJ and Judicial Police Status

One of the criticisms directed at the DGST is that they were carrying out arrests without judicial police status. To solve this issue, a draft law was introduced, which included the granting of judicial police status in respect to the offences set out in article 108 of the Criminal Code. Parliamentarians supported this amendment and considered that the granting of this status to the staff of the DGST would bring the work of this institution out of the “fog and secrecy to the public (Interview Cherkaoui 2016).” The Minister of Justice, Mohammed Naciri, argued that the granting of this status aimed to subject the DGST to the same measures and authority as all other disciplinary institutions. A DGST task force, which was recognized as a judicial authority and subject to legal supervision, would conduct investigations. It is the duty of those staff members to inform every person, who has been arrested or placed under probation, the grounds for his or her detention and their rights, including the right to remain silent (Interview Cherkaoui 2016). These measures gave birth to the Central Bureau for Judicial Investigation (BCIJ).

Rationality of Salafi Jihadists: Role of the Prison

Contrary to the common idea that prisons play a major role in increasing radicalization, the Salafi jihadists in prisons in Morocco were able to disengage from violence. Kushner and Davis (2004) argued that Western prisons are one of the main radicalizing sites for al-Qaeda). It is also claimed that prisons are the place where terrorists are recruited (Neumann and Rogers 2007). These are the experiences of prisons with extreme security measures. However, more relaxed prisons that also have state-led de-radicalizing program also saw the radicalization of regular prisoners (Cuthbertson 2004: 16).

Freedom from strict security measures and state led de-radicalization programs gives the Salafis space for reflection. “This is not co-optation, or pressures, no one asked us to abandon jihad or embrace another ideology (Interview Abou Hafs 2016)” Abu Hafs summarized his experience as follows: “We were simply heard, and someone was listening to us

We attended a Ph. D. defence dissertation at Mohammed V University in Rabat (Misbah 2016). One of the most important findings of this thesis is the role played by prisons in facilitating the disengagement process. The space of unfiltered interaction and access to books and media furnished the ground for deep reflections (Interview Abou Hafs 2016).

Chapter 9. The Jihadist Career: Trajectories of Former Jihadists

On July 22, 2011, Anders Behring Breivik killed 77 people, mostly youth in Utoya, Norway. Fourteen months before the attacks, he met with some friends at the Palace Grill in central Oslo (Sandberg 2015). He offered a beer to a woman by the name of Marta while talking about his future book, “My book’s going to be big, it is about knights.” When he was asked about the genre of the book, Breivik replied, “It’s a masterpiece” (Borchrevink 2013). He told Marta that he was an admirer of the novel *Ivanhoe*. Moments before the attacks, Breivik emailed a manifesto entitled *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* to thousands of people which was his “masterpiece” interpretation of the anti-Islamic movement in Europe (Sandberg 2015).

In South Carolina, Dylan Roof shot nine Black American parishioners in cold blood at the Emanuel African Methodist Church in Charleston on June 17, 2015 (Selengut 2003). When asked about the shooting, Roof replied that he had no choice but to keep America white and pure of race. His postings, writing and verbal communications with the media, and with surrounding friends and family exhibit who he is and how things escalated.

In the field of criminology and precisely, the life course theories of crime, the focal point is to understand the longitudinal patterning of stability or change in offending over time (Doherty, Laub and Sampson 2009: 187). The trajectories of both Breivik and Roof were drawn from life stories and narrations. Aage Borchgrevink (2013), a journalist, and Sandberg Sveinung (2015), a criminologist, used a repertoire of stories and routines to draw a “map of violence” for Breivik. The cases of Breivik and Roof unveil the usual “diagnosis” observers, bystanders, and media give to someone who committed a terror attack. Friends, acquaintances, and neighbors often discuss how the attacker was “normal” and conducted him or herself well, when asked about someone

they know who acted violently. When the Norwegian police asked Marta about Breivik, she said, “He was a completely ordinary guy. He wasn’t frightening (McPherson 2012).”

They Got Out of Jihad, but Jihad Did Not Get Out of them

Most of the literature on Salafi jihadism is written by academics and researchers who speak Arabic or those whom rely on translations and interpreters, and never met with a violent jihadist. Our research team, however, met with actual jihadists who once believed in violence, from street vendors to the highest profile theorist of al-Qaeda. The strength in our research is our observation of the everyday life of Salafi jihadists, which was achieved through face to face discussions, observing without interrupting, listening without putting words into their mouths, and documenting narrative accounts without perturbing the flow of conversations. The purpose was to reach a deeper understanding of the dynamics that drive each individual trajectory, i.e., each individual has his own contextual parameters, which differ from others with the same belief system. As a result, there are no standard symptoms for someone who committed violence, as there is no *one-way* or belief that can lead to terror.

The literature that we do have on Moroccan Salafi jihadism comes mostly from sociology (Tozy 1999; Darif 1999; Chaarani 2004; Cooper 1993; Misbahi 2016). These studies focus on Salafi behaviors within the context of the whole structure of Islam. Accordingly, understanding Salafi Jihadists’ disengagement within the structure of religion has opened the door to multidisciplinary fields in the social sciences to provide a contribution. Psychologists, for example, focus on the interaction of behavior and cognition. They use the literature on gangs and social movements to understand the process of disengagement (Bjorgo and Horgan 2009: 65). Blumenstein et al. (1986), a group of criminologists, developed the notion of a criminal career paradigm (CCP). A CCP is defined as “the longitudinal sequence of offending committed by an

individual offender” (12). The purpose of defining the sequence is to underline the individual motivations that drive criminals to *becoming* a criminal and *leaving* the gang. Furthermore, narrative criminology dissects the cultural influences on crime by understanding stories of crime (Sandberg, 2013, 72).

Using these perspectives, we ask the question *can we understand Salafi Jihadist disengagement* (religious field), which consists of power relationships between agents, by viewing it through the lens of a dominant cognitive and behavioral approach (cognitive psychology). How do we explain the conversion of, for instance, Sheikh Abu Hafs, condemned to 30 years in prison, released after spending eight years in confinement, from a religious field, to the expertise field and lastly, to a political field? Sheikh Abu Hafs is a known expert in Salafi jihadism, often invited to research centers in Europe and Jordan for his expertise. Abu Hafs acquired a name, a reputation and social capital. Most recently, he was a candidate in the 2016 Moroccan parliamentary elections.

We now turn our attention to a grassroots Salafi Jihadist, Mr. K, a sports shoe vendor. He also has a presumed reputation despite his lower ranking. We observed his conversion from the religious field to the economic field, where he accumulated trust from new suppliers and customers. His friends in the market called him the “scissor” to connote his sharp business dealing skills.

We postulate that the Moroccan Salafi jihadists interpreted the situations and opportunities at hand and acted rationally. In doing so, it comes down to a cost/benefit calculation, which includes economic elements as well as more subjective variables. In the coming chapters we argue that there are other subjective and political variables (for example, the Salafi Union and parliamentary elections). We reverse the communal perspective as Howard Becker (1963) did in

his study of deviant behavior. It is not the jihadists' motivations that lead to jihadist behavior, but conversely, the jihadist behavior produces, over time, the jihadist motivation. The recurrence of jihadist behavior over time allowed us to see the jihadist *course* as a "career."

The Jihadist "Career"

It is essential here to highlight the centrality of habitus to understanding the jihadist career. Becker's *Outsiders* (1963) equipped us to see beyond disengagement. We asked the question of how come, even after revisions to Salafi jihadist thought, we see a continuation of manners, language, and other Salafi Jihadist codes that encompass the jihadist career. The first dimension, the acquisition of the title, leads to the embodiment of an observable code of conduct. A dress code and a behavioral conduct are routinized in the everyday life of the Salafis. We argued in the previous chapters that Salafism was always present in Moroccan society, but it was never considered dangerous until now. Why? The evolving nature of these codes will provide an answer. We are borrowing the notion of "careers" from criminology. Howard Becker used the term career in his study of deviance in *Outsiders* (1963). The concept has been useful in constructing sequential models of various types. An heir to the Chicago School and in the sociological tradition of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, Becker utilized the concept of career to understand the determinants of moving from one point to another in the deviant "career" of an individual, with each phase explaining a behavior. In this respect, "career" answers more than the "why" of deviant practices, it also constitutes the prism of understanding and objectifying the "how". Thus, we can understand a jihadist's career as stages of engagement with the jihadist world and the resulting modes of behaviors, according to the particular jihadist groups (habitus): learning jihadist manners of dressing, talking, tasting and overall, living the life of the jihadist. We asked ourselves if poverty and marginalization led to the embrace of Salafi jihadism, why did only some and not all of the

inhabitants of lower-income neighborhoods in Morocco turn to violent radicalism? The ingrained dispositions (another manifestation of habitus) represent a central principle in the vision of the jihadists. They identify these dispositions in their concrete history and adhere to them through their practical activities. We see the importance of Bourdieu's habitus in understanding the social reality of the disengaged jihadists.

According to Mr. S, dates vendor in the old Medina of Rabat, a true believer and a follower of the prophet Mohammed must behave like the *salaf salih*, the predecessors of the prophet. This includes following a dress code and studying the language of the Quran. "Shaving the face is compared to infidels" Mr. S. says. This code extends beyond Morocco to even a remote village in the volcanic area of Java, Indonesia. Hassan Noorhandi (2006: 176) studied the Indonesian Salafis and how they followed both a stringent behavioral and dress conduct. One of his interviewees described Salafi appearances in the following way:

Whether someone is a true believer or not can be seen from his behavior, language and dress. A faithful Muslim must behave like the *salaf salih*, speak in the language of the Quran and the Sunna and wear Islamic dress such as *jalabiya* in order to distinguish himself from infidels. *Man tashabbaha bi qawm fa huwa minhum* (Whoever resembles other groups, he belongs to that group) (Interview Mr. S 2017)

Another interesting finding in Hassan Noohaidi's work is that the Salafis of the Dieng Plateau are aware and active in the discussion of the *al Wala'a wal Bara'a* (WB) doctrine, even though they are in remote areas far from the source (Ibid: 170).

Salafism is distinguished from other movements by its fluidity. Salafism, however, can be seen as fixed as well. The fixed Salafism entails conservative traditions of the Salaf, the followers of the prophet Mohammed. The historical attachment to the followers of the prophet should not be excluded from understanding Salafism. The fluid Salafism, however, goes beyond the traditional sphere, and embarks into politics, which carries many implications from participation in national elections to militant attacks against the nation in the name of jihad.

The Casablanca attacks in 2003 and its link to al-Qaeda, coupled with the growth of the Salafi Jihadist movement in the Islamic world, attracted the attention of the academic community, seemingly overnight. This community was committed to readjusting prior notions and building a body of knowledge on the phenomenon. Through our conversations with disengaged Salafi Jihadists, we aimed to generate new questions and push the intellectual boundaries of academia in relation to engaging and disengaging in militant jihadism. Studying actors who manoeuvre clandestinely and who were part of an underground movement that had the project of destabilizing society and state remains for many researchers inaccessible and dangerous. The case of the Moroccan Salafis, however, is more accessible and will help us to understand Jihadists trajectories. While a significant amount of literature has been written about Salafi Jihadists, the focus of these studies is to provide a chronological history of the movement, its formation, and to some extent, an ideological profile. Since September 11, 2001, we witnessed the birth of the Jihadist expert industry, which has built its reputation on fear and technicalities. In general, forensic psychiatrists and intelligence and security experts that fall into this camp base their assumptions on the future of the new generation of terror (Sageman 2008)

Singularity of Each Jihadist's Career

The purpose of employing the concept of career is to allow us to articulate the objective and subjective dimensions of jihadism. This means taking into great account the social structures and the positioning of the jihadist while interrogating his or her own way of seeing things. The manner through which these sequences are organized, their duration, and the contexts and relationships that occur during this process may vary, which is what creates the appearance of the singularity of each jihadist's career. An interesting finding during our observation is that many disengaged interviewees still keep their jihadist appearance in their everyday lives. Although there are

differences in the material condition of each Jihadist, the type and amount of capital available, along with their ingrained dispositions shape the possibility for action (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 122). At each sequence of the career, Howard Becker observed that some will stop, while others will persevere and even progress in their career by accessing the following sequence, according to the chain of relations and events. We can now apply this theoretical concept to the case of a disengaged jihadist in the alleys of the old Medina of Tangier. This is where we had long conversations and observations with Mr. K about how he is earning his income and how he sees himself in the world of “business.” We clearly observed a man who possessed the codes of the collective jihadist history (a jihadist language, a jihadist appearance, a jihadist economy) and reproduced them in the form of “permanent actions” (Bourdieu 1984). Thus, in a post-disengagement phase a Jihadist habitus is the fabric of an individual’s actions, which are socially determined based on their abilities. Habitus helps us to see the continuation of the jihadists ingrained dispositions, or what we called a “Jihadist career.”

How does someone become a career jihadist even after being disengaged from violence? The fact is that being a career jihadist is not a sole product of physical appearance (his manner of dressing, walking, and talking), but also, and perhaps most importantly, a product of the social mechanisms that allow continuity of jihadist behavior in the post-disengagement phase. To investigate further, we implemented the inductive method through conversations and interviews with 62 respondents. We managed to identify three sequences in the story of many disengaged jihadists that correspond to the finding in Howard Becker’s *Outsiders* (1963).

The first sequence is the knowledge of how to maintain jihadist culturally ingrained dispositions (habitus). This can be seen through appearance: the Afghan dress, black eyeliner *kohl*,

and long beard. In post disengagement, these individuals continue their ways of dressing, despite it being “strange” to Moroccan society. As Mr. T notes:

My dress code was never a barrier. On the contrary, it helps me gain respect. I feel comfortable. My language has lots of sayings and statements from the prophet Mohammed peace be upon him, I am not going to change that as I continue to read and discover. I like making eyeliner kohl as it reminds me of the followers of the prophet (Interview Mr. T 2016).

The second sequence is related to Becker’s understanding of “Learning the perception of effects” (1963). Once the manners of the jihadist are inculcated, the disengaged individuals become a kind of *connaisseur* of the truth of jihad and jurisprudence. The idea of potentially having the answers to most of life’s question makes the jihadist transcend the knowledge of the rest of the world. This transcendence is clearly seen through the way in which his/her responses to daily interactions with the general public are categorized by pride. This occurs especially when a disengaged jihadist knows that others respect and trust him in the economic space he operates in. For example, the borrowing of money from ordinary individuals is perceived as easy and sometimes done without guarantees. The continuation of this second sequence paves the way for this behavior, which is conditioned by economic possibilities, to become long-term. In Fez, Mr. G says as much when discussing the respect others show for him:

After years, I become knowledgeable in jurisprudential affairs. I gained the knowledge of Allah that made me protect myself from deviation. You have seen me how I am treated in the market with respect. How do I know that? Well, I can see that in people’s eyes, both clients and brothers in that place (Interview Mr. G).

The third sequence is jihadist conditioning. Being a Salafi Jihadist, even a disengaged one, has an impact on everyday life. We can see that clearly in the popular markets, where their peers treat them with respect. For example, suppliers give special considerations to them in financial transactions. The disengaged jihadist also uses his/her learned jihadist behavior to benefit. This is why we talk of jihadist conditioning. Mr. K speaks of his own experience:

As you can see I am a salesman. The business of sports shoes is slow these days. Me and two other brothers are planning to rent a big store where we can expand. You can see here everyone is getting up early to guarantee his place, his territory in the market. In the beginning people make it harder for me to start from a small business. You see now I am well of hamdulillah (thanks God). There are some people who were tough here, but they all become good to me. They trust me a lot with millions hamdulillah (Interview Mr. K 2016).

All that was asked at this stage in the jihadist career was to renounce violence. Open windows gave way to opportunities and hastened the embrace of nonviolence.

We suggest an alternative to reading trajectories that encompasses both elements of rational choice cognition and behavior (Horgan) and critical approaches that deals with agency (Bourdieu). A fusion of the ideas and theories of both perspectives can lay the groundwork for how disengagement takes place and what has been changed in the lives of former Salafi jihadists.

Much of the research on jihadism is grounded in traditional security studies and the birth of “jihad experts,” who promote that a state’s ability to survive is dependent on the way it handles threats. The post 9/11 era prompted a major shift in security studies (Browning and McDonald 2011). The focus became non-state actors, such as Salafi jihadists. However, this approach lacks an analysis on agents’ rationality. Including jihadist actors in the analysis by deciphering their life stories and decoding their everyday practices, is crucial to filling the gaps in the literature.

In Chapters 5 and 6 we conceptualized the meanings of radicalization and disengagement in detail. Through this chapter, we aim at adding value to the literature by outlining the intellectual contribution of sociological and psycho-criminological perspectives. The value of this research resides in the ability to study an unorganized and clandestine phenomenon. While drawing disengaged Salafi jihadists’ trajectories, we contextualize each one in his milieu.

For the past two decades, developmental and life course criminology have conducted successful studies with a focus on trajectories of offenders, including juveniles, adolescents and those who commit high volume crimes. In an extensive study conducted by Thornberry (1996),

personality traits and the long-term risk factors that explain criminal trajectories are emphasized. We also delve into other empirical research that investigates trajectories of criminals involved in organized crime.

Our aim is to situate disengagement as a change that occurs at the individual level of each jihadist's trajectory, beginning with the *acquisition of the title of Salafi jihadist*, climaxing in *ideological shifts*, and culminating in *disengagement*. These trajectories will be tracked from early involvement to the current disengagement phase. Similarly, criminologists when sketching criminal careers, focus on how "careers are initiated, how they progress, and why they are discontinued" (Petersilia 1980: 322). The everyday changes of each disengaged Salafi will be reconstructed using Bourdieu's trio of concepts in *Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu 1977): field, capital, and habitus. The field is the social space through which the disengaged Salafi jihadist competes with others and between themselves for resources (capital). Ultimately, how a disengaged Salafi jihadist perceives and acts upon his resources is generated by his habitus. This generation is happening when individuals cope with situations and is based on a learning process (habitus). We can understand how a trajectory is drawn by examining the structural conditions under which a person operates, and the everyday practices that manifest. Trajectories can result in various forms (for example, linear, cubic or quadratic). We will project each interviewee's trajectory not to fit a particular pattern but as it is.

Jihadists' trajectories are scarcely investigated. What we have instead are works that describes Jihadists based on interviews and memoirs. For instance, many of the studies and biographies on Sheikh Abu Hafs are extracted mainly from the series of interviews he had with a local newspaper, *alyaoum24*. While these case studies are important and provide the life histories of former jihadists, they are limited. These studies do not exhibit the trajectory of the jihadist as it

is. Sheikh Al Maqdessi (Interview 2016) notes that many researchers have not met him and yet, they paint a picture of him based on no empirical knowledge. We aim to fill the gap in the literature. Having the opportunity to meet face-to-face with Salafi jihadists, from street vendors to the highest profile theorist of al-Qaeda, gave us a broader perspective of the jihadist trajectory.

We observed and we listened to the stories of each one of the former Salafi Jihadists whom we interviewed. We did not ask questions related to their previous records, such as schooling, interactions with the police, prisons or other disciplining institutions. We also did not ask the question of *why* they became involved with Salafi jihadism in the first place. Each meeting with an interviewee starts with an open discussion on any subject of daily life. We let each interviewee sketch his own trajectory. We did not target a prototypic curve, i.e., one that shows a rise in engagement with movements during the teenage years, a peak in the adolescence phase and a decline in the late thirties. Instead, our interviewees were given the space to tell their stories in full. A pivotal point in the narrations of these stories is the sense of an indirect belonging to the Salafi Jihadists' imagined community, a point that will be discussed later.

A rich narrative repertoire enlightens the importance of analyzing the power relations within various *fields*, the pivotal force of the *capital*, and the implications of changes to the everyday life practices of each disengaged Salafi Jihadist on their habitus.

Most of our interviewees possessed a wide repertoire of stories. We see in them the conversion of fields from the religious to the economic (informal economy) to the political. Earning these new positions in society was made possible by their use of their reputation, names, and resources (capital).

The Salafi Jihadist's Capital

In a given society there are many fields of power. We contend that there is competition over positions within the same group (i.e. Salafi jihadists) at the horizontal level. We also highlight that a dynamic struggle over privileges requires a certain capital. Individual capital is not always material (economic) but can also include cultural resources. The possession of these resources equips the disengaged Salafis with negotiating powers within society's various fields. In order to mark their positions and existence within social structures, Salafi jihadists use their social, symbolic and cultural resources to compete. The Salafis cultivated dispositions based on their belief system and knowledge base, and expressed their symbolic resources in Moroccan society.

In the process of disengagement, the Salafi Jihadist converts from one field to another, i.e., he acquires a capital (reputation, name, respect, recognition etc.), which allows him to move and manoeuvre from a religious field to, for example, an economic field. This is seen in the case of Mr. K ("the scissor"), who expanded his commerce based on an accumulation of trust and recognition. In our second example, we will see mobility from the religious field to the political field through the case of Sheikh Abu Hafs.

Even though power seems to be horizontal, disengaged Salafi jihadists live in a hierarchical order. Mr. T described this vertical power as a consequence of the "unjust distribution of territories." He added that those who get the strategic vending corners are the ones who are loyal to si A or si B. I will go into detail about Mr. T's story in the section on trajectories. Mr. T's case reveals the idea that within the same belief system there are circles of power, loyalties and rewards. Now that Mr. T has acquired various resources, such as his deals with suppliers from other cities, new contacts, and plans for future expansion, he sees himself as an entrepreneur.

Dynamic Habitus

A jihadist habitus is the understanding of jihadist rules and mannerisms through which one generates capital within a field. According to Wacquant, the habitus is acquired and learned, it reflects a class and a background, and reflects social history. These backgrounds become internalized in the way a jihadist thinks, and the values that he or she acquires which affect how his or her body moves. Lastly, these dispositions appear natural and evident. No one is born a jihadist. The habitus is essential because those ingrained Jihadist dispositions mean that we see the continuation of the jihadist career even after disengagement.

In the previous section, we explored the case of Mr. T and how he started perceiving his resources and acting in his world after disengagement. It is important to mention those dispositions, which allow us to detect what constitutes the habitus of disengaged Salafis. To put it simply, the habitus is a manner of existing; it is dispositions that constitute appearances, clothing, mental state, and mannerisms in everyday interactions. A disengaged Salafi Jihadists everyday practices fall within Bourdieu's "matrix of perceptions" which encompasses personal experiences, belief systems, daily contacts with others, and the manners through which one behaves and expects reciprocity.

In the summer of 2015, I met with Mr. K in Tangier. Dressed in a long *jellaba* with a black jacket on top, a round white hat sits atop his head, and a long, dark beard covers his face. Mr. K's uniform and code of conduct makes him feel comfortable. I carefully asked him where he situated his train of thought. He replied that he simply likes to be labelled as a Salafi. His friends in the market call him 'the scissor' (*lamkass*), in reference to his bargaining skills, and rough trading style. In his presence, a friend of his described him as "si K does not revere anyone, he is a real businessman, anything moving in the market, he has a share on it. . ."

Seven months later, I visited Mr. K again. During this time, Mr. K gained more recognition in the market. He invited me to have a Moroccan green tea with mint and a delicious home-made bread made from semolina (*harsha*) in the corner café. I congratulated him on his business expansion, and asked him to summarize what had changed. He exhaled deeply and said: “Look brother, I was like a bee fifteen years ago, people took advantage of my naivety. I wasted time following people who were telling me what to do and how to think, but now, I am a Salafi on my own. I do not need any ignorant man to tell me how to be a good Muslim.”

The second meeting with Mr. K revealed the inner tension that a disengaged Salafi feels. Even though he did not pursue higher education, his knowledge and practices say otherwise:

We are living in a world where you are judged by your knowledge. I had to read numerous books this past five years in order to understand what is missing. I had to hire someone to teach me English, you know there are lot of tourists in the market. (Interview Mr. K, 2016)

As posited earlier, the manner through which Mr. K perceives himself and uses his resources (learning English, reading books, business skills, bargaining style) is generated by his habitus. While his dress is mostly the same, he transgresses with his choice in shoes, which are expensive, and the wearing of colognes that were considered distasteful by the Salafis. His deals in the market are of a small size, yet he has acquired impressive negotiating techniques, which include talking slowly, explaining thoroughly, and convincing buyers and closing the deal firmly. These everyday practices reveal the dynamism of the habitus. Mr. K’s now regular dealing with tourists is a sure sign of his disengagement. Where before dealing with tourists would get you excommunicated by the Salafi Jihadists, Mr. K now embraced his new trade willfully and happily.

We have noted from the beginning that our main focus is going to be on the disengaged Salafi jihadists from the base. These men were interrogated by the police for their involvement in the movement and eventually released. We also examine the trajectories of two main Salafi jihadists: Sheikh Abu Hafs in Morocco and Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al Maqdessi in Jordan. The purpose

of their inclusion is to have an idea of the big picture, which includes the Salafi elites. We sketched their trajectories based on the four dimensions mentioned earlier: the acquiring of the Salafi title, ideological shifts, disengagement and the jihadist career. These accounts outline how our interviewees became involved in the Salafi jihadist movement and how they left it behind them. Conversing with these men and listening to their experiences, stories and jokes is the only way to draw their trajectories. Psychologist John Horgan's (2009) emphasized the importance of these conversations as well. He also affirmed that the notion of disengagement is almost ignored by the academic community. We discuss disengagement as the last dimension, however, the dimensions are not meant to categorize the interviewees experiences into stages or clusters. Essentially, it is about the process. And while this process has a beginning, middle and an end, it is left open. Careful analysis of each trajectory is therefore necessary.

Chapter 10. Conclusion

Listen! Listen, and I will tell you how it happened. You will see, you will hear how healthy my mind is. It is impossible to say how the idea first entered my head. There was no reason for what I did. I did not hate the old man; I even loved him. He had never hurt me. I did not want his money. I think it was his eye. His eye was like the eye of a vulture, the eye of one of those terrible birds that watch and wait while an animal dies, and then fall upon the dead body and pull it to pieces to eat it. When the old man looked at me with his vulture eye a cold feeling went up and down my back; even my blood became cold. And so, I finally decided I had to kill the old man and close that eye forever! So you think that I am mad? A madman cannot plan. But you should have seen me. During all of that week I was as friendly to the old man as I could be, and warm, and loving. (Poe 1843).

The quote above is an extract from the short story *Tell-Tale Heart* written by Edgar Allan Poe, in which the main character is trying to convince the reader of his sanity, despite admitting to murdering his neighbor (Poe 1843: 42). Poe's story is a psychological tale of an inner struggle and provides an example of the capacity of the human mind to deceive itself. Similarly, a Salafi Jihadist sees himself as just, sane, wise, and simply a follower of the book. He uses the injustice and oppression of others, exploiting images of civilian deaths, to present himself as a savior seeking revenge for killings and occupation. In the *Tell-Tale Heart*, the narrator describes the vulture-like eye of his neighbor as 'evil', yet he denies his act of being evil. He created a rationale for killing the old man that allowed him to remain in a remorseless state of mind. The Salafi Jihadists also boast of their achievements and ingenuity in the perpetration of violent acts, while maintaining their innocence. Finally, they label those who do not adhere to their beliefs as villains (Poe 1843) or infidels, *kuffar* in the Salafi Jihadist vocabulary. The narrator in the *Tell-Tale Heart* uses religious language, which gives the impression that he is someone who upholds religious values and does not want to anger God: "Almighty God! O, no! They heard! They suspected." (Poe 1843). What we can grasp from this tale and the Jihadist world is the existence of two main human cognitive capacities: being rational and being normal.

The *Tell Tale Heart* introduces us to a tripartite of participants in the life cycle of a crime; the actor/self, the public/audience, and the state. For the perpetrator of the crime, there is a desire to remove something disturbing, and the self provides a rationale for doing so. Next, the actor attempts to convince his audience that such acts are necessary and inevitable. Lastly, the actor turns to the state, in the form of authoritative powers and institutions, to claim innocence by alleging love for the victim. For it was not their selfish desire that drove them to act but the victim's refusal to adhere to the main character's sphere of "Loyalty and disavowal." In *The Tell Tale Heart* the vulture-like eye of the other is analogous to the disloyalty of near and far enemies. According to both views, it does not matter how innocent the victims are, there is always a portion of the audience that is prepared to accept those claims.

In this thesis we revived the debates on Salafi Jihadism by questioning the two main paradigms of disengagement literature. The first paradigm addresses the actions of the Salafi Jihadist and the second, the state and society's reaction to Jihadist violence. We went beyond these two frames. We proposed an "in between" space that examines the Jihadist trajectories and career, i.e. a reflexive and critical terrorism studies. Combining both the rational choice perspective of John Horgan and the critical approach of Bourdieu's theory of practice, mainly his concept of habitus, allowed us to explore subjectivities and the issues facing the study of Jihadism. Using this framework, we were able to come up with notions of Jihadist field, jihadist capital and jihadist habitus.

We began our journey by entering a symbolic tunnel that represents the path from radicalization to disengagement. The beginning of the tunnel is dark and only becomes darker as we witness an individual's rupture from society. At first, this is not visible to all those around him. It is only when he is in the final stage of exile that his transformation is clear. Nonetheless, at the

heart of the tunnel, as the intensity of his quest heightens, we begin to see windows of opportunity open. As the windows multiply, the tunnel becomes lighter and there is a path to disengagement. We see post disengagement not as an end in itself, but as a continuous process that contains the seeds of jihadism through what we have called the Jihadist career, as driven by the Jihadist habitus. How do we know the Jihadist? Does it take much effort to answer this question? The answer is that knowing the Jihadist is easy because he does not use a secret code to hide and conceal his belonging unlike other Islamic currents. The process through which people use the code of secrecy is called *takiyya*, which means to hide in order to be protected. What is at stake here is that the prolonging of the Jihadist career can lead to something we call the Jihadist hibernation. Hibernation in its biological connotation means temporality and not death.

This ethnographic work helped us to combine two mostly contradicting theories, rational choice and theory of practice, to open the world of Salafi Jihadism. In cinematography, focus is achieved by zooming in on a subject, locking focus, and then zooming out to see the subject clearly in their surroundings. Similarly, the socio-psycho-criminal perspective that resulted from our combined approach, allowed us to “lock focus” on the subject, examining the individual intricacies of the Salafi Jihadist, and then move away from him, steadily realizing all the dimensions and angles of the full picture. There are a number of people, texts, books, opinions, messages, lectures, words, poems and other materials which endlessly build the mind of the violent radical, through which he sees the world. These materials are dispersed by a number of individuals and groups who compete with the state and society on tactics of how to educate and raise children and youth. These ‘breeders’ are often people we do not know. An Asian or Latin American woman prepares death belts in an Arab or European country, supervised by a man from a Middle Eastern country, and the casualties are Muslims and Christians who are killed in cold blood. The world of Salafi

jihadism is an ideological, doctrinal and behavioral minefield. We are engaged with one of the most prominent belief systems that see itself as the only source of truth and the embodiment of true and pure Islam. Yet we have to ask the following:

How did well-off young Norwegians become attracted to the authoritarian ideology of Mao in 1968 (Sjoli 2009)? What connects Seung-Hui Cho of the Virginia Tech shooting (2007), Eric Rudolph - the Olympic Park Bomber (1996), Ted Kaczynski - the Unabomber (1978), Hassan Nidal of the Fort Hood shooting (2009), Anders Behring Breivik of the Norway shooting (2011) and the 12 Moroccans who attacked Casablanca (2003)? Each of them felt that their countries had taken a wrong direction; that it was their duty to intervene to change this path, and that their actions would achieve the desired goal. Despite the multiplicity, diversity and even contradictions of the contextual situations that each one of these individuals underwent throughout his life, they all released a 'manifesto' that contained similar language. In *The Tell Tale Heart*, the main character's manifesto was built on the 'threat' that his neighbour's eye represented. The eye stood for the 'I' that sees things with clarity. The eye does not belong to the narrator's circle, as it is representative of another world view. According to the narrator, in order to bring order and unity in his life, an act of crime must be committed. Anders Behring Breivik did not have an individual problem with the 77 youth that he murdered; instead, he had an issue with what they represented. However, this seemingly self-evident ideological unity of these perpetrators of crime and terrorism raises many questions, the main one being what differentiates these individuals? On the other hand, if every case has specific contextual prerequisites that are distinguishable from other cases, how can we investigate the phenomenon?

It is futile to wait for the perfect device to read the minds of those who commit ideologically motivated mass killings. The only realistic option available is to read what is going on in their

social reality, which for the most part exudes despair and deadly anger. The Salafi Jihadist elite pursued its hardline culture by targeting the deprived Salafi Jihadist proletariat through the narrative of loyalty and disavowal *al Wala'a wal Bara'a* WB. There is a growing debate among leaders and thinkers of the political Islam movement about what constitutes political reality and how to combat the challenges created by significant events, especially in the period of the 'Arab Spring' and its harsh repercussions. On the other hand, we have those who were imprisoned both literally and by their ideas, which prevented them from understanding the dynamics of the movements and the development of history, instead adhering to antiquated and sterile attitudes. The question of the siege of Salafist interpretation of the Quran remains a quagmire for academics and researchers.

The central goal of our thesis was to investigate and examine the meanings each disengaged Salafi Jihadist attributes to his or her experience in the everyday life. We needed a thicker and denser observation in order to see what has changed in the everyday lives of these Salafis. Through our tunnel analogy, we have seen how the puzzle of radicalization is made of various pieces that represent ideas and situations that are unique to the bricoleur maker. The construction, which can be chaotic in the design, of course, makes sense to the designer, or the *bricoleur* who gathered the pieces.

Do not Take the *Bricolage* of a Violent Radical Lightly!

Radicalization as bricolage is a process through which the radical *bricoleur* uses his individual and unique skills to make his or her design function. This radical tinkering involves both knowledge of the activity at hand and finding ways to achieve the results with less effort, i.e. creating a personalized Jihadist formula. He or she takes the risk of being accused of sabotaging a perfectly designed system. Yet he or she will continue, despite criticism and pressures from those who hold

the knowledge of *the* Jihadist formula. For this reason, a Jihadist *bricoleur* must not be taken lightly! Even when the assemblage of the pieces is incongruent, it does not mean anything to the radical *bricoleur*, as he is engrossed in the importance of his task. This is why too often the *bricoleur's* enthusiasm for his project can mislead those outside of it on the level of the collective's intelligence. Overall, it is the alliance of the *bricoleur's* personal talents and skills with his everyday life environment that contributes to the magic of the object being designed. Part of this magic remains unspeakable and confined to the intelligence of the *bricoleur*. Mostly, the radical *bricoleur* is surprised that his 'craft' is functioning. We saw this astonishment and pride in Sheikh Al Maqdessi when we informed him that his literature on jihad had reached Morocco.

Reining in Violent Ideology: Detecting Individual Ruptures

The realist approach to countering the terrorist threat poses several questions; can Europe guarantee safety and security of life by distancing itself from a world engulfed by political, economic and social crises, and can the west be exempted from contributing to crises in the global South? Unless the goal is nihilism, the security approach cannot succeed in a time of globalization, apart from bringing attention to the growing contradiction in an increasingly convergent and interconnected world. These contradictions give some people the feeling that this world is not theirs. This leads to heinous acts of violence, committed on the misleading promise of a bridge that leads to paradise.

It is not right to isolate the rhetoric of brutality and the practices of fatalism from the conditions of reality that have been entrenched in it. The 'intellectual treatment' of radicalization is a luxury that does not touch the core of the issue and makes no significant contribution to the solution, although intellectual guidance remains an indispensable requirement. Nevertheless, those who engage in the 'war of ideas' do not pay attention to the reality of exclusion within society.

This has led to linking terrorism with the identity of the perpetrator, without examining the act itself. If the executor is Muslim or has Middle Eastern features, should the act be labelled ‘terrorism’? No, but this is often the case. The racist current in the definition of terrorism must overcome the identity, features, nationality and religion of the executor and needs to be defined instead based on the act.

Violent attacks carried out by radicals have triggered a series of troubling questions about the motives and causes of the growth of the extremist thought, and the magnitude of the threats it poses. First, it should be recognized that most of the extremist elements have strategically used Islamic discourse to align with Jihadist discourse, through ‘shopping’ for texts that can be manipulated. We have called this phenomenon ‘boutique jihadism’. The root of the problem lies in the methods of influence and the language used, which is characterized by tactical linguistic systems, that lead to mistrust and suspicion of the other.

Back to the Equation of Inclusion and Exclusion

We found that radicalization occurs *if and only if* individuals feel included in a radical movement and excluded from the mass, and disengagement happens when either condition is not met. This dissertation explained that people become radicalized as they become more strongly engaged (*e*) in a radical group’s cause *if and only if* a given individual has a strong sentiment of inclusion (*i*) towards a radical group AND a strong sentiment of exclusion from a competing group.

The less one feels included in a group or cause, the less motivated he or she is to engage him/herself. And the less one feels excluded from a group or cause, the less reason he or she has to fight against it. Then, if either truth condition (inclusive/exclusive) is absent, even if the other one is strong, engagement is unlikely and disengagement is the most logical outcome.

Succeeding in dissuading those who embrace extremist ideology from adhering to their closed intellectual approach, and abandoning the arrogance of rigid convictions that believe in the monolithic interpretation of certain Quranic verses necessitates drying out the sources of exclusion in society. Therefore, governments in particular are obliged to realize the importance of inclusion in the real sense, where no one must be left behind. Society must be involved in the battle against terrorism by the adoption of micro-social contracts (in the family and neighborhood) and macro-social contracts (major reforms). This will open more channels, allowing society (including marginal neighborhoods, the grocery shops in the corners, the owner of the bakery and produce) to be involved and express their views when it comes to opportunities and rejecting chaos. At this level, a greater margin should be given to civil society to reject extreme ideas and popular Jihadist media. Overall, the mechanisms that have induced the disengagement process are better understood within the inclusion-exclusion framework.

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BJ:	Benevolence and Justice
DGSN:	Direction General de Securite Nationale
DGST:	Direction General de Securite de Territoire
ICF:	Institution of the Commander of the Faithful
IER:	Instance d'Equite et de Reconciliation
INDH:	Initiative Nationale du Developement Humain
PDJ:	Partie du Developement et de Justice
JB:	Justice and Benevolence <i>al Adl wal Ihssane</i>
SJ:	Salafi Jihadism
USFP:	Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires
WB:	Loyalty and Disavowal <i>al Wala'a wal Bara'a</i>