

## Plebeian Jihadism in Denmark: An Individualisation and Popularization Predating the Growth of the Islamic State

by Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen

### Abstract

Already before the Islamic State's conquests in Syria and Iraq, a plebeian version of jihadism was developing in Denmark. This version resonates particularly well with the Islamic State's version, in some ways resembling it, indicating that the group is not so much creating something new as it is capturing a *Zeitgeist*, channelling already existing energies in its direction. This perspective allows us to view the group's mobilization in Denmark in a new light, which has implications for how to best respond to it, and it reminds us that a military defeat of the Islamic State is unlikely to end all contemporary challenges posed by jihadism.

**Keywords:** Denmark; jihadism; Islamic State; eschatology; crime-terror nexus

### Introduction

In 2015 and 2016, Europe has been struck by numerous attacks that have been defined as jihadi terrorism. Several observers have noted that many of the perpetrators led a less than pious lifestyle, having a troubled past that often included experiences with crime and violence. This has led to the coining of popular terms like “gangster jihadism”. The recent growth in numbers of such perpetrators has been linked to the rise of the Islamic State.[1]

Intuitively, this may make sense, given the timing and the fact that the Islamic State is perceived as more brutal and intellectually less demanding than groups such as al-Qaida,[2]. The group has set new standards for imaginative uses of novel forms of communication, not least via social media and in Hollywood-style video productions,[3] adding to these an eschatological narrative.[4] The question, however, is whether the Islamic State is the source of all of the above.

At least in a Danish context, developments in jihadism predating the growth of the Islamic State may have played a role in paving the way for attracting non-pious audiences. Already in the late 2000s, the writer of this article encountered both clever uses of social media and an eschatological narrative similar to that of the Islamic State in Denmark.[5]

In this article, I suggest that in Denmark one version of jihadism, which I refer to as *plebeian*, has been developing alongside other versions for at least a decade. This plebeian jihadism has strong ties to Omar Bakri Muhammad and Anjem Choudary, mirroring their UK-focused perspectives and relating it to the Danish situation. The Danes promote the implementation of Sharia and the establishment of a Caliphate in Denmark. They engage loudly with Danish society, the media and the authorities, seeking to appeal to a Muslim diaspora audience that is dissatisfied with its position in the Danish society.[6]

In addition to being burly, confrontational and local in its main focus, it is to some extent also an individualized version of jihadism. Adherents follow a “my opinion is as good as your knowledge”-line of reasoning, which is derived from an eschatological narrative that casts them as *the chosen few* who receive direct divine guidance. In their view, such individuals are just as authoritative as any scholar or expert. In other words, plebeian jihadism is both anti-elitist and anti-intellectual.

The main argument elaborated in this article holds that some contemporary trends, which are commonly regarded as new and attributed to the development of the Islamic State, have in fact (also) been developing in Denmark for some time. Therefore, they may just as well be indicators of this *plebeian* jihadism as results

of the Islamic State's influence on Danish jihadis. This has consequences not only for our understanding of jihadism in Denmark but also for how best to respond to it.

For the purpose of the present article, I conflate some categories that are usually treated separately. As expressions of jihadism in Denmark, I refer to individuals who sojourn or migrate to Syria or Iraq to take up residence, individuals who do so to engage in fighting or to receive training, *and* individuals who engage in (plotting) terrorist attacks in their home country or elsewhere – as long as they do so in the name of jihadism.

From the individual's point of view, these are undoubtedly different choices and should be analysed as such when one is attempting to understand what motivates an individual to do one or the other.[7] For the purpose of the present article, however, I am looking at all of them as different expressions of jihadism. This implies that the concept jihadism is used to refer to an ideology and that individuals and groups defined as jihadist are not necessarily seen as violent or engaged in illegal activities.

### ***Expression of Danish Jihadism during the Escalation of Conflicts in Syria and Iraq***

There is little doubt that a large share of the individuals, who have committed acts of terrorism with reference to jihadism in the West since the escalation of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq from 2011, have a known violent criminal past. The same appears to be the case with individuals who have travelled from the West to the countries in this period.[8]

In a Danish context, authorities estimate that about half of the individuals currently travelling to Syria and Iraq have a criminal past. It is certain that Omar Abdel Hamid el-Hussain, the presumed perpetrator behind the Copenhagen Shootings in February 2015, also had such a past.

Only two weeks prior to the attacks, el-Hussain was released from custody, awaiting the appeal of his trial after being sentenced to two years in prison for an unprovoked violent attack on a stranger in 2013. El-Hussain had numerous other convictions for violence and weapons possession. While in custody, Omar el-Hussain expressed support for the Islamic State. This had been reported to the Prison and Probation Service and to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service. Minutes before the attacks, el-Hussain pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi on Facebook. In the April 2015 edition of the Islamic State's magazine *Dabiq*, el-Hussain was honoured although the group did not take responsibility for his actions.

Not all contemporary expressions of jihadism in Denmark, however, involve individuals with a known criminal past. In addition to the Copenhagen Shootings, two cases relating to terrorism on Danish soil have become publicly known since 2011.[9] In February 2013, a man disguised as a postal worker rang the doorbell of Danish journalist Lars Hedegaard and attempted to shoot him. Hedegaard managed to foil the attempt and the attacker disappeared on foot. After investigations, Danish police charged the presumed perpetrator in late 2012 and in April 2014, Turkish authorities arrested him at Istanbul Airport. Danish authorities asked for his extradition but in October 2014, they were informed that he had been released. This led to a diplomatic dispute and also to rumours about the presumed perpetrator being handed over to the Islamic State in a prisoner exchange between Turkish authorities and the group.

It is unclear what actually happened in Turkey and since the suspect is still just that, it is, at least in Denmark, illegal to reveal his identity.[10] It is, however, very easy to find out who he is. He is wanted by the police but is currently believed to be with the Islamic State; his name has appeared in connection with Danish jihadism since the mid-2000s.

His name surfaced during what has become known as the first Danish terrorism trial, the so-called "Glostrup-case" that was part of the international complex of cases known as the "Sarajevo-case", which began with the arrest of among others Danish Abdulkadir Cesur, and Swedish Mirsad Bektašević in Sarajevo

in October 2005. The presumed would-be-assassin of Hedegaard was a friend of some of the Danish defendants, but although Danish authorities have kept a keen eye on him since, he has no known criminal record.

The other incident in January 2016 involved the arrests of a fifteen year old girl and a twenty-four year old man suspected of planning bomb attacks against a Jewish school in Copenhagen and the girl's old school in Fårevejle from where she had recently been expelled. The case is still under investigation and very few facts have come out, but the male suspect has previously appeared in Danish media on several occasions to explain why he has travelled to Syria. He is known to have a criminal past.

In addition to these cases, which revolve around terrorism on Danish soil, nine individuals were accused of joining and supporting the Islamic State in Syria in April 2016. In June 2016, a tenth individual, Hamza Cakan, who had been accused of the same since March 2015, was sentenced to seven years in prison. In addition to being convicted of joining and attempting to financially support the Islamic State, Cakan was convicted of having stolen a woman's computer and telephone and of glorifying Omar Abdel Hamid el-Hussain.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the case of Mesa Hodzic. On August 31 2016, police approached Hodzic at Christiania in Copenhagen to arrest him because he was believed to be carrying the revenues from illegal dealing with hashish. Resisting arrest, he shot the two police officers and a civilian bystander after which he fled the scene. The following day Hodzic again resisted arrest, firing at the police and was killed. It soon emerged that Hodzic had appeared in a video by the group *Millatu Ibrahim* giving greetings for Eid al-Fitr and was believed to sympathize with the Islamic State. The Danish police dismissed that such sympathies had played any role in his actions, but the Islamic State soon claimed responsibility, calling Hodzic a "soldier of the Islamic State".

While some of these individuals have a known criminal past, others do not and in the Danish context overlaps between criminal and jihadist milieus are nothing new. Jihadism in Denmark has never been the domain of members of a well-educated middle class or some very pious intellectuals.[11] The share of individuals who have a criminal background may be larger or more visible today, but in the Danish context it neither makes sense to view this as a new trend, nor to view the Islamic State as the cause.

There is little doubt that the Islamic State's success in Syria and Iraq has attracted Danish jihadis and that the group has become the point of reference for some Danes who act on behalf of jihadism on Danish soil. Looking back at the historical development of jihadism in Denmark, however, there are already indications of some of the contemporary trends, which could so easily be attributed to the Islamic State, in the late-2000s.

### ***The Development of Jihadism(s) in Denmark***

Jihadism has been present in Denmark at least since the early 1990s, when members of Egyptian *al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* visited or resided in Denmark. These include Omar Abdel Rahman, also known as The Blind Sheikh, whom the Danish citizen Said Mansour invited as a guest on several occasions as well as Talat Fuad Qassim, also known as Abu Talal.[12] After being convicted of participating in the assassination of President Anwar al-Sadat in Egypt, Qassim was granted political asylum in Denmark in the early 1990s where he stayed until 1995.[13] In 1992, Said Mansour founded the publishing house Al Nur Islamic Information in Copenhagen from which material has appeared in relation to major terrorist attack, including 9/11 and the Madrid-bombs.

The Danish Security and Intelligence Service were concerned, but these individuals enjoyed freedom of speech and movement, gave interviews about their views to mainstream media and propagandizing in a Copenhagen mosque.[14] Back then jihadism was not treated as a significant threat in Denmark, but

following 9/11 and the high-casualty attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) this changed. In fact, since 2005 there have been several trials under Danish terrorism legislation linked to jihadism.[15]

It was also in this period that jihadism in Denmark began to develop in several directions. While some remained loyal to a version of jihadism focussing on politics in, and related to, Muslim majority countries and putting emphasis on traditional sources of religious authority, a fraction with a stronger focus on Denmark and a more individualized approach to religious (and other) authority emerged.[16] Within this fraction, narratives about the End of Days, magic and supernatural powers played a role in the self-understanding of adherents as *the chosen ones* who receive direct divine guidance, thereby making them as authoritative as any scholar.

In June 2004, twelve young men travelled from Denmark to London to participate in a conference hosted by British citizen Omar Bakri Muhammad. Several of these men would later become involved in terrorist activities in Denmark and abroad. One of them in particular would become central to the development of plebeian jihadism in Denmark: Shiraz Tariq, a then twenty-five year old man. He had arranged the trip to London and in the years to follow, his name reappeared in terrorism trials in Denmark and later on in relation to Danes travelling to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State.[17]

In early 2016, documents containing details about some 22,000 individuals who had joined the Islamic State since 2013 were leaked. In those documents the names of several Danes appeared, many of whom indicating that Tariq was their recruiter. During his trial, the above-mentioned Hamza Cakan, who was the first Dane to be convicted of joining the Islamic State, confirmed the validity of the documents and that it was Tariq who facilitated his joining the group.[18]

In the years between, Tariq was involved in making plebeian jihadism in Denmark more organized and activist as well as more available to individuals with a criminal past. The latter was done through a letter-writing campaign aimed at Muslim inmates and through street proselytizing, specifically focusing on gang members. [19]

In 2009, Tariq established the group *Kaldet til Islam* (The Calling to Islam), which advocated the implementation of Sharia and the establishment of a caliphate in Denmark.[20] This group gave jihadism in Denmark a much higher public profile, communicating via websites and social media, giving interviews to media. Individuals affiliated with the group even appeared in debates with Danish politicians in a confrontational, burly and often ridiculing style.[21]

The group became known to a wider public in 2011 when it actively agitated against participation in the Danish general elections in September of that year. Shortly thereafter representatives of the group informed the press that they had implemented so-called “Sharia zones” in the residential area Tingbjerg in northern Copenhagen, in which they would patrol and keep order.[22]

Although by then Omar Bakri Mohammad had moved to Lebanon and Anjem Choudary had taken his place, Shiraz Tariq had maintained good relations in London. It stands to reason that the Danish campaigns were strongly inspired by similar activities in London under the organization of Choudary in the summer of 2011.[23]

On its website, *Kaldet til Islam* linked to Choudary’s endorsement of them and Anjem Choudary himself removed any doubts about the ties between Copenhagen and London during a conversation in November 2013. There, he explained that although he was pleased that Tariq had recently become a martyr in Syria, he himself had now lost his main contact in Denmark and would have to find a new one.[24]

Sometime before August 2013, Tariq had left Denmark and moved to Syria along with the spokesman of *Kaldet til Islam*, Musharaf Sahid. In August 2013, the two appeared in a series of videos entitled *Den*

*Forglemte Forpligtelse* 1-4 (The Neglected Duty) very clearly encouraging others to join them in establishing a Caliphate there and infamously making death threats against six named Danes. Although the two men had previously represented *Kaldet til Islam*, the videos were not explicitly linked to the group.

Following the death of Tariq in September 2013 and Sahid's death later that year, *Kaldet til Islam's* activities declined and some of those who had previously identified with the group began to appear as representatives of the new group *Millatu Ibrahim* in the summer of 2014.

A period of relative openness online ended approximately at the same time as Said Mansour was sentenced to four years in prison in December 2014 for having incited to terrorism and murder through his open Facebook profile. However, the groups still exist and more importantly, some of the individuals involved still exist.

That a separate fraction within jihadism was evolving and that it was breaking with others, could be seen in the conflicts that arose around certain ideological questions, namely the idea of implementing Sharia in Denmark, the idea of establishing a Caliphate in Denmark and the individualization of authority, including the rejection of the prestige coming from seniority, experience and high levels of formal education.

Following *Kaldet til Islam's* campaigns in the fall of 2011, a Danish jihadi by the name of Abu Ahmad al-Falastini published an article in which he argued against the group's idea of implementing Sharia and establishing a Caliphate in a country where the majority of the population is not Muslim.[25]

This led to reactions from individuals affiliated with *Kaldet til Islam*; on 31 December 2011, Abu Ahmad gave a speech where he elaborated on his article and addressed the reactions of *Kaldet til Islam*. Abu Ahmad explained that representatives of the group had accused him of insulting God and referred to him a "so-called Sheikh" who was a laughing stock. In response, Abu Ahmad belittled the representatives of *Kaldet til Islam*, calling them young and ignorant and likening himself to a father who now had to reprimand his children. Abu Ahmad vehemently dismissed the idea that Sharia can be introduced in Denmark as a sign of ignorance and made it very clear that he deserved respect for his knowledge, education and age.[26]

The latter point is as crucial to plebeian jihadism as the former. The rejection of formal education and the individualization of authority are to some extent linked to an eschatological narrative in which adherents understand themselves as *the chosen ones* who receive direct divine guidance and have access to supernatural resources such as revelations through dreams and invisible soldiers.

In their Danish eschatological narrative, an overwhelming foreign occupation of an area called Khorasan will symbolise the beginning of the end. A small group of men with long hair and long beards, wearing white clothes and carrying black and white banners with the Islamic creed will defeat the occupiers, forcing them to withdraw. This area covers Afghanistan, and the Taliban's resistance to the presence of NATO and ISAF troops was perceived as part of that battle.

Following the success in Khorasan, the battle will move to an area called al-Sham, where a Caliphate will be established and al-Mahdi, a saviour, will be found. This area covers Syria, in which there was no open violent conflict in the late 2000's. After much trouble, the Caliphate will eventually spread to the entire world. In this narrative, this will all be signs that the final clash between good and evil has begun and that all human beings will have to take sides. Part of the narrative is that only a small minority of Muslims will understand this and join the battles by engaging in violent activities and that these are *the chosen few* who are not only destined for greatness and ensured a place in Paradise, but also endowed with the ability to see everything clearly, having direct access to supernatural powers.[27]

References to this narrative as well as to the belief in having access to supernatural resources can be found in the above-mentioned series of videos entitled *Den Forglemte Forpligtelse* (The Neglected Duty) which was

published in the summer of 2013, featuring, among others, Shiraz Tariq and Musharaf Sahid. In these videos the participants explain how Syria, or al-Sham as they call it, is a blessed area predestined for establishing an Islamic state and how it is predestined that only a few select individuals will be willing to fight until Judgement Day and that those who migrate to engage in combat will play a unique role. Therefore, they are granted access to special resources such as invisible soldiers who will assist them in combat. In the second video, such soldiers are mentioned in relation to a specific clash in an airport and in the first video reference is made to being victorious without firing a single shot thanks to divine intervention. In this first video it is also mentioned that these select individuals will receive guidance through dreams and become part of divine miracles.[28]

## Conclusion

Key to Danish plebeian jihadism is the focus on Denmark itself, in addition to as a factor in conflicts in Muslim majority countries, and the ambition to implement Sharia and establish a Caliphate there. This implies a greater engagement with domestic politics and the public, which appeals more directly to an audience that is preoccupied and dissatisfied with its own position in Danish society.

For this audience, the individualization of authority, derived from the eschatological narrative, further adds to the appeal because it makes the requirements for admission so low that virtually anyone can join. Finally, the popular profile of plebeian jihadism, which supplements a pious and intellectual rhetoric with a confrontational, burly, streetwise and ridiculing one, resonates with new audiences.

Conflicts in Muslim majority countries and organizations such as the Islamic State and al-Qaida are undoubtedly central to Danish jihadism, including plebeian jihadism, but plebeian jihadism cannot be reduced to being an effect of those alone. Therefore, militarily defeating the organizations or even solving the conflicts will not necessarily lead to the dissolution of plebeian jihadism. Plebeian jihadism is *also* a response to domestic politics and a voice of angry, misunderstood and under-appreciated youth but it cannot be reduced to this either. If contemporary jihadism is to be countered, we must recognize and address all its aspects and, perhaps most importantly, the interplay between them.

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## Notes

[1] E.g. *Washington Post*, December 20, 2015, The Islamic State creates a new type of jihadist: Part terrorist, part gangster, by Anthony Faiola and Souad Mekhennet; URL: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/the-islamic-state-creates-a-new-type-of-jihadist-part-terrorist-part-gangster/2015/12/20/1a3d65da-9bae-11e5-aca6-1ae3be6f06d2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/the-islamic-state-creates-a-new-type-of-jihadist-part-terrorist-part-gangster/2015/12/20/1a3d65da-9bae-11e5-aca6-1ae3be6f06d2_story.html) ; accessed November 2, 2016; *BBC Magazine*, March 24, 2016, Brussels attacks: Molenbeek's gangster jihadists; URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35890960> ; accessed August 15, 2016; *CBS News*, October 11, 2016; Europe's criminals prove easy converts to "gangster jihad" for ISIS, URL: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/europe-criminals-converts-isis-gangster-jihad-super-gang-prisons/> ; accessed November 2, 2016; Basra and Neumann's article in this Special Issue.

[2] The assumption that Islamic State is less demanding intellectually may be a misunderstanding, see e.g. Graeme Wood. What ISIS Really Wants. *The Atlantic*, March 2015 Issue; URL: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/> ; accessed August 15 2016.

[3] E.g. *The Hill*, September 20 2014, Five ways ISIS, al Qaeda differ, by Kristina Wong, <http://thehill.com/policy/defense/218387-five-ways-isis-is-different-than-al-qaeda> Accessed August 15 2016.

[4] E.g. William McCants (2015). *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State*. New York: Macmillan. Jeffrey Kaplan & Christopher P. Costa (2015). The Islamic State and the New Tribalism, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 27:5, pp. 926-969.

[5] During fieldwork carried out with Dr. Manni Crone.

[6] Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012:14, note 15.

[7] See e.g. Sheikh's article in this Special Issue.

- [8] See e.g. Manni Crone, 2016, Radicalization Revisited. Violence, politics and the skills of the body, *International Affairs*, 92:3, 587-604.
- [9] It is worth keeping in mind that the author as a researcher who relies on open sources cannot assume to be aware of all cases that have been foiled.
- [10] In March 2016, Hedegaard was fined for having revealed the man's name in, among other places, his book "Attentatet" (The Assassination) from 2015. In November 2016, the US Department of State designated Basil Hassan as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. Following this, Danish media asked the Danish courts to lift the ban against naming him and on December 15th this was sanctioned by the Eastern High Court.
- [11] See Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2013), Making a case for going to court. Militant Islamism in Denmark, *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, 22:1, pp. 10-20.
- [12] One could argue that it has been present even since 1985, when two bombs exploded in Copenhagen in front of the American airline Northwest Orient and a synagogue, killing one person and injuring 32 others. In 1989, four Palestinian members of the group Islamic Jihad were convicted but to this day the details about the attacks are unclear. For more on the attacks see e.g. Andersen, Lars Erslev, 2011, "Terrorisme som permanent krise: 9/11 i Danmark" (Terrorism as permanent crisis: 9/11 in Denmark), in: Martin Marcussen & Karsten Ronit, (Eds.), *Kriser, politik og forvaltning. De internationale udfordringer* (Crises, politics and administration. International challenges), Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- [13] Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012:14; Andersen, Lars Erslev & Jan Aagaard, (2005), *In the Name of God – The Afghan Connection and the U.S. War against Terrorism. The Story of the Afghan Veterans as the masterminds behind 9/11*, University Press of Southern Denmark.
- [14] For more on this, see e.g. Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012; Lars Erslev Andersen (2011), "Terrorisme som permanent krise: 9/11 i Danmark" (Terrorism as permanent crisis: 9/11 in Denmark), in: Martin Marcussen & Karsten Ronit, (Eds.), *Kriser, politik og forvaltning. De internationale udfordringer* (Crises, politics and administration. International challenges), Hans Reitzels Forlag; Sheikh, Mona & Manni Crone (2011), "Muslims as a Danish security Issue", in: Jørgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Islam in Denmark: The Challenge of Diversity*, Lexington Books-Rowman and Littlefield; Lars Erslev Andersen & Jan Aagaard (2005), *In the Name of God – The Afghan Connection and the U.S. War against Terrorism. The Story of the Afghan Veterans as the masterminds behind 9/11*, University Press of Southern Denmark.
- [15] For a list of these up to 2012, see Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012:14.
- [16] Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012:14.
- [17] Including the Glostrup-case from 2005 and the Glasvej-case from 2007. Tariq was arrested in connection with the Glostrup-case; however, he was never charged.
- [18] *Politiken*, June 7, 2016, 24-årig erkender i retten: Var i Syrien med Islamisk Stat (24 year old admits in court: Was in Syria with Islamic State), by Johan Varning Bendsen. URL: <http://politiken.dk/indland/ECE3241594/24-aarig-erkender-i-retten-var-i-syrien-med-islamisk-stat/>; accessed November 7, 2016.
- [19] *Berlingske*, October 2, 2013, Fængslede muslimer skal have brev fra ekstreme islamister (Imprisoned Muslims to receive a letter from extreme Islamists); URL: <http://www.b.dk/nationalt/faengslede-muslimer-skal-have-brev-fra-ekstreme-islamister>; accessed November 14 2016; Author's notes from fieldwork carried out with Dr. Manni Crone, Copenhagen, January 24, 2009.
- [20] Morten Skjoldager (2016), *Syv år for PET-Jakob Scharfs tid* (Seven Years in Service of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service – Jacob Scharf's days), People's Press.
- [21] In July 2013, the news media Ekstra Bladet arranged a debate between Adnan Avdic and MP Inger Støjberg, who in 2015 became Minister for Immigration, Integration and Housing. URL: <http://ekstrabladet.dk/nyheder/politik/dansktopolitik/article4503263.ece>; accessed November 9 2016.
- [22] Representatives of the group occasionally also presented themselves as representatives of *ahl us-sunnah wal-jammah, sharia4dk, Iummah4dk, and Iummahfordk*.
- [23] This was not unique to Denmark. For parallels in other European countries, see e.g. Petter Nesser, 2016, *Islamist Terrorism in Europe: A History*. London: Hurst Publishers; also: Lorenzo Vidino (2015), "Sharia4: From Confrontational Activism to Militancy." *Perspectives on Terrorism* vol. 9, no. 2.
- [24] Author's notes from conversation, London, November 14, 2013.
- [25] Similarly to Shiraz Tariq's, Abu Ahmad's name has appeared in relation to several Danish terrorism cases.
- [26] Published at the now closed [www.islamiskundervisning.com](http://www.islamiskundervisning.com) website and previously mentioned in Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2012), Anti-democratic and violence-promoting environments in Denmark that subscribe to Islamist ideologies. What do we know? *DIIS Report*, 2012:14, p. 25.
- [27] An extended version of the eschatological narrative was documented in June 2009 and the part of it revolving around Khorasan can be found in Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2010), *The attractions of Jihadism. An identity approach to three Danish terrorism cases and the gallery of characters around them* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Copenhagen, Denmark. In this thesis, more details about the role of dreams, magic and supernatural powers can be found. The continuation taking place in as-Sham is only mentioned in Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen, 2015, *Viewing jihadism as a counterculture: potential and limitations, Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 7:1, pp. 3-17.
- [28] Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen (2014), *Jeg en stat mig bygge vil. Når vesterlændinge drager til konfliktområder for at grundlægge Utopia* (I will build myself a state. When Westerners migrate to conflict areas to establish Utopia), in Lars Erslev Andersen (Ed.) *Terrorisme og trusselsvurderinger* (Terrorism and Threat Assessments), Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, pp. 44-45.