



Bundeskriminalamt

This book deals with the psychological effects of extremist propaganda videos. It particularly asks the question how young adults in Germany respond to right-wing as well as Islamic extremist videos which can be found on the Internet today. This is not a book about terrorism, but about the potential conditions which might facilitate a climate of receptivity for radical messages in a young mass audience with diverging cultural and educational background and different attitudes and values.

The so called web 2.0, with its mostly unfiltered, user-created content provides unprecedented opportunities for extremists to present themselves and uncensored ideas to a mass audience. This internet propaganda is created in order to increase attention and interest for extremist ideas and group memberships. It also aims to indoctrinate the recipients and, as a last consequence, to foster radicalization. The radicalizing potential has been feared by international security agencies and mass media. Nevertheless, not even the early stage effects of extremist propaganda in terms of raising attention and interest have yet been analyzed empirically. They are however necessary preconditions in order for propaganda to envelope a radicalizing effect.

The current studies close this gap by focusing on this early stage effects. We analyzed how a non-radicalized audience responds to extremist internet videos. For the first time, based on a content analysis of actual right-wing and Islamic extremist Internet videos, our study used state-of-the-art methods from experimental media psychology for tracking the emotional and cognitive responses of a broad sample of 450 young male adults. As expected, we mostly found rejection and never strong acceptance for the extremist videos. Still, specific production styles and audience characteristics were able to cause at least neutral attitudes underpinning the strategic potential of internet propaganda. In the end, our studies might result in more questions than answers. However, we are confident that the conceptual as well as the methodological way chosen is most promising as to approach a deeper understanding of the first effects of extremist Internet propaganda.

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Rieger · Frischlich · Bente Propaganda 2.0

Diana Rieger · Lena Frischlich · Gary Bente

In cooperation with the Terrorism/Extremism  
Research Unit (FTE) of the German Federal  
Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt)

# Propaganda 2.0

## Psychological Effects of Right-Wing and Islamic Extremist Internet Videos

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Psychological Effects of Right-Wing  
and Islamic Extremist Internet Videos

*Polizei + Forschung*

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## Foreword

The radicalization of individuals through extremist propaganda is a phenomenon which has become increasingly discussed in recent years. Extremist organisations chiefly use videos and online services on the Internet to win over supporters and to radicalize individuals. For jihadist organisations, such as Al-Qaida, but also for right-wing extremists the Internet has become the most important communication and propaganda tool.

Within the research community there is little agreement regarding the degree of impact the Internet has on radicalization and recruiting processes. There is, however, a consensus that within such processes the Internet is deemed, in general, to exert a considerable influence. Today, the Internet seems to play a key role with regard to the dissemination of propaganda material by extremist organisations.

The extremist propaganda of jihadist and right-wing extremist organisations has recently changed not only in quantitative terms. More and more video messages are being released in German and references are made to current political and social affairs in Germany. Parallel to this development, the Security Authorities in Germany have identified numerous travel movements to training camps and combat areas as well as an increased inflow to autonomous right-wing extremists. An additional factor is the phenomenon of self-radicalization of right-wing and Islamic extremists in the privacy of one's home, as highlighted in the case of Arid Uka in Germany or Anders Behring Breivik in Norway.

In order to initiate preventive and repressive counter-measures, a better understanding of the effect of extremist propaganda disseminated over the Internet is required. It is especially important to determine how effective such propaganda videos really are. Who is susceptible to such propagandistic messages?

In an effort to seek answers to these questions, the German Federal Criminal Police Office (the "Bundeskriminalamt"), in co-operation with the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism within the Ministry of Security and Justice, invited interested parties to tender for a research project. I am very pleased that cross-border co-operation with a Dutch Security Agency has been achieved, focusing on the important question of research in the field of extremism. This also documents the fact that we are confronted with similar questions in relation to the fight against extremism and that we can pursue the answers to these questions together. Thus far, research on the impact of extremist propaganda on the Internet has taken a more theoretical approach, or was aimed at findings derived from qualitative analyses. Systematic, broad-ranging empirical studies have not been published yet. This experimental study is an initial step towards closing this research gap.

The main objective behind the research was to identify factors which can influence the emotional and cognitive effects of Internet propaganda on young – not radicalized – adults.

I would like to thank the research team led by Prof. Dr. Gary Bente, Head of the Department for Social Psychology at the University of Cologne, who has carried out a major empirical study which is the first of its kind. The effects of propaganda are demonstrated with the help of a combination of various quantitative, qualitative and experimental methods which ensure a broad discussion on the findings, offering a true insight into relevant interdependencies. At the same time, new questions are raised. It has to be underlined that the focus is not on conspicuous individual cases of radicalization, but on the influence of extremist Internet propaganda on inconspicuous individuals. The study is an attempt to identify the basal effects inherent in such propaganda forming necessary though non-sufficient pre-conditions for a potential influence on radicalization. .

The findings of the study highlight new avenues for the prevention of radicalization over the Internet. With this study, the Bundeskriminalamt and the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism strive to promote further research on the influence of (Internet) extremist propaganda and provide impulses for the prevention of extremist radicalization.

Jörg Ziercke  
President of the Bundeskriminalamt

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We further gratefully acknowledge the invaluable support received from the Joint Internet Surveillance Centre in Berlin (GIZ) and the jugendschutz.net with regard to the collection of our stimulus material. Mr. Khalid Zoubairi and Mr. Stefan Glaser had not only provided us with rich samples of propaganda videos but had also advised us with regard to the selection and content analytical criteria.

Extending experimental research beyond the usual samples of psychology students is certainly a particular challenge. We wish to express our gratitude to the International Students' Office (University of Cologne), in particular to Mr. Karl-Heinz Korn for supporting us in contacting and recruiting students from different cultures and disciplines. Extending our samples beyond student groups would not have been possible without the support of the vocational schools in Cologne. In particular, we gratefully acknowledge the support of the vocational school "Hans-Böckler" in Cologne Deutz and the support of Mr. Jochen Erpenbeck, the vocational school for media professions in Cologne Zollstock, especially Mr. Klaus-Dieter Schulz; and the vocational school Cologne Ehrenfeld, Mr. Christoph Schneider. They had not only brought us into contact with potential participants in their schools but had also supported us in conducting the studies on-site, providing both time and space in this regard.

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No psychological study is possible without the support of numerous anonymous participants. This study would not have been possible without their trust and openness. Their interest and feedback deeply impressed us and encouraged the continuation of our work.

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## 1. Introduction

*“This is the secret of propaganda: To totally saturate the person, whom the propaganda wants to lay hold of, with the ideas of the propaganda, without him even noticing that he is being saturated.”* (Paul Watzlawick, 1984, p. 112)

The idea of propaganda may be as old as mankind; but its threatening potential is quite contemporary. In Watzlawick’s terms, the main purpose of propaganda is to persuade the recipient into adopting the ideas the propagator tries to convey. Convincing the masses of one’s own ideology or dogma has always been part of every political, religious or societal system. Yet, in our globalized world propaganda has exceeded national borders or definable audiences. The increasing dissemination of the internet and its enormous outreach make it the perfect instrument to broadcast messages worldwide without temporal or geographical restrictions. Online messages can be read at the other end of the world within the blink of an eye. Furthermore, the internet allows the combined usage of stylistic means propaganda so far used separately (texts, videos, and discussion forums) and enables the masses to actively create their own content.

In particular, extremist groups have discovered these benefits and use the internet as their new home-base and operational area (Hoffmann, 2006). The two biggest of these virtual propagators are right-wing and Islamic extremists.<sup>1</sup> In Germany alone, there are thousands of online forums, blogs, social media offers and, particularly, videos that disseminate their ideology (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2008; Glaser, 2011). By spreading messages via online channels, three extremist objectives are regulated: (1) to threaten the public (2) to provoke the enemy and (3) to mobilize the *potential ingroup* to join the organization (Münkler, 2002; Wegner, 2009).

Prominent strategists from right-wing as well as Islamic extremism (e.g. Al-Suri, Milton Kleim Jnr.) pronounce the potential of the internet to form a base for a “media resistance”. For instance, Al’Qaida’s chief strategist Al-Suri declared the internet to be an activating tool. It would teach the recipient *“to pursue jihad and resistance in secrecy and alone, [ . . . ] and [to form a cell] for the individual jihad.”* (Al-Suri cf. Lia, 2007a, p. 393)

It is not surprising that security agencies and mass media have stated concerns that extremist propaganda would have the power to indoctrinate its recipients and to push extremist movements (Europol, 2011a). It has even been assumed that a so-called *“turbo-radicalization”* (Denso, 2011) among so far non-obtrusive people could be possible via single videos. Particularly young adults, *digital natives*,

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1 Left-wing extremist online activities are reported less frequently and differ qualitatively in their appearance (e.g. Verfassungsschutz des Saarlandes, 2010). Therefore, this book as well as the conducted studies focused on right-wing and Islamic extremism.

are considered to be susceptible since they can be easily reached via the extremist online offensive.

Moreover, the lack of geographical boundaries involves the danger of a new type of indoctrination that differs from the traditional forms as known from history (e.g. Naroidnaya Wolya) and found in today's separatist terrorist groups such as the ETA (Hoffmann, 2006). Traditionally, their members have been raised on-site and know the causes they fight for by own experiences. They have been taught to obey the ideology of the terrorist group in their immediate surroundings, a process which can be classified as "*embedded indoctrination*". However, in the last decade a new type of terrorist organization has raised the Western's focus of attention: The so called "*home-grown terrorists*" (Wilner & Dubouloz, 2009). In contrast to perpetrators, who were socialized and act in current war zones in Iraq or Afghanistan, home-grown terrorists have grown up in Western societies, and "autonomously" act according to their extremist ideology (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009a, p. 52). We refer to this process as "*distributed indoctrination*" as it has been assumed that it is directed and facilitated by a stream of extremist propaganda material accessed through the internet (e.g., National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009a).

Prominent cases of Western terrorists have been interpreted by the mass media as evidence for this distributed indoctrination process (Flade, 2011). One example is the case of Arid U., a young German extremist who shot down two U.S. soldiers at Frankfurt airport (on their way to Afghanistan) in March 2011. Arid U. claimed *YouTube* videos featuring U.S. violence and lootings in Afghanistan to be central triggers for his deed.

Besides serving as possible trigger, the internet also allows perpetrators to present themselves and their deeds to "the world". For example, Mohammed Mehra, who shot down soldiers and Jewish children in Toulouse in March 2012, filmed his attacks in order to "proudly" present them to the global community. This modern interplay between extremism and propaganda, the so-called *propaganda of the deed* (Bueno de Mesquita & Dickson, 2007) is not only found for Islamic extremists. Right-wing extremist examples are Anders Breivic, the self-proclaimed right-wing crusader who killed 77 mainly young people in Norway in July 2011, as well as the National Socialist underground terrorists who reached public awareness in Germany a few months later. Both propagated their deeds and messages via *YouTube* videos and online publications.

In these anecdotes, in particular extremist propaganda via audio-visuals played a relevant role in all these cases. From a media psychological perspective, videos are a perfect tool for propaganda. The technical development makes their recording increasingly easy and the simplicity of uploading them on *YouTube* allows the fast contact with a mass audience. Nevertheless, single cases which are retrospectively analyzed after an attack are not able to depict causal factors. Even though in all cases internet videos were present, research on media effects has constantly

shown media reception to be only one out of many factors affecting attitudes and violent behaviors (Ferguson, 2007). It is thus implausible that a few videos are able to transform a so-far normal young adult into a violent terrorist. Nevertheless, they might contribute to a climate of receptivity for extremist messages.

To make valid conclusions about the contributions of internet videos, experimental studies are necessary in order to test the prerequisites leading to an extremist attitude or even extremist behavior. However, research testing these influences and conditions is still seldom if existent. To close this gap, the current book examined extremist propaganda and its effects by applying established communication, media and social psychological theories and research methods.

In a first step, we conceptualized propaganda as a form of advertising in which an extremist ideology instead of a product is being sold (O'Shaughnessy & Baines, 2009). As advertisements, extremist internet videos also aim at finding new "buyers" for the ideology they "sell". Research on advertising however depicts the multiple steps a "product" has to climb before it will be bought. One of the classic models of this research field is the AIDA Model by E. St. Lewis (1903). He stated that a "product" (such as the extremist ideology) has to first get *Attention*, evoke *Interest* and create *Desire* before *Action* (e. g., "buying") might follow (E. St. Lewis, 1903). The hierarchical organization of the model implies that each step has to be preceded by the former(s), but does not necessarily lead to the latter. Applying this idea to the reception of extremist videos, the ideology first has to get attention and create interest before the desire to join an extremist group can spread and finally, an extremist behavior might follow. A direct leap from attention to action is—in general—very unlikely. Though this contradicts the medial interpretation of videos as causal factors in a radicalization process, raising attention and interest are the ground for desire to sprout.

Until now, little is known about the early stage effects of extremist videos and their potential to increase attention and interest in the underlying ideology. Instead, the majority of studies focused on the later steps and concentrated retrospectively on extremist actions. The mechanisms of the preceding steps and their preconditions remained unclear.

Taking a media and communication psychological perspective, there are many unanswered questions concerning the effects of extremist propaganda videos which should be addressed experimentally. Since right-wing and Islamic extremist formats are the most frequently uploaded ideologies online, it is still an open question whether these two differ systematically with regard to their appearance. Which means do they use to "sell" their ideas? It is still questionable whether such videos might be able to raise interest or even to influence the attitudes of a broad mass audience. Which emotions and cognitions are spontaneously triggered? Which role does the message style play for the effects? Besides, differences between the extremist videos; which factors on the recipients' side influence the receptivity for extremist propaganda? Is there, for instance, a

difference between recipients with the same cultural background as the propagator and those with a distinct one (e.g. Germans for German right-wing extremists vs. for Islamic extremists)? It is as well possible that the educational level of the recipients influence the potential effect of propaganda videos and that pre-existing personality and attitudinal variables shape the pattern.

All these questions point to the necessity to analyze extremist internet videos and their psychological effects from a media and communication psychological perspective. In order to understand the impact of a message, the full spectrum of a communication has to be analyzed. As Lasswell already stated in (1948) it has to be analyzed “*Who says what to whom in which channel and with what effect?*”. The current book and the hereby presented studies were structured according to this formula: Right-wing and Islamic extremists were identified as main *senders* spreading their ideology via *online videos* to their target audience (the *receivers*). The studies aim at identifying the *effects* of these different aspects. Focusing on the not (yet) radicalized *potential ingroup*, the subtle early stage effects of extremist internet videos were analyzed. To make these early stage effects observable three main guidelines for our research emerged: (1) the systematic description and analysis of current extremist internet videos, (2) the cautious assessment of relevant factors on the recipients’ side, (3) the usage of reliable methods from media, social and communication psychology allowing to detect even the subtle immediate effects of extremist internet videos.

Our large-scale study consisted of four consecutive parts. First, we systematically described the variance in the appearance of right-wing and Islamic extremist videos. Different production styles and narratives were analyzed, compared and categorized into different extremist “genres”. The method of Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA, Altheide & Cheney, 2006) allowed us to categorize a large database of extremist propaganda in German or with German subtitles.<sup>2</sup> We identified the same four prototypical categories for right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda depicting the current “genre” spectrum. Prototypical scenes for each of the categories were then presented to 450 un-radicalized participants.

It is obvious that right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda differs in terms of the cultural background of the *potential ingroup* they address: While German right-wing extremists try to mobilize Germans (not, i. e., Turks), Islamic extremist propaganda tries to recruit Muslims. To account for effects of a potential match between cultural background of the extremist sender and the recipient, participants with distinct cultural backgrounds (in terms of national origin and religious orientation) were invited and were confronted with right-wing as well as Islamic extremist videos. As education has often been conceptualized as a crucial factor, a student and a non-student sample were compared. Besides these broad classifica-

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2 The database was kindly provided by the Federal Criminal Police Office (more precisely the Joint Internet Surveillance Centre in Berlin (GIZ)) as well as the Network for Youth Protection (jugendschutz.net).

tions we were also interested in more individual factors of the recipients. In order to consider potential influences related to personality and attitudinal factors, a large set of recipient variables was thus included.

We pictured the potential effects by means of an innovative multi-methodological approach, combining established social psychological measurements and validated techniques from media psychology to detect subtle immediate effects. Studies I and II focused on the so-called *explicit* or *conscious* effects (during and after the exposure to the video clips) by combining psycho-physiological and real-time-response measurements during the reception (Bente, Aelker, & Fürtjes, 2009) and self-reported emotional and cognitive evaluations after each video. Study III complemented the pattern by using an implicit association test (Karpinski & Steinman, 2006) to investigate the *unconscious* or *implicit* effects propaganda videos might have. This methodological combination allowed insights in the immediate subtle processes triggered by extremist internet videos. Our results showed that propaganda mostly led to adverse reactions. The *potential in-group* was not attached to extremist messages and in turn, evaluated them negatively. However, some risk factors related to propaganda itself, as well as to the recipient, shaped the amount of rejection.

Using the words of Paul Watzlawick introducing this chapter, we aimed at contributing to an understanding of the “*secret of propaganda*”. Instead of focusing on those already “*saturated*”, as Watzlawick would call it, we wanted to describe the boundary conditions which might enhance receptivity for extremist messages in a young mass audience inside Germany.

The current book therefore provides a systematic description of extremist *propaganda* (Chapter 2), its right-wing and Islamic extremist *senders* (Chapter 3), the *formats* or genres of audio-visual propaganda (Chapter 4) and the relevant characteristics of the *receivers* (Chapter 5) as well as first studies on the *effects* of such videos (Chapter 6). Using this theoretical background, or research foci are derived (Chapter 7). In the second part of the book, a new empirical approach to look at propaganda effects is presented. We intended to deliver first insights into the psychological effects in terms of emotional and cognitive responses towards right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda and the relevant factors shaping them. We hope to stimulate further research and to give first hints for practitioners developing ideas for intervention and prevention.



## Part I Propaganda in the new Millennium

### 2. What is Propaganda? A Development Towards Modern Media Applications

*“Propaganda is about talking grievance into people, as Hitler did to the Germans. There is always the harsh residuum of grievance in any society that can be exploited by a demagogue. Nor does propaganda necessarily make, or ever did make, the mistake of asking for belief: it is sometimes merely an invitation to share a fantasy [...]. What has changed of course is the range of mediums colonised by propagandists [...].”* (O’Shaughnessy, 2012, p. 38)

The spreading of propaganda messages, as well as the theories which try to explain their appeal, has a long history. However, especially for extremist groups, the use of new media and new formats considerably changed the scope and the possibilities of propaganda during the last decade.

The current understanding of “propaganda” has been developed and shaped throughout history in interaction with religious, societal and technical changes. Independent of its current form, propaganda is still rooted in the same principles. The term itself is derived from the Latin word “propagare” meaning “*to spread plants to new locations*” (Rogers et al., 2007, p. 67). It was first used during the Thirty Year’s War by Pope Gregory the XV. who issued the “*Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*” (= congregation to spread the Catholic faith) in 1622 as a reaction to the protestant reformation. During World War II, the term was substantially coined by the German propaganda minister Goebbels (Taylor, 2003) who stated: “*We have made the Reich by propaganda.*” Looking back, the development of propaganda and its application had a clear focus on war and issues related to war. Bernays (1942) even stated that during WWII, “*ideas became weapons too*” (p. 236). As O’Shaughnessy (2012) formulated it: “*What we see [...] is an evolution of propaganda through war, revolution and the retailing of charisma*” (p. 31). It is thus no surprise that propaganda has been associated with psychological warfare. The “*battle of ideas*” (Bernays, 1942) was fought by every official institution or governmental party during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reaching its climax in the era of the Cold War (e.g., Taylor, 2003). Politicians were aware of the fact that “*winning the minds of civilians is [...] crucial to winning or losing a war*” (Finch, 2000, p. 372). The mainly negative connotation that is inherent in the term “propaganda” to day is due to this historical association (Rogers et al., 2007).

Although there is no common definition of propaganda, some core ideas derived from this historical development are consensual: For instance, Lasswell (1927) already described propaganda as the “*management of collective attitudes by manipulation of significant symbols*” (p. 627). This aspect of collective manipulation

has been further unfolded in the definition by Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) we will refer to throughout this book. They defined propaganda as “*the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist*” (p. 7).

Since the first studies on war propaganda in WWII this desired response remained the same: “(1) Heighten the moral unity of your own [people], (2) weaken the moral of your enemy and (3) win over the moral of the neutrals” (Bernays, 1942, p. 237). From a social psychological perspective this can be understood as an increasing cohesion among one's *ingroup*, weakening the cohesion of the *outgroup* and win the *potential ingroup*. Research in the area of Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) has largely described the importance of ingroup/outgroup categorizations as part of one's self-concept. These categorizations were found to influence people's motivation, emotion and behavior as people prefer to see themselves in a positive light (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Fein & Spencer, 1997).

Wining over the neutral potential ingroup is considered to be of particular interest for researching the effects of extremist internet videos. Besides the “own people” who already feel to be part of this extremist ingroup, the worldwide web confronts numerous so-far neutral recipients with extremist recruiting attempts. Basic strategies which are used to motivate this potential ingroup remain the same irrespective of online or offline implementation. As Lasswell (1927) already described it, four basic strategies can be distinguished: The recipient of the message has to be convinced that (a) the guilt lies on the side of the enemy (implying that there is a defined enemy), (b) that this enemy is “*incorrigible, wicked and perverse*” (p. 77), and that (c), nonetheless, there is hope of victory when (d) all allies stand together (Lasswell, 1927). Merten has further structured this basic pattern into five aspects (Merten, 2000, p. 153):

- (1) **Unique characteristic:** An arbitrary object (idea, action, person or product) is propagated and gains a unique characteristic.
- (2) **Behavioral premise:** For those who consume propaganda, a behavioral premise is predetermined which holds a characteristic of exclusiveness.
- (3) **Exclusiveness (pre-decision):** The recipient of these messages is forced to obey this behavioral premise. This leads to the divestment of freedom to make own decisions.
- (4) **Sanctions (future-directed):** To have the recipients obey these pre-decisions unconditionally, the propaganda messages sketch positive and especially negative sanctions.
- (5) **Non-verifiable arguments:** Propaganda messages should be formulated in a way that makes them unverifiable. This is mostly realized by emphasizing actions which may happen in the future – either threats or eschatological wisdoms.

While the basic aims and the underlying structure of propaganda remained similar over the time, its presence and face has substantially changed during the centuries. Throughout history, the possibilities for dissemination and reception of propaganda have evolved with every societal and technical improvement in communication (O'Shaughnessy, 2012) extending temporal and geographical limitations.

Via the construction of cities and the dissemination of literacy propaganda reached a larger mass audience. The invention of print further enabled propagandistic messages to be available over time. These factors together allowed a fast distribution to a large geographically and temporally distal audience (Taylor, 2003). Later, the invention of the telephone and the mechanical recordings extended the range of propaganda from words and pictures to the human voice.

A qualitatively distinct leap in the distribution of propagandistic messages was the invention of film and cinema. As O'Shaughnessy (2012) claimed: "*Propaganda which speaks the language of propaganda fails to penetrate cognitive defenses. The best propaganda is disguised as entertainment*". And "*Cinema is manifestly the finest medium for propaganda*" (p. 34). It is not surprising that since the beginning of the cinema era, professional filmmakers such as Leni Riefenstahl used their influence on a broad audience<sup>3</sup> for propagandistic purposes. In particular, Hollywood productions from the 1950s/1960s substantially contributed to the American fear of a communist infiltration as depicted in movies such as "*American Guerrillas at the Philippines*" by Fritz Lang (1950) or "*the Manchurian Candidate*" (1962) by John Frankenheimer.

Consequently, the development and the dissemination of the internet in the second half of the 20th century can be regarded as the latest evolution of propaganda. The internet not only combines all techniques used before, it also eludes national borders and governmental control, enabling propagators to spread uncensored messages and pictures to an enormous audience. Furthermore, with the implementation of Web 2.0 applications, (Münker, 2009) people have got the chance to be propagators themselves.

By now, this idea has been professionalized: Internet propaganda changed from an instrument to convince the masses to an instrument used by the masses (O'Shaughnessy, 2012). Social network sites (such as *youtube*), online forums and blogs enable everybody to produce and upload their own propaganda material (English, Sweetser, & Ancu, 2011; Holtz, Kronberger, & Wagner, 2012; O'Shaughnessy, 2012). Even the production of own videos and films has become increasingly easy with the distribution of computers, cheap cameras and smartphones. Furthermore, the seemingly user-generated content in web 2.0 applica-

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3 Riefenstahl has been controversially discussed as creator of Hitler's fascist aesthetic in her films and because of her closeness to the Nazi regime. See e.g. <http://www.abendblatt.de/kultur-live/article814253/Ein-Genie-auf-dem-Irrweg.html> Retrieved online, 26/06/2012.

tions provides a new form of credibility for professionally produced statements as they seem to come from the “average users” too.

To sum up, the main aspects, aims and structures of propaganda have remained the same over time. The guise however has changed with the technical developments over the centuries and especially during the last decade. In particular, extremist groups have discovered these benefits for their desired “grass-root movement” (Sageman, 2008). *“Internet is viewed as a perfect medium, one with a far reach that affords anonymity and where recruitment becomes self-recruitment.”* (Seib & Janbek, 2011). Among them, right-wing and Islamic extremists form the two biggest groups, particularly when it comes to the production and dissemination of extremist internet videos (Europol, 2011b; Glaser, 2011; Torres-Soriano, 2010).

### 3. Extremism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

*“Extremists conquer the internet”* (Pfister, 2012)

The terms “extremism” and “extremist” are considered to be ill-defined. In everyday language they are often used interchangeably for radicalism, fundamentalism and even terrorism. From a scientific perspective nonetheless, there are substantial differences between these terms. Thus, for the purpose of a scientific study, it is necessary to distinguish them. Hence, a short definition of our understanding is given so to classify who these “conquerors”, Pfister talked about, are.

In a broader sense, **radicalism** refers to an attitudinal pattern that aims at changing societal conditions at their roots (*radix* = lat. “root”). In a narrower perspective, radicalism often refers to intolerance towards other attitudes and to the democratic idea of equality<sup>4</sup>. **Fundamentalism**, in contrast, describes the insistence on firm political, religious or traditional values. Religious traditions are often literally interpreted and understood as universal solutions for all problems<sup>5</sup>. Consequently, both terms describe attitudinal patterns which do not necessarily conflict with a democratic society.

**Extremism**, derived from the Latin words *“extremus/extremitas”* (the outmost/the most dangerous), is often used to describe political attitudes at the uttermost parts of a left to right-wing spectrum. This implies a certain variance over time regarding which concrete attitudes or behaviors are classified as extremist. However, the term also includes actual attempts and behaviors “behind the democratic line”. In their definition, the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution mainly focuses on extremist efforts against the state, enunciating that extremism refers to any illegal attempt against the free democratic basic order, administration or security (Neugebauer, 2010, p. 5).

In the following we will refer to a definition by Kemmesies (2006) which also includes the extremist worldview. He specified the term as referring to *“any attempt being in the widest sense politically or religiously motivated and oriented towards ideologies, that interprets societal conditions in the ‘only truth manner’ with the intention to radically change the given conditions by accordant strategies”* (own translation, Kemmesies, 2006, p. 11).

Following Jesse (Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2004), extremist groups can be distinguished by their aims (left vs. right-wing) as well as by their degree of organization (party vs. single individuals), and the intensity of extremist convictions and their means (rejection of political violence vs. terrorism). As a rough differ-

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4 Retrieved online, <http://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/politiklexikon/18088/radikalismus,05/06/12>.

5 Retrieved online <http://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/politiklexikon/17513/fundamentalismus,05/06/12>.

entiation, mostly left-wing, right-wing and Islamic extremists are distinguished as major threats inside Germany (Otto Schily cf. Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2004)

While the term extremist encompasses those rejecting political violence as well as those who support political violence, the direct advocacy of terrorism is a special case. Terrorism, according to Hoffmann (2006), can be understood as “propaganda of the deed” (Bueno de Mesquita & Dickson, 2007). The understanding of terrorism as a spectacular act of violence pronounces the usage of pictures – broadcasted via mass media – to be relevant in the context of modern propaganda (Hoffmann, 2006). For instance, the attacks of 9/11 are the most famous prototype of propaganda of the deed. *“It was a classic asymmetric attack. Moreover, in the 16 minutes between the strikes on the first and second towers, New York’s news-rooms had scrambled their helicopters and were able to capture the second plane hitting its target live to a global audience”* (Taylor, 2003, p. 315). Even though terrorists have always tried to communicate their aims via attacks that attract attention (Hoffmann, 2006), the internet has opened up new ways to present them to the “global community”.

Most importantly, with the new media, the attacks can be followed *live* and *online*, which heightens their impact. Again right-wing and Islamic extremists are the most salient groups concerning the violence committed, the danger discussed (Europol, 2011a), and the online distribution of the resulting pictures. Anders Breivik preliminary announcing his cruel plans online and Mohammed Mehra filming his kills (see also Chapter 1) are two examples for the interplay of actual propaganda of the deed and its online distribution.

To our understanding, committing an attack refers to an act of **terrorism**. In contrast, the distribution of such pictures and their propagation is considered to be an **extremist** action. In consequence, the book will rely on the term extremism as our focus lay on the effects of extremist internet propaganda on young adults apart from the terroristic pole of the extremist spectrum

### 3.1 Islamic Extremism

*“For Islam is power, Jihad and courage, unity and brotherhood, and the path of Muhammad.”* (“Destroy Night’s Dark Injustice” cf. Kimmage & Ridolfo, 2007)

Since the attacks of 9/11 and the resulting “war against terror” declared by former U.S. president George Bush, the Western world has constantly been informed about the threat ensuing from Islamic extremists (Frindte & Haußecker, 2010). Single cases, like Arid U. and Mohammed Mehra, keep the threat salient. They also lead to some fundamental misinterpretations of Islamic extremism as “typical for the Islam” (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Kastenmüller, Frey, & Oßwald, 2007). In sharp contrast to the religion, Islamic extremism is a religiously motivated and allegedly legitimate form of political extremism (Puschnerat, 2006). Though it

is difficult to clearly define the ideologies and groups that are subsumed under the term, it basically includes certain fundamental or radical aims and the will to use extremist means to reach them (see also the definition of extremism by Kemmesies, 2006).

Islamic extremist organizations emphasize both the Sharia and the Jihad as crucial components: Originally, the Sharia described the God-established order in Islam. Islamic extremists misuse the term to militantly claim the implementation of Islamic law (Schubert & Klein, 1997). By referring to it, they create a utopia of one Islamic state legitimized by Allah and realized by the *Ummah* (the Muslim community). With regard to Jihad, the Western media, as well as Islamic extremists themselves, equate it with the “holy war” although it literally translates into “effort” and refers to war mainly on a metaphorical level (Burke, 2004; Thackrah, 2004). Generally the “great Jihad” as (peaceful) struggle for a worthy cause and the “small Jihad” as armed fighters can be distinguished (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009b). However, the interpretations of the concept are used in varying ways.

The most prominent representatives of Islamic extremism is Al’Qaeda, (Hoffmann, 2006). From their perspective, the “occupation” of the Arab peninsula (the former territory of the Muslim caliphate) and the spreading of Western values like individualism or materialism have alienated the Ummah from the rules of Islam. Therefore, they justify violent Jihad as a way back to God (Hoffmann, 2006; B. Lewis, 2003). The Islamic extremist ideology thus creates a second enemy stereotype besides the Western infidels – the apostate Muslims (Wegner, 2009). Islamic extremists seek to cleanse Muslim territories from all Jews and Crusaders and generally from all Western influence (Hoffmann, 2006). The overall long-term goal is the establishment of the worldwide Islamic caliphate, middle-term and short-term goals are the elimination of all corrupt secular regimes and the mobilization of the Muslim community. To do so, Islamic extremists try to elevate Jihad to a global issue of all believers. However, the concrete implementation of how the “war of ideologies” should be won is left rather vague (Egerton, 2011).

Al’Qaeda (= arab. the foundation) (Sarangi & Canter, 2009) originated from the Afghan Service Bureau (Khidmat lil Mujahidin al Arab) but was changed to Al’Qaeda in 1988, run by Osama bin Laden. By now, Al’Qaeda is present in many countries on different continents and is structured in a decentralized way, operating as a connected network (Thamm, 2005). Local groups act independently and organize terroristic attacks, such as the attacks in Madrid in 2004 or the bombings in London one year later. Consequently, Al’Qaeda is also one of the biggest producers of “propaganda of the deed” material (see Chapter 3.1). Their attacks aim at threatening all nations and institutions that do not follow their interpretation of Islamic law (Thackrah, 2004).

For this global presence it is necessary that Al’Qaeda’s members (inter-) act anonymously and clandestinely within their homelands, thus creating a globalized

grass-root movement of Islamic extremism (Sageman, 2008). Particularly over the last years, Al'Qaeda has more and more transformed from a clear, identifiable organization to an ideological movement hard to get hold of (Schneckener, 2006).

The call by the important salafist<sup>6</sup> strategist Al-Suri for a "Global Islamic Resistance" (Lia, 2007a) is mostly answered by scattered individuals instead of definable groups directly associated with Al'Qaeda (Schneckener, 2006).

He delineates the attacks by Al'Qaeda to "*a call for action and martyrdom*" (cf. Lia, 2007b, p. 438) and seeks to persuade every Muslim of the need to proactively join (Holtmann, 2009). Particularly, the on-going attempt to recruit new followers who are willing to sacrifice their lives is of major importance. Even though members for other purposes are needed, suicide attacks cause the death of the perpetrator (see also Hoffmann, 2006) and can therefore be traced back to one single commitment of the corresponding martyr.

Hegghammer (2006) distinguished three different types of Islamic extremists: (1) *ideologues*, whose function is to provide the group with an ideological and argumentative background. Typical examples are Osama bin Laden or Ayman Al-Zawahiri (the leader of Al'Qaeda since the death of bin Laden). (2) *Lifestyle-Jihadists*, who fight in the war or act as commanders in Al'Qaeda training camps and (3) the *martyrs* who sacrifice themselves for the goals of the organization.

As their use of violence hits innocent people, (which is clearly not intended in the Qur'an), Islamic extremists are challenged with gaining acceptance and legitimization of their actions (Corman et al., 2006). Therefore, they interpret the holy war as a defensive fight against a superior adversary. Propagation is the crucial means to "sell their movement" and gain new followers (Rogan, 2007). This is mostly achieved via the internet (see Chapter 4.1), Al'Qaeda's "electronic think tank" (Musharabash, 2006). Although Sageman (2004) claims personal connections to Al'Qaeda and Jihadists to be more important to explain why people join them, successful propaganda in order to recruit new members and to mobilize them is a necessary component of Al'Qaeda's personal reproduction (Wegner, 2009).

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6 Salafism: Fundamentalist ideology that advocate a traditional interpretation of Islam. New developments within the Islam are strongly rejected, as are Western values. Retrieved online: <http://www.tagesschau.de/inland/salafismus100.html> 24/06/12.



## 3.2 Right-Wing Extremism in Germany

*“Even if all silence, when they drift into their harm. We will protect the county-national Socialists. Bring the fight to the streets, here and now. National socialism lives on in us.”* (“Haftbefehl” cf. Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2003)

Global attention in the last years has surely focused more on the overall threat by Islamic extremists. However, this bias in media reports and societal awareness does not reflect well on the problem of right-wing extremism. The case of Anders Breivic, and his “crusade against multiculturalism”, and the series of terrorist attacks in Germany discovered a few months later, have once again drawn the attention of the public towards the outlasting threat right-wing extremism poses. Besides these single cases, right-wing parties as well as youth organizations are constantly present in Germany. Their appearance however has changed in recent years: While “traditional” skinheads have become rare, the autonomous, action-oriented right-wing youth-culture has constantly grown (Ruhe, 2010)

The definition of right-wing extremism is controversial. There are numerous terms and diverging definitions, often synonymously used for the radical right, extreme right or right-wing radicalism. Based on the aforementioned definition of extremism by Kemmesies (2006), “right-wing extremism” means the co-appearance of radical attitudes and the usage of extreme means. This is in line with Heitmeyer’s definition (1992), who also differentiates between right-wing extremist attitudes and right-wing extremist behavior. Right-wing attitudes are the advocacy of non-equivalent ideologies. Value differences between people and groups based on race, nationality or religion can be summarized here, as well as the marginalization of “un-worthy” others. The affinity for dictatorships, the downplaying of the Nazi regime, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, xenophobic and social-Darwinist attitudes are included (e. g., Decker, Weißmann, Kiess, & Brähler, 2010).

For right-wing extremist behavior, the acceptance of violence as a means to solve conflicts also plays an important role. According to Heitmeyer (2002), the amount of violence acceptance escalates from the acceptance of the immutability of violence to the actual execution of accordant behavior.

Both components are clearly anti-democratic and against the constitution. Right-wing extremism, in thought and deed, is only given when the two co-occur. This happens either by using right-wing extremist orientation for legitimating an escalating acceptance of violence or by accepting violence as a means to assert the ideology behind it (Heitmeyer, Borstel, Grau, & Marth, 2010). Both are impossible to differentiate retrospectively. Nevertheless, it has to be stated that right-wing attitudes are more frequent than right-wing violence (Decker et al., 2010).

Concerning the actual “offer” of right-wing extremism in Europe, two main streams within the scene can be distinguished: On the one hand, there are “traditional” forms of party organized right-wing groups, such as the German NPD or

the Dutch CP'86<sup>7</sup> (Mudde, 1995). They try to reach the middle of society and infiltrate the parliaments. They seek to cooperate with other European or even globalized “white-pride” organizations (Langenbacher & Schellenberg, 2011), for example, with regard to the campaign “Citizens against Islamization” (Langenbacher & Schellenberg, 2011). On the other hand, a noticeable part of the neo-Nazis sharply criticizes the civic strategies of mainstream right-wing parties as being too soft.

*“[. . .] we don't believe that the capitalistic system can be reformed or improved – the prevalent system IS the error and has to be replaced by a new, more liberal, just and NATIONAL AND SOCIAL form of society.”* (Black Block Berlin cf. Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2008).

The increasing number of these autonomous nationalists in Germany (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2008) is far less ideologically rooted but more experience-oriented. Addressing actual socio-political topics, they offer joint leisure time activities which are similar to those of other subcultures, e. g., the spreading of flyers or the drawing of graffiti.

Particularly, youth-oriented video propaganda is often produced by and for autonomous nationalists (Glaser, 2011). Strategies from the black block<sup>8</sup> and symbols from left-wing activists are adopted and used for various militant actions. This “political mimicry” (similar to the strategy of right-wing parties) aims at opening the way towards the discontent middle of society (Müller & Seiler, 2010). Unsurprisingly, the internet plays a major role in propagating these ideas and reaching a huge audience. It provides an important means for the ongoing presence of right-wing extremism. As a right-wing extremist formulated it in an Email to Thomas Pfeiffer in 1996: *“The Internet is cheap, fast and clean. We love it”* (Pfeiffer, 2003).

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7 Party is prohibited since 1998 (Mudde, 2000).

8 Black Block: A group of protesters that seems homogenous because of similar behavior and same-styled black disguise. The disguising shells hamper identification through safety authorities. (Retrieved online <http://szenesprachenwiki.de/definition/schwarzer-block/http://szenesprachenwiki.de/definition/schwarzer-block/March, 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012.>)

## 4. Virtual Propaganda and Extremist Videos

### 4.1 Right-wing and Islamic Extremists in the Internet

*“It is obvious that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90 % of the total preparation for the battles.”* (Osama bin-Laden cf. Corman et al., 2006, p. 3)

The internet encompasses various characteristics that can be used as dangerous instruments or even weapons of terrorism (Hoffman, 2006). Its de-centrality allows access from nearly all over the world, its anonymity hampers legal investigations, and its global nature distances it from the laws of single countries. Furthermore, it is incredibly fast and able to transport enormous data packages. Especially for the younger generations, the *digital natives* (Ebert, Feierabend, Karg, & Rathgeb, 2011), it has become a natural living-space, contributing to own identity development (Schmidt, Lampert, & Schwinge, 2010; Schmidt, 2009)

As was mentioned before, extremist groups have discovered these benefits; especially because they might be under constitutional supervision (Hoffmann, 2006). Everybody is able to join via an internet connection; there is no need to leave the home country or to arrange dubious encounters in order to get in touch with extremists. In particular, the base right to freely express one’s own opinion can be acted out without limitations, creating a space of impunity (Inan, 2007). The internet is used by extremists to communicate with their own people (*ingroup*), their enemies (*outgroup*) as well as to other internet users (*potential ingroup and global community*) (Payne, 2009). Ingroup communication, such as training instructions or planning, is often uploaded in restricted areas such as closed forums (Busch, 2005). For recruiting purposes in contrast, material that is freely accessible on homepages, social media applications or open discussion forums plays an enormous role. This material is often unobtrusively hidden in “normal” contents (wolf-in-sheep’s-clothes strategy) and may reach numerous internet surfers who might stumble over it. In line with this, extremists’ digital communication is often described as *propaganda offensive* (Puschnerat, 2006), *attention-seeking terrorism* or the *marketing of fear* (Weichert, 2007).

This explains why contact with extremist groups is often realized via the internet (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2009). Even in the few cases when public authorities are able to legally delete extremist content, such content has most likely already been uploaded to another website (Seib & Janbek, 2011). This makes the deletion of web content a long and difficult fight (Wortmann, 2007).

Not surprisingly, objective measurements indicate an increasing extremist presence and activity on the World Wide Web. Two years ago there were already over 100 English websites featuring Islamic extremist content. Moreover, the producers explicitly asked their users to translate these websites into as many lan-

guages as possible (Seib & Janbek, 2011). While in 2001, Al'Qaeda published 19 virtual documents, this figure increased to nearly 1000 documents uploaded by Islamic extremist groups in March 2007 alone (Torres-Soriano, 2009). In 2010, the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Sachsen noticed approximately 1000 right-wing extremist websites which were run from inside Germany. This number has also increased (Europol, 2011a; Glaser, 2011). Extremists themselves describe the relevance of a purposeful media application as *"a race for the hearts and minds of our people"* (Al-Zawahiri cf. Lia, 2007b). Three main communication goals can be distinguished: (1) *Legitimization*, (2) *Propagation*, and (3) *Intimidation* (Bockstette, 2008; Corman et al., 2006). While the latter clearly addresses the enemy, the former two are directed towards the already radicalized ingroup but also aim at gaining new members and legalizing the fight in the eyes of the global community (Hoffmann, 2006; Payne, 2009). Weimann (2006) has complemented this list by adding the possibility of collecting information via the net (e.g. about the enemy) and easily forwarding it to one's "colleagues", thus *facilitating concrete operations*. Instructions about how to produce explosives and incendiary agents (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2009; Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2003) as well as whole "university like studies on extremism" (Musharabash, 2006) are available.

Via these internet strategies, Al-Suri's dream of a *"grass-root"* movement of the Jihad (Lia, 2007b), a dream also proclaimed by Klu-Klux Klan<sup>9</sup> Leader Milton Kleim Jr (cf. Bush, 2008), is realized. *"In an individual, secret jihad, the operational activity also takes place on a global and universal [...] horizon. The horizons for this activity open up regardless of borders and countries"* (Al-Suri cited from Lia, 2007b, p. 369).

To sum up, the internet makes a great contribution to this grass-root movement of collective thinking and individual acting. According to Sageman (2008), Al'-Qaeda has already transformed into a social movement with participants rather than members. Besides providing a terrorist agenda, information, instruction and exchange, it is the *"virtual glue"* (Sageman, 2008, p. 144) that is transported online. The extremist organization itself as well as its affiliated groups became connected to a global and ideological homogenous Islamic extremist movement, called the *"leaderless jihad"* (Sageman, 2008) or *"cyber-jihad"* (Engelmann et al., 2010, p. 33). Even though globalized white-power movements are still more seldom, a development in the same direction is apparent (Verfassungsschutz, 2004). The National Coordinator for Counterterrorism in the Netherlands (2009a) assumed that the Internet "supports the entire radicalization process" (p. 52). Four specific goals are inherent in this strategy: (1) Indoctrinate the youth, (2) foster the meeting with similar others, (3) create a strong community and (4) plan and commit own actions.

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9 *Klu Klux Klan*: A racist secret society in the USA, advocating a mixture of right-wing and religiously disguised messages. The clan is known for his violence (Wagner, 2008).

The **indoctrination of the youth** is pronounced by both Islamic and right-wing extremists. For example, Al-Suri claimed a well-considered application of jihadist propaganda to be able to activate many Muslims (Holtmann, 2009). Particularly, the youth shall be addressed for an early comprehension of the underlying ideology in order to ensure a self-reliant movement (Precht, 2007). Analogously, right-wing extremists offer entertainment and attract the youth by applying their cultural codes and lifestyle (Becker, 2009), creating a “right-wing extremist world of experience”. The promotion of subsequent *offline* activities as political or common leisure activities (such as concerts, sport events, street festivals) may influence the socialization of the young generation (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2008).

Online communities **foster the meeting of others** who share their own questions, sorrows or wishes (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009a). This is why Milton Kleim Jr., grand dragon of the Klu-Klux Clan, wrote “*Crucial to our [...] campaign is that our message is disseminated beyond ‘our’ groups [...]. We MUST move out beyond our present domain, and take up positions on ‘mainstream’ groups*” (John Milton Kleim Jr., 1998).

They want to evoke the interest of potential sympathizers who can then be contacted for persuasive purposes. Similarly, fighters within the media jihad justify and legitimate their movement online to reach young men as recruits (Hegghammer, 2006). Sageman (2008) concluded that the influence of interactive (jihadist) discussion forums or links may be as big as the influence of radical prayers in real mosques.

Via these activities, extremists create **a strong virtual community** (Egerton, 2011; Engelmann et al., 2010). Concerning Islamic extremism, one of the most attractive aspects of using the internet is the ability to get “*a concrete example of what the utopian Ummah can look like: a community of friends [...].*” (Sageman, 2008, p. 117). This experience is expected to motivate and oblige members in a very specific way, so the Ummah or “*this utopia becomes something worth fighting for*” (Sageman, 2008, p. 117). Similarly right-wing extremists try to create an attractive cohesive online community (Glaser, 2011). The 3.992 Facebook fans of the “Nationalistes Autonomes France<sup>10</sup>” or the members and fans of corresponding German sites (Glaser, 2011) seem to depict the success of this aim.

Finally, interested users shall commit **own actions** with the internet providing a gateway function. Often, neither the materials uploaded on websites like *Wikipedia*, *youtube*, *twitter*, *MySpace* or *facebook*, nor the actions demanded are directly

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10 Retrieved online [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), 05/05/12.

recognizable as extremist (Schürmann<sup>11</sup>, 2012 ZDF Mediathek). For example “liking” fan-sites against pedophilia on *Facebook* may instead be “liking” the National Socialist organization behind it, without (the user) even noticing (Schürmann, 2012 ZDF Mediathek). Web 2.0 applications (e.g. music communities, regional parties, communication networks) therefore perfectly fit the “take up position” strategy and create easy “take-part” opportunities (Busch, 2008). Content generated by the individual user, whether it consists of texts, pictures, tones, music or even videos, can be produced and uploaded without a sophisticated knowledge (Winn & Zakem, 2009).

This is where audio-visual propaganda gets its outstanding function. Especially, videos that are uploaded on platforms like *YouTube* or shared via mobile phones play a significant role within the extremist web 2.0 offers. *Google* (2012) stated that about 60 hours of videos are uploaded every minute on *YouTube* and a substantial amount of them (though the actual number is unknown) has been created by extremist individuals or groups. Glaser (2011) reported that single right-wing extremist video clips can easily exceed 170.000 clicks.

Audio-visual propaganda appears to be very attractive (see also Chapter 2) and is able to reach high numbers of recipients (Seib & Janbek, 2011). It can even get the attention of news broadcasting companies like CNN or Al-Jazeera. For instance, scaring effects can be achieved via brutal film sequences (e.g. the pictures of 9/11). By distributing them online, these videos get the attention of mass media broadcasting and thus may frighten the enemy or society even more (Bockstette, 2008).

## 4.2 Propaganda through Audio-visual Material

*“It is a new version of an old activity, terrorism and its novelty is characterized by: First, the extremism of the terror act itself; second the global reach of such acts and third, the ability to elucidate the message of those acts both verbally and visually on a global scale via the universal reach of the internet, [. . .]”* (O’Shaughnessy, 2012, p. 37)

Audio-visual propaganda may be the universal tool for transporting the propagator’s desires. Therefore, although web 2.0 is open to everybody, it is not surprising that video propaganda is often produced by professional media companies in order to promote extremist ideologies. Beyond user generated content as for example the videos uploaded by Anders Breivic (see Chapter 1) there are numerous systematically produced and distributed videos conveying a right-wing or Islamic extremist ideology. In particular, Islamic extremism has highly professionalized structures (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009a). In general, there

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11 Retrieved online. <http://www.zdf.de/ZDFmediathek/beitrag/video/1493124/Netzschau-Subtile-Rekrutierung#/beitrag/video/1493124/Netzschau-Subtile-Rekrutierung>, 24/04/2012.

are three units with distinct functions: (1) militant groupings as footage providers or creators, (2) media production units, and (3) media distribution units (Kimmage & Ridolfo, 2007; Kimmage, 2008). In some cases this segmentation is not distinctive. For instance Al-Fajr, As-Sahab and the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) are considered to be global operating production and distribution centers. For right-wing extremism, professional production companies such as “media-pro-patria” (Müller & Seiler, 2010) also exist.

The enormous amount of extremist videos online has led to a broad variety of extremist propaganda genres and topics addressed. Former studies have tried to describe how propaganda 2.0 looks like mostly focusing on descriptions of Islamic extremist material. Besides first exemplary descriptions of right-wing extremist videos, formal categorizations have not yet been provided here.

On the one hand, descriptive analyses of Islamic extremist material can be distinguished on the basis of content analytical approaches aiming at identifying genres of extremist audio-visuals (thus encompassing typical plots, styles and supposed aims) as, for example, provided by Finsnes (2010) the Intel Center (2005, 2006) or Salem, Reid and Chen (2008).

On the other hand, more detailed analyses of the narrative structure concerning the symbols used and the messages transported are also available (Combating Terrorism Center at WestPoint, 2006; O’Shaughnessy & Baines, 2009; Payne, 2009).

The description of Jihadist genres has mainly been conducted by governmental organizations aiming at providing operator communities working on counter-terrorism with a professional categorization. For example, the Intel Center (2005, 2006), and the Terrorism Research Group of the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (Finsnes, 2010) both reported comparable genres among their large databases. Accordant with extremist aims, different genres satisfy different purposes. Still, one video can encompass different genres and usually fulfills different purposes.

As already described in Chapter 2, propaganda can be directed towards the extremist ingroup, for instance in order to give instructions. It can also address the enemy or outgroup in order to intimidate, and the so-far neutral potential ingroup in order to propagate the own ideas and legitimate the own deeds (Bernays, 1942; Lasswell, 1927; Payne, 2009). These three basic goals of propaganda (intimidate, propagate and legitimate) of course also apply to extremist internet videos. For instance, within former categorization approaches (e.g., Intel Center, 2005) these goals can also be recognized. The following two genres preliminarily address the extremists’ outgroup in order to **intimidate**, whereas the third additionally addresses their ingroup.

- (1) *Operational (Documentary) Videos* show assaults and assassinations aiming at threatening the enemy. They usually last only a few minutes (1–8min.) and are confined to the depiction of attacks. For instance, sequences from remote-

controlled charges that explode when a military vehicle passes by. These sequences are often repeated in slow motion. Image marks, like red arrows, are added to emphasize the detonation. Anasheed (religious battle songs) accompany the images to praise the jihad.

- (2) Intimidation is achieved through *Hostage Videos* and *Beheading Videos* which demoralize and deter the enemy. These videos serve as primary tools of psychological warfare. Through their brutality they warrant extreme media exposure. The militant group threatens with consequences so that the hostages set requirements to their governments.
- (3) *Statement Videos* quote high-ranked jihadists. These videos refer to actual events. The speakers threaten their enemies by emphasizing future attempts or offering exemptions if certain claims are accomplished. These videos are directed towards the enemy as well as towards financial donators, potential recruits and insiders.

The second important aspect is the **legitimation** of the own deeds, which plays an important role in all video clips and is not clearly distinguishable from videos with **propagandistic** purposes. The subsequent categories encompass this legitimation aspect in addition to propagandistic purposes.

- (4) *Propaganda/Promotion Videos* aim at communicating goals, legitimating the assaults, propagating the ideology, recruiting new holy fighters and at intimidating the enemy. The speakers are mostly hooded and comment on images from mass media coverage which show humiliated and abused Muslims, ruined homes and sequences of fights. The speakers refer to conspiracy theories against Muslims.
- (5) *Humiliation Videos* resemble the Propaganda category in terms discrediting and taunting the enemy. Similar categories are *Ideology* and *Statement*.
- (6) *Ideology Videos* serve as ideological presentations through the speeches of important leaders. They can last five to 90 minutes. In many of them, only one subtitled speaker is shown. The argumentation is often based upon political conflicts and the individual obligation of a Muslim to participate in the Jihad. The Qur'an is cited to fundamentally root the argumentation.
- (7) *Recruitment Videos* can be considered rather as more of a function of several categories than as a separate genre and represent the explicit call to militant Jihad.

The next genres primarily address those already convinced of the ideology: The ingroup. They offer concrete **instructions** or advocate the most extreme form of personal involvement with Jihad: Sacrificing oneself.

- (8) *Praising/Tribute Videos* serve as commemoration of fallen jihadists and as an honor of both important leaders who are still alive or of major group los-



ses. *Martyr Videos* often show the planning of an attack, preparation of the vehicle and pictures of the final destruction. The martyrs read out their testaments, send their dying words to their families and encourage recruits by emphasizing the importance of self-sacrifice.

- (9) *Instructional and Training Videos* are produced less frequently. They provide manuals, instructions and training for the use of arms or preparation of crafted dynamite.

The intention is not to replace real existing training camps but rather to use the internet as an additional instrument for self-radicalization. Since the obligation to (militant) Jihad includes appropriate preparation, training videos are often used for internal documentation of the drill.

To conclude the categorization, professional style video clips have to be mentioned as they are the most cinema-like productions available and thus the best to “*disguise propaganda as entertainment*” (O’Shaughnessy, 2012, p. 38). These productions however are still seldom compared to the other formats (Intel, 2006).

- (10) These Hollywood-like *Produced Videos*, are produced on a highly professional level. They mainly consist of a mix of several genres and sequences and last between 1–2 hours. Extremist groups produce only a few of those videos per year and time their release (anniversaries etc.).

Based on the content analysis of the Intel Center (2005, 2006), Salem, Reid and Chen (2008) developed a two-dimensional approach to depict the dimension underlying these classifications of extremist videos: One dimension covers the speaker orientation and the other one the depiction of violence (operational versus non-operational). The speaker orientation can be either individual- or group-oriented to emphasize whether the destiny of several individually distinguishable mujahedin is displayed or whether the video focuses on a group as a whole (see comparisons of all three category systems in Table 1).

Table 1. *Categorization Approaches of Islamic Extremist Material*

Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (Finsnes, 2010)	IntelCenter (IC) 2005, 2006	Salem, Reid & Chen (2008, p. 616)		
Operational Promotion/ Propaganda Ideology Deterrence/ Intimidation Martyr	Produced Operational Hostage Statement Tribute	Individual Oriented	Operational <i>Documentary</i> <i>Beheading</i> <i>Hostage Taking</i>	Group Oriented
Instructional Praising Training Humiliation Recruitment	Internal Training Instructional		<i>Suicide Attack</i> <i>Tribute Message</i>	
		Non-Operational		

The specific implementation of these genres is strongly transported by subtle cues as symbols and music. The Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point of the United States Military Academy has published a comprehensive analysis of the used imagery in the jihadist internet propaganda. It aimed at making the subtle and non-verbalized messages in propaganda footage visible. The catalogue reaches from symbols of nature, geography and politics to people, weapons, warfare and afterlife, to gestures and colors. Many motives are immanent in the Islamic culture and combined with selective picture elements which are used by the jihadists to suggest a certain extremist interpretation. The Imagery Project reveals the attempt to elicit a required reaction through emotional or historical memories. For instance, the depiction of a waterfall symbolizes spiritual progress, the spirit which is ultimately raised to paradise and is therefore often used in conjunction with martyrdom (Combating Terrorism Center at WestPoint, 2006).

Similarly, music plays an important role: Kimmage and Ridolfo (2007) mention the importance of audio visuals consisting of war or attack pictures accompanied by songs which “are the ideal conduit for an ideological message. The message is strikingly uniform and primarily jihadist.” (p. 32).

A closer look into the specific narrations of Islamic extremist propaganda has been provided by narrative analyses. Similar to conventional news reports, generally jihadist reports comprise a structured framing, consisting of a problem definition, causal interpretations, moral judgments and guidance (Rogan, 2007). According to Bandura’s concept of moral disengagement, the videos employ, (a) “displacement of responsibility”, (b) “diffusion of responsibility”, (c) “dehumanization of targets”, (d) “use of euphemistic language”, (e) “advantageous com-

parisons”, (f) “attribution of blame” and (g) the “distortion of the sequence of events” (Weimann, 2006).

In a detailed analysis of the symbolic and semiotic level of communication in Jihadist video clips, O’Shaughnessy and Baines (2009) established a three-way-interaction model: The positioning triad. They differentiated between the *Item* (the issue or text the communication is about), the *Symbol* (the intended message) and the *Meaning* (the interpretation of the symbol within a cultural context). They found that in all videos the West was depicted as the permanent aggressor (*Item*), standing in contrast to the unfairly treated Muslims (*Meaning*) who were represented through several cultural codes (*Symbol*). O’Shaughnessy and Baines (2009) summarized that terrorist positioning of fear, hatred, death or jihad is similar to a marketing strategy to the extent that terrorists “*have target markets, use communications, access channel of distribution and have a market differentiation strategy*” (p. 239).

In line with this, Payne (2009) also ascribes jihadist propaganda a special rhetoric, using the idea of a global conspiracy against Islam and the obligation of a Muslim to defend himself and his family as religious or social justification for the fight. In particular, Al’Qaeda is famous for the narratives it invents. By distributing the videos they are successful in building a kind of brand that can appropriate for any act of jihadist terror.

*“Al’Qaeda’s ideological narrative has at its heart the desire for a return to Islamic purity, and the division of the world into two distinct groupings, an ‘us’ and a ‘them’. On the ‘us’ side of the equation are a vanguard of virtuous Muslims, conscious of the true Islam. The ‘them’ is an unholy alliance of Crusader-Zionists, with a centuries-long record of scheming to do down Islam, allied with the corrupt and degenerate political leadership of the Muslim world, who are thwarting the desire of Muslims to return to their true faith.”* (Payne, 2009, p. 111)

In typical Al’Qaeda propaganda messages, there appear to be four different kinds of narratives: (1) An Islamist Utopia, (2) the notion “they are attacking us”, (3) the message “Jihad is the only just response” and (4) the glory of martyrdom as a consequence of the notion that terrorism is a legitimate tactic in jihad. By analyzing these narrative structures, Payne (2009) clarifies that Al’Qaeda’s propaganda message features death and tries to advance a wholly utopian ideal. “*To do so, it employs a simple, powerful narrative of revolution and resistance, good versus evil, honor and retribution; all grounded in a particular interpretation of Islam.*” (Payne, 2009, p. 114)

As for the Islamic extremist video clips, some studies have been conducted in the field of right-wing extremism. The production style of right-wing extremist propaganda can be characterized as being provocative, containing a revolutionary pathos and a rebellious appearance (Schedler, 2009).

Few authors name the most typical formats of right-wing extremist audio-visuals. Busch (2008) described music videos with right-wing rock music to be the most frequent format. Other videos contain scenes from demonstrations, presentations of certain groups or talented speakers who present the right-wing extremist scene, implying here also the existence of different extremist genres.

One exemplary narration analysis was conducted by Müller and Seiler (2010). They analyzed both a right-wing extremist website ([www.media-pro-patria.net](http://www.media-pro-patria.net)) and one propaganda video clip (“Mahngang des Gewissens”<sup>12</sup>). Regarding the website, the authors noticed a simple-structured design and the usage of very subtle means in order to appeal to the user. The intention of right-wing extremist producers is to appear as serious and informational.

There are no significant features, symbols, paroles or pictures that clearly point towards the right-wing extremist scene. The dominating aspects are calls to fight against capitalism, globalization and Americanism. Social problems like child poverty, child abuse and animal abuse are topics chosen to evoke sympathy due to the right-wing extremist’s caring image (Müller & Seiler, 2010). Speaking about the propaganda video, it directs criticism towards capitalism. The “System” is found to be guilty for all social and political misfits. The authors state that the video has a very modern, professionalized presentation format. There is no explicit reference to a glorification of violence or the National Socialist ideology. Relying on the general structure of propaganda described in Chapter 2 (Merten, 2000), the structure of Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda can be summarized as shown in Table 2.

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12 “Mahngang des Gewissens” literally translates into “admonition of the conscience”.

Table 2. Structures of Islamic and Right-wing Extremist Propaganda

Structures	Religious propaganda Islamic Extremism	Political propaganda Right-wing Extremism
(1) An arbitrary object (idea, action, person or product) is propagated and gains a <b>unique characteristic</b>	God/Allah The “ <i>Ummah</i> ”	Charismatic figure (“ <i>der Führer</i> ”) The “ <i>Völkische</i> ” Community
(2) For those who consume propaganda, a <b>behavioral premise</b> is predetermined that holds an exclusiveness characteristic	Believe in Allah and/or Follow his rules Jihad is a duty	Obey the leader/the organization Nationality defines who you are Defense of the Nation is a duty
(3) The recipient of these messages is forced to obey this behavioral premise. This leads to the divestment of freedom to make <i>own</i> decisions and creates <b>exclusiveness</b>	“Thou shalt have no other gods before me” [Qur’an] Encompasses the commitment to the uniqueness of god for which martyrdom is the ultimate worship (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009b)	The leader/the organization is always right, more vague than in religious propaganda but inherent in actions such as stigmatization after disobedience (heretic, deviant, dissident)
(4) To have the recipients unconditionally obey these pre-decisions, the propaganda messages sketch positive and especially negative <b>future-directed sanctions</b>	Negative sanctions: the invention of “the evil” and its location: those who don’t believe and disobey will go to hell Positive sanctions: those who believe and obey will go to heaven/paradise, will have eternal life	Negative sanctions: actions under massive audiences (show trials, combustions, manifestations, arrests)* Positive sanctions: the idea of an ultimate victory, revolution of the world, the “1000years Reich”
(5) Propaganda messages are best formulated in a way that makes them <b>un-verifiable</b> . This is mostly realized by emphasizing actions that may happen in the <i>future</i>	Sanctions are non-verifiable since they are only effective after death	Reference to a better future

*Note.* \* Political propaganda relies more on negative sanctions. Generally Islamic extremism refers also to political topics. Nonetheless it is also a classical example for religious propaganda (see Hoffman, 2006).

To sum up, Islamic as well as right-wing extremist propaganda videos include different genres. As former approaches have not yet combined insights from the descriptions of Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda videos, we decided to develop a categorization system encompassing both ideologies. Thus we focused on prototypical genres asking whether right-wing and Islamic propaganda can be described in comparable terms. The common root strategies depicted in Table 2 are comparable between the two ideologies (though distinctively realized).

The description of style and message in propaganda 2.0, however, is only the first component in understanding its effects. As O'Shaughnessy and Baines (2009) stated, the symbolization of a visual image is based on the interaction between an intended meaning and the interpretation by the audience. Without the recipient, neither genre, nor symbol, nor message can unfold any persuasive power.

## 5. The Audience of Extremist Propaganda

*“Internet propaganda is immensely dangerous, falling on a fertile ground it leads to radicalization”*. (German Federal Minister of the Interior Hans Peter Friedrich RTL.de 27.03.2012)

Propaganda seeks a clear audience. Without a listener or recipient the message would go unheard, unable to achieve its purpose. From the propagators’ perspective, four groups of recipients can be distinguished (Payne, 2009). Lying on a continuum, they range from those who would totally reject the presented messages to those who would fully accept the portrayed ideology.

First, there are those already convinced of the transported ideology, the extremist *ingroup*. The second group consists of those who are attacked by the threat, the enemy or *outgroup*. Third, the group in between both ends of this continuum features recipients who are not (yet) in support of the ideology or susceptible to the conveyed messages. According to Payne (2009), they can be further differentiated into (1) those who are to be convinced, and (2) the “global community”, those who are able to classify the sender as “terrorist” or “freedom fighter”. Together they form the *potential ingroup* or *outgroup*. They can sway to acceptance and become radicalized ingroup members, as well as harshly distance themselves from the ideology and turn to an outgroup. The resulting question “*Under which conditions do recipients of extremist propaganda offer ‘fertile ground’?*” is not only important for possible prevention options but this also lies in the focal attention of the presented study.

### 5.1 Knowing the Audience

Former research on the audience focused on the extreme points of the ingroup-outgroup continuum, examining either one or the other. Research on the outgroup (mainly in Western societies) showed us how terrorist messages can increase the preference for one’s own culture (Liu & Smeesters, 2010) and the support of harsh punishments against those who are rejecting their own norms (Fischer et al., 2007). The research conducted after terrorist attacks and the subsequent media coverage found that society reports higher levels of stress and anxiety (Marshall & Galea, 2004; Propper, Stickgold, Keeley, & Christman, 2007). It was also found that the overall acceptance of terrorism is low (Frindte & Haußecker, 2010), indicating that the “global community” would rather reject extremist propaganda when it has been identified as terroristic. However, this research does not yet answer the question regarding the conditions under which this rejection could be suspended.

Research on the already radicalized ingroup faces many difficulties. For example, finding interview partners willing to talk is challenging and they may substan-

tially differ from those who do not. Researchers first have to gain access to prisons (in order to interview imprisoned terrorists) or have to deal with injuries or even the death of possible interview partners (particularly self-bombers in Islamic extremism, see Loza, 2007). This partly explains why the vast majority of studies chose a retrospective approach and used secondary sources such as friends and families (Bakker, 2006; Hegghammer, 2006; Sageman, 2004) or document analyses (e.g., Jenkins, 2010), mostly resulting in “anecdotal evidence” (Munton et al., 2011, p.1). These retrospective analyses of extremist perpetrators can be substantially distorted. Besides the problems of sample selection, psychological biases may veil the original motivations even for the perpetrators themselves. Human memory tends to be pretty flawed (Zhu et al., 2012) and a consistent positive self-view is a strong motivator (Aronson, 1992), able to enormously influence post-hoc interpretation of one’s own behavior. As Heitmeyer, Borstel, Grau, & Marth (2010) have already formulated for the case of right-wing extremism, it is impossible to define what came first: The acceptance of violence or the ideology advocated (see also chapter 3.2).

The patterns described in all these studies may however serve as a starting point to further investigate the audience. Although they lack in causal evidence, certain factors mentioned in these analyses could have influenced an orientation towards extremism (pre-radicalization phase, Precht, 2007) among the potential ingroup.

For the presented study, demographic characteristics were retrieved from relevant research as they do not demand post-hoc interpretation (see Chapter 5.1). In a second step, personality variables and attitudinal patterns were identified as possible moderators of the found effects and their potential to influence the recipients’ reaction was analyzed (see Chapter 5.2).

## **5.2 Demographic Factors**

In a series of interviews with political inmates from right-wing and Islamic extremist groups, Lützing (2010) reported more commonalities than differences between extremist ideologies. Munton and his colleagues (2011) also mention that those demographic factors which were found among right-wing as well as among Islamic extremists seem to have the potential to influence the general reaction towards extremist propaganda. Former studies analyzed the structure of Islamic extremist networks and found the members to be relatively young and mostly male. Often, they were immigrants with a Muslim cultural background, and had to cope with either broken educational careers or a frustrating professional situation (Bakker, 2006; Lützing, 2010; Sageman, 2004).

Although immigration was not found to be influential among right-wing extremists, a general feeling of marginalization, which is present among many migrants, was also found to be a factor in right-wing radicalization (Fuchs, 2003; Heitmeyer, 2002; Terwey, 2000). According to Precht, “*This [ . . . ] process [of rad-*



icalization] is largely influenced by factors which are unique to every individual but often starts by persons being frustrated with their lives [. . .]. They are searching for an identity and a cause and often extremist Islam offers the solution to their quest” (Precht, 2007, p. 35).

This “search for an identity” is strongly influenced by groups people feel affiliated to. Demographic factors, such as gender or culture, are easily accessible categorizations which have the potential to create a feeling of being part of a certain group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Social psychological research has shown how our identity, emotions, cognitions and behaviors are substantially influenced by this need to belong.

*Social Identity* determines the direction, being, “[. . .] part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1982, p. 24). This is why extremists try to activate culture as primary group-identity (see Chapter 4.1) and foster outgroup comparisons. Based on these observations, age and gender, cultural background, and educational level are described in more detail below.

### **5.2.1 Age and Gender**

In his classical work “Understanding Terror Networks”, Sageman (2004) analyzed 172 cases of Islamic extremists and reported the average age to join the jihad to be 26 (see also, Bakker, 2006). For right-wing extremists, the first contact with the scene happens between the age of 12 and 16 (Claus, Lehnert, & Müller, 2010). Internet propaganda has a high chance to be accessed by adolescents. The so-called *digital natives* are especially susceptible to online influences (Schmidt, 2009; Schmidt et al., 2010). According to the latest JIM Study (2011), practically every teenager in Germany has access to a computer or notebook at home (Ebert, Feierabend, Karg, & Rathgeb, 2011, p. 5). In 2011, 89 % used the internet multiple times a week or even daily and 68 % of them used video-platforms such as *YouTube* on a regular basis. Although there is no gender difference with regard to general internet usage, boys and girls still differed in what they did online and how they evaluated it. For example 16 % of the boys and only 11 % of the girls rated the internet as a credible source of information (Ebert et al., 2011).

Since extremism is still mainly a male phenomenon (e.g., Bakker, 2006; Claus et al., 2010), extremists can be assumed to address mainly young males via online propaganda. For the presented study we thus decided to focus only on young male adults.

## 5.2.2 Cultural Background

*“That was how it started with the right-wing extremist attitudes, because I’ve grown up in an estate where foreigners were foreigners and Germans were Germans”* (Right-wing extremist “Ri21”, cf. Lützing, 2010, p. 171)

Whenever dealing with any kind of extremist ideology, it is obvious that the potential ingroup addressed is often a cultural one.

While right-wing extremists in Germany refer to the German “blood and history”, Islamic extremists point towards their specific interpretation of being “Muslim”. **Culture**, in both cases, is formed by national as well as religious influences. While Germany has developed with an atheistic/Christian (occidental) background, Muslim tradition and identity has been formed by Islam and by oriental influences (e. g., Lewis, 2003). In both ideologies, the striving for “purity” (German nation respectively Muslim caliphate) free of foreign influences lies in focal attention (see Chapter 3.1 and 3.2). Entering a right-wing extremist group in Germany being a migrant is practically impossible.

Having parents from a Muslim country has been reported to be a characteristic among the members of Islamic extremist networks. For example, Bakker (2006) found that especially second generation migration was a common factor in nearly 300 cases of European “home-grown” jihadists. The same was reported for jihadists socialized in the USA or for converted Islamic extremist (Jenkins, 2010).

Although Islamic extremist propaganda can be classified as religious (Merten, 2000, see Chapter 2), Sageman (2004) pronounced that the causality between radicalization and religion is unclear. Only a small percentage of jihadists in his analysis had a primary and secondary Muslim education. Though religious identification increases during the radicalization process, it does not necessarily trigger it (Munton et al., 2011; Precht, 2007).

In line with this, the Muslim educational scientist Mouhanad Khorchide said in an interview with the German “Zeit”(Khorchide & Schenk, 2012) that the message transported by salafists (see Footnote 6, Chapter 3.1) in Germany is not really about religion but about being rejected by the main society for being Muslim.

Perceived discrimination and a feeling of marginalization have constantly been discussed as the underlying factors in the Islamic radicalization processes (Baines et al., 2006; Wilner & Dubouloz, 2009). Similarly, feelings of marginalization and of non-acceptance by society have been found to be risk factors for right-wing extremism (Rippl & Seipl, 2002). Internet communities can contribute to identity development particularly among marginalized groups (McKenna & Bargh, 1998) and extremists try to satisfy this need (Precht, 2007). *“In the organization, colors and races dissolve. There are no foreigners among us. We are all brothers, believers and have a close relationship. [. . .].”* (Al-Ablaj cf. Aaron, 2008, p. 263).

However, the “cultural” group-identity extremists address has to be isolated from the general national identity. The extent to which someone identifies with the national or majority culture (**national identity self-concept**) should thus be regarded separately (Maehler & Schmidt-Denter, in press). The majority of Muslims and Germans harshly reject extremism (Frindte, Boehnke, Kreikenbronn, & Wagner, 2012; Jenkins, 2010). The actual number of Muslims in Germany (3.8 to 4.3 million, see Frindte et al., 2012, p.16) is nearly 40.000 times higher than the number of actual Islamic extremists (about 130, Friedrich, RTL.de, march 27th, 2012). In line with this, radical right-wing parties in Germany are voted for only by a minority (see Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung<sup>13</sup>) (see Jenkins, 2010 for US numbers). Additionally, research has shown that negative ingroups motivate people to distance themselves from them (Arndt, Greenberg, Schimel, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 2002). In general, there are specific factors which make people suspend their primary rejection of extremist attitudes or behaviors. Bandura (cf. Weimann, 2006) claims “moral disengagement” to be necessary to overcome this rejection. It seems that addressing the cultural background as a characteristic of the potential ingroup may be ambiguous.

A shared culture may lead to a feeling of belongingness to the “Ummah” or the “German nation” as well as to sharply distance from the ideology promoted. For the presented study, different ingroup and outgroup conditions were realized by inviting Germans, Muslims and other migrants and confronting them with right-wing as well as Islamic extremist propaganda.

### 5.2.3 Educational Level and Major Field of Study

Feelings of social marginalization have already been discussed as risk factors for radicalization (e.g. Decker, Weißmann, Kiess, & Brähler, 2010; Heitmeyer, 1992; Precht, 2007). Low educational status can also foster feelings of being separated (Rippl & Seipl, 2002). Not surprisingly, low educational status or a gap between education and profession has frequently been found among Islamic as well as right-wing extremists.

Lützing (2010) reported broken educational careers as communality among the political inmates in her study. Similarly, Bakker (2006; see also Sageman, 2004) report a mismatch between educational capabilities and work situation. Bakker (2006) attributed this to the difficulties immigrants have to face in working situations (e.g., Watson, Appiah, & Thornton, 2011). This explains why only few Islamic extremists, especially home-grown terrorists in Western countries, had completed an academic career. Professional frustration has also been discussed to be an underlying factor (Gambetta & Hertog, 2007). For biographies of extremists who are located on the Arabian Peninsula, Gambetta and Hertog (2007) reported

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13 <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41904/rechtsextreme-parteien>. Retrieved online, 22/06/12.

a strong overrepresentation of engineers which are frequently confronted with unemployment there, among the already radicalized ones. Educational level may thus play a role in the reaction towards extremist propaganda. Therefore, the sample for the presented study included different **educational levels**; namely students and pupils from vocational schools and with regard to the findings of Gambetta and Hertog (2007) with different **major fields of study**. Similar to culture (see Chapter 5.2.2) as a potential influence, claiming a causal relation between education and the effects of propaganda would do injustice to the understanding of the process of radicalization. Unsurprisingly in that respect, research has tried to identify personality factors and attitudinal patterns that could moderate the relationship between certain superficial classifications as preconditions and radical attitudes.

### 5.3 Personality Factors and Attitudinal Patterns

Personality factors influencing extremist biographies in context of Islamic extremism have also been researched retrospectively, trying to interpret or even psychoanalyze the entire personality of already radicalized individuals.

*“One finding is that, unfortunately for profiling purposes, there does not appear to be a single terrorist personality. This seems to be the consensus among terrorism psychologists as well as political scientists and sociologists. The personalities of terrorists may be as diverse as the personalities of people in any lawful profession.”* (Hudson, Majeska, & Metz, 1999, p. 60).

Hudson’s (1999) findings explain why broad personality factors such as the **Big Five** (Costa & McCrae, 1992) have failed to reliably predict prejudice or discrimination (Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004). Accordingly, psychopathological approaches generally could not find a significantly higher prevalence of personality disorders among terrorists compared to others (Munton et al., 2011; Sageman, 2004). *“This is not to deny, however, that certain psychological types of people may be attracted to terrorism”* (Hudson et al., 1999, p. 60). For example, search for excitement and hunger for stimulation have frequently been discussed (e. g., Hudson et al., 1999) to increase the attraction of terrorism. Lützing (2010) reported thrill and adventure as well as experience seeking motives to influence right-wing and Islamic extremists. Baines and colleagues (2010) supposed that an adventure motivation could contribute to a positive evaluation of Islamic extremist propaganda. Similarly, modern right-wing extremists (see Chapter 3.2) offer an action-oriented group image (Schedler, 2011). These features indicate characteristics of the **sensation seeking** personality. Sensation seeking (Zuckermann, 1979) describes the search for stimulating experiences motivated by a low level of general arousal. This fits Lützing’s finding (2010) that boredom was negatively perceived by her interview partners. Regarding radicalization processes, sensation seeking has not yet been analyzed experimentally.

The effect it might have on the evaluation of extremist messages has yet to be tested.

In addition to personality factors, the definition of extremism as “a combination of radical attitudes and the choice of extreme means” (see Chapter 3) implies the importance of *attitudinal patterns*. Lützing (2010) reported a strong political argumentation among right-wing as well as Islamic extremists. Munton et al. (2011) also found **political attitude** to be a strong motivator. In particular, right-wing extremist propaganda can be classified as political.

As inherent in the relation of cognitive abilities and the preference for a simple worldview, Lützing (2010) found an increased search for order and structure and a simplified worldview mentality among all types of extremists.

*“System extends into all aspects of life; it discusses all minor or major affairs of mankind; it orders man’s life[ . . .] People should devote their entire lives in submission to God, should not decide any affair on their own [ . . .]”* (Sayed Qutb, 1964, p. 34–36).

**Authoritarianism** is strongly related to this search for order and also to moderate the relation between cognitive abilities and racism (Hodson & Busseri, 2012). Authoritarianism, as an attitudinal pattern, is the desire to submit under authorities and the demand for punishment of those who do not. It has been found to be a predictor for outgroup derogation, defense of the own cultural worldview (Fuchs, 2003; Greenberg et al., 1990), as a mediator of the relationship of low **feelings of control** and prejudice (Agroskin & Jonas, 2010) and to correlate with right-wing political attitudes (Larsen & Schwendiman, 1969). Due to the inherent orientation towards the ingroup and the need for social order, cohesion and stability (Duckitt, 2011; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010), authoritarianism might be a predictor for radical right-wing and Islamic attitudes (Altemeyer, 1988; Frindte et al., 2012; Fuchs, 2003). It also correlates with low educational level and fundamentalist religious beliefs (e. g., Altemeyer, 1988). Furthermore, it was found to moderate the negative relationship between religiosity and the endorsement of democratic values (Canetti-Nisim, 2004). High levels of authoritarianism could also positively influence the evaluation of extremist messages.

According to Precht (2007), the second phase in a radicalization process is characterized by the acceptance of extremist means. Accordingly, a **general acceptance of violence** is the second component of right-wing extremism (Heitmeyer, 2002). This may also be relevant in the context of Islamic extremism, as can be derived from the harsh rhetoric used in many propaganda clips: *“Strike the long-awaited blow and kill as many infidels as you wish. Turn my lands into a grave”* (cf. Kimmage & Ridolfo, 2007). As described by Heitmeyer et al. (2010), the causality between ideological justification and acceptance of violence is unclear, suggesting that specific **justifications of terrorism** may also influence the evaluations of extremist propaganda. It has to be noted, however, that a general

acceptance of both terrorism and violence has usually been found to be low (see Frindte et al., 2012; Heitmeyer, 2002).

## 6. The Effects of Extremist Propaganda: Rejected Acceptance?

*“They would invite pupils to evening lectures and social occasions and give them pamphlets to read. Then they would show jihad videos from Bosnia, Chechnya and elsewhere, and thus motivate people to travel to Afghanistan.”* (Former militant describes his initiation process cf. Hegghammer, 2006, p. 50)

The senders of propaganda clips aim to: *“shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behavior”* (Jowett & O’Donnell, 2012, p.7). The potential ingroup is to be *persuaded* of the ideology transported, the “corporate identity” created and the means derived. As of yet, research examining if propagandistic video clips are able to do so, is scarce.

Former research on the effects of extremist propaganda has mainly shown that unobtrusive participants did not react with “desire” but with rejection. The degree of rejection varied depending on style and content of the message as well as depending on sender and recipient. For example, messages not clearly identifiable as propaganda (Allen, 1991) or with credible speakers (English et al., 2011) were more persuasive than others. However, research on the effects of extremist propaganda clips has been practically nonexistent until now. The only exception is the work by Baines and his colleagues (Baines et al., 2006, 2010). They showed first hints on differences between Islamic extremist clips depending on their content and style. Focusing on the potential ingroup, they analyzed a non-radicalized sample of British Muslims.

Each of their participants watched five Islamic extremist clips which differed in terms of the style and topics they dealt with. Two of them were *movie-like* formats: *A musical clip* about a suicide attack and *a comic* showing a Palestine boy fighting an Israeli soldier. Furthermore, a realistic clip – a CNN-style *news broadcast* – about how Al’Qaeda sees the world, and two *“talking heads”* clips were included. One showed Al-Zawahiri, an *Ideologue* and the other one featured Muhammed Sidique, a *Martyr*. Both explained how they justified Jihad by addressing Western failures and Muslim victims.

Following reception, participants were asked to discuss their impressions in small focus groups. One of the two male focus groups clearly rejected the clips and thought them to be *“irresponsible and childish”* (Baines et al., p. 6). They evaluated them as *“unlikely to stimulate respondents to act in the name of Allah”* (p. 6). The other male group, however, showed a less pronounced rejection. Though not stating own susceptibility, the participants claimed that others might copy the acts, reacting to the message that *“the Western world is corrupt”* (p. 10). In both cases, the speech of Al-Zawahiri about the number of young Muslim children dying due to the West raised understanding. *“Up to [a] point, most of what he [Al-Zawahiri] said made sense”* (p. 10). Furthermore, the authors suggested that *“stimulating”* clips (such as the movie-style ones) could raise greater interest in

the Jihad. Having watched the videos, however, none of the groups expressed an overt sympathy for the radical means proposed.

The study implies that comprehensibility of the arguments plays a role. Comprehensibility might be influenced by pre-existing attitudes as well as the context in which the arguments are embedded. “*Communication effects are the greatest when the message is in line with relevance, existing opinions, beliefs and disposition of the receiver*” (Jowett & O’Donnell, 2012, p. 209).

Ramírez and Verkuyten (2011) analyzed the effect of pre-existing values and message context. Their participants read a newspaper article about a planned extremist speech in their hometown. They evaluated whether the speech should be tolerated and how participants would feel about the extremists. The speech was either classified as right-wing or as Islamic extremist. The context was manipulated by presenting the article either as discussing *public order and stability* or as dealing with *freedom of speech*. Participants were also asked about their preference when forced to choose between these two values. Similar to Baines et al. (2010), the vast majority of participants had negative feelings towards the extremist groups. Tolerance for the speech nevertheless varied with individual values and framed context. Participants preferring order and stability showed less tolerance, except when freedom of speech was framed.

For those already valuing freedom of speech, framing public order did not lead to a mirrored pattern. In contrast, they showed a boomerang effect (Feather, 1990), being even more tolerant. Thus, personal values and the “label” of presentation interacted to produce the effects. The ideology also influenced the results. Framing freedom of speech increased tolerance for right-wing but not for Islamic extremists.

Roessing and Siebert (2006) also found differences depending on the portrayed ideology. They presented four extremist documents (e.g. screenshots of an extremist forum or instructions on how to craft Molotov cocktails) to German students. The material was either framed as right-wing or as left-wing extremist. Results showed that material presented as right-wing was perceived as more threatening than the left-wing material.

All of these studies imply that the extremist aims to “*shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behavior*” (Jowett & O’Donnell, 2012, p.7) are not automatically fulfilled by propaganda. However, they cannot answer the question under which conditions non-obtrusive recipients *could* be susceptible. Different video styles (Baines et al., 2010) and different ideologies (Ramírez & Verkuyten, 2011; Roessing & Siebert, 2006) have not yet been combined in experimental approaches.

The presented study aims at closing this gap. As a first step, we explored the reactions of unobtrusive recipients, confronting them with varying propaganda from their cultural ingroup or outgroup. We aimed at investigating immediate ef-



fects, as they influence the probability of further processing of accordant material. As McGuire (1968) and Zimbardo and Leippe (1991) formulated it: The recipient has to be *exposed* to a certain message; the message has to create *attention* and evoke *interest*. [...] Then [it] can create *retention*, which might lead to a *translation of attitude to behavior* and finally to *action*.

However, the effects are also substantially influenced by the recipient's motivation. Several *two-process models* of persuasion distinguish between an *accuracy motivation* (leading to a detailed consideration if the individual feels involved), *defense motivation* (evokes when attitude change would threaten the self-concept) and an *impression motivation* (drives the effects if the attitude matches social norms (Chen, Duckworth, & Chaiken, 1999).

Defense motivation allows only for the information supporting the pre-existing attitudes to be processed. Impression motivation, in contrast, leads to a reporting of only socially desirable attitudes.

Summarizing the immediate effects of reception can be described as spontaneous evaluations or *attitudes* towards the clips. As implied in the definition of propaganda (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 7), attitudes contain cognitive, emotional and behavioral components. Predominantly cognitive attitudes refer to known objects; their positive and negative features end the resulting expectancies. Emotional attitudes, in contrast, refer to personal values and "gut feelings". They express the own (cultural) worldview (Katz, 1960). Behavioral attitudes emerge after the execution of a certain behavior and justify it (Bem, 1972). Thus they render an implausible explanation when someone is confronted with a video for the first time.

The presented study focused on immediate emotional and cognitive responses. As shown in former studies, we expected overall negative emotions and cognitions. According to them, we also expected different degrees of rejection. The style and content of the clips, the ideology behind them and factors on the side of the recipients (e.g. attitudes or shared cultural background) were expected to shape the pattern.

## 7. Research Questions

In the last chapters, research on propaganda itself, the senders and possible characteristics of the recipients, as well as potential effects of such material were presented. Relying on Lasswell's (1948) formula "*Who (sender) says what to whom (recipient) in which channel and with what effect*" (see Chapter 1), the first part of this book aimed at describing the sender, channel and recipient of extremist propaganda 2.0.

Although propaganda can appear in many possible ways, predominantly the internet was presented as increasingly important for modern propaganda (see Chapter 2). In particular, online distributed audio-visuals evoke special interest as they combine the entertaining potential of movies (O'Shaughnessy, 2012) and the wide dissemination and take-part opportunities of the social web (Schmidt et al., 2010). It was depicted that mainly right-wing and Islamic extremists use the internet to an alerting extent (see Chapter 3). Over the last years these two extremist groups expanded their online presence in order to propagate their ideology, legitimate their goals or actions as well as intimidate their "enemies" (Corman et al., 2006; Payne, 2009). For this purpose Islamic and right-wing extremists produce a large variety of video formats. The current research therefore focused on right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda videos. Comparable formats within both ideologies were expected. From this literature review the first of our research foci emerged:

*R1: Description of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda videos and analysis of their effects.*

*Q1: Which prototypical formats of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda in Germany can be distinguished? Which messages are transported?*

*Q2: Do distinct production formats and message styles differ with regard to their potential to create interest or to trigger rejection?*

Among the goals of propagation, legitimation and intimidation, different addressees of extremist propaganda were distinguished (see Chapter 5). The *potential ingroup* in terms of demographic, personality and attitudinal patterns was identified as the group of interest for the current study. Former research had mainly focused on the already radicalized ingroup respectively the rather uninvolved outgroup. However, the factors which could contribute to a first approach towards the ideology when stumbling over such video material have not been tested experimentally before.

Relying on factors discussed among actual ingroup members, **age, gender, cultural background, educational level and major field of study** emerged as possible explanative demographic factors. **National identity** has also been discussed as a possible influence. Furthermore, broader personality characteristics, such as

the **big five** and **sensation seeking**, were assumed to contribute to a first understanding of why propaganda might trigger a slight approach. Above all, however, attitudinal patterns, such as **authoritarianism**, **feeling of control**, **political attitude** and **acceptance of violence**, were identified as potential influences on the effects of propaganda.

Our second research focus was derived from the analysis of these potential factors influencing the effects of propaganda:

*R2: Analysis of the immediate explicit effects of right-wing vs. Islamic extremist propaganda on different audiences.*

*Q3: Do recipients react differently to right-wing than to Islamic extremist propaganda?*

*Q4: Does this reaction depend on the cultural background or other demographics of the participant?*

*Q5: Are personality factors and pre-existing attitudinal patterns able to influence the evaluation of extremist propaganda?*

Former research on the effects of audio-visual and extremist propaganda on normal young adults predominantly reported adverse reactions (see Chapter 6). However, the effects depended on characteristics of the material, the ideology, and the participant.

Most research so far focused on explicit<sup>14</sup> reactions towards propaganda. Since the topic itself can be regarded as adverse and thus might evoke socially desirable answers (King & Bruner, 2000), it is important to take implicit reactions towards the topic into account. Our third research focus thus additionally addressed the question of how implicit associations were affected by the exposure to propaganda material.

*R3: Analysis of the implicit effects of selected propaganda videos.*

*Q6: Do different propaganda videos have the potential to shape the implicit associations of extremism in its most extreme form?*

Figure 1 displays the factors which were expected to influence the immediate evaluation of extremist propaganda videos.

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<sup>14</sup> Explicit= verbalised, conscious. Implicit= non-verbalised, unconscious (Schnabel et al., 2006)

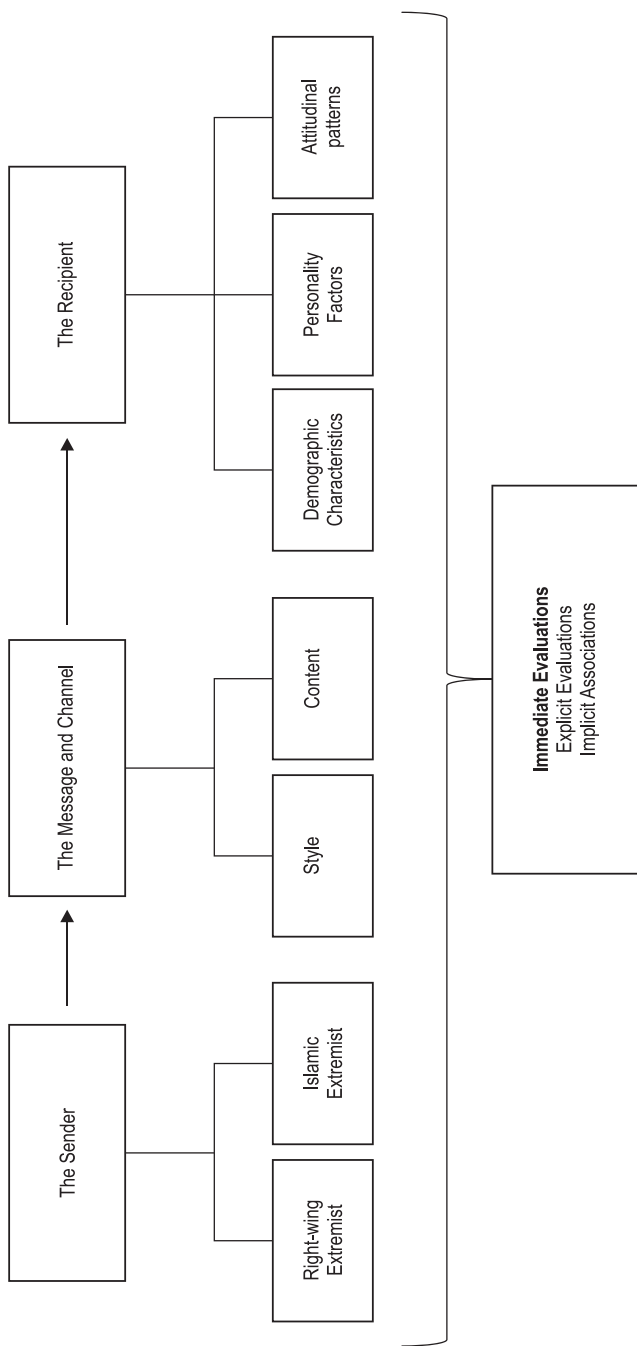


Figure 1. Assumed factors influencing the immediate evaluations of extremist propaganda.

## Part II Studying the Effects of Right-Wing and Islamic Extremist Propaganda Videos

### 8. The Current Study: Exploring the Effects of Propaganda 2.0

To address the research questions (see Chapter 7), a large-scale study with four consecutive parts was conducted at the University of Cologne in 2011. This study and its results are described in this second part of the book. We aimed to balance readability and precise presentation and therefore we explain the statistical analyses briefly in footnotes for the non-trained reader. Meanwhile, the appendix presents supplementary statistical analyses for trained readers. For further questions concerning the statistical details, please contact the authors.

Based on the theoretical background displayed in the first part of this book, we made the following decisions for our study:

- Comparison of right-wing and Islamic extremist video clips in order to understand current propaganda 2.0 in Germany
- Description of similarities and differences between videos from both ideologies concerning production style and plot
  - Development of an integrative categorization system allowing systematic comparisons of single clips *within* an ideology as well as *between* ideologies
  - Identification of prototypical example videos (stimuli) in order to expose participants to them during the experiments
- Invitation of male young adults differing in educational level and cultural background
- Assessment of further demographics, personality factors and attitudinal patterns, potentially influencing the evaluation of extremist video clips
- Realization of a multi-methodological approach in order to display *explicit* and *implicit* effects of propaganda.

Table 3 gives an overview of the deduced research foci and their realization throughout the project.

Table 3. *The Research Foci and their Realization during the Project*

<b>Research Focus</b>	<b>Step</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Methods</b>
I. Description of right-wing extremist and Islamic extremist propaganda videos and analysis of their effects (see Chapter 9) Research Questions 1 and 2	1. Content Analysis	Development of a categorization system describing the prototypical formats of extremist video clips Selection of prototypical video clips for these categories as stimulus material	Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA)
	2. Study I	Development of factors explaining the explicit post-hoc evaluation of propaganda Description of online and post-hoc evaluations of the videos Further selection of affecting video clips as a more precise stimulus material for further processing	Integrated-Reception Process Analysis (IRP)
II. Analysis of the immediate explicit effects of right-wing vs. Islamic extremist propaganda on different audiences (see Chapter 10) Research Questions 3–5	2. Study I and	Testing the explicit effects of various propaganda videos within one student and one non-student sample (pupils from vocational schools) Identification of affecting factors on the side of the recipient influencing these effects	Self-reported post-hoc evaluations
	3. Study II		
III. Analysis of the implicit effects of selected propaganda videos (see Chapter 11) Research Question 6	4. Study III	Testing the implicit effects of selected video clips on the positive vs. negative association of the concept “terrorism”	Single Category Implicit Association Test (SC-IAT)

As depicted in Table 3, we used a multi-methodological approach to investigate the various aspects of propaganda videos. A total of four studies were conducted in order to answer our research questions (see Chapter 7).

At first, a content analysis was conducted so as to cautiously describe the available video material. After we had identified distinguishable prototypes (see Chapter 9.1), we chose representative videos out of these for further processing (see Chapter 9.2).

As presented in Table 3, the first two studies focused on explicit measures and Study III addressed the implicit ones. Study I and II followed the same procedure, which is described in Chapter 9.3. In order to measure different aspects of the evaluation of the presented videos, several complementing methods were used. For the implicit effects, real-time response measurements were assessed during recep-

tion (psycho-physiological arousal and real-time evaluations). On the other hand, questions following each clip addressed participants' immediate emotional and cognitive reactions (post-hoc evaluations) (see Chapter 9.4.1.).

For these complementing effect measures, the data of study I was first analyzed in an explorative manner. We examined which videos evoked which reactions in the participants and identified underlying factors in the evaluation. The results showed differences in the affecting potential of different video clips (see Chapter 9.4.2). Based on these results, the sample of videos was reduced. Only videos which clearly evoked a reaction in the participants were included in Study II (see Chapter 9.4.2).

The stimuli selected for Study II were then presented to a broader range of recipients. Besides students, a sample of pupils from vocational schools was included. The statistical analyses<sup>15</sup> confirmed invariance of the evaluation between the two studies, supporting the selection and allowing for direct comparison Chapter 10 (see Table 3) presents the two studies together in order to raise generalizability. (For a more detailed analysis of the two separate studies and the role of culture and education, please see Frischlich & Rieger, (2013)).

Particularly, the role of recipient variables as potential influences lay in focal attention. Against the theoretical background described in Chapter 5, demographic variables as well as the additional explanative benefits of personality and attitudinal factors were examined.

In order to allow detailed insights into processing and evaluation of propaganda, Study III again reduced the stimulus material and amplified the methods used. Four representative videos were selected. They served as stimuli in order to analyze the potential of video clips meant to shape the implicit valence association of terrorism among German students. In order to increase readability and to distinguish between explicit and implicit approaches, Study III is described separately in Chapter 11.

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15 Confirmatory multilevel-factor analysis proved invariance of the factors assessed between the two samples. Model fit was good on all relevant criteria.

## 9. Research Focus I: Description and Analysis of Right-Wing Extremist and Islamic Extremist Propaganda Videos

*Q1) What are the prototypical formats of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda in Germany? Which formats and styles can be distinguished? Which messages are transported?*

In order to answer the first research questions, we used a content analysis<sup>16</sup>. As described in Chapter 4.2, although research has focused more on Islamic extremist propaganda (Intel Center, 2005; Salem et al., 2008), it seems plausible that comparable formats can also be identified in right-wing extremist material. Our categorization system focused on typical formats of the two ideologies.

We conducted an Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA, Altheide & Cheney, 2006) in which former categorizations of Islamic extremist propaganda served as a starting point (see Chapter 4.2 and 6). Categories were refined in close interaction with the videos from the two ideologies. ECA regards the coder as well as other recipients as part of the meaning of the message. As O’Shaughnessy and Baines (2009) already noted, the specific meaning of the symbols used in Islamic extremist propaganda has to be regarded within Muslim culture. Thus German as well as Muslim coders were included in the coding team.

For the Islamic extremist material, a large database of 1.039 video clips was provided by the *Joint Internet Surveillance Centre in Berlin* (GIZ). As the study focused on the impact on young people living in Germany, only those 53 Islamic extremist clip either without text, in German, or with German subtitles were analyzed in detail. As far as the right-wing extremist material is concerned, *jugendschutz.net* provided us with a database of 60 video clips.

The resulting categorization system covered four main categories. They were similar to those described by Baines and colleagues. (2010, see Chapter 4.2): Videos featuring “*Talking heads*”, journalistic “*Reality clips*”, produced “*Movie clips*” and – in addition to their selection – “*Extreme clips*” were distinguished. As depicted in Figure 2, the main categories *Talking heads* and *Reality clips* spanned three sub-categories each.

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16 According to Berelson (cf. Bente & Krämer, 2004, p. 203), “*content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication*” (p. 18). Commonly in content analyses, a categorization system is developed, offering the possibility to classify the material at hand. It is inherent that categories should exclude each other and cover the variability of the material. An additional “rest” category should be included. The categorization system can be derived either theoretically or in interaction with the material, or both at the same time. Different trained researchers should then categorize the same material (Mayring & Gläser-Zikuda, 2008)



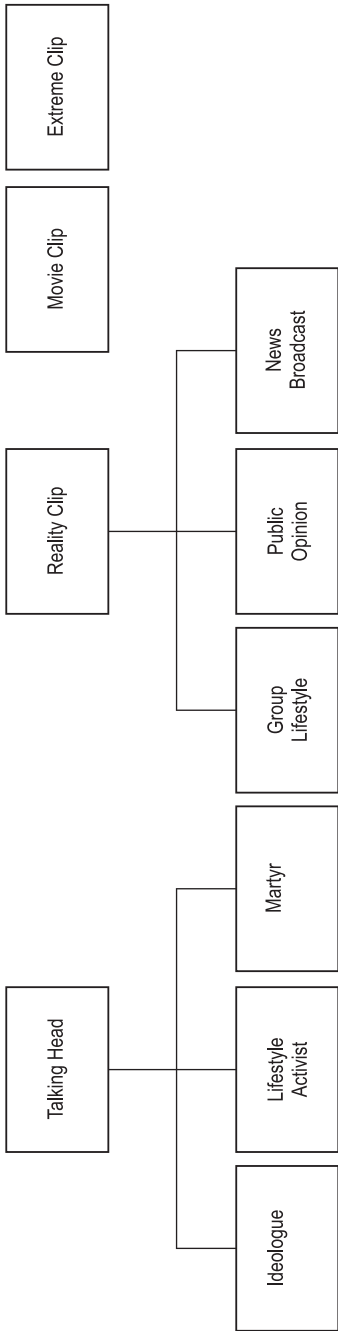


Figure 2. Formats of extremist propaganda videos either in German, with German subtitles, or without text.

## 9.1 The Categorization System and Frequency of the Formats

*Talking head* (TH) formats were defined by one or more speakers directly addressing the recipient, resembling *Ideology/Statement* clips. Direct addressing is either accomplished by direct speech or by a camera angle simulating face-to-face interaction. In these (stylistically simple) video clips, the camera focuses on the speaker to bring the individual message into focal attention. Sometimes, speeches are underlined by pictures in the background, but for the most part the speaker fills the majority of the screen. Personal motives for entering Jihad (or joining the National Socialists) are described from a first-person perspective. Referring to Hegghammer (2006), *Ideologues* (like Osama bin-Laden), *Lifestyle activists* (like Abu-Thala<sup>17</sup>) and *Martyrs* (like Mohammed Atta Khan or Mohammed Sidique<sup>18</sup>) were distinguished as sub-categories. The main communication goal of these clips is the legitimization of own deeds and recruiting new members (see Chapter 4.2)

*Reality clips* (RC) resemble *Propaganda/Promotion* and *Humiliation video* clips described in former categorizations (Finsnes, 2010; Intel Center, 2005, 2006). They try to give the impression of a journalistic third-person perspective. Often, usual news broadcasts are copied (Baines et al., 2006). Pictures taken from the mass media are reused and partially accompanied by rhythmic music (Anasheeds or right-wing songs). While for *Talking head* formats the speaker always lies in focal attention, *Reality clips* focus on various people or groups. Thus, subcategories, namely *Group lifestyle*, *Public opinion* and *News broadcasts*, were distinguished.

*Group lifestyle* videos display a cohesive, action-oriented and strong community. They focus on the extremist ingroup and their (partially very violent) actions.

Usually handheld cameras are used to film the extremist's daily life. Filmed interviews, in contrast, try to transport *Public opinion* by interviewing "normal" people in the street. These videos aim for broad support of the transported extremist worldview.

*News broadcasts* and the overall state of the world are the focus of the last sub-genre. Although these *News broadcasts* are reported from the extremists' perspective, similar to *Public opinion*, they simulate objectivity. Like *Group lifestyle*, the other two formats are often filmed with a handheld camera. This lets them appear to be "real" instead of "artificial", action-oriented and agitated. As described in

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17 Muslim from Bonn, Germany. In 2009, he was one of the most famous "frontline" Jihadists. He alerted German security agencies with threats of attacks in a self-produced video clip but was killed in the Afghanistan- Pakistani border region in January 2011.

Retrieved online <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/dschihadist-abu-talha-bonner-qaida-kaempfer-soll-bei-gefecht-gestorben-sein-a-740140.html>, 21/07/2012.

18 The perpetrators of 9/11 and of the bombings in London in 2005.

Chapter 4.2, the video clips address the potential ingroup and the global community in order to legitimate and propagate their goals.

The *Movie clips* (Baines et al., 2006) or *Produced videos* (Finsnes, 2010; Intel Center, 2005, 2006), in contrast, are produced similarly to feature films. Their design is highly professional, for instance, by using film music (sometimes even from a well-known Hollywood movie), metaphoric pictures and showing incarnate destinies (children dying and mothers weeping). For right-wing as well as Islamic extremist propaganda, music video clips also play an important role for propagation (see also Baines et al., 2010). In contrast to *Talking head* and *Reality clip* formats, the content is transported both textually and audio-visually. The focus lies on victims of the own ingroup while accusing outgroups of being guilty (for their children dying). Videos of Islamic extremist material can last up to hours but different scenes and foci can be distinguished. The clips primarily try to propagate but also legitimate own violence.

The last category covers *Extreme clips*. They can contain different elements of the other three main categories. However, what singles them out is their norm-violating character. Besides dealing with the legitimization of *martyr acts*, they also handle taboos such as pedophilia, *hostage takings*, and *beheadings*. Some even give names and locations of outgroup members, demanding their death. In contrast to the other categories they contain a strong intimidation aspect.

The four identified categories allowed the description of Islamic as well as right-wing extremist propaganda. However, some subcategories were only found for either Islamic or right-wing extremist videos. A quantitative analysis of the videos within each category is presented in Table 4. Videos which were unique or consisted of many different genres without being thematically focused (such as *Extreme clips*) were coded as *Rest*.

Table 4. Frequency of Videos within each Extremist Format Category

Category	Right-wing extremist videos	Islamic extremist videos	Total
TH Ideologue	–	16	16
TH Lifestyle activist	9	5	14
TH Martyr	–	4	4
RC Group lifestyle	21	13	34
RC Public opinion	3	–	3
RC News broadcast	2	2	4
Movie clip	19	1	20
Extreme clip	6	3	9
Rest	10	8	18
Total	60	53	112

Note. TH = Talking head, RC = Reality clip. The table shows the absolute number of videos coded in one category.

As can be derived from Table 4, overall *Reality clips* were the most frequent format. In both ideologies, about a third of all clips fit this category (29 % of the Islamic and 37 % of the right-wing extremist video clips). *RC Public opinion* however appeared to be unique to right-wing extremist videos. In contrast, *Group lifestyle* was frequently found among both Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda. Neither *TH Ideologue* nor *TH Martyrs*, were found for right-wing extremist propaganda. *Movie clips*, in contrast, were more typical for right-wing (27 %) than for Islamic extremist (2 %) material. *Extreme clips* were found to be rarest among both ideologies (6 % of the Islamic and 9 % of the right-wing extremist videos). Figure 3 shows the distribution.

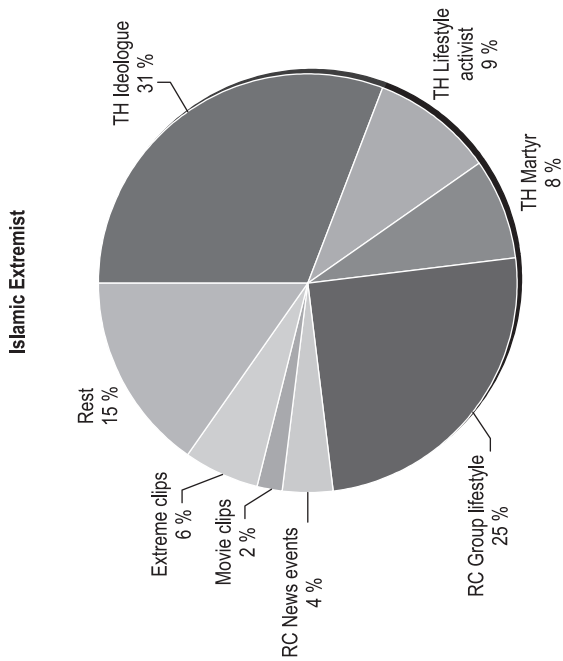
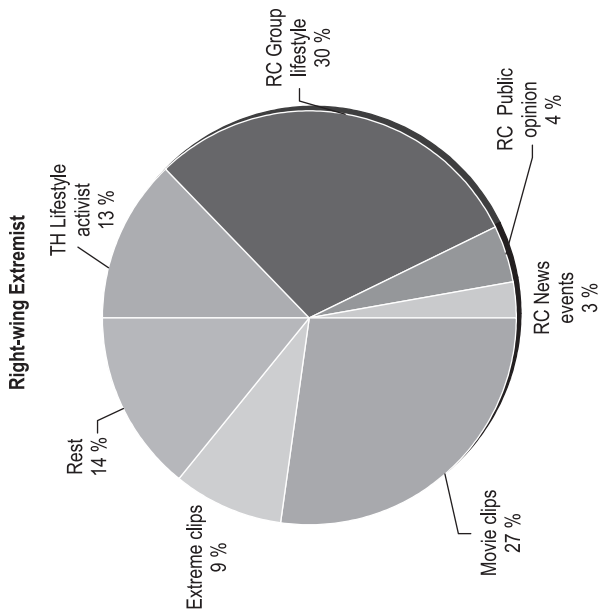


Figure 3. The distribution of single formats within the two ideologies analyzed. TH = Talking head, RC = Reality clip.

## 9.2 The Selected Videos for the Studies

Based on the developed categorization system, prototypical videos for each category were selected to serve as stimulus material for the subsequent experiments. Since not all categories were found for both ideologies, a total of 13 clips resulted for Study I (one video more for Islamic extremist propaganda). Generally, it has to be noted that Islamic and right-wing extremist videos differed regarding length: Whereas right-wing extremist material took only a few minutes, the Islamic extremist material took up to three hours. Thus, representative scenes were cut with a maximum duration of 06:04 minutes, in order to increase comparability.

**TH Ideologue** was found only for Islamic extremism. The selected scene originates from a speech of Osama bin Laden to the European Union about the Mohammed caricatures<sup>19</sup>. In the video, a picture of bin Laden is dubbed in Arabic with German subtitles. He is shown with a weapon in his hands and a lance in the background (see Table 5). Bin Laden ascribes the killings of innocent Muslims to the lack of morality in Western societies. He demands the protection of innocent Muslim women in “*their villages of mud*” and threatens the West by saying “*(the) price ought to be paid*”.

**TH Lifestyle activist** among the Islamic extremist material was selected from the video “*mother stay firm*”. A young German Jihadist describes how badly the Ummah<sup>20</sup> is treated by the West. His argumentation is underlined by background images from Abu-Grahib and the story of a Muslim woman who was raped there. He asks his mother while looking into the camera “*How shall I sit still?*” For the right-wing extremist material, the video “*German open your eyes*” was chosen. Three young men talk into the camera while walking through a German city. The video gives the impression that they talk with one voice while the camera iterates. The topics addressed are the victimization and extinction of the Germans by “the system”. The video ends in an appeal to join the movement. Both videos are accompanied by music but no lyrics to underline the words of the speakers.

**TH Martyr** again was only found for the Islamic extremist clips. The selected scene shows Mohammed Sidique talking into the camera, with German subtitles. He justifies his bombing plan by referring to crimes committed against Muslims. He pronounces the guilt of each elector in democratic countries and the derived duty of each Muslim to take revenge.





Table 5 shows screenshots of the four *Talking head* clips and summarizes information about lengths and the topics addressed.

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19 The publication of caricatures in a Danish newspaper displaying Mohammed raised worldwide complaints.

20 Ummah: Community of the believers of Islam

Table 5. *Prototypical Scenes for the Talking Head Formats*

Subcategory	Selected Clip	Topics	Length
Ideologue		Muslim suffering, innocent victims, Western societies fail.	Cut: 00:05:01 Original: 00:05:13
Lifestyle activist		Muslim suffering, innocent victims, joining the fight.	Cut: 00:02:46 Original: 00:30:26
		Victims of the system, joining the fight.	Original: 00:02:04
Martyr		Western injustice, Muslim suffering, Jihad as duty.	Cut: 00:03:55 Original: 00:27:22

For *RC Group lifestyle* within the Islamic extremist clips, “*Labbaik*<sup>21</sup>” was chosen. Short sequences show members of the armed Jihad while presenting their weapons and scenes during combat. Throughout the video, the anasheed “*Labbaik*” accompanies pictures of the adventurous group lifestyle. The video does not have further text. Within the right-wing extremist video clips “*Security yes, Surveillance no- preserve freedom of opinion*” was chosen. The video displays marching right-wing extremists all dressed in the same way. Similar to the Islamic extremist video, the whole scene is accompanied with music. The sentence “*Is that freedom of speech? Total Surveillance! Is that democracy? Total Surveil-*

21 Arabic: “Here I am, ready to obey your order”. Literally a response to a call.

*lance!*” is repeated over the course of the video. No further text or information is given.

For **RC Public opinion** only right-wing extremist examples were found. The clip *“Anti-Globalization”* presents interviews with pedestrians concerning the economic situation in Germany and around the world. The interviewer is not seen within the scene but his suggestive questions trigger the responses. The outsourcing of workplaces and the lack of integration among foreign workers is criticized.






**RC News broadcast** for the Islamic extremist videos was represented by scenes from *“The crusade of the Western World”*. It deals with a series of (broadcasted) images about 9/11 along with various Western politicians.

A distorted (male) voice reports the number of Muslims who had already joined Jihad to oppose the “Western crusade”. Finally he demands German soldiers to leave Afghanistan. The pictures used and the segmentation of the screen is reminiscent of CNN. For the right-wing extremist material a scene from *“Revolution of the consciousness”* was selected. In the video, sequences from German mass media are presented, commented by blending in subtitles like *“censorship”* or *“stultification”*. Media manipulation and the failure of the government are some of the covered topics.

Table 6 shows screenshots of the five clips representing the category *Reality clip*.



Table 6. *Prototypical Scenes for the Reality Clip Formats*

Subcategory	Selected Clip	Topics	Length
Group lifestyle		Jihadists, group, trainings camp, weapons, being prepared.	Cut: 00:02:17 Original: 00:51:38
			
Public opinion		Globalization, difficult work situation, anti-migration.	Original: 00:01:42
News broadcast		Crusade, 9/11, Afghanistan war, attendance of Jihadists.	Cut: 00:03:05 Original: 00:03:59
			

For the Islamic extremist *Movie clip*, a scene from “*The Attack on our Siblings in Iraq*” was selected. This high-quality production presents civil victims of the Iraqi war, accompanied by the “Lord of the Rings” original title theme. The question: “*Who is going to offer protection from the infidels?*” is posed and underlined by dramatic pictures of dead children and crying mothers. The Muslim Caliphate is proposed as the only answer and is symbolized by “Hizbut al-Tahir<sup>22</sup>” members around the world. In the meantime, the “Pirates of the Caribbean” theme is played. The video is composed of pictures, written text (in German) and dramatic music. In the right-wing extremist video “*The Bombing of Siegen during WWII*”, similar topics are addressed. The video presents an aesthetic black and white paper cut film about the bomb attack of the allied forces in 1944. The amount of victims is presented and supported by images of crying women and dead children in ruins. It focuses on the allies’ aggression, ending with two bombs named “*democracy*” and “*freedom*”.





As *Extreme clip* for the Islamic extremist videos, a suicide attack from “*Goodbye of a Suicide Bomber*”, was selected. The video shows a suicide bomber with his car and a bomb planted inside. While driving the car to its destination, he is filmed by a handheld camera and accompanied by chants about paradise (translated in German). The video ends in an explosion on the horizon. For the right-wing extremist material, the clip “*Tougher Penalties for Child Rapists*” was chosen. The clip promotes a campaign against child abuse. Headlines and photos of victims taken from German mass media are shown and accompanied by a song about a young girl being raped. After a cut, national socialists (dressed in black) demonstrate for higher penalties (again with the “Pirates of the Caribbean” soundtrack).

Table 7 shows screenshots of the four clips representing the categories *Movie* and *Extreme clip*.

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22 An Islamic, neo-fundamentalist organization rooted in the Muslim brotherhood. The party is banned in nearly all Arabic countries, Turkey and Germany.

Table 7. *Prototypical Scenes for the Movie and Extreme Clip Formats*

Subcategory	Selected Clip	Topics	Length
Movie clip		War in Iraq, Muslim victims, Western lies and aggressions, Muslim Caliphate.	Cut: 00:06:04 Original: 00:23:42
		War in Germany, German victims, American lies and aggression.	Original: 00:02:35
Extreme clip		Suicide attack, becoming a Martyr, paradise.	Cut: 00:02:02 Original: 00:22:57
		Pedophilia, child victims, harsher penalties.	Original: 00:03:19

### 9.3 Procedure Study I and II

The selected clips were then presented to a large sample of participants. Study I and II followed a similar procedure, by focusing on the *explicit* effects of (various) extremist video clips (see also Chapter 8).

In order to ensure that participants would neither feel deceived nor get suspicious about the study aims, recruiting flyers informed about the topic (propaganda) and invited people with different cultural backgrounds to participate. The study took place either in a laboratory at the University of Cologne or in classrooms of vocational schools supporting the study. Participants took part in small groups of up to six people per session. They received about € 15 for one hour of their time. One session took approximately two hours in Study I and one hour and a half in Study II. After arriving in the room, participants were informed about their rights. This included the right to quit the experiment at any given time without the risk of losing the reward. Afterwards, participants picked a code at random from a box and

were seated in separate cubicles. Each workplace was equipped with a notebook, headphones, finger sensors, and a handheld slider (SCR) (see Chapter 9.4.1.1). Figure 4 displays the setting.



*Figure 4.* Experimental setting during video reception. The participant was equipped with headphones and finger sensors on the left hand. He holds the slider in his right hand.

The experiment itself was run on a computer. It started automatically after participants had entered their code. In a first step, a series of demographic, personality and attitudinal questionnaires was presented (described in detail in Chapter 10). Afterwards, participants were asked to put on the headphones, to rest the slider (SCR) in their dominant hand and to start the video reception. They started either with a series of the selected right-wing or with a series of Islamic extremist video clips (see Chapter 9.2).

After each clip, participants were asked to return the slider to a neutral position and then answered 20 questions assessing emotional and cognitive reactions towards the single video (see Chapter 9.4.1.2). After each series of video clips (of one ideology), participants were further forced to choose which one had impressed them the most (“Forced choice”). *“Please indicate which of the clips you remember best? Select by means of the screenshots the clip which impressed you the most”*.

After the last questionnaire, participants were thanked and given a full debriefing by a psychologist in groups of up to six people. Figure 5 depicts the course of a session.

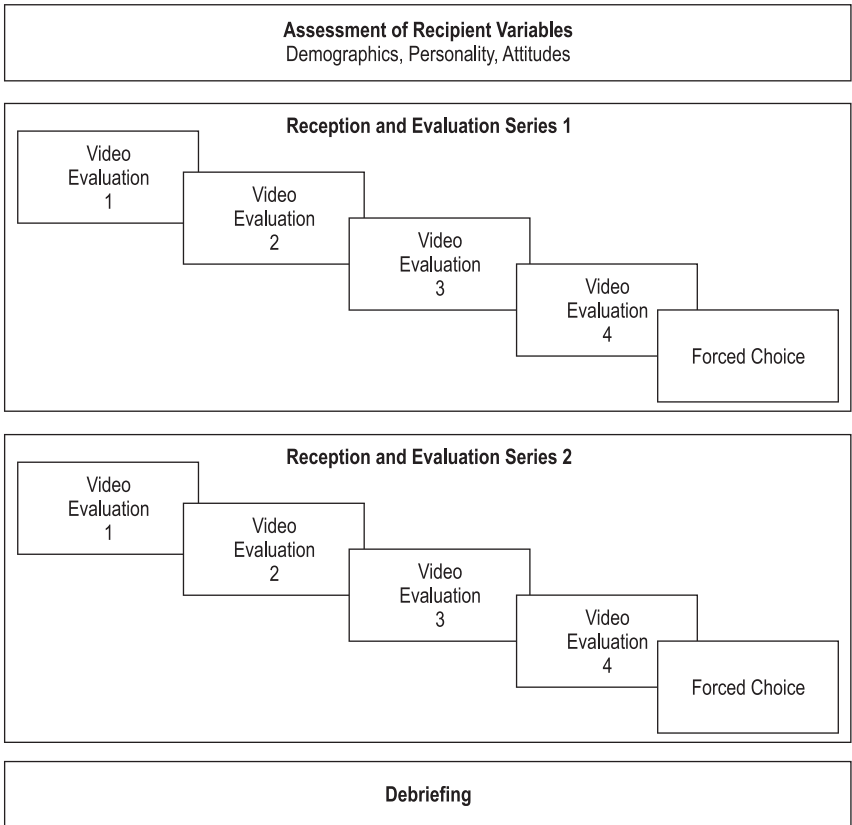


Figure 5. Procedure of Study I and Study II. The order of the two series (right-wing vs. Islamic extremist video clips) as well as the order of the single videos within, were randomized to prevent sequence effects (Hussy & Jain, 2002).

### 9.4 The Effects of Propaganda 2.0 – Immediate Evaluations

Former studies mostly found negative evaluations of propagandistic material and extremist groups (see Chapter 6). This could, to some extent, be explained by the methods used. For example, Baines and his colleagues (2006, 2010) asked participants during group discussions how they had experienced such videos. However, propaganda might be evaluated rather negatively in general and participants might have hesitated to show their agreement openly.

We therefore aimed at combining different measures in order to detect even slight changes on different dimensions. As indicated in Chapter 9.3, the first two studies

combined so-called online measures during and questions after each video. The impact a video has on the recipient might vary during exposure. It is a challenge in communication research to deal with the continuous flow of audio-visual stimuli that is characteristic for media exposure. Different emotions, cognitions and moment-to-moment evaluations are subject to change during reception (Lang, 2000). Thus, if a video is (exclusively) evaluated afterwards, the judgment is likely to predominantly reflect the last impression (Bolls, Lang, & Potter, 2001). By the applied combination of online (Chapter 9.4.1) and post-hoc measures (Chapter 9.4.2) we depicted the process of explicit evaluation formation. The results for single video clips (Chapter 9.4.3) will thus describe the effects of propaganda ranging from the process of online to post-hoc evaluations.

### 9.4.1 Online Measures

Online measurements reveal the participants' reactions during reception by real time measurement/recording. They comprise physiological arousal towards the stimulus presented as well as the evaluation of its valence.

Arousal in general can be understood as an energizer of behavior; it prepares and accompanies activities, experiences and emotions (Ravaja, 2004). One well researched parameter for arousal is Galvanic Skin Response (*GSR*). It measures the electrical activity of the skin that varies due to processes (neuronal activation) in the autonomic nervous system. Due to physiological processes, *GSR* changes, for example, when we are startled or frightened (Cantor, 2002). According to Ravaja (2004) it is an excellent description of [the] "*drive state or [the] non-specific energizer of behavior, something that describes the intensity of an experience but not its quality*" (Duffy, 1962; Mandler, 1992). *GSR* is conceived as a sensitive and reliable indicator especially for the emotional component of arousal (Grings & Dawson, 1978; Ravaja, 2004).

The unspecificity of arousal also implies that very intense emotions (positive and negative) can lead to similar psychophysiological reactions (e.g. tachycardia, sweating). Thus, the subjective valence of these states is important for their interpretation. Valence can be considered the second dimension of emotional responses, which also unfolds dynamically during stimulus presentation (Bente, Aelker, & Fürtjes, 2009)

To measure these two dimensions of online responses towards extremist stimuli, the "Integrated-Reception-Process analysis (IRP)" (Schmeisser, Bente & Isenbart, 2004) was employed. It has been frequently used in the context of advertising research (Bente et al., 2009; Schmeisser et al., 2004). Arousal in terms of *GSR* was recorded using finger sensors (Wild Devine *IOM*, 2006). Valence was assessed via continuous handheld slider ratings. The slider (*scorer ratings = SCR*) displayed a nine-point rating scale represented by red, yellow and green LEDs. It ran-

ged from  $-4$  (*red = very unpleasant*) over  $0$  (*yellow = neutral*), to  $+4$  (*green = very pleasant*).

## Data aggregation

GSR measurements were z-transformed on an individual level and controlled for outliers following a z-criterion of  $\pm 3$  standard deviations (Field, 2009)<sup>23</sup>. The transformed GSR averages were then calculated to represent the average arousal for each video. The same procedure was applied to SCR.

To understand the average online effects of extremist propaganda, the data for GSR and SCR were aggregated to a single mean for each participant and video clip.

### 9.4.2 Post-hoc Measures

After each video clip, participants answered 20 items asking their cognitive and emotional evaluations. These items were assessed on a 4-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (= *I absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *I absolutely agree*). Five items addressed the acceptance of message style (e.g. “*I couldn’t take this video seriously*”), and five items the acceptance of content (e.g. “*After this video I can understand the perspective of its makers much better*”). Ten additional items asked for different emotions as “*interest, anger or boredom*” on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*) (M-DAS, Renaud & Unz, 2006).

## Data aggregation

The items were analyzed via multilevel factor analysis<sup>24</sup>. The factor analysis is used to detect *latent variables* which cannot be measured directly<sup>25</sup>. In a first step, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to detect the underlying structure. The term “multilevel” refers to the fact that each of the items had to be answered multiple times (after each video) and by multiple participants.

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23 Z-transformation standardizes the raw values to an extent that the mean value equals zero and the other values are normally distributed around it. 68 % of all values lie within  $-1$  and  $+1$  standard deviations. Z-Values of  $\pm 3$  have a probability of about 99.9 % to belong to the same distribution of values (e.g. because they did result from video-induced arousal but not from *movement artifacts*).

24 A factor analysis contributes to a) an understanding of the structure underlying the questions applied; and b) to reduce them to relevant dimensions (Field, 2009) via analyzing the associations between the items. Items representing the same factor should be associated more strongly with each other than with all other items. Generally, exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA) factor analyses can be distinguished.

25 Conclusiveness of an argument, for example, is a latent variable but might be mirrored in the answers to items as “more facts named”, a “better rhetorical style” and “more importance for the receiver”. Factor analyses help detect whether single items represent the same underlying construct.

It has to be kept in mind that different answers to one item could have occurred due to differences between the video clips when evaluated by the same participant (level 1, the so-called *within-level*) as well as due to differences between the participants evaluating the same video clip (level 2, the *between-level*). Further interactions between the levels (*cross-level*) were possible.

In total, five latent variables or *factors* describing how the participants evaluated extremist propaganda were detected. A total of ten out of the assessed twenty items were identified to represent the post-hoc evaluation of propaganda. The further analyses will thus focus on them.

The factors were found on both levels. They are thus able to display effects varying within single video clips as well as differences between participants. Factors were proofed via CFA and remained stable within different educational levels as well as within different cultural samples.

Three of the factors described the participants' emotional reactions: *Aversion*, *Shame* and *Interest*. While the first two are negatively connoted and express rejection of the material; the latter one can be understood as a first step of an approach towards the message. The other two factors covered items referring to the cognitive evaluation of the stimuli. The first one describes to what extent a video was ascribed *One-sidedness*, the second the extent of its *Persuasiveness*. Again, adverse and approaching effects were distinguished. Table 8 gives an overview of the single items forming the five factors.

For further statistical analyses the items which represented the same factor were aggregated to a single mean for each participant and video clip.



Table 8. *Items and Factors of the Immediate Evaluation of Propaganda*

	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Items</b>
Emotional Evaluations	Aversion	After I had watched this video ... ... <i>I felt contempt</i> ... <i>I felt disgust</i> ... <i>I felt anger</i>
	Shame	... <i>I felt shame</i> ... <i>I felt guilt</i>
	Interest	... <i>I got interested</i> ... <i>I felt fascinated</i>
	One-sidedness	... <i>I found this video to be one-sided.</i> ... <i>I found this video to be sensational.</i> ... <i>I couldn't take this video seriously.</i>
	Persuasiveness	... <i>I have now more compassion with the makers of this video.</i> ... <i>I can understand the makers' perspective much better.</i> ... <i>I felt to be better informed about the background.</i> ... <i>the video was persuasive in my opinion.</i>

*Note.* All emotional items were answered on a five-point Likert-scale from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*). Cognitive evaluations were given on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*). Appendix 1 gives an overview of the factor-loadings and statistical details.

### 9.4.3 Results for Single Videos

Our second research aim was to investigate on which dimensions the videos differed with regard to the effects they evoked in recipients (see Chapter 7).

*Q2: Do distinct production formats and message styles differ with regard to their potential to create interest or to trigger rejection?*

For this purpose we analyzed online reactions (*GSR* and *SCR*) and post-hoc evaluations of  $N = 133$  student participants in Study I. As described in Chapter 9.4.2, the post-hoc factors can be distinguished into those rather evoking adverse evaluations (*Aversion*, *Shame*, *One-sidedness*) and those suggesting an approach towards extremist videos (*Interest*, *Persuasiveness*). During this first step, all 13 videos (see Chapter 9.2) were analyzed. Separate rANOVAs<sup>26</sup> for the right-wing and the Islamic extremist video clips were conducted. Table 9 reports the statistical results for the within factor *video clip* (i.e., differences regarding the effects due to differences between the single videos). For galvanic skin response

<sup>26</sup> Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is able to answer the question if more than two means differ significantly from each other (here, for example, the mean evaluations of the single video clips). Variance explained (e.g., resulting from the different videos) is compared to variance unexplained. Repeated measurement ANOVAs (rANOVAs) were used as all participants had watched and evaluated all video clips.

The chosen level of significance for the whole study was  $\alpha = .05$ , meaning that with a probability of 95% the values compared indeed varied from each other in the sample analyzed and would do so in the population as well.

(GSR), the right-wing extremist videos did not differ among each other concerning the evoked arousal, but the Islamic extremist videos did. SCR showed that the videos of both ideologies differed in regard to the evoked evaluations of pleasantness.

Table 9. *rANOVA Results for the Online Measures for the within Factor Video Split by Ideology*<sup>27</sup>

<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Online measure</b>	<b><i>F</i>(<i>df</i>)</b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b><math>\eta_p^2</math></b>
Right-wing extremist	GSR	$F(5, 535) = 1.26$	<i>n.s.</i>	.01
	SCR	$F(4.53, 571.27) = 32.35$	< .001	.20
Islamic extremist	GSR	$F(6, 636) = 5.27$	< .001	.05
	SCR	$F(5.08, 639.86) = 8.25$	< .001	.06

*Note.* The table shows the main effects for the within factor “video clip”. *F* is the statistical parameter in ANOVAs measuring the ratio of the variance explained vs. the unexplainable variance. As a rule of thumb bigger *F*s indicate stronger effects. *Df* = degrees of freedom. *p* = probability of the found differences to be random vs. significant.  $\eta_p^2$  = (partial) effect size.

A closer look at single video clips (see also Figure 6) in order to interpret the reported effects, revealed two main patterns:

(1) Arousal (GSR) did not change much depending on the video clip, except for one Islamic extremist clip, *RC Group lifestyle*<sup>28</sup>. This clip contains high levels of dramatic noise (exploding bombs, shootings), so one possible reason for the higher arousal might be that participants are alerted. The corresponding negative slider-ratings of the clip support this idea.

(2) Slider ratings (SCR) overall showed negative evaluations of propaganda video clips. However, there were some videos which stood out due to either very negative or rather neutral SCRs.

For both ideologies, the *TH Lifestyle activist* and the *Extreme clips* were evaluated most negatively while the *Movie clips* were evaluated as nearly neutral. The other video clips showed distinct evaluations depending on ideology. The *RC News broadcast* was rated neutrally when containing a right-wing extremist ideology and very negatively for the Islamic extremist clip. Both categories that appeared to be unique to one of the ideologies (*TH Ideologue* and *Public opinion*) were also perceived to be rather neutral. Figure 6 displays the online measures for the right-wing and Islamic extremist videos.

<sup>27</sup> Single comparisons are depicted in Appendix 2.

<sup>28</sup> Due to its low discriminative and explanatory power, GSR is no longer reported in the subsequent chapters.

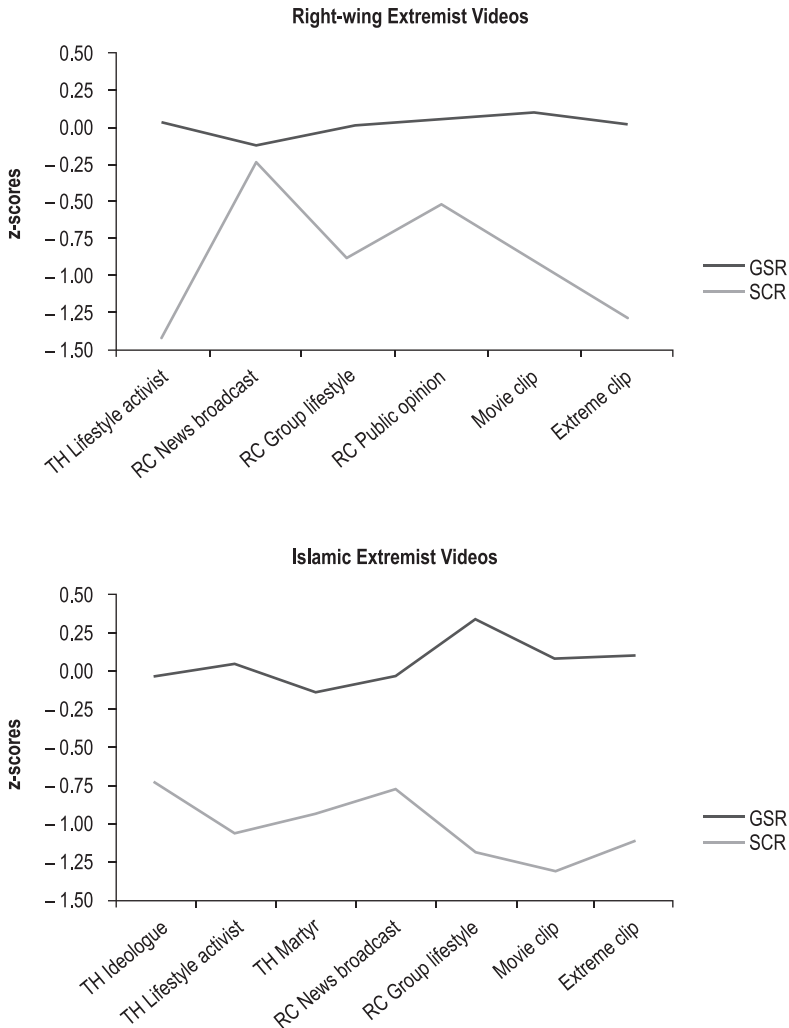


Figure 6. GSR and SCR measures for the different videos split by ideology. For displaying purposes GSR and SCR values were z-transformed.

Besides online responses, we were also interested in the post-hoc evaluations after each clip. In a first step, we analyzed the association between the slider ratings and the post-hoc factors. The relations between variables (*SCR* and the post-hoc evaluations) were measured via correlational analyses<sup>29</sup>. It is important to note that correlations do not allow causal interpretations.

<sup>29</sup> Correlations indicate a) whether relations are positive, thus an increase, for example, in *SCR* is associated with an increased post-hoc evaluation, or negative (an increase in *SCR* ratings associated with a decreased post-hoc evaluation). They are expressed via  $r$ . The higher its value, the stronger the relation.  $r = 1$  is the highest possible correlation.

Table 10 shows that first impressions made during the reception of a video clip already indicated tendencies for later evaluation. Videos which were rated as very unpleasant (SCR) were also reported to be more adverse afterwards. *Aversion*, *Shame* and *One-sidedness* correlated negatively with SCR during exposure. *Interest* and *Persuasiveness* correlated positively with SCR. It can be concluded that combining both online and post-hoc measures sufficed to depict an evaluation formation process.

Table 10. *Correlations between Online Measures and Post-hoc Factors*

SCR	Video	Aversion	Shame	One-sidedness	Interest	Persuasiveness
Right – wing extremist videos	TH Lifestyle activist	<b>-.48**</b>	-.09	<b>-.34**</b>	-.00	<b>.18*</b>
	RC News broadcast	<b>-.21*</b>	<b>-.19*</b>	-.13	.11	.06
	RC Group lifestyle	<b>-.32**</b>	-.09	<b>-.27**</b>	<b>.19*</b>	<b>.34**</b>
	RC Public opinion	<b>-.40**</b>	<b>-.26**</b>	<b>-.36**</b>	<b>.25**</b>	<b>.36**</b>
	Movie clip	<b>-.18*</b>	-.04	-.13	-.01	.05
	Extreme clip	<b>-.25**</b>	.08	<b>-.32**</b>	.16	<b>.28**</b>
Islamic extremist videos	TH Ideologue	-.13	<b>.19*</b>	<b>-.18*</b>	<b>.20*</b>	<b>.27**</b>
	TH Lifestyle activist	<b>-.32**</b>	-.01	-.01	.08	.14
	TH Martyr	<b>-.36**</b>	.05	-.08	-.02	.11
	RC News broadcast	<b>-.21*</b>	.16	-.16	-.02	.13
	RC Group lifestyle	<b>-.44**</b>	.06	-.06	.05	.05
	Movie clip	-.13	-.02	<b>-.22*</b>	.15	<b>.21*</b>
Extreme clip	<b>-.26**</b>	.11	-.06	.02	.14	

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$  Significant correlations are marked in boldface. Correlations  $r \geq .10$  can be regarded as low,  $r \geq .30$  as medium,  $r \geq .50$  as high (Field, 2009).

In the next step, the post-hoc factors were also analyzed via separate rANOVAs for the right-wing and Islamic extremist videos. Table 11 depicts that again differences between the video clips elicited significant effects.

Table 11. *rANOVA Results for the Post-hoc Measures within Factor Video Split by Ideology*

Ideology	Post-hoc Factor	<i>F</i> ( <i>df</i> )	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Right – wing extremist	Aversion	$F(4.27, 546.42) = 77.89$	< .001	.38
	Shame	$F(4.03, 515.32) = 11.67$	< .001	.08
	One-sidedness	$F(4.86, 515.32) = 622.64$	< .001	.17
	Interest	$F(4.60, 588.10) = 23.55$	< .001	.16
	Persuasiveness	$F(3.72, 476.00) = 19.94$	< .001	.14
Islamic extremist	Aversion	$F(4.92, 630.24) = 24.27$	< .001	.16
	Shame	$F(4.42, 565.53) = 5.89$	< .001	.04
	One-sidedness	$F(5.52, 705.93) = 9.53$	< .001	.07
	Interest	$F(5.49, 702.69) = 16.12$	< .001	.11
	Persuasiveness	$F(4.26, 544.76) = 18.22$	< .001	.13

*Note.* The table shows the main effects for the within factor “video clip”. *F* is the statistical parameter in ANOVAs measuring the ratio of the variance explained vs. the unexplainable variance. As a rule of thumb, bigger *F*s indicate stronger effects. *Df*= degrees of freedom. *p* = probability of the found differences to be random vs. significant.  $\eta_p^2$  = (partial) effect size.

Concerning the post-hoc evaluations indicating a rather adverse reaction towards propaganda videos, Figure 7 shows that the most outstanding reaction among all videos was *Aversion*. Especially the *Extreme clips* of both ideologies received high ratings here.

This was NOT very surprising as these videos deal with controversial topics (see Chapter 9.2), namely pedophilia and martyrdom. It might also be due to these topics that participants also report high levels of *Shame* after watching them.

High *Aversion* was also found for both *TH Lifestyle activist* videos. These videos share a commonality in that they try to recruit and motivate people to join the movement. Furthermore, both try to justify extremist actions by emphasizing the victimization of the “ingroup”. Moreover, they blame the audience for its ignorance and for not rising against the committed injustice. This might explain why they – similar to the *Extreme clips* – also evoked high ratings in *Shame*. Due to arguing from the “victims” perspective only, it is not surprising that participants also rated these videos to be rather one-sided. In line with this the *Movie clips* also elicited feelings of shame. Although the videos are produced rather professionally, it is reported from only one perspective. This might have triggered the high one-sidedness ratings found.

Several videos of the category *Reality clip* – although seemingly presenting an “objective” perspective– were rated high on one-sidedness. For example, the Islamic extremist *RC News broadcast* deals with the extremists’ view of the actions

of 9/11 and their subsequent claims. Unsurprisingly, this famous terrorist action was perceived to be one-sided because the video neglects the perspective of the victims. As already implied in the online measures, the Islamic extremist *RC Group lifestyle* also evoked very negative online ratings.

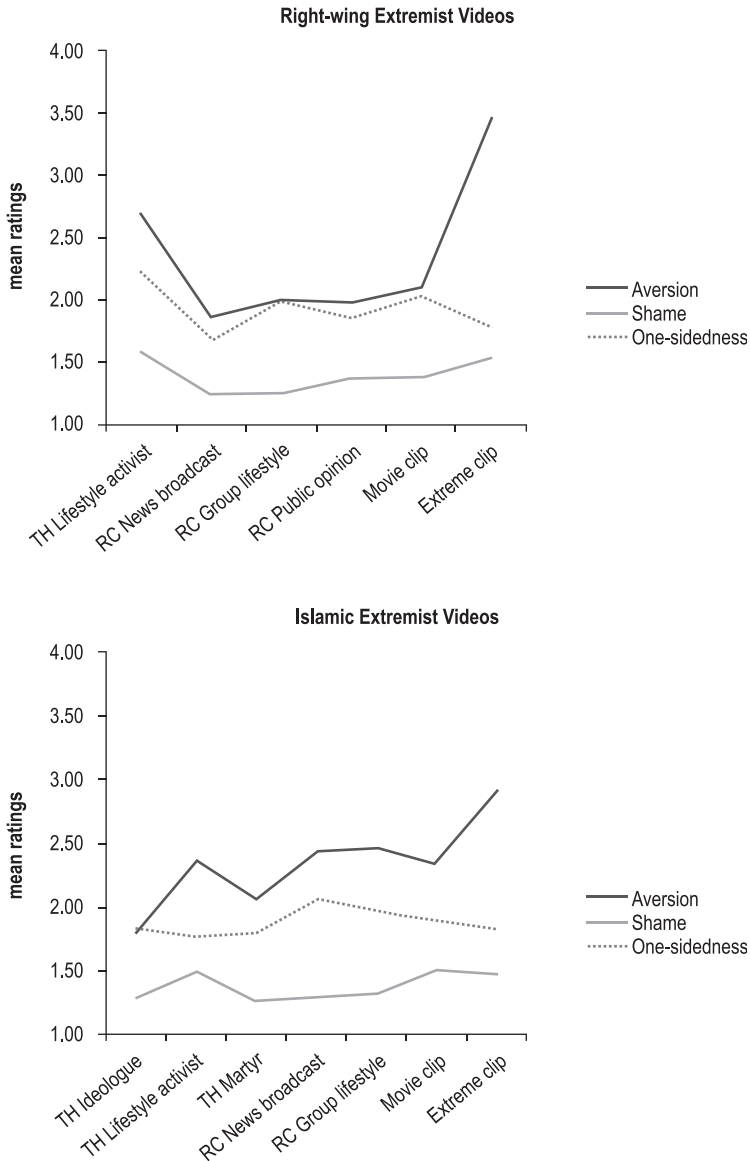


Figure 7. Adverse post-hoc evaluations for the different videos split by ideology. All emotional items were answered on a five-point Likert-scale from 1 (= not at all) to 5 (= very strong). Cognitive evaluations were given on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (= absolutely disagree) to 4 (= absolutely agree).

Strikingly, those videos evoking negative reactions also elicited evaluations which can be described in terms of a first approach (see Figure 8). For example, among the right-wing extremist clips, the *Extreme* and *Movie clips* evoked high *Aversion* and *Shame* and were evaluated as one-sided. Nonetheless, they also stimulated *Interest*. Similarly, the *RC News broadcast* received high ratings on *Aversion* and *One-sidedness* as well as the highest ratings on evoked *Interest*. In general, the *Persuasiveness* of the videos was always rated lower than the evoked interest. Within this restriction, *RC News broadcast* and the *Movie clips* were rated to be the most persuasive ones for the right-wing extremist material.

The same is true for the Islamic extremist video sample: *TH Lifestyle activist*, the *Movie* and *Extreme clip* evoked the most *Interest* and were rated as aversive and as evoking shame. *TH Lifestyle activist* and (as for the right-wing extremist material) the *Movie clip* were also rated as the most persuasive ones.

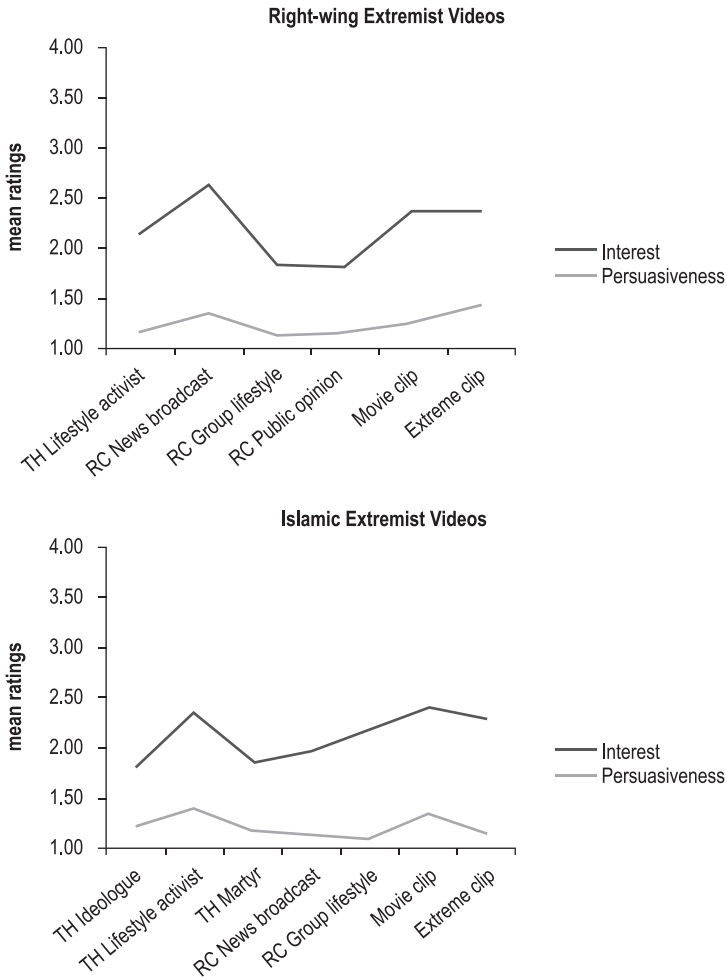


Figure 8. Approaching post-hoc evaluations for the different videos split by ideology. All emotional items were answered on a five-point Likert-scale from 1 (= not at all) to 5 (= very strong). Cognitive evaluations were given on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (= absolutely disagree) to 4 (= absolutely agree).

To draw a first conclusion, it seems that the videos either evoked some kind of reaction (negative *and* positive) or they did not. It might be that videos not evoking reactions might be evaluated as boring and thus are not able to trigger the first two steps in the AIDA Model (Attention and Interest, (E. S. Lewis, 1903, see chapter 1). Analyzing ratings on the item “boring” as a further control (see Chapter 9.3.1.2) supported this idea. Videos that were rated as boring did not show high rankings on the post-hoc factors. For each video, the evaluation of the video as boring was negatively correlated with *Interest* and *Persuasiveness*. Concerning *Interest*, all correlation coefficients were significant at  $p < .01$ ,  $r \geq -.28$ , indicat-



ing that boredom and *Interest* in the same clip really contradict each other. With regard to *Persuasiveness*, the majority of correlation coefficients were significant at  $p < .05$ ,  $r \geq -.21$ , only for those Islamic extremist clips dealing with suicide attacks (TH Martyr and Extreme clip) the correlation did not become significant. Although these video clips were rated as interesting, they were not rated as very persuasive.

Also, the participants' selection of the most impressive videos from each ideology supported this idea. Generally, the memorization of certain videos within one ideology can be seen as a further indicator of the impact of the presented stimuli. As already stated in theories on advertising effects, material has to be recalled in order to allow further processing (Moorman, 2003).

Figure 9 gives an overview of the videos which were recalled best after presentation of all videos within one ideology. It can be concluded that videos evoking a reaction (even the videos evoking negative reactions such as *Aversion* or *Shame*) were also recalled better after reception.

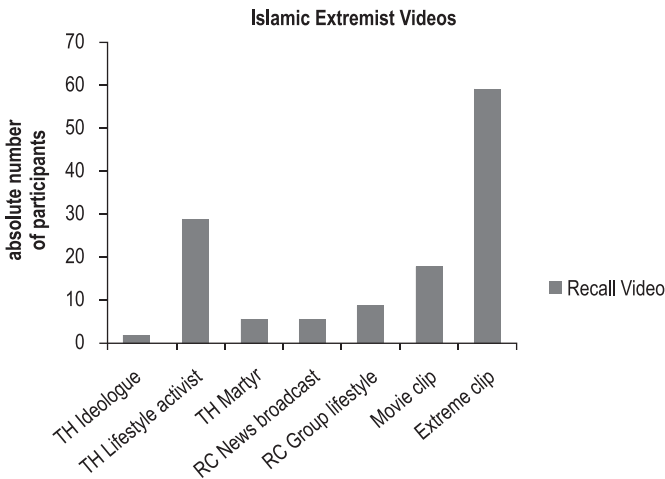
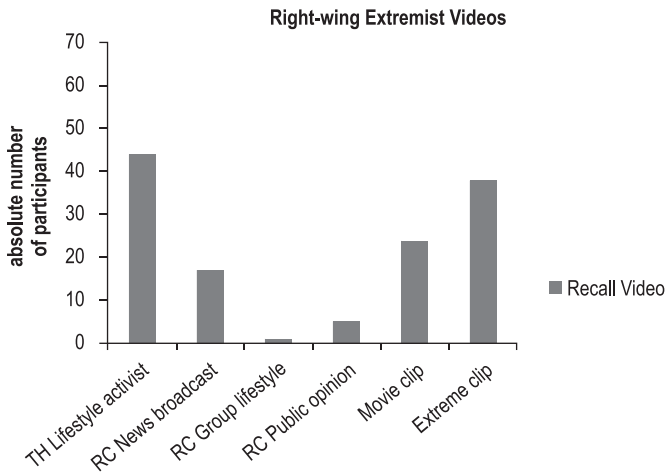


Figure 9. Absolute number of recalls per video split by ideology.

In both ideologies, the clips *TH Lifestyle activist*, *Movie* and *Extreme clip* not only stood out concerning their online and post-hoc ratings, but were also evaluated as the most impressive ones. Crucial points might be the direct addressing of the audience as well as their professional production style. Further, all six videos combine animated pictures accompanied by music. The other formats (only) affected the audience to a lesser extent.

As Study I also aimed at reducing and refining the stimulus material, for the second study only the six videos evoking the strongest responses were included. We made one exception; *RC Group lifestyle* videos were included in the subsequent studies as well. One the one hand, the content analysis (see Chapter 9.1) has identified them as the most frequent format for both ideologies. On the other hand,

Baines et al. (2010) supposed that particularly such adventurous video clips might stimulate to approach Jihad. Furthermore, with the selection of these four clips per ideology, all four main categories of the content analysis were still realized. By adding this category to the next study, the variability of formats (*Talking heads, Reality, Movie and Extreme clips*) was preserved. Statistical analyses (see also Chapter 8) confirmed the comparability of Study I and Study II regardless of video reduction. Subsequent analyses thus present Study I and Study II together focusing on those eight clips found to have the largest effects on the audience.

Besides all communalities between Islamic and right-wing extremist propagation, people can only be attracted (“recruited”) by one of them. Thus, we focused on ideology as the main underlying factor, irrespective of the production style or format of the single video clips. We combined all video clips sharing the same ideological background by computing a single mean for each online and post-hoc factor for “right-wing” and “Islamic” extremist material. Including “Ideology” as a factor allowed analyses of how participant characteristics influenced the evaluations of either Islamic or right-wing extremist propaganda in general.

#### **9.4.4 Summary: Research Focus I**

*R1: Description of right-wing extremist and Islamic extremist propaganda videos and analysis of their effects.*

Chapter 9 addressed our first research focus and aimed at characterizing modern right-wing and Islamic extremist internet videos and giving first insights into their effects. Four prototypes of extremist propaganda were found to characterize right-wing as well as Islamic extremist audio-visuals linguistically understandable for a German audience.

*Q1: Which prototypical formats of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda in Germany can be distinguished? Which messages are transported?*

Analogous to the work by Baines and his colleagues (2006, 2010) as prototypes, *Talking head formats, Reality* and *Movie clips* were distinguished. Furthermore, *Extreme clips* as an additional category were included. According to the description of propaganda by Merten (2000), the structure of Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda was similar. The suffering of the own ingroup, particularly of innocent children and/or women, was opposed to the faults of an outgroup. Furthermore, the extremist group was presented as a cohesive entity willing to address the problems depicted before.

*Q2: Do distinct production formats and message styles differ with regard to their potential to create interest or to trigger rejection?*

Indeed, differences were found in the potential of extremist propaganda to catch the audience’s attention and trigger their response. Videos rated as boring could not develop a possibly persuasive potential and were not sustainably recalled.

In contrast, videos “touching the recipient” in terms of playing with his emotions (unpleasantness, aversion, shame) were also able to create slight reactions of interest and persuasiveness.

Our video selection was derived from this analysis and those videos able to attract attention were chosen. For the *Talking head* formats those clips displaying a *Lifestyle activist*, were chosen. Further, the professional *Movie clips* and the *Extreme clips* were perceived as potentially attracting. The *Reality clips* were identified as the most frequent format available and were thus also included in the analyses. However, this format overall had a smaller affecting potential compared to the other three formats.

## 10. Research Focus II: Propaganda and Different Audiences

### 10.1 Characteristics of the Audience

The study focused on the potential ingroup of extremist propaganda. We were interested in the reactions of “normal young adults” when they are confronted with extremist videos.

A self-developed scale (Table 12) assessing the acceptance of terrorism justifications was thus applied to control for recipients already accepting terrorist means.

Table 12. *Justifications of Terrorism Scale*

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Example items</b>	<b>Rating scale</b>
Justifications of Terrorism (own scale)	<i>“Terrorism can be morally justified if ... it helped the expulsion of an occupying power” “... it was about restoring social justice” “... it was about fighting for one’s religious beliefs”</i>	7-point Likert (1 = <i>totally disagree</i> ; 7 = <i>totally agree</i> )

*Note.* Answers were aggregated to a single value expressing the justifications of terrorism (Cronbachs  $\alpha^{30} = .72$  in Study I and  $\alpha = .73$  in Study II).

As extremist propaganda mainly focuses on young men (see Chapter 5), only male participants took part in the study. We further assessed demographics as age, media usage behavior, cultural background, educational level, and the major studied.

Against the theoretical background depicted in Chapter 5, the characteristics suspected to contribute to a recipient’s approach towards extremist content were considered (see Table 13). As one possible moderator, the self-reported German/culture of origin social identity self-concept (Maehler & Schmidt-Denter, n.d.) was measured. The scales by Maehler (2011) measure distinct cultural identities with the same six questions for each cultural identity of the participant (German and, if existing, culture of origin). Questions concerning the culture of origin were only presented when a migration background was reported.

To cover personality factors, the Big Five (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and a sensation seeking scale were included. The big five (extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness) were assessed on a 10-item scale (Ramm-

30 Cronbachs  $\alpha$  is a measure of the internal consistency of a scale and expression of its reliability.  $\alpha < .5 =$  unacceptable,  $< .6 =$  questionable,  $< .7 =$  acceptable,  $< .8 =$  good,  $< .9 =$  excellent.

stedt, 2007; Rammstedt & John, 2007). Sensation seeking was measured by AISS-D (Roth & Hammelstein, 2003) which contains 20 items.

In order to address attitudinal patterns, lack of control, political attitude, authoritarianism and acceptance of violence were included. The lack of control was measured by means of 15 items by Agroskin and Jonas (2010) encompassing items for political, economic and personal lack of control. The political attitude was measured with the help of a single item, directly asking for the political attitude on a five-point scale (Wasmer, Koch, Harkness, & Gabler, 1996). The assessment of authoritarianism combined the two items by Frindte and Haußecker (2010) as well as the eight item scale by Petzel, Wagner, Nicolai, and Van Dick (1997).

As described in Chapter 5, acceptance of violence can be understood as a second component in an approach towards extremism. We applied the concept by using the six-item scale from Wagner, Christ and Kühnel (2002). See Table 13 for an overview of all scales used. Variables not assessed via scales (gender, age, media usage) are not included in the table.

Table 13. *Personality and Attitudinal Variables Assessed*

Category	Instrument	Example Items	Rating scale
Self – concept	German/Non-German Identity Self-concept (Maehler & Schmidt-Denter, n. d.)	<i>“I feel German/Culture of Origin”</i>	5-point Likert (1 = <i>absolutely not applying</i> ; 5 = <i>absolutely applying</i> )
	Personality Factors	Sensation seeking (Roth & Hammelstein, 2003)	<i>“When I listen to music, it should be loud”</i> or <i>“On a general level, I work better under pressure”</i>
Big-Five (Rammstedt & John, 2007)		<i>“I see myself as someone . . . who is relaxed, who handles stress well”,</i> or <i>“. . . who gets nervous easily”</i>	5-point Likert (1 = <i>absolutely not applying</i> ; 5 = <i>absolutely applying</i> )
Attitudinal Patterns	Lack of Control (Agroskin & Jonas, 2010)	<i>“It is hard for us to influence the actions of politicians”</i>	5-point Likert (1 = <i>absolutely not applying</i> ; 5 = <i>absolutely applying</i> )
	Authoritarianism (Petzel et al., 1997)	<i>“The most important thing, children should learn is obedience and respect for parents and superiors”</i>	5-point Likert (1 = <i>totally disagree</i> ; 5 = <i>totally agree</i> )
	Authoritarianism (Frindte & Haußecker, 2010)	<i>“How important is it in society to obey under authorities?”</i>	6-point Likert (1 = <i>totally unimportant</i> , 6 = <i>totally important</i> )
	Political Attitude (Wasmer et al., 1996)	<i>“How would you classify your political attitude?”</i>	5-point Likert (1 = <i>left-wing</i> , 5 = <i>right-wing</i> )
	Acceptance of Violence (U. Wagner et al., 2002)	<i>“Sometimes I have to use violence to not draw the short straw”</i> or <i>“The usage of violence can create clear conditions”</i>	4-point Likert (1 = <i>absolutely not applying</i> ; 4 = <i>absolutely applying</i> )

### Data Preparation

Based on their **demographic variables**, participants were split into cultural and educational groups. Three cultural groups were distinguished: 1) Participants with both parents originating from Germany and a Christian or no religious affiliation were classified as “Germans”. 2) Participants with both parents originating from a Muslim country (e.g. UAE, Turkey, or Iran) and Muslim religious affiliation were referred to as “Muslims”. 3) Participants with parents originating from a non-Muslim country (e.g. Latin America, Russia) and either Christian

or no religious affiliation were classified as “Others”. All other combinations (e.g. Russian Jews) were excluded from further analyses in order to ensure that groups were big enough to be compared statistically.

Concerning educational level, only students and pupils from vocational schools were included in the analyses. If available, their major fields of study were manually coded as social-/humanist (e.g. psychology, philosophy) or science-oriented/technical (e.g. physics, engineering) ones.

For the **personality and attitudinal questionnaires**, the items were recoded to such an extent that higher values expressed higher manifestation of the accordant trait. To enhance comparability, all items of the lack of control scale were recoded to the extent that higher values represented higher feelings of control instead of lack of it. To avoid confusion, we thus refer to the accordant scale from now on as “*feeling of control*”.

In accordance to literature, values for the single items were aggregated to a single value for each scale.

## 10.2 Sample

A total of  $N^{31} = 339$  participants took part in both Studies I and II. However, as already mentioned in Chapter 10.1, the differentiation in cultural subgroups led to the exclusion of some participants. A total of  $N = 39$  participants could not be taken into consideration for further analyses due to statistical reasons. Further  $N = 23$  had to be excluded due to their professional status (neither students nor pupils). The remaining  $N = 277$  were on average  $M = 24.14$  ( $SD = 4.54$ ) years old.

As far as the educational level is concerned,  $n = 160$  participants were students and  $n = 117$  were pupils from vocational schools. Table 14 shows the absolute number of participants with different cultural backgrounds within the educational subgroups.

Table 14. Total Number of Participants Split by Cultural Background and Educational Level

		Educational Level	
		Students	Pupils from vocational schools
Cultural Background	German	98	66
	Muslim	24	27
	Other	38	24

*Note.* The distribution of cultural background did not differ significantly<sup>32</sup> among the educational levels,  $\chi^2(2) = 2.98, n.s.$

31  $N$  = Number of participants,  $M$  = Mean,  $SD$  = Standard Deviation.

32 Tested with a Chi-Square test. Chi-square tests analyze whether or not the frequency of a variable (e.g. cultural background) differs significantly between different groups (e.g. educational levels).



For a subgroup of  $n = 56$  students in Study II, the major fields of study were additionally assessed. Two major fields were differentiated: 39.3 % studied a humanistic subject, 60.7 % pursued technical, scientific-oriented studies.

As the focus here lay on online propaganda addressing the *digital natives*, the media usage was also assessed among students and pupils from vocational schools. Similar to the results of the JIM Study in 2011, the vast majority of all participants could be described as frequent online users. 97.9 % reported to have their own notebook with internet access. Most of them (85.3 %) described using the internet for a broad range of purposes (e.g., social media, emails, e-shopping, video clips, etc.); 10 % reported using the internet frequently and only 4.7 % stated that they only used it occasionally (e.g., only emails and information search). Regarding the frequency of extremist online propaganda, it is thus not surprising that 66.7 % of the students and 79.5 % of the pupils had already found an extremist video clip online. Table 15 gives an overview of the clips found before the participation in our study. Though participants were more familiar with right-wing extremist videos, more than half of the students and a third of the pupils also had pre-experiences with Islamic extremist material.

Table 15. Percentages of Videos Found, Split by Ideology

Educational level		Have you already found a (n)...	
		Right-wing extremist video?	Islamic extremist video?
Students	yes	83.3 %	51.1 %
	no	16.7 %	48.9 %
Pupils	yes	85.7 %	39.6 %
	no	14.3 %	60.4 %

Note. Chi-Square tests<sup>33</sup> revealed that pre-experience with right-wing extremist material did not differ among the samples,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.46$ , *n.s.* However, students reported significantly more pre-experience with Islamic extremist propaganda,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.92$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Phi = -.18$ .

Although a majority of the sample had already come into contact with extremist video clips, only a few reported media to have a huge influence on them. The answers reflect a typical third-person-effect (Davison, 1983; Duck, 1995). While the impact of media on oneself is perceived as low, the others are thought to be easily influenced (see Figure 10).

33  $\Phi$  =effect size measure.

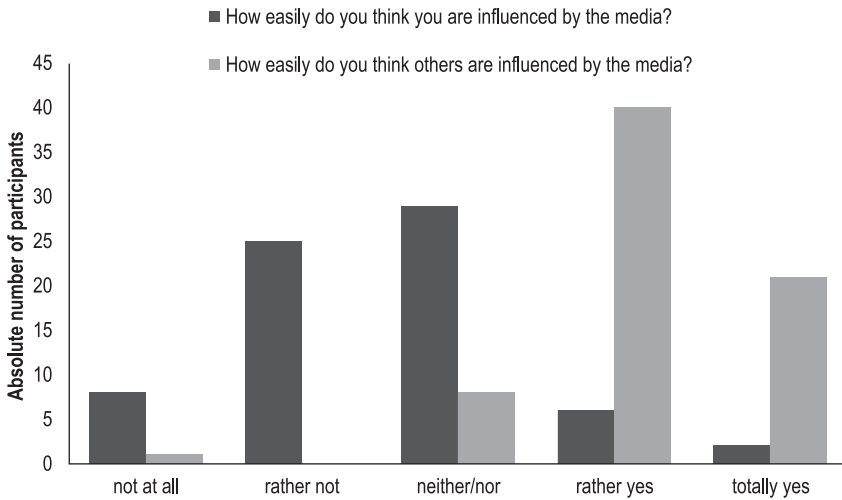


Figure 10. Perceived influence of the mass media.

Chapter 10.1 already introduced the recipient variables we assessed in order to get a more detailed description of our sample and to enable a more precise picture of potential propaganda effects. In terms of justifications of terrorism, our sample indeed could be classified as unsuspecting. On the applied scale between 1 (= *totally disagree*) and 7 (= *totally agree*), our participants had a mean value of  $M = 2.36$  ( $SD = 0.33$ ). As far as the other recipient variables are concerned, Table 16 gives an overview of the average manifestations of the single aspects.

Table 16. *Average Manifestation of Assessed Recipient Variables*

Category	Instrument	Average manifestation	Possible Range (Minimum- Maximum)
Self – concept	German Identity Self-Concept (Maehler & Schmidt-Denter, n.d.)	$M = 3.45, SD = 0.82^b$	1–5
Personality Factors	Sensation seeking (Roth & Hammelstein, 2003)	$M = 55.71, SD = 6.31^c$	20–80
	Big-Five (Rammstedt & John, 2007)		1–5
	Extraversion	$M = 3.44, SD = 0.94^a$	
	Neuroticism	$M = 3.35, SD = 0.91^a$	
	Conscientiousness	$M = 3.31, SD = 0.87^a$	
	Openness	$M = 3.91, SD = 0.88^a$	
	Agreeableness	$M = 3.05, SD = 0.75^a$	
Attitudinal Patterns	Feeling of Control (Agroskin & Jonas, 2010)	$M = 2.77, SD = 0.65^a$	1–5
	Authoritarianism (Frindte & Haußecker, 2010; Petzel et al., 1997)	$M = 28.71, SD = 7.17^b$	10–52
	Political Attitude	$M = 1.19, SD = 0.39^a$	1–5
	Acceptance of Violence (U. Wagner et al., 2002)	$M = 1.96, SD = 0.62^a$	1–4

*Note.* Higher values express higher manifestations of the accordant characteristic. Only for political attitude higher values express a more right-wing political attitude. Indices indicate manifestation compared to scale mean when standard deviation is considered <sup>a</sup>) low, <sup>b</sup>) average, <sup>c</sup>) high.  $M$  = Mean,  $SD$  = Standard deviation.

## 10.3 Results for Ideology

### 10.3.1 Demographics and the Evaluation of Propaganda

*Q3) Do recipients react differently to right-wing than to Islamic extremist propaganda?*

*Q4) Does this reaction depend on the cultural background or other demographics of the participant?*

As already described in Chapter 5, we planned to investigate whether these differences were due to potential ingroup relations between sender and recipient, interacting with other demographics. Thus, particularly the cultural background and the educational level of participants seemed to be of major interest. Hence, separate  $3$  (Culture: German vs. Muslim vs. Other)  $\times 2$  (Educational level: students vs. pupils)  $\times 2$  (Ideology: Islamic vs. Right-wing extremist clips) mixed<sup>34</sup> ANOVAs, with the last factor serving as a repeated factor, were conducted for each of the dependent variables. Table 17 gives an overview of the significant interactions between the three factors<sup>35</sup>.

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34 Mixed ANOVA because—in contrast to the rANOVAs described in Chapter 9.4.2—besides a *within* factor (here: ideology) also *between* factors (culture and education) were included. Besides main effects of each of the three factors, interactions between them were possible as well. An interaction generally describes how the effect of one factor (e.g., cultural background) on the outcome varies with differences in the other factor (e.g., educational level). Two-way interactions between two factors and a three-way interaction between all three factors were possible. The latter is the “higher one”. In case of significant interactions, the highest ones should always be interpreted as they describe the full effect. For example, it might be that generally right-wing extremist videos are evaluated as less unpleasant but that this effect is only significant among one of the cultural and/or educational groups. Quality of these interactions is described later on. For further questions please contact the authors.

35 Results for the pairwise comparisons are depicted in Appendix 3

Table 17. Results of the Mixed ANOVAs for SCR and the Post-hoc Measures

DV	Interaction	$F(df)$	$p$	$\eta_p^2$
SCR	ideology $\times$ cultural	$F(2, 183) = 5.021$	$< .01$	.05
	background $\times$ educational level			
Aversion	ideology $\times$ cultural background	$F(2, 266) = 3.538$	$< .05$	.03
Shame	ideology $\times$ cultural background	$F(2, 266) = 21.447$	$< .001$	.14
One-sidedness	ideology $\times$ cultural	$F(2, 266) = 6.299$	$< .01$	.05
	background $\times$ educational level			
Interest	ideology $\times$ cultural	$F(2, 266) = 24.308$	$< .001$	.16
	background $\times$ educational level			
Persuasiveness	ideology $\times$ cultural	$F(2, 266) = 21.534$	$< .001$	.14
	background $\times$ educational level			

*Note.* For each mixed ANOVA the highest significant interaction is reported. The interpretation of these interaction effects can be derived from the main body of the text.  $F$  is the statistical parameter in ANOVAs measuring the ratio of the variance explained vs. the unexplainable variance. As a rule of thumb, bigger  $F$ 's indicate stronger effects.  $df$  = degrees of freedom.  $p$  = probability of the found differences to be random vs. significant.  $\eta_p^2$  = effect size.

As already implied in Chapter 9.4.2, all propaganda videos were evaluated as unpleasant during reception and rather negatively afterwards (post-hoc). However, different shades of this rejection were found in the six subsamples (student vs. pupil  $\times$  German vs. Muslim vs. other). The analysis of the online as well as the post-hoc factors revealed a consistent pattern.

In general, Germans evaluated propaganda during reception more negatively (SCR) than the other two cultural groups. However, this effect varied with the ideology of the clips as well as the educational level of the participants.

During reception, Muslim participants reported less unpleasantness than the other two groups. However, for the Islamic extremist material, Muslim students reported significantly more unpleasantness than Muslim pupils. The two educational levels did not differ significantly regarding the right-wing extremist material. As depicted in Figure 11, a trend is evident – though not significant- that German and Muslim students rated propaganda of the own ingroup as more unpleasant than the other material and pupils showed the mirrored pattern; judging the material of the respective other group as being more unpleasant.

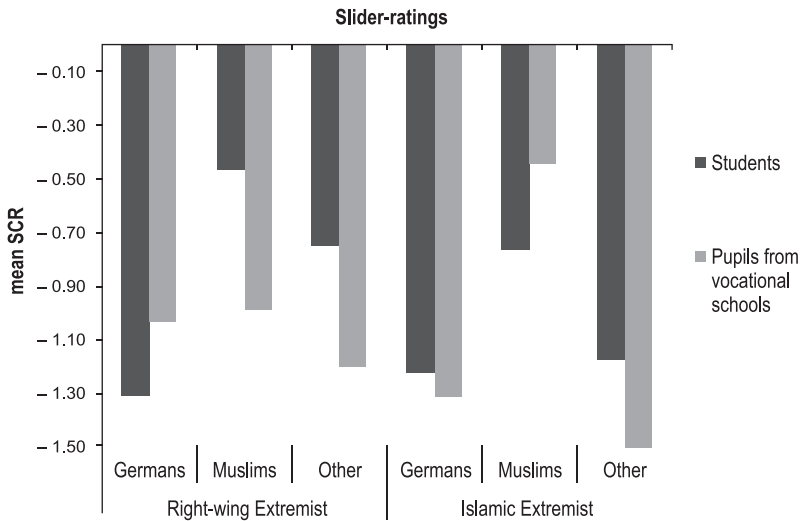


Figure 11 Slider-ratings (SCR) in the subsamples split by ideology. Scale ranged from -4 (=very unpleasant) to +4 (=very pleasant).

The impression derived from the online ratings (SCR) was also found for the post-hoc factors. Concerning the evoked aversion and shame, the evaluation only depended on the ideology of the video clips and the participants' cultural background. In general, the Islamic extremist ideology was reported to be more adverse than the right-wing extremist one. However, this difference only reached significance for the Muslim participants. They also evaluated all videos to evoke more shame than other immigrants and Germans did. However, once again, this difference was most pronounced for the Islamic extremist material. Germans, in contrast, reported more shame after the right-wing extremist clips. Other immigrants – who might not feel addressed by either ideology – reported similar levels of shame for both.

For the remaining three factors, *One-sidedness*, *Interest* and *Persuasiveness*, the evaluation of propaganda differed between the ideologies, the cultural backgrounds and the educational levels.

As for the slider-ratings, German students evaluated the videos overall as more one-sided than the other two cultural groups. This effect varied with the ideology of the clips. German participants evaluated particularly right-wing extremist propaganda as more one-sided than the Islamic extremist material. With regard to the Muslim participants, pupils judged the videos to be more one-sided than students. This effect concerned particularly the right-wing extremist material, which was evaluated as more one-sided than the Islamic extremist one. Other immigrants

did not differ concerning the evaluation of right-wing and Islamic extremist material (see results for *Aversion*, *Shame* and *One-sidedness* in Figure 12).

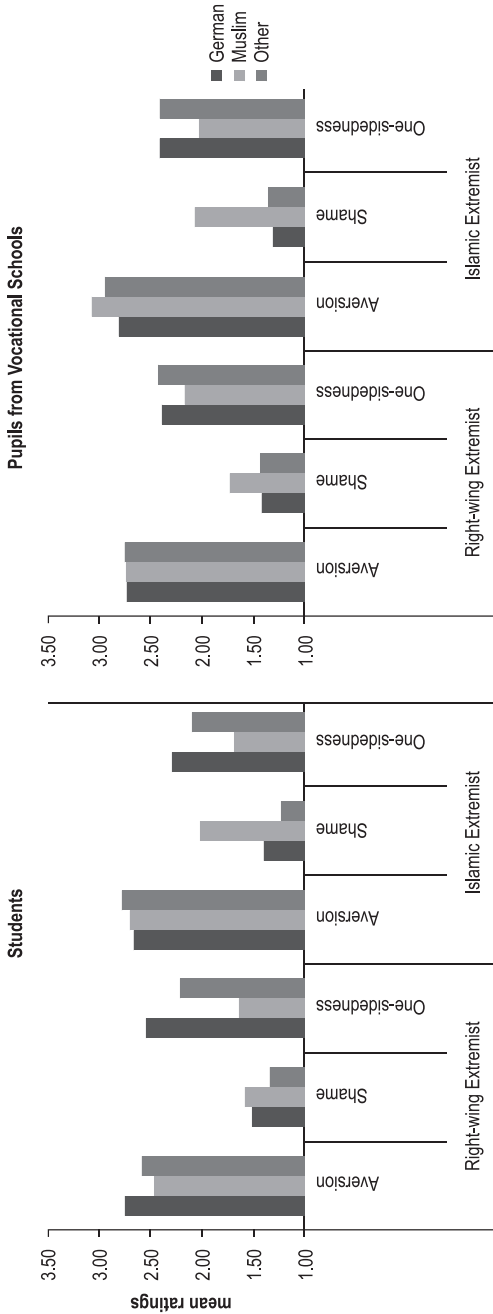


Figure 12. Adverse post-hoc evaluations for the different subsamples split by ideology.

Both post-hoc factors expressing a cautious approach towards an ideology (*Interest* and *Persuasiveness*) yielded a convergent pattern. While German students reported less interest for right-wing extremist propaganda, Muslim students rated the Islamic extremist material as less interesting. They also reported less persuasiveness for the Islamic extremist material. Within the pupil subsample, as found by the preceding measures, the pattern changed. German pupils reported more interest and persuasiveness for the right-wing extremist material and Muslim pupils for the Islamic extremist material. Further, pupils significantly differed from students with the same cultural background when evaluating propaganda of the own ingroup. Pupils evaluated this propaganda as more interesting.

Participants with another cultural background neither differentiated between right-wing and Islamic extremist material nor did their evaluations differ in terms of educational level. Figure 13 shows the pattern for the approaching post-hoc factors.



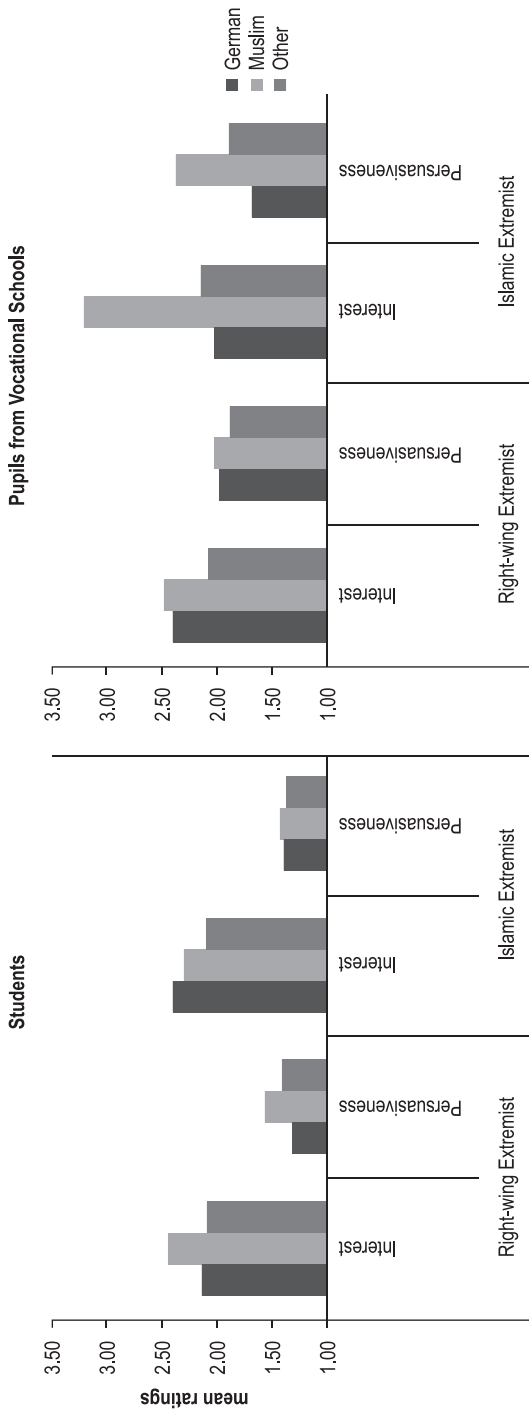


Figure 13. Approaching post-hoc evaluations for the different subsamples split by ideology

To sum up, a coherent picture emerged from the online and post-hoc measures when focusing on participants' cultural and educational background. The main difference between both educational levels was that students tried to distance themselves from the apparent "cultural ingroup" propaganda whereas pupils from vocational schools reported to be in favor of said propaganda. Other immigrants showed no such systematic reactions towards the propaganda material.

It has to be taken into consideration the fact that propaganda in general has a negative connotation. When Germans watched right-wing extremist videos they may have been reminded of the Nazi regime. Similarly, Muslims might have felt negatively for being reminded of Islamic extremism. Their first reaction thus might be a spontaneous distancing from the presented message in order to defend themselves by denying the ingroup relation. This is in line with former research on ingroup defense reactions. Belonging to a negative ingroup triggered distancing from this group (Arndt et al., 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

This, however, does not explain why pupils from vocational schools did not show such a defense reaction. On the one hand, it might be that students were more aware of the own cultural guilt (Gunn & Wilson, 2011; Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006). Thus social desirability might have prevented them from overt expression of approaching tendencies. Study III (see Chapter 11) addressed this idea.

On the other hand, it might be a more common conventionalism to understand other perspectives and to criticize closer shortcomings (such as the extremist black-and-white worldview) within the student samples. Pupils from vocational schools might not be that trained in rejecting or questioning such statements. Against this background we further analyzed if the studied major influenced how students reacted to propaganda of the ingroup. There are first hints (Gambetta & Hertog, 2007) that majors with a clear determined and structured focus (technical or scientific-oriented) might lead to more interest in an extremist ideology or reverse: Extremist people might be more prone to study technically and scientifically-oriented majors. However, the inclusion of major field of study did not change the pattern in the student sample. The rejection of ingroup propaganda was similarly found among students with a humanistic as well as a technical major.

This is in line with Gambetta and Hertog (2007) who reported a higher number of engineers becoming Islamic extremists in countries with strict Muslim regimes (Arab Peninsula) but not among Westerners. Potential explanations will be discussed in detail in Chapter 12.

Last but not least, it might be possible that although pupils in general reacted more receptively to propaganda of the own ingroup, this would – in a second step – not influence their evaluation of terrorism in general. We thus applied the self-developed justifications of the terrorism scale (see Chapter 10.2) in Study II not only as

a control variable before reception, but also after each series. By repeating the assessment of justifications of terrorism, changes due to the videos could be displayed. Arguably, people might report terrorist actions to be more justifiable if they were presented with arguments in favor of those actions (e. g., as in extremist videos clips) before. To depict this short-term effect, the next analysis aimed at investigating if the justifications of terrorism changed after being exposed to either ideology. Notably, terrorism acceptance after the reception was only accessed in Study II. As a result, for the student participants, cultural background could not be analyzed as nearly all of them were German. A 3 (Culture: German vs. Muslim vs. Other)  $\times$  3 (Terror justification: before vs. after the right-wing vs. after the Islamic extremist clips) mixed ANOVA<sup>36</sup> with the last one as within factor was conducted only for the pupils from vocational schools.

The results indicated that German pupils did not change their justifications of terrorism depending on the extremist ideology of the presented videos. Other migrants showed increased justifications of terrorism after the series of right-wing but not after the Islamic extremist videos. Muslim pupils reported more justifications of terrorism after the Islamic extremist videos but not significantly after the right-wing series (see Figure 14).

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36 Mixed ANOVAs include *between* (here: culture) and *within* (here: terrorism justification) factors. Thus besides the main effects of each of the factors also interactions between them were possible.

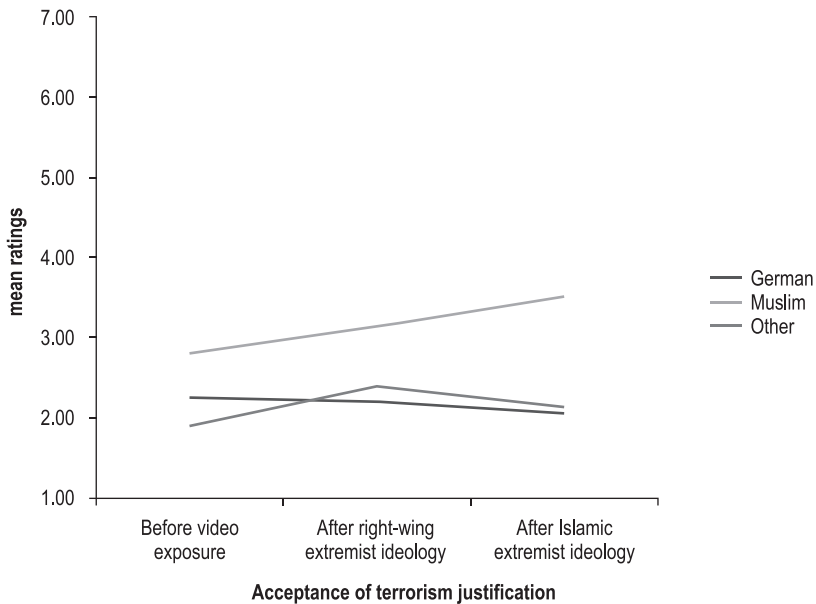


Figure 14. Results for the justifications of terrorism among pupils split by cultural background and ideology. Participants stated their agreement on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (=absolutely not agree) to 7 (=absolutely agree).

In general, the results so far indicated that propaganda evoked mainly negative reactions. The strongest demographic factor influencing the shade of rejection was found to be the cultural background. For all dependent measures, cultural background shaped the evaluations. The results can be interpreted in terms of a defense reaction against propaganda of the own cultural ingroup among students. However, besides for *Shame* and *Aversion* which only depended on cultural background, the effect turned for pupils of vocational schools. Overall, they evaluated propaganda of the own ingroup less negatively and more interest-evoking.

Nonetheless, Decker and his colleagues (Decker et al., 2010) showed that right-wing attitudes were also found among the higher educated Germans (such as academics). Further, Sageman (2004) as well as Bakker (2006) reported a substantial amount of Jihadist having finished college or university. Additionally, the broad majority of students and pupils from vocational schools of all cultures certainly reject extremism. Against this background, it seems implausible that cultural background and educational level alone can explain extremist appeal. As already discussed in Chapters 1 and 5, personality factors and attitudinal patterns were expected to contribute to the effects of propaganda.

### 10.3.2 The Role of Personality and Attitude

*Q5) Are personality factors and pre-existing attitudinal patterns able to influence the evaluation of extremist propaganda?*

Besides the influence of culture and educational level on the evaluation of extremist propaganda, we were also interested in the effects personality and attitudinal patterns may have. Correlational analyses showed that nearly all recipient variables correlated significantly with cultural background and/or with educational level.

In order to identify the pure association between the recipient variables and the evaluation measures, we thus conducted partial correlations<sup>37</sup> controlling for the influence of education and culture (dummy-coded<sup>38</sup> with other migrants serving as the control group) on the recipient variables and the dependent variables. Table 18 shows the correlation coefficients.

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37 Partial correlations describe the association strength between a predictor (here: the recipient variables) and a criterion variable or outcome (here: the online and post-hoc measures). In contrast to a normal correlation, the influence of other variables is controlled (Field, 2009), (here: culture, educational level and the respective dependent measure). These correlation coefficients display the additional association between the recipient variables and the evaluation of the propaganda clips.

38 Dummy coding is a necessary step when grouping variables with more than two groups shall be entered into a correlational analysis, as for example cultural background with its three manifestations (German, Muslim, Other).

Table 18. *Partial Correlations for Personality Factors and Attitudinal Patterns*

	SCR		Aversion		Shame		One-sidedness		Interest		Persuasiveness	
	RE	RI	RE	RI	RE	RI	RE	RI	RE	RI	RE	RI
Neuroticism	.14	.13	-.05	.01	-.07	.02	-.05	.03	-.08	.04	-.02	-.15
Extraversion	-.01	.04	.06	-.02	.02	-.02	-.01	.12	.12	.12	.14	.02
Conscientiousness	-.08	-.01	-.08	.00	-.05	.01	.05	.00	-.16	-.11	-.13	-.09
Openness	-.12	-.09	-.03	-.08	-.07	-.09	.07	.06	-.03	.07	-.17	-.04
Agreeableness	<b>-.20*</b>	<b>-.25**</b>	.13	.11	.06	.00	-.11	<b>-.25**</b>	.00	.10	-.09	-.08
German Identity	.04	-.07	.03	<b>.13*</b>	.09	.01	-.08	.06	<b>.13*</b>	.00	.10	-.07
Non-German Identity	.03	<b>.30**</b>	-.03	-.16	-.07	.01	<b>-.24*</b>	<b>-.31**</b>	-.05	.10	.04	.01
Authoritarianism	<b>.38**</b>	<b>.14*</b>	-.05	.05	.01	.08	<b>-.35**</b>	<b>-.25**</b>	<b>.20**</b>	.04	<b>.16**</b>	<b>-.13*</b>
Political Attitude	<b>.22**</b>	.08	-.10	-.07	<b>-.14*</b>	-.06	<b>-.11*</b>	.02	.10	-.11	<b>.21**</b>	-.05
Acceptance of Violence	<b>.21**</b>	<b>.15*</b>	.02	<b>.12*</b>	-.04	.05	-.09	.07	<b>.19**</b>	.09	<b>.31**</b>	<b>.13*</b>
Feeling of Control	-.09	-.03	.02	-.02	.01	-.06	<b>.31**</b>	<b>.31**</b>	-.09	-.11	.04	.06
Sensation Seeking	.05	-.02	.09	<b>.12*</b>	-.06	.01	.11	<b>.14*</b>	.10	.10	.11	.05

Note. \*\* $p < .01$  \* $p < .05$  Significant correlations are marked in boldface. Correlations  $r > .10$  can be regarded as low,  $r > .30$  as medium,  $r > .50$  as high.

For all dependent measures at least small associations were found. Based on these partial correlations, the most promising predictor variables were chosen. We aimed at identifying the most important predictors for the evaluation of propaganda in terms of two main aspects: (1) Correlation coefficients which are considered as at least moderate ( $r > .30$ , see Field, 2009) and (2) variables which affected a substantial part of the applied measures (at least 1/3 of our dependent measures). Based on these two criteria, authoritarianism and acceptance of violence were considered the most promising predictors when trying to explain the evaluations of online propaganda.

For deeper insights into the specific contribution of these variables we conducted multivariate regression<sup>39</sup> analyses for the online as well as post-hoc measures. Since only authoritarianism and acceptance of violence emerged as promising explanations, the other recipient variables were no longer included<sup>40</sup>.

Based on recommendations by Field (2009), a forced entry hierarchical approach was chosen. Step one<sup>41</sup> encompassed the demographic variables describing the samples (culture and education, dummy-coded).

Since the mixed ANOVAs described in Chapter 10.2 showed an influence particularly for the interaction of cultural background and educational level, this interaction was entered in step 2 (dummy-coded). Authoritarianism was entered in step three, acceptance of violence in step four. As the influence of culture and education has already been described, this chapter will focus on the additional value of authoritarianism and acceptance of violence.

First of all, it has to be noted that *Aversion* as well as *Shame* could not be explained to a satisfying extent by the variables entered. After having seen either ideology, neither reporting aversion nor shame depended on the participants' degree of authoritarianism or acceptance of violence. This is in line with results found in Chapter 10.2; in these analyses only *Aversion* and *Shame* were not influenced by the interaction of cultural background and educational level, but by culture alone. This might be due to the basal nature of aversion and shame. Both can

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39 Multiple regression predicts a criterion or dependent variable (here: our online or post-hoc measures) via multiple predictor variables. A linear relation means that more of a predictor leads to either more (positive  $b$  or  $\beta$ -coefficient) or less (negative  $b$  or  $\beta$ -coefficient) manifestations on the dependent measure. While the  $b$ -coefficients are unstandardized (thus not comparable between different predictors);  $\beta$ -coefficients can be compared. The higher the coefficient is, the stronger the effect on the criterion.

40 Including all predictors did not significantly increase the variance explained. The model fit was equally good when all predictors correlating with at least three of the dependent measures were included. Thus the more economic model with authoritarianism and violence acceptance as additional predictors was chosen.

41 Blocks are entered one after another. Thus predictors in the second block are used to explain the amount of variance in the data, not explained by those in the previous blocks. To control for the effects of culture and education (see Chapter 10.2) they were thus included in block one.

be regarded as universal basic emotions (Zillmann, 2004) and might thus represent the most basal reaction when being confronted with propaganda. It is therefore not surprising that they are influenced more by characteristics of the stimuli (see Chapter 9.4.3) than by specific characteristics of the recipient. Table 19 displays the results of hierarchical regressions for *Aversion* and Table 20 for *Shame*.



Table 19. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Reported Aversion

	Step 1				Step 2				Step 3				Step 4				
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$		
<b>Aversion</b>																	
Student vs. Pupil	-.04	.09	-.02		-.05	.17	-.03		-.08	.18	-.05		-.07	.18	-.04		
German vs. Other	.14	.11	.09		.10	.17	.06		.10	.17	.06		.11	.17	.07		
Muslim vs. Other	-.03	.15	-.01		.05	.21	.02		.06	.21	.03		.06	.21	.03		
German Student					.08	.22	.04		.06	.22	.03		.05	.22	.03		
Muslim Student					-.17	.30	-.05		-.14	.30	-.04		-.14	.30	-.04		
Authoritarianism									-.01	.01	-.05		-.01	.01	-.05		
Acceptance of Violence													.04	.08	.03		
Model-fit	$R^2 = .01$				$\Delta R^2 = .00$				$\Delta R^2 = .00$				$\Delta R^2 = .00$				
<b>Islamic extremist</b>																	
Student vs. Pupil	-.19	.11	-.10		-.24	.19	-.13		-.19	.20	-.10		-.13	.20	-.07		
German vs. Other	-.07	.12	-.04		-.13	.19	-.07		-.13	.19	-.07		-.10	.19	-.05		
Muslim vs. Other	.05	.17	.02		.08	.24	.03		.06	.24	.03		.08	.24	.03		
German Student					.11	.25	.05		.13	.25	.06		.09	.25	.04		
Muslim Student					-.06	.34	-.02		-.12	.35	-.03		-.11	.35	-.03		
Authoritarianism									.01	.01	.07		.01	.01	.05		
Acceptance of Violence													.17	.09	.11		
Model-fit	$R^2 = .01$				$\Delta R^2 = .00$				$\Delta R^2 = .00$				$\Delta R^2 = .01$				

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ .  $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.

Table 20. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Reported Shame

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
Right-wing extremist	.00	.06	.00	-.09	.11	-.08	-.07	.11	-.07	-.09	.12	-.08
Student vs. Pupil	.10	.07	.09	.00	.11	.00	.00	.11	.00	-.01	.11	-.01
German vs. Other	<b>.25</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.17*</b>	.24	.14	.16	.24	.14	.16	.23	.14	.16
Muslim vs. Other	.17	.14	.15	.18	.14	.15	.18	.14	.15	.19	.14	.16
German Student	-.02	.19	-.01	-.03	.20	-.01	-.03	.20	-.01	-.03	.20	-.01
Muslim Student				.00	.01	.03	.00	.01	.03	.00	.01	.04
Authoritarianism												
Acceptance of Violence												
Model-fit	$R^2 = .02$			$\Delta R^2 = .01$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$		
Student vs. Pupil	.00	.06	.00	-.10	.12	-.08	-.05	.12	-.04	-.04	.12	-.03
German vs. Other	.05	.07	.04	-.05	.11	-.04	-.05	.11	-.04	-.05	.11	-.04
Muslim vs. Other	<b>.68</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.41**</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.38**</b>	<b>.62</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.37**</b>	<b>.62</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.37**</b>
German Student	.17	.15	.13	.17	.15	.13	.19	.15	.15	.19	.15	.14
Muslim Student	.09	.20	.04	.09	.20	.04	.04	.21	.02	.04	.21	.02
Authoritarianism				.01	.01	.10	.01	.01	.10	.01	.01	.10
Acceptance of Violence												
Model-fit	$R^2 = .15**$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$			$\Delta R^2 = .01$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$		

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ . \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .  $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.

For all other dependent measures however, the pattern was more interesting. Concerning the rather adverse measures, authoritarianism in particular emerged as an important predictor.

For the *slider ratings* during the reception, the inclusion of authoritarianism significantly increased the variance explained for both right-wing and Islamic extremist material. In both cases, higher levels of authoritarianism predicted less reported unpleasantness during the reception. Further including acceptance of violence slightly reduced the effect of authoritarianism indicating a partial moderation of the effects of authoritarianism via acceptance of violence. Nonetheless, acceptance of violence only significantly contributed to the prediction of the slider ratings for the right-wing extremist material. As expected, higher levels of acceptance of violence predicted lower *Unpleasantness* (SCR) ratings. Table 21 displays the results for the regression analysis on the slider ratings.

Concerning the post-hoc reported *One-sidedness*, again authoritarianism significantly increased the prediction for the Islamic as well as for the right-wing extremist material. In both cases, higher levels of authoritarianism predicted less one-sidedness reported after the reception. Table 22 displays the results. Acceptance of violence did not contribute significantly to this pattern.

Table 21. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Slider-ratings (SCR)

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
<b>Slider ratings (SCR)</b>												
Student vs. Pupil	.01	.14	.01	.22	.24	.11	<b>.50</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.24*</b>	<b>.60</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.29*</b>
German vs. Other	<b>-.42</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.21*</b>	-.11	.23	-.05	-.15	.22	-.08	-.09	.22	-.05
Muslim vs. Other	.16	.21	.06	.01	.29	.00	-.07	.28	-.02	-.04	.27	-.02
German Student				-.53	.31	-.24	-.35	.29	-.16	-.43	.29	-.19
Muslim Student				.37	.41	.10	.06	.40	.02	.08	.39	.02
Authoritarianism							<b>.05</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.38**</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.34**</b>
Acceptance of Violence							<b>.31</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.19**</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.19**</b>
Model-fit	$R^2 = .06**$			$R^2 = .03*$			$R^2 = .10**$			$R^2 = .03**$		
Student vs. Pupil	.00	.12	.00	.02	.22	.01	.14	.22	.08	.21	.22	.11
German vs. Other	.06	.14	.03	.06	.21	.03	.04	.21	.02	.08	.21	.04
Muslim vs. Other	<b>.66</b>	<b>.19</b>	<b>.26**</b>	<b>.74</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.29**</b>	<b>.70</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.28**</b>	<b>.72</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.28**</b>
German Student				.01	.28	.00	.07	.28	.03	.02	.28	.01
Muslim Student				-.16	.38	-.05	-.30	.39	-.09	-.30	.38	-.08
Authoritarianism							<b>.02</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.15*</b>
Acceptance of Violence							.19	.10	.13	.19	.10	.13
Model-fit	$R^2 = .06**$			$R^2 = .00$			$R^2 = .02*$			$R^2 = .01$		

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ . \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$   $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.

Table 22. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Reported One-sidedness

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
	<i>b</i>	SE	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	SE	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	SE	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	SE	$\beta$
<b>One-sidedness</b>												
Student vs. Pupil	-.04	.07	-.04	-.16	.12	-.13	-.32	.12	-.26**	-.34	.12	-.28**
German vs. Other	.19	.07	.16*	-.01	.12	.00	.01	.11	.01	.00	.11	.00
Muslim vs. Other	-.36	.10	-.22**	-.22	.15	-.13	-.17	.14	-.10	-.17	.14	-.10
German Student				.34	.15	.25*	.25	.15	.19	.27	.15	.20
Muslim Student				-.34	.21	-.14	-.16	.20	-.07	-.16	.20	-.07
Authoritarianism							-.03	.01	-.35**	-.03	.01	-.34**
Acceptance of Violence							-.05	.05		-.05	.05	-.05
Model-fit	$R^2 = .10^{**}$			$\Delta R^2 = .04^{**}$			$\Delta R^2 = .09^{**}$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$		
<b>Right-wing extremist</b>												
Student vs. Pupil	-.18	.06	-.17**	-.25	.10	-.24*	-.36	.10	-.34**	-.33	.10	-.31**
German vs. Other	.11	.06	.11	.02	.10	.02	.03	.10	.03	.04	.10	.04
Muslim vs. Other	-.38	.09	-.26**	-.36	.13	-.25**	-.33	.12	-.23**	-.32	.12	-.22**
German Student				.16	.13	.14	.11	.13	.09	.09	.13	.08
Muslim Student				-.06	.18	-.03	.06	.18	.03	.06	.18	.03
Authoritarianism							-.02	.00	-.26**	-.02	.00	-.28**
Acceptance of Violence							.09	.05		.09	.05	.10
Model-fit	$R^2 = .12^{**}$			$\Delta R^2 = .01$			$\Delta R^2 = .05^{**}$			$\Delta R^2 = .01$		

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .  $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.

Regarding the rather positive post-hoc factors besides authoritarianism, particularly acceptance of violence played a role, but was more pronounced for the right-wing extremist material.

The post-hoc *Interest* ratings could only partially be explained (see Table 23). *Interest* in the Islamic extremist material was predicted by authoritarianism, where a higher level of authoritarianism indicated a higher reported interest. However, this significant prediction diminished when acceptance of violence was included. Both, authoritarianism and acceptance of violence contributed to the interest for right-wing extremist propaganda. Again, high levels of both authoritarianism and acceptance of violence increased interest in the videos.

In total, the variance explained was highest for the *Persuasiveness* ratings. For right-wing extremist material, authoritarianism explained a part; higher authoritarianism indicating higher ratings on *Persuasiveness* (see Table 24). Common for both ideologies however was the contribution of acceptance of violence: Higher levels of acceptance of violence significantly predicted higher levels of *Persuasiveness*.

Table 23. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Reported Interest

Interest	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
Right-wing extremist	<b>-.19</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	-.17	.17	-.10	-.03	.17	-.02	.05	.17	.03
Islamic extremist	.19	.10	.12	.25	.16	.15	.24	.16	.15	.28	.16	.17
Student vs. Pupil	<b>.36</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.16*</b>	.30	.20	.13	.26	.20	.11	.28	.20	.12
German vs. Other				-.10	.21	-.06	-.03	.21	-.02	-.08	.21	-.05
Muslim vs. Other				.15	.29	.05	-.01	.29	.00	.00	.29	.00
German Student							<b>.03</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.23**</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.19**</b>
Muslim Student												
Authoritarianism												
Acceptance of Violence												
Model-fit	$R^2 = .04**$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$			$\Delta R^2 = .04**$			$\Delta R^2 = .03**$		
Student vs. Pupil	-.01	.10	.00	-.22	.16	-.13	-.14	.17	-.08	-.11	.17	-.06
German vs. Other	.04	.11	.02	-.34	.16	-.20	-.35	.16	-.20*	-.33	.16	-.19*
Muslim vs. Other	<b>.59</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.25**</b>	<b>.89</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.38**</b>	<b>.86</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.37**</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.37**</b>
German Student				<b>.64</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.35**</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.37**</b>	<b>.66</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.36**</b>
Muslim Student				-.69	.29	-.21*	-.79	.29	-.24**	-.78	.29	-.24**
Authoritarianism							<b>.02</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.13*</b>	.01	.01	.12
Acceptance of Violence										.08	.08	.06
Model-fit	$R^2 = .06**$			$\Delta R^2 = .08**$			$\Delta R^2 = .01*$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$		

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ . \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$   $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.

Table 24. Hierarchical Regressions for both Ideologies on the Reported Persuasiveness

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
<b>Persuasiveness</b>												
Student vs. Pupil	<b>-.56</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>-.52**</b>	<b>-.54</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.50**</b>	<b>-.48</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.45**</b>	<b>-.40</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.37**</b>
German vs. Other	.00	.06	.00	.05	.09	.05	.04	.09	.04	.09	.09	.08
Muslim vs. Other	.15	.08	.10	.09	.11	.06	.07	.11	.05	.09	.11	.06
German Student				-.09	.12	-.07	-.06	.12	-.05	-.11	.11	-.10
Muslim Student				.14	.16	.07	.07	.16	.03	.07	.16	.04
Authoritarianism							<b>.01</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>.10</b>
Acceptance of Violence										<b>.23</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.26**</b>
Model-fit	$R^2 = .29***$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$			$\Delta R^2 = .02^*$			$\Delta R^2 = .06**$		
<b>Student vs. Pupil</b>	<b>-.46</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>-.45**</b>	<b>-.57</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.57**</b>	<b>-.60</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.60**</b>	<b>-.56</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.56**</b>
German vs. Other	-.09	.05	-.09	-.28	.10	-.28**	-.28	.08	-.28**	-.26	.08	-.26**
Muslim vs. Other	<b>.26</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.19**</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.29**</b>	<b>.41</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.30**</b>	<b>.42</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.31**</b>
German Student				<b>.33</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.30**</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.29**</b>	<b>.29</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.27**</b>
Muslim Student				<b>-.34</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>-.31</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.16*</b>	<b>-.31</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.16*</b>
Authoritarianism							.00	.00	-.07	-.01	.00	-.09
Acceptance of Violence										<b>.09</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.12*</b>
Model-fit	$R^2 = .28**$			$\Delta R^2 = .06**$			$\Delta R^2 = .00$			$\Delta R^2 = .01^*$		

Note.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance explained by the model with a possible maximum of  $R^2 = 1$ . \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$   $\Delta R^2$  indicates the changes for the subsequent step.



## 10.4 Summary: Research Focus II

*R2: Analysis of the immediate explicit effects of right-wing vs. Islamic extremist propaganda on different audiences.*

Chapter 10 aimed at addressing the research questions 3, 4 and 5 (see Chapter 7) formulated for Research Focus II. In the first step, differences between the evaluation of right-wing and Islamic extremist material, depending on demographic differences between the participants, were addressed.

*Q3) Do recipients react differently to right-wing than to Islamic extremist propaganda?*

*Q4) Does this reaction depend on the cultural background or other demographics of the participant?*

Results showed that participants indeed reacted differently to right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda. Further, responses were moderated by cultural background. Overall the Islamic extremist material was evaluated as more aversive and shame evoking by Muslim participants. Contrastingly, Germans reported more shame for the right-wing extremist material. Participants without shared cultural background with the right-wing or Islamic extremist clips did not differentiate between the ideologies.

Besides cultural background, the educational level of the participants also played a role. While German and Muslim students tended to evaluate propaganda of their own ingroup rather negatively (one-sided, unpleasant, not interesting or persuasive), pupils showed the reverse pattern. They evaluated propaganda of their own cultural ingroup less negatively.

In the second step (as depicted in Research Question 5), we were also interested in the role of personality and attitudinal patterns in the effects of extremist propaganda.

*Q5: Are personality factors and pre-existing attitudinal patterns able to influence the evaluation of extremist propaganda?*

Results showed that while general personality factors did not explain the evaluations of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda, attitudinal patterns did. However, from the assessed attitudinal patterns only authoritarianism and violence acceptance emerged as significant predictors beyond cultural background and educational level. Higher authoritarianism and acceptance of violence predicted less negative and more positive evaluations of propaganda videos.

In conclusion, *Aversion* and *Shame* were overall found to be basic factors which were evoked independently of personality factors or attitudinal patterns. They were only influenced by the cultural background of the participants.

The other factors (*SCR, One-sidedness, Interest, and Persuasiveness*) could in part be explained by the chosen predictors. Besides cultural background and educational level (see Chapter 10.2), authoritarianism and acceptance of violence contributed significantly to an understanding of the evaluations of propaganda.

For the *Unpleasantness* during reception and post-hoc reported one-sidedness and interest, authoritarianism emerged as a significant predictor. High levels of authoritarianism led to lower experience of unpleasantness during the reception and to less perceived one-sidedness and more interest in the propaganda material. Further, for the right-wing extremist videos, high levels of acceptance of violence reduced the experienced unpleasantness of the videos seen but increased the reported interest. *Persuasiveness* was found to be predicted by acceptance of violence, where higher levels lead to more perceived persuasiveness of the propaganda material.

The importance of the acceptance of violence component in understanding the attraction of right-wing extremism could be confirmed. Since the Islamic extremist material overall consisted of both more violent language and cues, it seems striking that the explanative power was lower here. However, it has to be regarded that overall acceptance of violence in our sample was low. Thus it might be that the more extreme forms of violence depicted in the Islamic extremist clips exceeded the participants' level of violence tolerance. The lower predictive value acceptance of violence had for persuasiveness of the accordant material supports this assumption.

In general, it has to be noted that the total amount of variance explained remained rather small. Only for *Persuasiveness* more than 30 % of variance could be explained<sup>42</sup>. In all other cases the included predictors could explain less than a quarter of the total variance. Nonetheless, as a conclusion for Research Focus II, including characteristics of the recipients significantly contributed to an understanding of the immediate effects of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda.

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42 The total variance explained can be depicted from the summation of all  $R^2$  in the preceding tables.

## 11. Research Focus III: Implicit Associations and Propaganda

The preceding analyses indicated a rejection of extremist propaganda particularly from the own cultural ingroup, especially among German students (see Chapter 10.2). However, as already outlined, this might be due to an increased awareness of the social undesirability of approaching tendencies towards right-wing extremist propaganda. Study III tested this idea by focusing on a sample of German students and using implicit measures in order to avoid social desirable answers.

Implicit measures display the automatic, non-controlled component of spontaneous associations and evaluations. In contrast to explicit evaluations (e.g., the (dis-) agreement to items in a questionnaire), they precede conscious awareness (Schnabel, Banse, & Asendorpf, 2006). Particularly in the case of undesirable social attitudes, such as prejudice or extremism, implicit and explicit evaluations might differ substantially (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) and should be analyzed separately (Goodall, 2011). Even though in the current studies participants were seated separately from each other during Study I and Study II, they might still have hesitated to express overt agreement to propaganda. Therefore, Study III focuses on the implicit associations of terrorism.

Implicit measures are able to identify subtle changes before explicit measures can detect them (Goodall, 2011; Hefner, Rothmund, Klimmt, & Gollwitzer, 2011). They are thus able to depict even unconscious short-term effects induced by single video clips one might stumble over on the internet. Even though the process from such spontaneous reactions to explicit agreement (far more actual behavior) might be substantial, implicit measures can depict first unfiltered propaganda effects.

One widely used and established procedure among implicit measures is the analysis of *associations* via the recording of response latencies. The procedure is based on the concept of human memory as a network (so called *semantic or associative network*, see Collins & Loftus, 1975). This network consists of *nodes* and *links* in between them.

Nodes can represent attributions, persons, groups or concepts (Greenwald et al., 2002) and are created with every new concept a person acquires (e.g. terrorism is a concept). Links between nodes are created when two concepts occur either simultaneously (Arnold, Eysenck, & Meili, 1997, pp. 158–162) or when they are familiar (Greenwald et al., 2002), respectively when they evoke common thoughts (Wyer & Srull, 1994). The strength of these links can be understood as the potential of one node to activate adjacent others (*spreading activation*, Collins & Loftus, 1975). Generally, nodes can be activated internally via links or through external stimuli.

Besides concepts, valence is also stored in the form of a node. The more positive a concept is evaluated, the stronger it is linked to the positive valence node. Similarly, negatively evaluated concepts are linked to the negative valence node. Therefore, the activation of a concept also activates its implicit valence. Figure 15 gives an example of how the associated network for terrorism as concepts could look like.

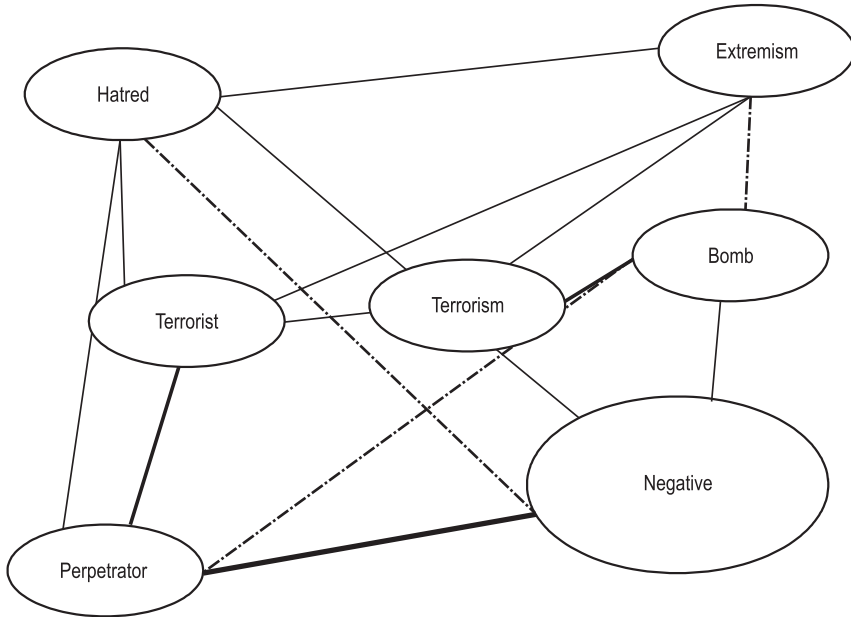


Figure 15. An example of a possible associative network for terrorism-related concepts.

The *implicit association test* (IAT) uses this mechanism to measure valence associations of concepts (e.g., Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). In a classical IAT, participants are confronted with four categories of stimuli, two representing the target categories (e.g., *insects* and *flowers* as a classical example, see Greenwald et al., 1998) and two representing the valence (*positive* and *negative* items).

Participants are asked to sort these categories by pressing certain keys (e.g., by pressing an “i” for each *flower* and an “e” for each *insect*). The time span between appearance and pressing the key (the *response latencies*) is measured.

During the target trials, two concepts always share the same key. First, flowers and positive stimuli are both answered by pressing “e” and the other two by pressing the “i” (*congruent* condition). In the second phase the combination is reversed (*incongruent* condition).

The idea is that if the combination is congruent, pressing the key will be facilitated and participants will respond more quickly (the response latencies will be lower).

Thus, comparing the response latencies for both target trials describes which valence is experienced as more congruent.

Generally, the association strength between e. g., valence and a concept can be influenced also by preceding stimuli, so-called *primes*. Research has shown that responding to a category is faster when a prime that shares the same valence has been presented before (Fazio, 2001; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Olson & Fazio, 2003). For example, people would react faster to negative associated concepts if beforehand another negative stimulus (e. g., an insect in our example) was presented (Hefner et al., 2011).

### 11.1 Sample, Procedure and Material Study III

A total of  $N^{43} = 111$  male students participated in this study. Due to the language-based methodology, only native Germans were included in the analyses. Based on this,  $n = 32$  participants had to be excluded. Random sampling left 14 participants for each condition<sup>44</sup>. On average, the resulting  $N = 70$  participants were  $M = 24.31$  ( $SD = 3.26$ ) years old. All of them were studying at the moment of data collection.

In the experiment, participants arrived in the laboratory and were then informed about the procedure of the study and their rights (see also Chapter 9.3). Further, they were offered the option to talk to a psychologist afterwards for debriefing, further questions, or clarification. The experiment started by randomly assigning participants to one of the experimental conditions in which they had to watch one extremist video (either right-wing or Islamic extremist)<sup>45</sup> or to a control condition without video. Subsequent to the video exposure, they were asked to perform a so-called *single-category implicit association test* (SC-IAT).

The procedure of the SC-IAT used in this study resembles the classic IAT described in Chapter 11.1, except that only one concept is analyzed for its valence association (Goodall, 2011; Karpinski & Steinman, 2006). The SC-IAT displays differences in concept evaluations following media reception that are not detected by explicit measures (Hefner et al., 2011). We used the SC-IAT to detect whether priming via extremist propaganda could influence implicit associations of “terrorism”.

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43  $N$  = Number of participants,  $M$  = Mean,  $SD$  = Standard Deviation.

44 Equal cell distribution had to be realized due to violations of the assumptions in ANOVA (Hussy & Jain, 2002)

45 Participants in the control condition answered the SC-IAT without watching an extremist video clip.

Four videos were selected as primes based on the results of Study I (see Chapter 9.4.2). As cited before, “*Propaganda which speaks the language of propaganda fails to penetrate cognitive defences. The best propaganda is disguised as entertainment*” (O’Shaughnessy, 2012, p. 34).

Thus, propaganda which is too conspicuous in revealing its real purpose might fail to affect implicit associations. As a conclusion, those videos scoring highest on one-sidedness vs. those lowest on one-sidedness and highest on persuasiveness were selected (see Table 25).

Table 25. Selection of the most One-sided and Persuasive Videos for Study III Split by Ideology

<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Highest one-sided video</b>	<b>Highest persuasive video</b>
<b>Right-wing extremist</b>	TH Activist	Extreme Video
<b>Islamic extremist</b>	RC News broadcast	TH Activist

To represent valence, ten positive and ten negative adjectives (pretested for frequency and valence (Glock, 2010) were chosen. Additionally, words associated with terrorism (such as *bomb*) were selected. All items were pretested by  $N = 25$  participants on a 7-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (= *Not at all applying to terrorism*) to 7 (= *Totally applying to terrorism*). Refer to Appendix 4 for a list of words selected. For both target trials, mean response latencies for words associated with terrorism were calculated. To control for outliers, response latencies  $z > +/-3$  (Field, 2009)<sup>46</sup> were excluded.

Two values resulted for the data analysis: terrorism-positive and terrorism-negative response latencies. To describe the general valence of terrorism association, a difference of these two values was computed. The difference score was created by subtracting negative-terrorism response latencies from positive ones. The positive values of this difference score expressed a more negative association (people reacted faster when terrorism and negative words shared a key) and the opposite occurred with the negative values. After having completed the SC-IAT, participants filled out a questionnaire about their demographics and were then thanked and rewarded.

46 Z-transformation standardizes the raw values (resulting  $M = 0, SD = 1$ ). Z-values of  $+/- 3$  thus have a probability of less than 0.1 % to belong to the same distribution of values, for example, because they resulted from the inattention of the participant.

## 11.2 Results for Implicit Effects

To measure the implicit association of terrorism and the impact of propaganda videos, a univariate ANOVA<sup>47</sup> (Video prime: no-video vs. one-sided vs. persuasive right-wing vs. one-sided vs. persuasive Islamic extremist video) was conducted using the computed difference score as a dependent measure in order to identify differences according to the presented video clip.

The main effect for video prime became only marginally<sup>48</sup> significant,  $F(4, 65) = 2.18, p = .08, \eta_p^2 = .12$ <sup>49</sup>. The overall positive difference scores indicated a negative association of terrorism in all conditions. However, the control condition (without video prime) had a difference score close to zero, indicating a rather neutral association of terrorism. Consequently, differences were found between the control condition and nearly all video conditions (all  $p < .04$ ).

Only participants who watched the persuasive right-wing extremist video did not differ from the control group concerning their difference score ( $p = .11$ ). Similar to the condition without video prime, no pronounced negative association of terrorism was given after having watched the persuasive right-wing extremist video.

To further investigate if the distinct associations of terrorism after the videos were due to faster response latencies on the positive key share or due to slower response latencies on the negative key share, a 5 (video prime: no video vs. one-sided vs. persuasive right-wing vs. one-sided vs. persuasive Islamic extremist video)  $\times$  2 (valence: negative key share vs. positive key share) mixed ANOVA for the terrorism-positive and terrorism-negative response latencies was conducted.

The results showed a marginally significant interaction between video prime and valence,  $F(4, 65) = 2.18, p = .08, \eta_p^2 = .19$ . As already found for the explicit justifications of terrorism in Study I and Study II, the results overall indicated a negative association of terrorism. Terrorism-related words were categorized significantly faster when they shared one key with the negative words. Figure 16 shows the response latencies split by video seen.

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47 As all participants saw only one video and difference scores were analysed between participants, differences found are due to the different video clips.

48 The result is called *marginally significant* because the correspondent  $p$  value is between .05 and .10, thus, in this case, the result is random with a probability of 8%.

49  $F$  is the statistical parameter in ANOVAs measuring the ratio of the variance explained vs. the unexplainable variance. As a rule of thumb, higher  $F$ s indicate stronger effects.  $Df$  = degrees of freedom.  $p$  = probability of the found differences to be random vs. systematic.  $\eta_p^2$  = (partial) effect size.

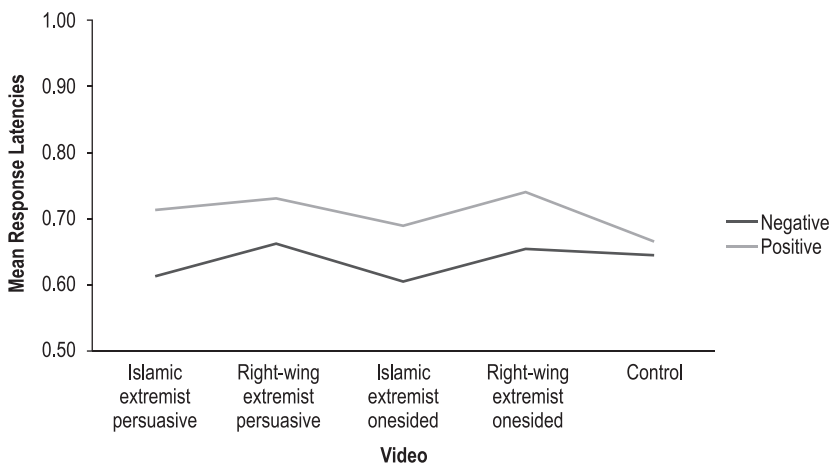


Figure 16. Response latencies for the terrorism-related words when sharing a key with either the positive or the negative words.

However, a closer look at the distinct conditions revealed interesting differences. In the control condition (thus without preceding video prime) the association of terrorism was nearly neutral (difference close to zero), meaning that the negative association of terrorism was weaker here. In all other conditions differences became significant. Both analyses together clearly indicate that video primes led to a more negative association with terrorism. This suggests that implicit propaganda videos rather exacerbate negative evaluations of terrorism. However, the effect was the smallest for the persuasive right-wing extremist clip.

### 11.3 Summary: Research Focus III

R3: *Analysis of the implicit effects of selected propaganda videos.*

*Q 6) Do different propaganda videos have the potential to shape the implicit associations of extremism in its most extreme form?*

Concerning our sixth research question, we found that propaganda videos in general influenced the implicit associations of terrorism. Terrorism was associated more negatively after having been confronted with an extremist video clip. However, this effect was not found for the persuasive ingroup propaganda indicating differences depending on style of the message and ideological background.

This could be interpreted in a way that right-wing extremist propaganda (if made persuasively) would not activate the negative associative network more than it is usually already activated. It is no surprise that terrorism is associated negatively but this finding sheds first light on the role persuasive propaganda could play. It has to be noted, however, that the result was found in a German student sample. It is still questionable whether a broader sample would lead to the same findings.



Especially, the role of cultural background should be investigated in greater detail. Our previous results suggested an explicit defense reaction in the student subsample. Implicitly, this defense reaction was not found for the persuasive ingroup propaganda. More precisely, the right-wing extremist *Extreme clip* addressing pedophilia and child victims did not increase the negative association of terrorism. In contrast, the *TH Lifestyle activist* directly addressing the recipient as well as the Islamic extremist *RC News broadcast* all led to more negative associations of terrorism.

This is in line with O'Shaughnessy's (2012) assumption that propaganda disguised as entertainment is severely rejected. While the *Extreme clip* focused on the victims of pedophilia (the organization behind it is only presented in the last few seconds), the other three videos portray the transported ideology more obviously.

In both Islamic extremist clips, concrete references to Islam and Jihad are given. The right-wing extremist *TH Lifestyle activist* video begins with the sentence "German open your eyes, you are in war".

Furthermore, as already discussed in Chapter 9.4.2, videos displaying children suffering (the two *Movie clips* and the right-wing extremist *Extreme clip*) overall reached rather low ratings on the adverse and high ratings on the approaching post-hoc factors analyzed.

The results are thus interesting in two main aspects: (1) the wolf-in-sheep's clothes strategy used by right-wing extremists (see e. g. Chapter 3.2) generally seems to be more dangerous than propaganda overtly expressing extremist thoughts. (2) While German students seemed rather unsusceptible to extremist propaganda when explicit measures were used, implicit measures found a less pronounced defense reaction. The following chapter will conclusively summarize our findings and discuss their implications.

## 12. Discussion

We introduced the book with a quote by Paul Watzlawick, stating that the “*secret of propaganda*” lies in its potential to “*totally saturate*” the desired receiver “*without him even noticing*”. Security agencies and researchers have recently shown concern that modern propaganda videos are able to “*saturate*” even, so far, non-obtrusive recipients and, “*without them even noticing*”, to contribute to a distributed indoctrination or even radicalization. Particularly, the amount of Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda on the Internet reached an alarming potential in recent years (Europol, 2011; Precht, 2007). Strategists from both ideologies also claimed internet propaganda as a powerful tool in their “*war over minds*” (Weimann, 2006, p. 118).

However, as depicted in the famous AIDA formula, propaganda as a “product selling strategy” first has to get attention, raise interest and create desire before action might follow (Lewis, 1903). So far, little research has tested whether a distributed indoctrination is possible or whether the preceding steps (attention and interest) can be accomplished via propaganda.

The large-scale study presented shed some light on this question and the related assumptions. By referring to Lasswell’s (1948) formula of mass communication, we addressed the question “*Who spreads extremist propaganda to whom, in what format and with what effect?*” The answer can be summarized as: Right-wing and Islamic extremists disseminate audio-visual propaganda with varying formats over the internet. As discussed in Chapter 5, they particularly try to reach recipients forming their potential ingroup in terms of cultural background. In general, recipients reacted to propaganda material with rejection. Nonetheless, effects varied with the specific format of the video, the underlying ideology as well as with factors on the side of the recipient.

In order to describe the formats of the video clips, a categorization system encompassing Islamic as well as right-wing extremist video clips was developed via Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA). To our knowledge, this approach can be considered as unique since it is the first attempt to adapt two ideologies into one systematic categorization.

On that point, we found four *prototypical formats of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda in Germany* (Q1, see Chapter 7), similar to those described by Baines et al.(2010) (see Chapter 9.1). The same *formats and styles could be distinguished* for both ideologies (Q1, see Chapter7).

Videos featuring individual “*Talking heads*”, journalistic “*Reality clips*”, produced “*Movie*” and “*Extreme clips*” were found for both. *Talking heads* as well as *Reality clips* were further differentiated into three subcategories each according to the person or group focused on in the videos. *Talking heads* covered

videos featuring *Ideologues*, *Lifestyle activists* and *Martyrs*. Reality clips encompassed clips displaying the “*Group lifestyle*”, the “*Public opinion*” or mass media styled “*News broadcasts*”. Differences between the two ideologies were only found concerning the existence and the amount of these subcategories (e. g., *Martyrs* were not identified among the right-wing extremist material).

Overall, both senders tried to convey their messages via the same production styles. Furthermore, the messages transported shared the same common strategies (Merten, 2000) and served the same purposes: (1) Legitimization, (2) Propagation, and (3) Intimidation (Corman et al., 2006). Most of the videos aimed at legitimization and propagation. Furthermore, similar *messages were transported* (Q1, see Chapter 7).

Particularly, displaying the own group as innocent victims, and “the unprovoked aggression of the others” laid in focal attention. Additionally, the depiction of a “strong community” and the possibility of “own activities” played a major role in Islamic as well as right-wing extremist propaganda.

Though ideological foundations (*TH Ideologues*) were more frequent within Islamic extremist propaganda and fancy *Movie clips* among right-wing extremist videos, overall the distribution of the categories was similar.

Hence, though they fight on different ends and partly ideologically oppose each other, a comparison between right-wing and Islamic extremism from a media psychological perspective was found to be possible.

Out of the developed categories, we selected prototypical videos for each ideology (see Chapter 9.2) and presented them as stimulus material in three consecutive experiments. Study I and Study II followed the same procedure and focused on the explicit evaluations of extremist propaganda. Study III additionally assessed the implicit effects.

The explicit effects of propaganda were measured via online reported (*Un*)*pleasantness* as well as immediate post-hoc evaluations. (*Un*)*pleasantness* was accessed via constant slider-ratings (*SCR*) during video reception. Post-hoc evaluations were measured via questionnaires applied afterwards. Five post-hoc factors were found to describe the effects of propaganda. Three of them indicated adverse evaluations (*Aversion*, *Shame* and *One-sidedness*) and two can be interpreted in terms of a first approach (*Interest* and *Persuasiveness*). First impressions made during the reception of a video indicated tendencies for later evaluations. Combining both online and post-hoc measurements depicted the evaluating process ranging from immediate to short-term effects.

The analysis of the single video clips showed that *distinct production formats and message styles differed with regard to their potential to create interest or to trigger rejection* (Q2, see Chapter 7).

Summarizing, the overall effect found was a rejection of propaganda. In general, young, normal recipients showed adverse reactions towards the videos. During, as well as after, the reception they mainly stated that they experienced *Unpleasantness*, *Aversion*, *Shame* and *One-sidedness*. However, some videos were able to trigger *Interest* and *Persuasiveness* as well. Additionally, one could argue that low ratings on the adverse factors might as well be interpreted in terms of a first approach.

In general, the analyses showed that, on a broad level, videos which had an affecting potential could be distinguished from those that had not. In line with O'Shaughnessy (2012), propaganda disguised as entertainment was less rejected. For Islamic as well as right-wing extremist videos *TH lifestyle activist*, *Movie* and *Extreme clips* affected recipients online as well as post-hoc on the adverse as well as the rather approaching factors.

Particularly, the individualized *Talking heads* and the norm-violating *Extreme clips* were evaluated as being unpleasant during the reception and stimulated aversion and shame afterwards. The *Movie clips*, with their high professional production style, received less pronounced (*Un*)pleasantness ratings. However, post-hoc, their victim-focused argumentation was also evaluated as being one-sided and shame evoking. Strikingly, regardless of these rather adverse evaluations, the same videos were also the best ones in evoking interest and persuasiveness. The overall more frequent *Reality clips* (see Chapter 9.1) could not trigger similar levels of *Interest* regardless of their “journalistic perspective”. In contrast to Baines and his colleagues' (2010) assumption, the adventurous clips were not better in stimulating approaches towards the transported ideology.

It seems remarkable that videos evoked negative and rather positive evaluations at the same time. However, results showed that the response to propaganda cannot be conceptualized in simple positive/negative dimensions but has multiple facets. Videos which were designed in a professional way or which directly addressed the audience were more likely to affect. Instead of being regarded as boring they were able to get attention and – as depicted in the AIDA formula (E. S. Lewis, 1903) – got the chance to be processed by the recipient. Furthermore, looking at the messages and the pictures transported, first hints were found that, in particular, videos displaying children suffering would touch the recipients. It is not surprising that these videos triggered aversion ratings as well as reactions of interest.

From a media psychological perspective, preventive approaches should particularly address these “entertaining” videos. Videos rated as boring – even though transporting ideological foundations or public opinions – do not touch to the same extent. Concluding, on the level of different videos, more communalities than differences between Islamic and right-wing extremist propaganda were found.

However, it has to be noted that our categorization system encompasses broad formats or “genre” distinctions. Further research should deepen this description. For example, analyses of the way right-wing extremist and Islamic extremist senders “sell” their ideology (e. g., via narration – or frame analyses) shed light on the details of the different formats.

As a first conclusion, on the side of the video clips, professionally made videos, directly addressing the recipient and transporting personalized messages or individual destinies were found to develop an affecting potential. Nevertheless, besides all communalities, people are usually attracted (“recruited”) by only one of them. Thus, in the next step, we focused on ideology as the main underlying factor.

The results indeed showed that *recipients reacted differently to right-wing than to Islamic extremist propaganda* (Q3, see Chapter 7). However, these differences were shaped by the variance between the recipients. As depicted in research question four (see Chapter 7), the *reaction depended on the cultural background and the educational level of the participants* (see Chapter 10.2). While Germans can be regarded as the potential ingroup addressed by right-wing extremist propaganda, the same is true for Muslims and Islamic extremist audio-visuals. Still talking about the general rejection of propaganda, this ingroup relation was identified as shaping the amount of rejection. The effect further varied with the educational level of the participants.

German students rated right-wing extremist videos more negatively and less persuasive than Muslims did. Participants with a Muslim background showed the inverse pattern, that is, more negative and less positive responses to the Islamic extremist videos. Participants with another migration background (without ingroup relation to either ideology) did not show pronounced reactions to either the Islamic or the right-wing extremist material.

This pattern, however, was conversed when analyzing a different educational level. Muslim as well as German pupils reacted less negatively and more positively to propaganda of their own cultural ingroup. Subsequent analyses showed an even higher (though still low!) degree of acceptance of terrorism justifications for Muslim pupils after watching Islamic extremist material.

Our data also show that the students and pupils did not differ concerning evoked aversion and shame. In both samples a tendency was found that material of the own ingroup evoked more aversion and shame. Nonetheless, pupils rated ingroup propaganda as more interesting and persuasive and students rated it less so. Different explanations for this effect are possible. First of all, students might be more trained in questioning propagandistic statements and be stricter in the avoidance of these.

In line with this, the results of Study III implicitly showed a neutral evaluation of terrorism in a student sample (see Chapter 11.2). Students who had not seen a pro-

pagandistic video (the control group) showed no pronounced association of terrorism with neither positive nor negative concepts. The conducted single-category implicit association test, however, revealed that *after the reception of propaganda videos terrorism was associated more negatively* (Q6, Chapter 7). Nevertheless, in the case of a “wolf-in-sheep’s clothes” strategy, namely a persuasive video of the own cultural ingroup, the rejection was less pronounced. The amount of negative association did not differ from participants in the control group. Speculating, persuasive propaganda might slip through these defensive walls but once under conscious awareness it is most likely to be rejected as well.

Regarding the higher general rejection of propaganda videos clearly identifiable as such (see Chapter 9.4.2), it might be that the threshold value for students to react may be lower. This can be explained when considering that people can be inoculated against persuasive attempts similarly to biological infections (Mcguire & Papageorgis, 1961). Former confrontations with a persuasive topic and a strong “immune system” trigger fast defensive reactions. It has to be remembered that students reported pre-experience with Islamic extremist material significantly more often (see Chapter 10.2), so that they may have overall reacted faster. Two components of the inoculation process can be distinguished: threat and refutation pre-emption (Pfau & Szabo, 2003). Threat has been identified as a more important factor, motivating the defense reaction. In order for threat to work, the recipient of the message must be warned that his attitude might be questioned (Pfau & Szabo, 2003).

In the student sample, threat could have been induced because the evaluation of propaganda as negative was a more pronounced value for students. Not only propaganda in general but also extremism may have been evaluated as more socially undesirable (King & Bruner, 2000).

In general, academics are traditionally seen as tolerant, left-wing oriented and anti-propagandistic. In line with this, the political attitude in our student sample was rather left skewed; no student stated a right-wing attitude. Thus, it seems plausible that implied values such as rejection of extremist propaganda were held high. Students may thus have felt greater threat than pupils from vocational schools, when having been confronted with propagandistic material. Future studies should therefore assess individual values in order to account for this interpretation.

Threat could further have been induced by being addressed as a potential ingroup member of an extremist ingroup. The conveyed ideologies are referring to a specific cultural background which is perceived as either ingroup or outgroup. According to the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), people are motivated to see their ingroups in a positive way. In the case of being confronted with reminders of collective guilt (Wohl et al., 2006), this positive interpretation becomes more difficult. As known from literature on stereotype threat (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999), people fear to confirm negative stereotypes about their ingroup. Right-wing extremist Germans and radical Islamists surely represent

the dark side of one's corresponding cultural ingroup. Therefore, it seems plausible that in the case of being addressed by an extremist group as a potential recruit, people try to distance themselves (Arndt et al., 2002). Future research should clarify why this effects is most pronounced for the student sample.

This can also be regarded as a possible starting point for prevention. The most important aspect for a specific behavior is the underlying intention to behave that way. However, this intention is not only influenced by one's attitudes but also by the expectancies concerning the results of these attitudes and the behavior. For instance, social norms influence the expectancies concerning a certain goal (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1970). This implies that the fostering of anti-extremist or anti-propagandistic norms in non-student samples could hamper the potential of extremist messages.

Last but not least, former research has discussed professional frustration as potential influence (Gambetta & Hertog, 2007; Heitmeyer, 1992; Munton et al., 2011). Since academics are usually highly respected within German society, we cannot exclude that more positive expectancies for the future might have played a role. In line with this, a representative survey conducted by Continental found the majority of students to have rather positive expectations concerning their own future<sup>50</sup>. Contrastingly, in another survey, more than 50 % of pupils from vocational schools reported "mixed feelings" (Bacher & Prosch, 2002). Thus, future studies should also include professional satisfaction as a possible influence on the effects of extremist propaganda. The actual shell study (Albert, Hurrelmann, Quenzel, & Infratest Sozialforschung, 2010) complements the pattern by pronouncing that, particularly, the certainty in finding or keeping a job moderates future expectancies.

Besides these demographic variables, *personality factors and pre-existing attitudinal patterns* were partly able to influence the evaluation of extremist propaganda (Q5, see Chapter 7). However, broad personality factors, such as the Big Five or sensation seeking, could not contribute to an understanding.

This is in line with other research that could not identify a typical "terrorist personality" (Hudson et al., 1999; Kemmesies, 2006). Nevertheless, including attitudinal patterns as additional explanations identified authoritarianism and acceptance of violence as influential factors. Though additional explained variance remained rather low, particularly authoritarianism showed a consistent pattern.

Participants, who scored higher on authoritarianism, overall evaluated propaganda more positively than those with lower manifestations. Regarding the conceptualization of authoritarianism as "flight into security" (Oesterreich, 2005), the idea that uncertainty (e. g., concerning the own future) might play a role in

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50 Representative opinion poll by Continental 2006. Retrieved online <http://www.wiwi-treff.de/home/index.php?mainkatid=1&ukatid=1&sid=9&artikelid=2764&pagenr=0> 09/02/2012, 15:00

the attraction of extremist propaganda could be supported. Authoritarianism reflects the personal search for order and structure by looking to authorities or powerful groups. It is not surprising that extremists try to address this desire and, vice versa, recipients respond to this proposing.

Research until now has not sufficiently answered the question about the roots of authoritarianism and acceptance of violence. Difficult familiar situations (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), social learning approaches (Altemeyer, 1988) and cultural norms and values (Rubinstein, 1996) have been discussed. However, modern approaches particularly pronounce the role of perceived insecurity (Duckitt, 2011) and authoritarianism as motivated attachment to ingroups. In line with this, the identification with powerful others has been found to increase under uncertainty (Hogg, 2000).

In a similar vein, the acceptance of violence committed by members of the own group was found to increase when people were faced with existential anxieties (Pyszczynski et al., 2006). Nonetheless, it was also found that increased self-esteem and security might serve as a resilience factor when it comes to such situations (Harmon-Jones et al., 1997; Rosenberg & Pearlin, 1978). Further research on potential prevention should thus analyze self-esteem and personal security as potential resilience factors.

Authoritarianism and acceptance of violence furthermore share the demand for punishment for those who threaten their social order. Extremist groups offer this punishment. Diffuse, inhuman “others” as the “system” or “the Western world” are scapegoated and threatened by the extremist groups. A supplementary assessment of demand for punishment could analyze this aspect in more detail.

To sum up, patterns related to security, structure and conservatism were found to predict the appeal of extremist messages. The explanative power of authoritarianism and acceptance of violence for the case of right-wing extremism could be extended to Islamic extremism. Surprisingly, the acceptance of violence was a more important predictor for right-wing extremist propaganda. We already noted that our sample overall reported low acceptance of violence. The higher exposure of violence in the Islamic extremist material would have assumed that acceptance of violence predicted more variance of the evaluation of this ideology. Nevertheless, the data suggests that the question posed by Heitmeyer and his colleagues (2010) of whether ideology or acceptance of violence precede each other in radicalization might also be interesting in the context of Islamic extremism.

Our results showed that the chosen media and social psychological approach could contribute to a deeper understanding of susceptibility to and effects of extremist internet propaganda. However, it has to be stated that radicalization is a multi-factorial process in which media effects might play only a minor role. The overall small amount of variance explained (see Chapter 10.3.2) underlines this.



Extremist careers cannot be understood without reflecting the social context and the communication networks in which individuals are embedded (Kemmesies, 2007; Munton et al., 2011). The phenomenon of extremism has to be understood as triggered by factors on cultural, societal, social and individualist levels (Kemmesies, 2006, p. 17).

Besides this general constraint, the study also had some more specific limitations, restricting the generalizability of our results. These restrictions also might point towards future research directions.

First of all, the sample analyzed has to be mentioned. As only male participants took part, potential gender influences could not be addressed. Although male recipients are the primary target group of extremist propaganda, future studies should also include female samples. Baines and his colleagues could show differences between female and male reactions towards propaganda (2010). Additionally the focus on Germans with occidental and Muslims with oriental cultural background allows no inferences on converted Germans. The actual discussion about salafist extremists in Germany, however, indicates that they might particularly be at risk<sup>51</sup>.

Furthermore, the focus on students and pupils from vocational schools excluded participants who had not graduated or were unemployed. The discussed potential influence of negative life-expectancies makes an extension to such groups desirable or even necessary.

Our results suggest that there are general factors inherent in propaganda irrespective of ideology. These interact with factors on the side of the recipient and might increase interest in propaganda material. It seems interesting to generalize these findings to other extremist groups, as for example left-wing extremists or sects. Since they are less present on the internet (in terms of audio-visuals), future studies should maybe include also other types of propaganda (homepages, forums, etc.).

Second, our study focused on the *potential ingroup* of extremist propaganda, not on already radicalized individuals as confirmed by the low pre-existing acceptance of justifications of terrorism (see Chapter 10.2). The potential influence extremist propaganda might have in the confirmation of accordant pre-existing attitudes or on already radicalized recipients cannot be deduced from our studies.

Particularly the influence of real social groups when confronted with such material can be important. In line with this, social influences are discussed as a main factor in the radicalization process (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2009a). Research has shown that, in interpersonal situations, phenomena such

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51 Report in the ARD morning magazine from 07/06 2012. Retrieved online <http://www.einslive.de/medienn/html/1live/2012/07/16/ard-morgenmagazin-salafisten.xml> 02/09/2012.

as *conformity* (Asch, 1956), *informative and normative social influence* (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), *de-individuation* (Postmes, Spears, & Lea, 1998) or *polarization of attitudes* towards more risk acceptance (Blascovich, Ginsburg, & Veach, 1975) play a substantial role in forming attitudes and influencing behavior.

Analyzing the evaluation of extremist content in groups with positive compared to negative attitudes towards the content thus seems promising. However, as already discussed in Chapter 5, finding such real-life groups comes along with a set of difficulties for researchers. Besides getting in contact with an accordant group, people willing to take part may substantially differ from those who do not. Holtz et al. (2012) pointed out some of these difficulties when analyzing only forums of extremist groups instead of real-life situations.

As a third limitation, the focus lay on short-term effects. Short- and long-term effects may differ. Generally, research on persuasion has shown that the effect of mediated information on attitudes decreased over time (Petty & Wegener, 1998). However, under certain circumstances, persuasive appeals were found to be stronger after a while.

On the one hand, a so-called *sleeper effect* (Hovland & Weiss, 1951) cannot be excluded. Studies showed that factors reducing the persuasive power of a message, for instance low credibility of the source or adverse cues (e.g., extremism, violence), were remembered less after a while, while content memorization remained stable (Kumkale & Albarracín, 2004). As a consequence, general persuasiveness increased. However, the effect was mainly found under laboratory conditions (Pratkanis, Greenwald, Leippe, & Baumgardner, 1988).

On the other hand, over time, a *mere exposure effect* might develop (Zajonc, 1968). Persons, situations or objects are perceived as being more positive when they are seen again, due to the apparent higher familiarity. However, the mere-exposure effect only suggests a better evaluation of propaganda when watching it for the second or third time and only if it was not perceived as negative during first contact (Faullant, 2007).

To address these possibilities, further research should consider long-term designs with repeated presentation of extremist propaganda. Ethical concerns will have to be regarded and carefully addressed.

In conclusion, despite some limitations, the presented findings can be regarded as meaningful, especially against the background of the applied methodology. To our knowledge, this is the first study to experimentally analyze the effects of right-wing and Islamic extremist propaganda on a non-obtrusive sample. The main reaction of all our recipients was a rejection of the message and the ideology behind it. The responses were more pronounced when propaganda of the own cultural ingroup was evaluated. Nonetheless, factors increasing susceptibility (professional style of the clips, low educational level, high authoritarianism and ac-

ceptance of violence) as well as starting points for increasing resilience towards extremist propaganda were identified.

To sum up, the actual project was a first exploratory access, trying to understand the effects of extremist propaganda 2.0. We hope that it will stimulate further investigations in this field assessing the new arising questions which can be pulled out of our results.

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## Appendix – Supplementary Statistical Material

The supplementary statistical material addresses mainly those already used to interpreting statistical results. Therefore, values used are not explained.

### A1. Factor Loadings and Multilevel Factor Analysis

All analyses were conducted using the statistical software Mplus version 6.11 (Byrne, 2012). The corresponding 2-level EFA with a robust maximum likelihood estimator and a geomin rotation method revealed five factors based on 14 items with significant factor loadings and the same factor structure on both levels. Ten items were dropped in the subsequent CFA due to cross-loadings indicating lack of construct sensitivity. The final 2-level CFA denoted an excellent model fit with  $\chi^2(123) = 222.94$ ,  $p < .01$ , RMSEA = .02, CFI = .98, TLI = .97, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .02, and SRMR<sub>between</sub> = .07.

Table A1. Factor Loadings of Items on the Cognitive Post-hoc Factors: Within Level

Item*	Stimuli-Differences (Within-Level)					R <sup>2</sup>
	Cognitive Evaluations		Emotional Evaluations			
	ICC	One-sidedness	Persuasiveness	Interest	Aversion	Shame
I have now more sympathy with the makers of the video.	.28		<b>.76</b>			.58
After this video I can understand the perspective of the makers much better.	.27		<b>.76</b>			.58
Through this video, I feel myself better informed about the background.	.31		<b>.68</b>			.46
On my opinion, the video was persuasive.	.30		<b>.66</b>	.18		.63
I found this video one-sided.	.36			.29		.38
I found this video sensational.	.42			<b>.50</b>	.25	.12
I couldn't take this video seriously.	.26					<b>.59</b>

Note. ICC = Intra-class correlation. All factor loadings were significant,  $p < .05$ . Main loadings are marked in boldface. R<sup>2</sup> = The amount of total variance by an item explained by the underlying factor.

\* Items were translated for publication purposes.

Table A2. Factor Loadings of Items on the Cognitive Post-hoc Factors: Between Level

Item*	Person-Differences (Between-Level)					R <sup>2</sup>
	ICC	Cognitive Evaluations	Emotional Evaluations	Shame		
I have now more sympathy with the makers of the video.	.28					.89
After this video I can understand the perspective of the makers much better.	.27					.88
Through this video, I feel myself better informed about the background.	.31					.76
In my opinion, the video was persuasive.	.30					.82
I found this video one-sided.	.36					.88
I found this Video sensational.	.42				.32	.61
I couldn't take this video seriously.	.26					.58

Note. ICC = Intraclass correlation. All factor loadings were significant,  $p < .05$ . Main loadings are marked in bold face. R<sup>2</sup> = The amount of total variance of an item explained by the underlying factor.

\* Items were translated for publication purposes.

Table A3. Factor Loadings of Items on the Emotional Post-hoc Factors: Within Level

Item*	Stimuli-Differences (Within-Level)							R <sup>2</sup>
	Cognitive Evaluations			Emotional Evaluations				
	ICC	One-sidedness	Persuasiveness	Interest	Aversion	Shame		
Through this video, I got interested.	.29			<b>.86</b>			.73	
Through this video, I felt fascination.	.40			<b>.68</b>			.46	
Through this video, I felt contempt.	.30				<b>.83</b>		.69	
Through this video, I felt disgust.	.31	-.15			<b>.72</b>		.57	
Through this video, I felt anger.	.32	-.24			<b>.71</b>		.62	
Through this video, I felt shame.	.35					<b>.87</b>	.75	
Through this video, I felt guilt.	.33	-.22				<b>.43</b>	.24	

Note. ICC = Intra-class correlation. All factor loadings were significant,  $p < .05$ . Main loadings are marked in boldface. R<sup>2</sup> = The amount of total variance of an item explained by the underlying factor.

\* Items were translated for publication purposes.

Table A4. Factor Loadings of Items on the Emotional Post-hoc Factors: Between Level

Item*	Person-Differences (Between-Level)							$R^2$
	Cognitive Evaluations			Emotional Evaluations				
	ICC	One-sidedness	Persuasiveness	Interest	Aversion	Shame		
Through this video, I got interested.	.29			<b>.85</b>			.72	
Through this video, I felt fascination.	.40			<b>.85</b>			.72	
Through this video, I felt contempt.	.30				<b>.79</b>		.62	
Through this video, I felt disgust.	.31				<b>.79</b>		.63	
Through this video, I felt anger.	.32				<b>.93</b>		.86	
Through this video, I felt shame.	.35					<b>.82</b>	.68	
Through this video, I felt guilt.	.33	-.25				<b>.73</b>	.59	

Note. ICC = Intra-class correlation. All factor loadings were significant,  $p < .05$ . Main loadings are marked in boldface.  $R^2$  = The amount of total variance by an item explained by the underlying factor.

\* Items were translated for publication purposes.



## A2. Pairwise Comparisons for the Effect of Single Videos

Table A5. Pairwise comparisons refer to the 6 (Right-wing extremist video clips) respectively 7 (Islamic extremist video clip) rANOVA displayed in Chapter 9.4.3.

Adverse evaluations	SCR		Aversion		Shame		One-sidedness	
	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE
Right-wing Extremist Videos								
TH Lifestyle activist	-1.42 <sup>a</sup>	0.13	2.71 <sup>a</sup>	0.10	1.60 <sup>a</sup>	0.06	2.23 <sup>a</sup>	0.05
RC News broadcast	-0.24 <sup>c</sup>	0.10	1.85 <sup>d</sup>	0.07	1.24 <sup>c</sup>	0.05	1.69 <sup>d</sup>	0.05
RC Group lifestyle	-0.88 <sup>b</sup>	0.11	2.01 <sup>ad</sup>	0.08	1.26 <sup>c</sup>	0.04	1.99 <sup>b</sup>	0.05
RC Public opinion	-0.51 <sup>d</sup>	0.10	1.98 <sup>d</sup>	0.08	1.36 <sup>b</sup>	0.05	1.87 <sup>c</sup>	0.05
Movie clip	-0.89 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	2.10 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.39 <sup>b</sup>	0.06	2.03 <sup>b</sup>	0.06
Extreme clip	-1.28 <sup>a</sup>	0.11	3.43 <sup>c</sup>	0.10	1.53 <sup>a</sup>	0.07	1.79 <sup>c</sup>	0.06

Note. Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons within this column.  $p < .05$ . Values in lines cannot be compared as scales differed from each other. SCR = Slider rating from -4 (= very unpleasant) to +4 (= very pleasant). Aversion and shame were evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= not at all) to 5 (= very strong). One-sidedness was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= absolutely disagree) to 4 (= absolutely agree).

Table A6. Pairwise Comparisons for Online and Post-hoc Ratings: Right-wing Extremist Videos

Adverse evaluations	SCR		Aversion		Shame		One-sidedness	
	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE
Right-wing Extremist Videos	-1.42 <sup>a</sup>	0.13	2.71 <sup>a</sup>	0.10	1.60 <sup>a</sup>	0.06	2.23 <sup>a</sup>	0.05
TH Lifestyle activist	-0.24 <sup>c</sup>	0.10	1.85 <sup>d</sup>	0.07	1.24 <sup>c</sup>	0.05	1.69 <sup>d</sup>	0.05
RC News broadcast	-0.88 <sup>b</sup>	0.11	2.01 <sup>ad</sup>	0.08	1.26 <sup>c</sup>	0.04	1.99 <sup>b</sup>	0.05
RC Group lifestyle	-0.51 <sup>d</sup>	0.10	1.98 <sup>d</sup>	0.08	1.36 <sup>b</sup>	0.05	1.87 <sup>c</sup>	0.05
RC Public opinion	-0.89 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	2.10 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.39 <sup>b</sup>	0.06	2.03 <sup>b</sup>	0.06
Movie clip	-1.28 <sup>a</sup>	0.11	3.43 <sup>c</sup>	0.10	1.53 <sup>a</sup>	0.07	1.79 <sup>c</sup>	0.06
Extreme clip								

Note. Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons within this column,  $p < .05$ . Values in lines cannot be compared as scales differed from each other. SCR = Slider rating from -4 (= very unpleasant) to +4 (= very pleasant). Aversion and shame were evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= not at all) to 5 (= very strong). One-sidedness was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= absolutely disagree) to 4 (= absolutely agree).

Table A7. Pairwise Comparisons for Online and Post-hoc Ratings: Islamic Extremist Videos

Adverse evaluations	SCR		Aversion		Shame		One-sidedness	
	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE
Islamic Extremist Videos								
TH Ideologue	-0.72 <sup>a</sup>	1.18	1.80 <sup>a</sup>	0.08	1.30 <sup>a</sup>	0.06	1.83 <sup>a</sup>	0.04
TH Lifestyle activist	-1.06 <sup>b</sup>	1.30	2.36 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.50 <sup>b</sup>	0.07	1.76 <sup>a</sup>	0.04
TH Martyr	-0.93 <sup>a</sup>	1.06	2.05 <sup>c</sup>	0.09	1.27 <sup>a</sup>	0.05	1.80 <sup>a</sup>	0.04
RC News broadcast	-1.31 <sup>c</sup>	1.31	2.44 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	1.30 <sup>a</sup>	0.05	2.07 <sup>b</sup>	0.05
RC Group lifestyle	-1.11 <sup>b</sup>	1.15	2.46 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	1.32 <sup>a</sup>	0.06	1.97 <sup>c</sup>	0.04
Movie clip	-0.77 <sup>a</sup>	0.95	2.34 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.52 <sup>b</sup>	0.07	1.89 <sup>ac</sup>	0.05
Extreme clip	-1.18 <sup>bc</sup>	1.13	2.91 <sup>d</sup>	0.10	1.47 <sup>b</sup>	0.07	1.82 <sup>a</sup>	0.04

Note. Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons within this column.  $p < .05$ . Values in lines cannot be compared as scales differed from each other. SCR = Slider rating from -4 (= very unpleasant) to +4 (= very pleasant). Aversion and Shame were evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= not at all) to 5 (= very strong). One-sidedness was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= absolutely disagree) to 4 (= absolutely agree).

Table A8. *Pairwise Comparisons for Post-hoc Ratings: Right-wing Extremist Videos*

Approaching evaluations	Interest		Persuasiveness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Right-wing Extremist Videos				
TH Lifestyle activist	2.15 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	1.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.02
RC News broadcast	2.63 <sup>c</sup>	0.10	1.36 <sup>c</sup>	0.04
RC Group lifestyle	1.84 <sup>d</sup>	0.08	1.14 <sup>a</sup>	0.03
RC Public opinion	1.81 <sup>d</sup>	0.07	1.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.03
Movie clip	2.38 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	1.27 <sup>b</sup>	0.04
Extreme clip	2.37 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.44 <sup>c</sup>	0.05

*Note.* Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons within this column.  $p < .05$ . Values in lines cannot be compared as scales differed from each other. *Interest* was evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*). *Persuasiveness* was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*).

Table A9. *Pairwise Comparisons for Post-hoc Ratings: Islamic Extremist Videos*

Approaching evaluations	Interest		Persuasiveness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Islamic Extremist Videos				
TH Ideologue	1.80 <sup>a</sup>	0.08	1.21 <sup>a</sup>	0.03
TH Lifestyle activist	2.36 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.39 <sup>b</sup>	0.05
TH Martyr	1.86 <sup>ac</sup>	0.08	1.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.03
RC News broadcast	1.98 <sup>c</sup>	0.08	1.14 <sup>bc</sup>	0.03
RC Group lifestyle	2.20 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	1.09 <sup>c</sup>	0.02
Movie clip	2.41 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.34 <sup>b</sup>	0.04
Extreme clip	2.31 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.14 <sup>b</sup>	0.03

*Note.* Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons within this column.  $p < .05$ . Values in lines cannot be compared as scales differed from each other. *Interest* was evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*). *Persuasiveness* was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*).

### A3. Pairwise Comparisons for the Interactions between Cultural Background, Educational Level and Ideology

Results refer to the 3 (Culture: German vs. Muslim vs. Other)  $\times$  2 (Educational level: Students vs. Pupils from vocational schools)  $\times$  2 (Ideology: Right-wing vs. Islamic extremist material) depicted in Chapter 10.3.1. Only for significant interactions pairwise comparisons are displayed.

Table A10. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Three-way Interaction: SCR*

SCR		Educational level			
		Pupil		Student	
Cultural Background		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
German	Right-wing extremist	-1.03 <sup>a</sup>	0.19	-1.31 <sup>a</sup>	0.11
	Islamic extremist	-1.31 <sup>a</sup>	0.17	-1.22 <sup>a</sup>	0.10
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	-0.99 <sup>ac</sup>	0.26	-0.47 <sup>c</sup>	0.22
	Islamic extremist	-0.45 <sup>b</sup>	0.24	-0.76 <sup>bc</sup>	0.20
Other	Right-wing extremist	-1.20 <sup>acd</sup>	0.31	-0.75 <sup>bc</sup>	0.16
	Islamic extremist	-1.58 <sup>ad</sup>	0.28	-1.18 <sup>acd</sup>	0.15

*Note.* Different indices in a column or a line indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . SCR = Slider rating from -4 (= very unpleasant) to +4 (= very pleasant).

Table A11. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Two-way Interaction: Aversion*

Cultural Background		Aversion	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
German	Right-wing extremist	2.74 <sup>a</sup>	0.07
	Islamic extremist	2.73 <sup>a</sup>	0.08
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	2.60 <sup>ab</sup>	0.12
	Islamic extremist	2.89 <sup>ac</sup>	0.13
Other	Right-wing extremist	2.67 <sup>a</sup>	0.11
	Islamic extremist	2.86 <sup>a</sup>	0.12

*Note.* Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . *Aversion* was evaluated on a scale ranging from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*).

Table A12. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Two-way Interaction: Shame*

Cultural Background		Shame	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
German	Right-wing extremist	1.47 <sup>a</sup>	0.04
	Islamic extremist	1.35 <sup>b</sup>	0.04
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	1.65 <sup>c</sup>	0.07
	Islamic extremist	2.05 <sup>d</sup>	0.08
Other	Right-wing extremist	1.39 <sup>ab</sup>	0.07
	Islamic extremist	1.29 <sup>ab</sup>	0.07

*Note.* Different indices in a column indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . *Shame* was evaluated on a scale ranging from 1 (= *not at all*) to 5 (= *very strong*).

Table A13. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Three-way Interaction: One-sidedness*

<b>One-sidedness</b>		<b>Educational level</b>			
		Pupil		Student	
Cultural Background		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
German	Right-wing extremist	2.38 <sup>a</sup>	0.07	2.54 <sup>a</sup>	0.06
	Islamic extremist	2.41 <sup>ac</sup>	0.06	2.29 <sup>e</sup>	0.05
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	2.17 <sup>ab</sup>	0.11	1.64 <sup>c</sup>	0.12
	Islamic extremist	2.03 <sup>b</sup>	0.09	1.68 <sup>c</sup>	0.10
Other	Right-wing extremist	2.42 <sup>ad</sup>	0.12	2.21 <sup>d</sup>	0.09
	Islamic extremist	2.41 <sup>a</sup>	0.10	2.10 <sup>d</sup>	0.08

*Note.* Different indices in a column or a line indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . *One-sidedness* was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*).

Table A14. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Three-way Interaction: Interest*

Interest		Educational level			
		Pupil		Student	
Cultural Background		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
German	Right-wing extremist	2.39 <sup>a</sup>	0.10	2.14 <sup>b</sup>	0.08
	Islamic extremist	2.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	2.40 <sup>a</sup>	0.08
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	2.47 <sup>a</sup>	0.15	2.44 <sup>ab</sup>	0.16
	Islamic extremist	3.21 <sup>c</sup>	0.15	2.30 <sup>a</sup>	0.16
Other	Right-wing extremist	2.07 <sup>a</sup>	0.16	2.09 <sup>ab</sup>	0.13
	Islamic extremist	2.14 <sup>ab</sup>	0.16	2.10 <sup>abd</sup>	0.13

*Note.* Different indices in a column or a line indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . *Interest* was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*).



Table A15. *Pairwise Comparisons for the Three-way Interaction: Persuasiveness*

Persuasiveness	Cultural Background	Pupil		Student	
		M	SE	M	SE
German	Right-wing extremist	1.97 <sup>a</sup>	0.06	1.31 <sup>b</sup>	0.05
	Islamic extremist	1.67 <sup>c</sup>	0.05	1.39 <sup>bd</sup>	0.04
Muslim	Right-wing extremist	2.01 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	1.57 <sup>c</sup>	0.09
	Islamic extremist	2.37 <sup>b</sup>	0.08	1.42 <sup>d</sup>	0.08
Other	Right-wing extremist	1.87 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	1.40 <sup>bd</sup>	0.07
	Islamic extremist	1.88 <sup>ad</sup>	0.08	1.37 <sup>bd</sup>	0.07

*Note.* Different indices in a column or a line indicate significant differences in the pairwise comparisons.  $p < .05$ . *Persuasiveness* was evaluated on a four point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= *absolutely disagree*) to 4 (= *absolutely agree*).

#### A4. Words Used in the Single Category Implicit Association Test

The table shows the translated stimuli used in the SC-IAT (see Chapter 11) as well as the amount to which they were associated with terrorism in the conducted pre-test.

Table A16. *Stimuli for the SC-IAT*

Item*	Terrorism			Positive Adjectives			Negative Adjectives		
	<i>M</i>	<i>(SD)</i>	Item*	<i>M</i>	<i>(SD)</i>	Item*	<i>M</i>	<i>(SD)</i>	
Annihilation	6.3	-0.89	Kind	1	-0.2	Fussy	1.7	-1.17	
Explosive charge	6.3	-0.99	Funny	1.1	-0.28	Dependent	1.9	-1.36	
Extremism	6.4	-1.04	Sensitive	1.1	-0.44	Pompous	2	-1.58	
Bomb	6.4	-0.87	Candid	1.2	-0.37	Fawning	2.2	-1.38	
Radicalism	6.4	-0.82	Cheerful	1.2	-0.8	Distorted	2.2	-1.55	
Devastation	6.4	-1.23	Charming	1.2	-0.83	Apathetic	2.2	-1.66	
Hatred	6.6	-0.77	Caring	1.3	-0.74	Smug	2.2	-1.68	
Perpetrator	6.6	-0.64	Content	1.3	-0.99	Unfaithful	2.2	-1.85	
Assault	6.7	-0.46	Tender	1.3	-1.25	Phlegmatic	2.2	-1.61	
Terrorist	6.9	-0.28	Obliging	1.4	-0.7	Mincing	2.3	-1.74	

*Note.* \* Items were translated for publication purposes. Items were rated on a 7-point-Likert ranging from 1 (= absolutely not applying to terrorism), to 7 (= absolutely applying to terrorism).

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