



# laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

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## Radical Innovators Beware -- in the arts, sciences and philosophy Terrifying implications of radical new deradicalisation initiative in France

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### Introduction

Despite cultivating the image of being a country renowned for its cultivation of intellectual endeavour, and most notably philosophy, [Manuel Valls](#), Prime Minister of France, announced on 9 May 2016 a radical initiative to set up a dozen deradicalisation centres (*Plan d'Action contre la Radicalisation et le Terrorisme*, *Dossier de Presse*, 9 mai 2016). This has been widely reported and has elicited extensive commentary (Kim Willsher, *France to set up a dozen deradicalisation centres*, *The Guardian*, 9 May 2015; Lara Marlowe, *France unveils counter-terror plan in battle against jihadism*, *The Irish Times*, 9 May 2016; Norwegian Defence League, *France to set up 12 muslim extremist deradicalisation centres*, *NDL News Media*, 9 May 2016).

**Neither "radical" nor "deradicalisation" was qualified in the announcement of the plan**, although clearly the presentation of the 2-year, 80-point plan was intended to address concerns about home-grown terrorism and would-be extremists. So serious was the threat from radicals and the appeal of their "deadly" doctrines, it was claimed that a "general mobilisation" was now required in response to the greatest challenge the country faced in more than 70 years. The argument was however strangely reminiscent of that used in recent support of the extraordinary cross-party attempt to "block" any electoral success by the National Front in France.

The radical new initiative by France goes beyond the provisions of the [Radicalisation Awareness Network](#) (RAN). Launched by the EU in 2011, this is an umbrella network connecting people involved in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism throughout Europe. However, as that EU preoccupation is currently framed, "radicalisation" is not qualified, except by implication as the precursor to violent extremism. This conflation is also characteristic of analogous public announcements in the UK (Josh Halliday, *Almost 4,000 people referred to UK deradicalisation scheme last year*, *The Guardian*, 20 March 2016).

Given the systematic lack of government qualification of "radical", "radicalisation" and "extremism", the question here is **what implications the French initiative might have for those engaged creatively in radical initiatives**. This is now a question for the arts (painting, drama, sculpture, etc), the sciences (fundamental physics, chemistry, biosciences, etc), technological innovations of every kind (including public health, surveillance and weapons research), and philosophy (in the French tradition). Presumably these would also include radical humanitarian initiatives in response to the socially disadvantaged. Many such initiative are typically presented as admirable because of their radical nature. Some may even be rewarded by prizes in their respective disciplines -- or as Nobel Prizes, Right Livelihood Awards, and the like

Clearly anybody in France, or those attracted to the quality of thinking for which it has been reputed, now needs to be exceptionally aware that their extreme views (in relation to the inadequacy of conventional patterns of thinking) may be effectively criminalised by the new directive. Irrespective of any possible qualification in relation to creativity, "radical" is now effectively to be conflated with potential threat. This is of course consistent with the traditional conservative perspective of those anxious to prevent any change to business-as-usual -- no matter the inadequacies which the latter may exhibit.

In the light of the variety of tangible measures in the French Action Plan, the concern in what follows is that these are designed in response to elusive intangibles. As a matter of subjective experience, it is necessarily unclear as to the nature of radical or the terror it may engender. Ironically, **the radical measures could themselves be experienced as "terrifying"** in contrast to the acclaimed values

of peaceful, civilised societies and the advancement of knowledge therein.

In addressing the central issue of the nature of the shadowy intangibles against which concrete measures are to be taken. The exploration here is based on an English translation (by Google) of the original French *Dossier de Presse*. In an experimental [modification of the translation](#), XXXX has been substituted for radicalisation and its derivatives, and YYYY for terror and its derivatives.

This opens the possibility of considering how XXXX may be interpreted in terms of creativity, imagination, insight, inspiration, and the like -- often appreciatively acclaimed as "radical". Similarly YYYY can then be explored in terms of the wide variety of fearful experiences in contemporary society, typically excluded from simplistic definitions of terrorism. Together these operations raise the issue of whether the quest for "normality" has itself already become abnormal and a source of fear -- possibly for many.

The question could then be asked whether the French government's Action Plan is usefully to be recognised as very much a strange metaphor of France in a time of change. Does the Action Plan constitute a mirror of its own condition -- in the spirit of the early argument from a systems perspective in the human sciences by Gregory Bateson (*Mary Catherine Bateson, Our Own Metaphor: a personal account of a conference on the effects of conscious purpose on human adaptation, 1972*)?

The method adopted follows from a previous exercise (*Towards a Generic Global Issue Statement: evoking an instructive pattern of unquestionable responses, 2009; Template, 2009; Racism example, 2009*). The argument is framed by concern with the strategic implications (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century? Indicative checklist of possible domains of application, 2014; Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: "rooting for" normalization vs. "rooting out" extremism?, 2005*). Brief reference is made to [previous arguments](#) by which this approach is framed.

## Using the checklist of French actions against radicalism as a template

The procedure employed was based on the 80-point *List of Measures* in the *Plan d'Action contre la Radicalisation et le Terrorisme* (*Dossier de Presse, 9 mai 2016*), presented by Prime Minister Manuel Valls. An indicative English translation was made using Google Translate, with all the reservations the result may imply; no attempt was made to correct the translation. As noted above, terms relating to radicalisation were then replaced by XXXX; those relating to terrorism were replaced by YYYY. Given the explicit focus on Islam as the "other" considered to be primarily associated with radicalisation and terrorism in the document, a further substitution of ZZZZ can be made to enable a variety of "others" to be considered.

This gives a document which can then be imaginatively explored by substitution of synonyms and connotations of radicalisation for XXXX, with a similar approach applied to terror, in the case of YYYY (see *Action Plan against XXXX and YYYY*).

The issue, in terms of the wider implications of the result, is how the list of measures might then be more fully understood. The following is an indication of the back-replacements that could be made -- possibly using the template in an interactive mode on the web, to enable such cut-and-paste exploration by many.

Indication of potentially instructive back-substitutions in the Action Plan					
[see <a href="#">experimental template</a> ]					
XXXX ?	contra-XXXX ?	YYYY ?	contra-YYYY ?	ZZZZ ?	contra-ZZZZ ?
radicalism	eradication	fear	de-fear	change agents	de-Islamisation
creativity	de-radical*	terror	de-terror	fundamentalists	de-Christianisation
-- imagination	dis-imaginat*	anxiety	dis-anxiety	-- Islam	de-Judaism
-- insight	de-creativity	shock	de-shock	-- Christianity	de-Hinduism
-- ingenuity	dis-insight	dread	de-dread	-- Judaism	de-religion
-- inspiration	de-inspiration	horror	de-horror	-- Hinduism	de-science
-- vision	de-innovation	intimidation	dis-intimidation	-- sects / cults	de-art
innovation	discouragement	trepidation			de-philosophy
-- inventiveness	TINA	panic		disciplines	
-- originality	conservation			-- religion	
-- fundamental*	dumbing down			-- science	
unbeliever	de-programming			-- art	
-- dissident				-- philosophy	
-- nonconformist				-- technology	
-- separatist				believers	
-- apostate				-- revolutionaries	
-- blasphemous				-- extremists	
-- heretic				-- nonconformists	
-- "witch"				-- heretics	
abnormal				-- reformers	
-- courage					
-- extremism					
-- fanaticism					
-- heresy					
-- delusion					
-- addiction					
-- decadence					
reformer					
-- change agent					
-- revolutionary					
-- alternative					
-- otherwise					
-- critic					
-- activism					

It is interesting to note that whilst de-radicalisation has achieved acceptance as a term, the range of analogous terms for other possible "de-XXXX" processes is remarkably impoverished. This is also true of "de-YYYY" processes, and their mitigation. It is however equally true of "de-ZZZZ" processes. Potentially of most significance is the framework provided by "eradication", as discussed separately (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century? Indicative checklist of possible domains of application 2014*).

The latter notably refers to the recognised policy consequences of framing otherness through metaphors, as articulated by [Donald Schon](#) (*Generative Metaphor: a perspective on problem-setting in social policy*, 1979). He argues that the essential difficulties in social policy have more to do with problem setting than with problem solving, more to do with ways in which we frame the purposes to be achieved than with the selection of optimal means for achieving them. For Schon the framing of problems often depends upon metaphors underlying the stories which generate problem setting and set the direction of problem solving, as summarized separately (*Generative metaphor and policy-making*). The focus on "deradicalisation" or "eradication" therefore has very particular consequences.

The concern here is the extent to which the preoccupation with XXXX as "abnormal" may in some way be interpreted to include any initiative which is creative, innovative or original -- even those strategic initiatives acclaimed as offering radical solutions in response to the so-called [wicked problems](#) by which society is now faced. Is the French initiative symptomatic of a form of memetic warfare against the unusual in any form (*Noopolitics and memetic warfare within the noosphere*, 2014; *Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: "rooting for" normalization vs. "rooting out" extremism?*, 2005)?

An unqualified framing of radicalisation, as through the EU [Radicalisation Awareness Network](#) (RAN), offers the further irony as to how its mandate might be confused with that of hypothetical initiatives such as an EU Creativity Awareness Network, an EU Innovation Awareness Network, or an EU Imagination Awareness Network. Are government authorities renowned for their capacity to distinguish creative innovation from deadly threat? In the case of France, the argument is usefully illustrated by the political crisis regarding the highly controversial legislative response to the issue of homosexual marriage -- indicative of radical behavioural extremism, terrifying to many, calling into question the norms of civilised society.

## Existential subtlety of radical intangibles

The table above helps to focus attention on the subtlety of what may be implied (as variously noted in the [papers cited below](#)).

How to think about what is implied by radical, given the synonyms and connotations? What is radical originality or radical creativity? What is imagination, insight, or any vision that may be associated with them -- readily to be understood as "radical" and "extreme", and admired as such? The same may be asked of terror, fear and anxiety -- readily to be deprecated as such, or cultivated in the process of daily recreation and entertainment.

It is intriguing to note how little effort the French initiative makes to define its stated preoccupation with radicalisation and terrorism. It is either assumed that these subtleties require no definition, or else it is assumed that they are whatever the initiative chooses to address -- effectively by government fiat. The lack of consensus on the matter is striking, most notably the failure of United Nations processes in that regard.

The essence of the challenge might be usefully recognized in the experimental substitution of "change" for XXXX in the template. How indeed is change to be understood in a sociopolitical context? Change is frequently promised by politicians in response to popular demand. In his presentation of the plan, Manuel Valls is however quoted as declaring that: **Radicalisation and terrorism are linked.** *We are faced with a stubborn phenomenon that has widely spread through society and which threatens it because it could expand massively.*

Is the more fundamental challenge that **Change and fear are linked?** Change is widely acknowledged as potentially terrifying. Fear of it is a recognised phobia. **Should change agents now be recognised as terrorists -- if not, why not?**

An early introduction to the phenomenon by Don D. Jackson (*The Fear of Change, Medical Opinion and Review*, 3, 1967) indicates:

In a world that to some observers is wildly chaotic, it may appear absurd to postulate that the primary flaw in the modern condition is fear of change. Our economic, political, religious, social, psychological, and biological systems are torn by the continual tug-of-war waged by conflicting tendencies. The thrust forward, the push toward change, renewal, and growth, is violently or stubbornly resisted by an equal will to maintain what is and has been, reinforced by rigid personal, interpersonal, and cultural systems grounded in fear of the unknown.

How is enabling "change" for survival then to be disassociated from adopting a "radical" perspective -- leading to radical measures -- which some will indeed find fearful? Following this logic, given that politicians do indeed promise change, to what extent **should politicians be "re-cognised" as terrorists**, or distinguished from them?

The question can be expressed otherwise through questioning how change is to be distinguished from "learning" -- or related to it. Might learning itself be considered terrifying to some in some way? Helpful in this respect is the distinction made between "maintenance learning", "shock learning" and "innovative learning" in an early report to the Club of Rome (James Botkin, et al., *No Limits to Learning: bridging the human gap*, 1979), as critically reviewed separately (*Societal Learning and the Erosion of Collective Memory*, 1980). More recently the contrast is articulated with language relevant to this argument (*Radical and Incremental Innovation, The Innovation Policy Platform; Incremental Innovation vs. Radical Innovation, Incremental Innovation*; Donald A. Norman and Roberto Verganti, *Incremental and Radical Innovation: design research versus technology and meaning change*, 2012).

Is it the shock factor which is so valuable as a catalyst to innovative learning in the radical modality -- in contrast to the maintenance approach so questionably promoted by public authorities whilst awaiting "surprises", as so remarkably analyzed by [Nassim Nicholas Taleb](#) (*The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable*, 2007)?

**Definition?** A valuable review of the lack of consensus regarding both radicalism and terrorism is provided by [Randy Borum](#) (*Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories, Journal of Strategic Security* 4, 2011). This argues that:

In discourse about countering terrorism, the term "radicalization" is widely used, but remains poorly defined. To focus narrowly

on ideological radicalization risks implying that radical beliefs are a proxy -- or at least a necessary precursor -- for terrorism, though we know this not to be true. Different pathways and mechanisms of terrorism involvement operate in different ways for different people at different points in time and perhaps in different contexts.... Most people who hold radical ideas do not engage in terrorism, and many terrorists -- even those who lay claim to a "cause" -- are not deeply ideological and may not "radicalize" in any traditional sense.

Borum stresses that:

First, there is little discussion and even less consensus about what "radicalism" and "extremism" even mean. Given that researchers and governments cannot reach consensus in defining terrorism, perhaps it should not be surprising that such a diversity of views exists in defining even more nuanced concepts related to radicalization.... Sometimes the concepts of radicalism and terrorism become conflated.... Little attention has been given in the scholarly or policy literature to defining criteria for which extremist ideologies pose a threat to national or global security, or whether extremist ideologies matter in the absence of violent actions.... just as we struggle with the boundaries of radicalism, we face a similarly complex challenge in operationalizing the concept of "radicalization".

The difficulty highlighted here is that different authorities have asserted what are essentially simplistic definitions of radicalisation, but without questioning whether the process has more fundamental implications worthy of the most careful attention -- especially if it proving so attractive to the young. Thus the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network explains its focus only the following circuitous terms: *Radicalisation in this sense is understood as a complex phenomenon of people embracing radical ideology that could lead to the commitment of terrorist acts.*

The questionable approach to authoritative definition has been strikingly evident in the recent debate on the highly questionable definition of **torture** -- euphemistically defined as "**enhanced interrogation**" in the USA. This has also been effectively defined by fiat -- as aided and abetted by the US Department of Justice ([Phillipe Sands](#), *Torture Team: Rumsfeld's memo and the betrayal of American values*, 2008). Definitions have been crafted to enable some highly questionable policy initiatives, carefully excluding dimensions which are a reality for many.

Also of particular relevance is the assertion by Manuel Valls that: *The radicalisation of part of our youth, seduced by a deadly antisocial model, is in my view the most serious challenge we have faced since the second world war because it deeply damages the republican pact.* How is any definition to emerge when experiencing fear -- even to the point of terror -- is widely sought in the thrill of daily entertainment and recreation -- even acclaimed using the descriptor "terrific"? Even more problematic is the "seductive" nature of exposure to the the fear experienced by others, epitomised by the gladiatorial games of Imperial Rome -- terror cultivated vicariously.

The arbitrary nature of this process of definition can be usefully termed "conceptual gerrymandering" (*Conceptual gerrymandering and definitional game-playing*, 2002). Curiously, as discussed separately, such "gross" definition is also evident in the case of the economic definition of GDP, despite its fundamental importance to governance (*Evaluating the Grossness of Gross Domestic Product*, 2016).

Rather than the heavy investment on preventing French youth from being attracted to a terrifying experience in Syria and Iraq, the focus might be more appropriately placed on how that attraction to violence could be better understood, as separately discussed (*Global Incomprehension of Increasing Violence: matching incapacity to question the reason why*, 2016).

**Terror as tangible?** The definitional approach is authoritatively justified by the presentation of terrorism in tangible terms (bombings, etc) -- beyond any need to question its nature. This is unfortunately problematic in that it is the fear of incidents of this nature which is essential to the experience of terror. Those affected by the tangible nature of the incidents may well be tragically beyond the ability to experience terror. There is seemingly little understanding of the varieties of fear and terror, or those who engender it, as separately considered (*Varieties of Terrorism -- extended to the experience of the terrorized*, 2004). The latter included the following sections:

- [Engendering terror through intimidation](#)
- [Broadening the taxonomy of terrorism](#)
- [Questions in distinguishing terror and terrorism](#)
- [Distinguishing degrees of fear and terror](#)
- [Training for intimidation and terrorism](#)
- ["Terrorism-alpha" vs "Terrorism-beta"](#)

**Exclusions:** However fearful for those who experience it as unwilling victims, striking examples **excluded** from any definition of terrorism (as officially recognised) therefore include:

- intimidation and violence in prisons
- intimidation and violence in the home (domestic violence) and between neighbours
- gender-determined intimidation and violence
- racially-determined intimidation and violence
- bullying in institutions (including school shootings, shootings on military bases, etc)
- street violence (muggings, car-jackings, etc)
- organized crime (racketeering, kidnappings, traffic in persons, prostitution, etc)
- corruption, engendering fear through intimidation and blackmail
- violence against animals, possibly associated with systematic intimidation
- terror engendered by wild animals (*Unprecedented wave of shark attacks causes terror in North Carolina*, *The Telegraph*, 1 July 2015; *Terror down under: Spate of shark attacks keep anxious Aussies out of the water*, *South China Morning Post*, 19 August 2015)

Every effort currently seems to be made to see terrorism -- conventionally framed -- as **resulting from** a process of radicalisation. The focus is on Islamic radicalisation, careful avoiding any reference to radicalisation with the Christian, Jewish or other denominations. The contrast is highlighted between the arbitrary (but unquestionable) labelling of the Orlando shooting as the act of a "terrorist", avoiding any implication that the killer of Jo Cox in the same period could in any way be recognized as a "terrorist" -- as carefully argued by [Glenn Greenwald](#) (*Why Is the Killer of British MP Jo Cox Not Being Called a "Terrorist"?* *The Intercept*, 17 June 2016). This makes the point that:

... it's virtually impossible to find any media outlet calling the attacker a "terrorist" or even suggesting that it might be "terrorism". To the contrary, the suspected killer -- overnight -- has been alternatively described as a gentle soul or a mentally ill "loner"... the word "terrorism" has no real concrete meaning and certainly no consistent application. In the West, functionally speaking, it's now a propaganda term with little meaning other than "a Muslim who engages in violence against Westerners or their allies". It's even used for Muslims who attack soldiers of an army occupying their country... the term "terrorist" at this point has so little cogent meaning that debates about how to apply it seem quaint and completely academic.

There is however clearly the possibility that prior experience of forms of terror -- excluded from that understanding -- may in fact **lead to** a form of radicalisation. The terror associated with bullying or torture may well trigger a radical change of perspective -- as with the experience of rape. In some cases this may in turn lead to violence. In this sense the experience of violence in prisons, although seldom acknowledged officially, may well engender a terrorist mentality.

Especially interesting is the case of rape and any conversion to [radical feminism](#) that it may trigger with respect to attitudes to [violence against women](#). Of particular relevance however is the extent to which this radicalisation may engender a pattern of reciprocated violence against men -- notably as revenge against the original perpetrators -- such as to ensure that they in turn experience equivalent terror.

Also of interest is the manner in which the "violence" triggered by any experience of terror may take non-physical forms. Thus remedial social initiatives to ensure it is not repeated may be experienced, and labelled, as "violent" -- by those who are thereby obliged to modify and constrain their habitual responses. The terror at the prospect of loss of employment (or a reduction in wages endangering an already marginal livelihood) may also engender democratic protest against [structural violence](#) -- possibly degenerating into physical violence.

Thus although Manuel Valls can assert that radicalisation and terrorism are linked, it is equally true to explore the extent to which **terrorism and radicalisation are linked**.

However the manner in which conceptual gerrymandering is used to exclude experience of certain forms of terror from any understanding of "terrorism" is then clearly to be expected in the methodology by which some forms of radical and radicalisation are designed out of the "radicalisation" currently framed as a fundamental security preoccupation through its association with deprecated forms of violence. It is unfortunate that this effectively results in an inability to understand the varieties of radicalisation and the meaning of "violence" -- especially in its most subtle forms, where it may be appreciated as the only means of enabling change or recreation (*Global Incomprehension of Increasing Violence: Matching incapacity to question the reason why*, 2016).

Examples include violence to nature to acquire food, combat sport, and some forms of interpersonal interaction. Such conceptual gerrymandering has been evident in the questionable definition of enhanced interrogation in contrast to torture, as well as in [just war theory](#) -- to the point of implying a "just torture theory", or a "just radicalisation theory". There is the further implication that [state-sponsored terrorism](#) is effectively framed by a "just terrorism theory" -- to which freedom fighters of every epoch have presumably subscribed (including those of the French Revolution). In addition to noting recognition of state-sponsored terrorism by a range of countries, *Wikipedia* offers separate profiles in the case of the [USA](#), [Russia](#) (the [Soviet Union](#)), and [Israel](#).

**Extreme examples?** As a strange coincidence, a week after the announcement of the Action Plan, Brussels was the scene of a massive [Gay Pride Parade](#) -- gathering together every facet of the [LGBT community](#) in Belgium. Acclaimed otherwise as the "epicentre of European terrorism", multiple bands played in many parts of the centre -- most notably in the immediate proximity of the central police station. It can be readily asserted that the lesbian, gay and transgender communities epitomise radical behaviour and sexual extremism to a high degree. Such behaviour is indeed terrifying to some -- ironically exemplified by the demonic costumes some participants may choose to wear on such occasions, as at any carnival. How is such "terror" to be distinguished from "terrorism" -- especially when cultivated in a carnival setting? How is any decision to "come out", or to "change gender", to be contrasted with other "radical" decisions? Is the increasing attractiveness of doing so (for some) now to be recognised as "radicalisation" -- as with any Gay Pride Parade?

The example is highly relevant to the French situation, given the very recent major political crisis in France regarding the right of homosexuals to marry (*Nicolas Sarkozy calls for repeal of France's same-sex marriage law*, *The Guardian*, 16 November 2014; *The French Defy Socialists over Gay Marriage, Crisis*, 12 June 2013; *Marriage for All France*, *The Huffington Post*, 2 February 2016). Considered by some to be an abnormally reprehensible relationship, the arguments made against this bear careful comparison with those made regarding radicalisation, as discussed separately (*Marrying an Other whatever the Form: reframing and extending the understanding of marriage*, 2013).

The [Paris attacks](#) of 2015, which provoked the new Action Plan, were triggered by Islamic reaction to the blasphemy attributed to satirical cartoons in the French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. The justification was variously considered ridiculous by French society. Curiously, in the week following announcement of the plan, a major concert on the occasion of commemoration of the centenary of the [Battle of Verdun](#) was cancelled as being a risk to public order. This followed a high level of controversy provoked by the extreme right and others. The event was seen as an insult to the commemoration -- framed as "spitting on" an iconic war memorial. This perception was evoked by the intention of a celebrated rapper to sing a song there using the term *kuffar* -- a highly derogatory term in Arabic, meaning infidel -- employed by jihadist groups to describe Westerners (*France cancels rap show at WWI centenary after far-right*

*objects*, *France 24*, 14 May 2016; *Verdun: le concert de Black M annulé*, *L'Est Républicain*, 13 mai 2016). How should these different forms of "blasphemy" be compared?

**Transformation of "terrorist":** Given the pattern by which "terrorists" have been transformed into national icons in many countries -- even in recent decades -- of particular interest in the case of France is how the [Reign of Terror](#) (1793-94) is to be understood. During that period some 15,000 to 30,000 people were guillotined -- as a direct consequence of the [French Revolution](#) through which the [French Republic](#) emerged.

In that respect, far more problematic are the repeated recent arguments by the French Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, that any attempt to explain jihadism is already a step towards justifying it. Clearly a "bad career move" for any researcher dependent on government funding. He goes further in calling into question any cultural or sociological commentary with regard to the attacks in France. This attempt to equate understanding with excuse has subsequently been criticized (Sonya Faure, et al., *"Culture de l'excuse"? : les sociologues répondent à Valls*, *Libération*, 12 janvier 2016). This notes that: *Cette dynamique est une régression intellectuelle qui va de pair avec une politique basée sur la construction d'ennemis*. Previous condemnation of government deradicalisation strategies had been made in the UK (Robert Verkreik, *Government deradicalisation plan will brand Muslims with beards as terrorists, say academics*, *The Independent*, 10 July 2015).

The Action Plan presented by Manuel Valls may well offer the possibility of fruitful speculation on how it might have been appreciated by [Louis XVI](#), and whether he might himself have chosen to formulate such a plan in response to social unrest in France prior to the Revolution. The plan also invites speculation as to whether it would have been similarly appreciated by those encouraging such extensive use of the guillotine thereafter ([Maximilien Robespierre](#), and others).

In their crafted strategic preoccupation with "terrorism", authorities may well be blind to fear engendered otherwise -- and may well be systematic in their denial of it as systematic rather than incidental (as instanced by sexual abuse by Catholic clergy). It could be said that a blinkered approach to terrorism avoids the need to consider the more complex challenges of forms of fear otherwise engendered in society.

**Previous French initiatives against sects and cults:** It is appropriate to recognize how the new initiative could be understood as a particular instance of the pattern of controversial initiatives against sects in France, as usefully summarized in the French version of *Wikipedia*:

Dans le contexte de la polémique et de la lutte contre les sectes, qui a pris une ampleur internationale depuis le début des années 1980, la France s'est engagée dans une lutte dont l'objectif fut d'abord de "lutter contre les sectes" puis "de réprimer les dérives sectaires". La France est un pays laïque dont l'état doit respecter tous les cultes et n'en reconnaître aucun; les mouvements spirituels sont donc a priori considérés comme licites et seuls leurs délits sont répréhensibles. Dans ce cadre, plusieurs commissions d'enquêtes ont été initiées à l'Assemblée nationale afin d'enquêter de manière plus approfondie sur le phénomène sectaire. Le gouvernement s'est également doté d'un nouvel organisme interministériel appelé "Mils" quand il était question de "lutte contre les sectes" puis "Miviludes" pour "réprimer les dérives sectaires". La commission parlementaire... a publié en 1995 une liste de 173 mouvements jugés sectaires et proposé des modifications de législation qui ont mené au vote de [la loi About-Picard](#) en 2001. La liste de sectes, très controversée, a été officiellement abandonnée par la circulaire du 27 mai 2005 relative à la lutte contre les dérives sectaires. [*Lutte antisectes en France*]

The question is what has been learned by French authorities from that process. Especially interesting in that regard is the exclusion of certain "sects" from these preoccupations, especially those secret societies to which a significant number of those in power belong.

**Repeating historical patterns?** With respect to the complex subtleties of belief against which authorities have endeavoured to act in the past, insights may be gained from the sets of [heresies](#) identified at different times by different religions as exemplifying reprehensible radical thinking and thereby providing definitions of heretics and [apostates](#) (see *List of Christian heresies*, *Christian heresy in the modern era*, *Heresy in Judaism*).

The French deradicalisation initiative therefore suggests extraordinary parallels to what became the [Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith](#), following its highly controversial history as the [Inquisition](#) in a Europe-wide defence against heresy. It also implies the emergence of a French variant of the deprecated [McCarthyism](#) of the USA, namely the practice of making unfair allegations or using unfair investigative techniques, especially in order to restrict dissent or political criticism.

More intriguing is the sense in which the Inquisition of the time would have studied with critical appreciation the Action Plan of Manuel Valls. **Are radicals of any persuasion now to be the focus of a new variant of the notorious witch hunts by Christians of various denominations** -- despite the long-recognised controversial challenges of reality, imagination, suspicion and allegation in that respect? How indeed is "witch" to be defined and how is "heresy" to be proven? In the desperate quest for radicals as the source of modern ills, the question invites a provocative comparison between "witchcraft" and the "which-craft" by which the radical threat is now to be authoritatively framed, with every necessary legal justification. English enables the useful play on words -- **which radical is which** -- highlighting the probability of inappropriate response to some (as being a "witch").

Is it to be anticipated that France will produce an analogue to the primary manual of the Inquisition, the notorious *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487), as variously translated ([Christopher S. Mackay](#), *The Hammer of the Witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, 2009; [Montague Summers](#), *The Hammer of the Witches: The Malleus Maleficarum of Kramer and Sprenger*, 1948)? Its particular focus on the "putting to the question" of suspects through water torture was indeed used in France through to the 18th century -- now resuscitated in the USA as [waterboarding](#) and its variants.

Is there now a case for a "Hammer of the Radicals", as *The New Times* (1816-28) was described under the editorship of [John Stoddart](#)?

Of some relevance, the latter also translated a review of the Executive Directorate of the French Revolution (Joseph Despaze, *Les Cinq hommes: Vie privée des membres du Directoire, ou les Puissants tels qu'ils sont*, 1796). The appropriateness of the hammer metaphor in the case of current US policy has however been usefully challenged by William deB. Mills (*Hammering Islamic Radicals*, *MWC News: media with conscience*, 2 February 2010), arguing:

So I am not convinced that all Islamic radical political activists must automatically be labeled as enemies of the U.S. (though the U.S. certainly has the power to make them its enemies). However, even if one does so label them, it may still be the case that the U.S. needs a different approach. Battling Islamic radicalism is like battling with glass. Smash it, and it fractures into millions of very sharp splinters. Maybe the U.S. needs a better tool than a hammer.

Is there a sense in which the Action Plan could be understood as a form of [Trojan horse](#) to further the agenda of a "Catholic-Nationalist complex" -- or perhaps a "Christian-Populist" complex -- in the light of the warnings regarding the "[military-industrial complex](#)"?

This recalls the relevance of the radical insight of [George Santayana](#): *Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

## Scientific clarification of action against XXXX and YYYY

The French initiative specifically envisages:

- Establishment of a permanent Scientific Council on XXXX and YYYY, to coordinate a research network and to ensure the transfer from research to operational activities (#54)
- Allocation of more university scholarships to ATER / PhD students whose work fall within this framework. (#55)
- Setting action research development targets for XXXX and analysis of YYYY phenomena, providing for the introduction of some research activities at the decentralized level (regional education authorities). (#56)

**Mandate:** Given that XXXX and YYYY are not new challenges, of specific concern is how the scientific mandate is to be defined in practice. Issues include:

- pressures to frame the mandate (given the issue of definition) such as to avoid consideration of issues which may be held to be too problematic, or to extend discussion in ways which cannot be effectively managed.
- how the committee members are to be appointed -- given the results which are desired from its work, and the source of funding - - and probable scepticism regarding objectivity and independence consequent on "committee stacking"
- the need for the scientific approach to be sensitive to:
  - vulnerability to gerrymandering, possibly framed as fruitful
  - any unfortunate tendency for research [goal displacement](#), especially when initial results prove inconclusive (W. Keith Warner and A. Eugene Havens, *Goal Displacement and the Intangibility of Organizational Goals*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, March 1968; The National Research Council, *The Causes of Goal Displacement*, *Canadian Public Administration*, 1970; Sam D. Sieber, *Goal Displacement*, In: *Fatal Remedies: the ironies of social intervention*, 1981)
  - the constraints and opportunities emerging from recognition that much work in the social sciences may be unreplicable and questionable (Sonia van Gilder Cooke, *Why so much science research is flawed - and what to do about it*, *New Scientist*, 13 April 2016; *Estimating the reproducibility of psychological science*, *Science*, 28 August 2015)

**Operations:** In practice, concerns might include:

- how the committee is to:
  - avoid being tainted by radical new thinking, given that "radical" is pre-defined as problematic -- and therefore how its research is to reach fruitful unradical conclusions, given that it is required to work within a conventional framework which should not be challenged
  - cultivate critical thinking, given the risk of it being interpreted as "radical", in the light of the provision to:
    - Mobilize the "citizenship" segments of of educational projects to develop, in partnership with municipalities and associations, offer extracurricular activity dedicated to the development of critical thinking, but also the capacity for judgment vis-à-vis media and social networks (#41).
- constraints on recognition from a systems perspective of the possibility of understanding XXXX and YYYY more generically in the light of the variety of issues calling for authoritative action. Despite the particular focus on the war on terror, the pattern is evident with respect to the articulation of action in the multiplicity of virtual wars (*Review of the Range of Virtual Wars: strategic comparison with the global war against terrorism*, 2005).
- formulation of the "norms" -- with respect to which XXXX and YYYY are to be considered unacceptable -- given the degree to which desirable "change", proposed by politicians in response to popular demand, results in constantly evolving and shifting norms. A cover title of *The Economist* reads *Europe's New Normal* (26 March 2016).
- given the political focus on "normalisation" (most notably in Europe), the mathematical insight into [renormalisation](#) is of particular interest with respect to any form of "extremism" and the challenges of "reintegration"

**"Intelligence failure"?** Investigations into the "global intelligence failure" relating to 9/11 and Iraq (cf *Report on the U.S. Intelligence Community's Pre-War Assessments on Iraq*, 9 July 2004; Lord Butler's *Review of Intelligence of Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 13 July 2004) highlighted two factors:

- **Groupthink:** This was originally defined as "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action". It describes a process by which a group can make bad or irrational decisions. Each member of the group attempts to

conform his or her opinions to what they believe to be the consensus of the group. In a general sense this seems to be a very rationalistic way to approach the situation. However this results in a situation in which the group ultimately agrees upon an action which each member might individually consider to be unwise [more]. In the case of Iraq, this "extended to our allies and to the United Nations and several other nations as well, all of whom did believe that Saddam Hussein had active WMD programs" [more]. (cf *Cui Bono: Groupthink vs Thinking the Unthinkable? Reframing the suffocating consensus in response to 7/7*, 2005; *Groupthink: the Search for Archaeoraptor as a Metaphoric Tale: missing the link between "freedom fighters" and "terrorists"*, 2002)

- **Failure of imagination:** regarding the second factor, according to David Leventhal (*Bush's groupthink caused failure of imagination*, 11 September 2004): *Groupthink is used to blame the intelligence agencies for the WMD fiasco. 'Failure of imagination' is used to blame the whole body politic for the 9/11 attacks. Both frames are being used to deflect criticism away from the Bush administration. In reality, though, groupthink and failure of imagination uniquely characterize the administration's maladaptive pre-9/11 behavior.*

Together these two factors resulted in coherent, simple conclusions -- which were premature and wrong. In the articulation of any action in response to XXXX and YYYY in scientific terms, it is to be hoped that similar failures do not become evident -- leading to similar recognition of their inadequacy by the future.

## Precedents for an Action Plan "contra-X"

Use of the template readily recalls past and current actions by societies or groups against XXXX -- all framed as being fundamentally dangerous for society, human civilization and the values by which they are informed. Examples include:

- freedom-fighter and **liberation movements**, initially defined as terrorists, prior to achievement of independence. This is especially problematic in the case of France given the manner in which it emerged from the French Revolution which notably included *La Terreur*, during which some 15,000 to 30,000 people were guillotined
- religious reform movements, notably the **Radical Reformation**, notably illustrated by the mutual condemnation and violent dynamics between Christians (Catholic vs Protestants), Muslims (Shia vs. Sunni), etc
- political and ideological reform movements, as illustrated by the dynamics between capitalism, communism, socialism, anarchism, and the like. Now especially evident with respect to far right movements and the need for other parties to "block" their possible success in any democratic electoral process (most notably in France)
- scientific reform movements, as illustrated by initial deprecation of emerging paradigms (**Thomas Kuhn**, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 1962)
- artistic reform movements, as illustrated by the severe condemnation of emerging styles of art (music, painting, sculpture, etc), typically framed as "decadent" and "not-art", notably by the Nazi regime
- indigenous peoples, as illustrated by the now-deplored historical response to native peoples -- deriving notably from their uncivilised behaviour and their active resistance to exploitation
- cults and secret societies, as illustrated by the challenge of scientology, framed as dangerously misleading and disruptive of family life
- movements for eugenic improvement, especially given their highly problematic consequences in Europe. Eugenic policies are recognised as having their roots in France, Germany, the UK and the USA (Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought*, 1997).

Of particular interest in many such cases is the manner in which the expression of certain views is condemned, even violently as constituting some form of heresy, blasphemy or treachery.

## Remedial centre precedents and potential for confusion with centres of excellence

**"Remedial" centres:** Given the much-publicised provision in the current French initiative for "deradicalisation centres", it is useful to recognise how this falls into a pattern of past provision for remedial centres. The question is how the focus of the planned centres is to be distinguished from those already implemented and what can be fruitfully learned from their operation. Initiatives with a systemically analogous focus include:

- **"Containment" emphasis :**
  - **concentration camps**, as initially developed by Britain at the time of the Boer War, but used much later to contain Mau Mau activists in Kenya, for example. Such internment, without trial, has notably been a means of containing enemy citizens in wartime or of terrorism suspects. **FEMA camps**, believed by conspiracy theorists to exist in the US, are seen as facilities to imprison millions in the event of social unrest. The planned deradicalisation centres in France are curiously reminiscent of the network of concentration camps established by France for over 100,000 defeated or interned personnel of the Spanish Republican armed forces in the late 1930s.
  - **prisoner-of-war camps**, especially in the light of action against terrorism now being defined as a "war" (most notably in France)
  - resettlement camps, notably used to contain rebellious indigenous peoples displaced by processes of colonial exploitation -- possibly subsequently transformed into "**reservations**"
  - **displaced persons camps** during war time
  - **refugee camps**, especially since such semi-permanent facilities may arise as a result of refugee movement consequent on terrorist activity
  - **prisons**, as provided for the incarceration of those convicted of criminal activity

- [labour camps](#) (or work camps) are simplified detention facilities where inmates are forced to engage in penal labour as a form of punishment under the criminal code. They may have many aspects common to slavery and imprisonment (especially [prison farms](#)). Conditions vary widely depending on the operators.
- [psychiatric institutions](#) (mental asylums) employed to house those with (possibly severe) mental disadvantages. Use has been made of such facilities to contain political dissidents, notably in the former UssR.
- **"Correctional" emphasis** : Such initiatives may well include some form of [deprogramming](#), namely the use of coercive measures to force a person in a controversial belief system to change those beliefs and abandon allegiance to the religious, political, economic, or social group associated with the belief system. Methods and practices of self-identified "deprogrammers" have involved kidnapping, false imprisonment, and coercion, and sometimes resulted in criminal convictions of the deprogrammers. Classic deprogramming regimens are designed for individuals taken against their will, which has led to controversies over freedom of religion, kidnapping, and civil rights, as well as the violence which is sometimes involved.
  - [halfway houses](#), used to allow people with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities to learn the social and other skills necessary to integrate or re-integrate into society.
  - [correctional boot camps](#), in which those exhibiting varying degrees of anti-social misbehaviour (typically juveniles) receive attitudinal and disciplinary training. Allocation to such facilities may be made either parents or as a consequence of a court order
  - [behaviour modification facilities](#), a residential educational and treatment institution enrolling adolescents who are perceived as displaying antisocial behavior, in an attempt to alter their conduct.
  - [re-education camps](#), framed as a means of containing those opposed to a political regime, most notably during the Vietnam war
  - [therapeutic boarding schools](#), namely private residential treatment, providing a tuition-based, out-of-home placement that combines therapy and education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, substance use disorders, or learning disabilities.
- **"Health" emphasis:**
  - [rehabilitation centres](#), residential treatment centres, namely a live-in health care facility, providing therapy for substance abuse, mental illness, or other behavioral problems. Such treatment may be considered a "last-ditch" approach to treating abnormal psychology or psychopathology.
  - [retreat centres](#), variously framed as a temporary relief from social stresses, often involving a spiritually oriented discipline
  - [health farms](#), typically understood as providing a context for weight reduction
  - [fitness boot camp](#), is a type of group physical training program conducted by gyms, personal trainers, and former military personnel -- designed to build strength and fitness

The emphases clustered above are readily conflated in misleading support of particular agendas. This may be readily exacerbated by confusing claims, variously made, that confinement within such centres is ultimately "good for the individual" and/or "good for society".

**Centres of "excellence" as contexts for radical thinking?** Given the ambiguity associated with "radical" and "radicalisation", there is a case for recognising how a number of initiatives may be acclaimed through their cultivation of some form of excellence, as specifically noted by the European Union with respect to research and technological development (*Action for "centres of excellence" with a European dimension*). The latter argues, under the heading *an intuitive concept not easy to define*, that:

In practically all areas and disciplines, Europe has public or private centres where research and technological development (RTD) is performed at a very high, often world-class level. Intuitively, such "centres of excellence" may be recognised because they comprise and attract excellent researchers and developers, earning a reputation as a significant resource for the progress of science and technology and the spread of innovation....

The concept of centres of excellence is interpreted and used in many different ways in Europe. A simple definition could be: *A centre of excellence is a structure where RTD is performed of world standard, in terms of measurable scientific production (including training) and/or technological innovation.* In any case, it seems possible to list some key features which should be part of the concept:

- a "critical mass" of high level scientists and/or technology developers;
- a well-identified structure (mostly based on existing structures) having its own research agenda;
- capable of integrating connected fields and to associate complementary skills;
- capable of maintaining a high rate of exchange of qualified human resources;
- a dynamic role in the surrounding innovation system (adding value to knowledge);
- high levels of international visibility and scientific and/or industrial connectivity;
- a reasonable stability of funding and operating conditions over time (the basis for investing in people and building partnerships);
- sources of finance which are not dependent over time on public funding.

Such criteria, interpreted contrariwise, could be seen as indicative of possible measures of deradicalisation, for example. Central to any dangerous confusion is whether "excellence" involves any form of thinking which could be considered "radical" and "extreme", rather than conventionally "normal". Given their possible encouragement of the much sought "new thinking" in response to the problematic conditions of society, how is this to be disassociated from what might be understood as radical -- radical solutions being by definition unacceptable. This is itself perhaps best explored as also being *an intuitive concept not easy to define*.

The cited document is however primarily focused on technology, the question is whether the range of centres of excellence is also to be considered as encompassing other domains, including the sociopolitical. Thus an EU [Erasmus/Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence](#) is a

focal point of competence and knowledge on European Union subjects. As indicated:

It gathers the expertise and competences of high-level experts and aims at developing synergies between the various disciplines and resources in European studies, as well as at creating joint transnational activities and structural links with academic institutions in other countries. It also ensures openness to civil society. Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence have a major role in reaching out to students from faculties not normally dealing with European Union issues as well as to policy makers, civil servants, organised civil society and the general public at large.

Such a centre is involved in:

- organising and coordinating human and documentary resources related to European Union studies;
- leading research activities in specific European Union subjects (research function);
- developing content and tools on EU subjects to update and complement the current courses and curricula (teaching function);
- enhancing the debate and exchange of experiences about the EU, where possible in partnership with local stakeholders and/or EU Representations Offices in Member States an EU Delegations in third countries (think-tank function);
- systematic publication of the results of research activities.

Such centres of excellence are associated at the EU level with a [Creative Europe](#) programme -- which presumably also has to avoid any semblance of radical thinking disruptive of the status quo. Other resources of relevance include:

- [Eight new Centres of Excellence for computing applications](#) with respect to the EU Horizon 2020 programme
- [EU Centres of Excellence in the US](#)
- [EU Chemical, Biological and Nuclear Centres of Excellence Initiative](#)
- [Public Consultation on the implementation of European Centres of Excellence](#)
- EU Centres of Excellence on specific themes: [neuroendocrine tumor disease](#) (ENETS), [rheumatology](#) (EULAR), [risk mitigation](#) (CBRN), [autoimmune diseases](#)

Curiously, despite the level of sociopolitical problems in Europe -- with which radicalisation is purportedly associated -- comparatively little effort has been made to establish "centres of excellence" in that regard. Exceptions noted include:

- [European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research](#) (EriCarts).
- [NATO Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism](#) (COEDAT)
- Proposed EU Centre of Excellence to collect and disseminate expertise on anti-radicalisation. This builds upon the [Radicalisation Awareness Network](#) (RAN), the EU-wide umbrella network launched in 2011.

Given the former [NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society](#) (NATO/CCMS), and the potential threats which continue to be associated with YYYY of any kind, of relevance is the particular NATO understanding of [Centers of Excellence](#) as:

Centres of Excellence (COEs) are international military organisations that train and educate leaders and specialists from NATO member and partner countries. They assist in doctrine development, identify lessons learned, improve interoperability and capabilities, and test and validate concepts through experimentation. They offer recognised expertise and experience that is of benefit to the Alliance, and support the transformation of NATO, while avoiding the duplication of assets, resources and capabilities already present within the Alliance.

### How might a "centre for excellence" on YYYY avoid deprecated "radical" thinking with regard to sociopolitical change?

Relevant documents might include:

- [Developing and Supporting Centers of Excellence for Social and Behavior Change Communication at Tertiary Institutions](#), (USAID, December 2012)
- [Centers of Excellence in Ethical, Legal and Social Implications \(ELSI\) Research \(CEER\)](#)

**Eliciting creativity, originality and critical thinking -- as a process of radicalisation:** Many environments claim to offer disciplined approaches to thinking. These can be understood as requiring radical engagement such as to cultivate unusual perspectives. In the light of arguments for self-reflexivity, these may require that individuals effectively reinvent themselves in the light of a more fundamental perspective.

The transformation of perspective has been extensively argued by [Douglas Hofstadter](#) and [Emmanuel Sander](#) ([Surfaces and Essences: analogy as the fuel and fire of thinking](#), 2013), as a further development of Hofstadter's earlier work ([Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid](#), 1979). The question is **how is the cultivation of "excellence" is to be distinguished from radicalisation** -- if not to be completely disassociated from it.

Contexts in which the question is relevant include:

- cultivation of critical thinking, most notably in educational institutions
- facilities enabling the further development of the specially gifted, irrespective of their possible handicaps
- self-defence training, especially for security forces
- survival training, notably in the form of outward bound courses
- personal development and spiritual training, notably in retreat centres, ashrams, and the like
- institutes of advanced studies
- innovation facilitation, notably in incubator complexers and tehnopoles

- military academies, notably in order to elicit radical defence strategies and the ability to "think the unthinkable"
- management schools, notably in order to engender radical strategic insights for corporations

Of particular interest is the extent to which elite academic institutes, such as Ivy League universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton), would readily associate their activities with the cultivation of radical thinking -- beyond that characteristic of other educational and research environments. Do "institutes of advanced studies" enable and encourage radical thought?

The argument can be explored otherwise in terms of the role of "think tanks", potentially to be contrasted with "centres of excellence". What forms of creativity are cultivated in such contexts, as questioned separately ("*Tank-thoughts from Think-tanks: metaphors constraining development of global governance*, 2003)?"

## Who should now be terrified by implementation of such state-enforced initiatives?

Radical thinking is now seemingly to be understood as a threat to French society. Special authorisation may even be required to engage in such thinking and to establish that it is not a threat to French society. It may need to be undertaken in "intellectually secure" installations to prevent the release of dangerous memes (modelled on biosecurity labs). As under far more repressive regimes, hitherto deprecated in French discourse, radical thought is seemingly to be suppressed by every means possible.

In France, those who engage in radical thinking (without special authorisation) now need to be re-educated and reorientated in deradicalisation centres. Framed euphemistically as "reinsertion and citizenship centres", these are only too reminiscent of those previously held to be characteristic of repressive regimes. People exhibiting any such tendency now need to be reported to the security services (via anonymous hotlines) -- presumably to be placed on watch lists and no-fly lists, following the pattern in the USA. Not renowned for the capacity to make subtle distinctions, the difficulty for security services to avoid inappropriate conflation has been admirably illustrated by a recently reported incident on a US airline (*Flight delayed after passenger becomes suspicious of equation*, BBC News, 8 May 2016).

**Radical strategists:** There are numerous appreciative references to:

- radical strategy
- radical measures
- radical initiative
- radical thinking
- radical new ideas
- radical understating

Commenting on the works of management guru [Charles Handy](#), and emphasizing the point that *great strategy is always subversive*, Stuart Henshall offers a summary of *Radical Strategy Innovation* (21 November 2002) under the headings:

- Radical innovators challenge the dogmas and the orthodoxies of the incumbents.
- Radical Innovators spot the trends that are already changing but have gone unnoticed.
- Radical innovators learn to live inside the customer's skins.
- Radical Innovators think of their companies as portfolios of assets and competencies.

Similar views are echoed by:

- Michael Lin: *Wanted: Bold Leaders with Radical Strategy* (*Leadership Resources*, 2011)
- Reinier Geel: *Strategic Management: the radical revolutionary strategic management matrix for predators* (2011)
- Anders Johansson, et al: *Transformation by Radical Innovation: turning megatrends and emerging technologies into growth opportunities* (Arthur D. Little, 2014)
- Richard Leifer: *Radical Innovation: how mature companies can outsmart upstarts* (Harvard Business Press, 2000)
- Francis Cripps: *Manifesto: A Radical Strategy for Britain's Future* (1981)
- Vadim Kotelnikov: *Radical Innovation: case studies, high-value innovation -- a key driver of growth, profitability, and competitive advantage*
- D. Hruska: *Radical Decision Making: leading strategic change in complex organizations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

Courses are now offered in "radical innovation", as at MIT. Those who should now beware, are those making a case like Wolfgang Grulke and Gus Silber (*Lessons in Radical Innovation*, 2002):

Think innovation, because that's the way the world turns: on the axis of an idea whose time has come. Radical innovation is no longer an option. It has become a business imperative. Innovation has become the economic religion of the 21st century, but on its own, it's no longer enough to differentiate you from "the bunch". To thrive today, you need radical innovation. At the heart of radical innovation are bold visionary individuals who are fiercely proud of what they do. Often, they exhibit "unreasonable" behaviour and end up becoming the heroes of the business revolution they inspired.

Clearly those associated with such initiatives should now be wary of the implications of official response -- at least in France. Those promoting such "abnormal" approaches in France now urgently need to "renormalise" them to confirm their own integration into civilised society. There is the comical possibility of French CEOs, acclaimed for their radical strategies, being transferred to deradicalisation centres to be appropriately reoriented. Such programmes might be offered by elite management schools.

An international humanitarian organization especially associated with France -- Médecins Sans Frontières -- needs to be especially vigilant. It announced its decision -- described as "radical" -- to cease accepting funds from the European Commission for its programmes. Furthermore it incited the EU to a radical assessment of its own programmes:

MSF is calling for a radical re-think of migration policy, with the needs of affected people front and centre of efforts to tackle this crisis. The impacts of policy decisions should be measured to ensure that they are not contributing to the heavy toll of human suffering. (*Migration: MSF's response to European council meeting, MSF*, 26 June 2015)

Should MSF be the focus of deradicalisation programmes -- as well as recognizing its dangerous encouragement of radicalisation of the EU as a whole?

On the occasion of Brexit, as notably deprecated by France, the "radical reform" announced by the new Prime Minister of the UK clearly needs especially careful consideration in the light of the French initiative and its future response to the UK (*Theresa May just promised radical economic reform, The Independent*, 12 July 2016; *Theresa May Will Be More Radical Than Most People Realise, HeatStreet*; *Boris Johnson returns as Theresa May unveils radical cabinet, Financial Times*, 14 July 2016).

<b>Presidential Radicalisation in France?</b>
Paradox of right-wing presidential campaign in France (November 2016)
<i>François Fillon, 'Radical Conservative' Who Could Be French President (Agence France-Presse, 22 November 2016)</i>
<i>En meeting à Lyon, Fillon assume son projet "radical" (Le Parisien, 22 novembre 2016)</i>
<i>François Fillon, le candidat de la "rupture radicale" renverse la table (Le Figaro, 21 novembre 2016)</i>
<i>A Lyon, François Fillon déroule son programme "radical" (Lyon Capitale, 23 novembre 2016)</i>
<i>Fillon: Si on n'est pas radical maintenant, quand le sera-t-on? (Twitter, 22 novembre 2016)</i>
<i>François Fillon: un projet de transformation radicale (Les Yvelines pour François Fillon, 2016)</i>
<i>La rupture selon Fillon: un projet "radical" et "sans concession" (Ambition France, novembre 2016)</i>

**Creative artists:** Radical innovation in every art (technology included) has long been admired -- with its radical nature specifically acclaimed. Clearly painters, sculptors, dramatists, composers, and the like should also now be worried of the suspicions which that label will attract. Specific recognition is accorded to radical creativity (N. Madjar, et al., *Factors for Radical Creativity, Incremental Creativity, and Routine, Noncreative Performance, Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96, 2011; Garry Wills, *Radical Creativity, Comparative Literature*, 89, 1974). Given that authorities are far from being renowned for their recognition of creativity, it might be asked whether those exhibiting a radical form should in future be especially vigilant -- in France.

**Cultural creatives:** A large segment of Western society is recognized as having recently developed beyond the standard paradigm of modernists or progressives versus traditionalists or conservatives, as detected by Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson (*The Cultural Creatives: how 50 million people are changing the world*, 2000). The interesting question is whether those in France should now be considered vulnerable because of the difficulty of authorities of distinguishing them from the kinds of radical they consider a threat. The challenge is highlighted by the radical lifestyle preferences they may adopt (Jim Merkel, *Radical Simplicity: small footprints on a finite Earth*, 2003), or by the politics they may propose (*Mark Satin, Radical Middle: the politics we need now*, 2004).

**Spiritually oriented:** It is unclear how this new French proposal relates to the continuing battle of French authorities against the spiritually oriented, especially those not directly associated with the Catholic Church and labelled as sects (as noted above). Clearly those "sects" which frame their insights, worldviews, programmes and objectives as "radical" could now consider that they are vulnerable to a far greater degree.

Of particular relevance is which spiritually oriented groups would deny that their preoccupations have a radical dimension, or that the spiritual development they enable could very appropriately be understood as one of "radicalisation". In addition to the theological claims for a "radical Christianity", there is further irony to the framing of Jesus by some Christians as "radical". Thus, for Jerry S. Maneker (*Radical Christianity*):

Jesus was a radical and, hence, countercultural and, as Christians, we are to be radical and countercultural as well! We are never to be satisfied with a status quo that allows assorted social ills such as poverty, corruption in institutions, discrimination of any kind, or the creation of out-groups that are then demonized and discriminated against "in the name of God," to go unchallenged.

Such a framing is consistent with promotion of "fear of God" by religions, leading some to ask how this terror should be related to terrorism (*Is God a Terrorist? Definitional game-playing by the Coalition of the Willing*, 2004). This consideration helps to frame the concern with whether Jesus would now be prosecuted by authorities as a threat to public order -- as in the past (*Would Jesus Now be Prosecuted by US?* 2013; Giles Fraser, *Under this government, Jesus would have been done for extremism, The Guardian*, 22 October 2015).

The deep complicity of the Abrahamic religions with the violence of the present times suggests that they are variously "radical" in contrasting ways they have proven to be totally incapable of reconciling. Whilst the French initiative focuses exclusively on Islamic radicalism, this may reflect the inability of a Christian society to "re-cognise" the threat constituted by its own radical modality.

**Scientists:** As noted above, the quest for radical new theories is often the essence of the scientific endeavour -- possibly finally awarded by a Nobel Prize. Again caution is in order for those based in France, irrespective of whether their work is in the natural sciences or the social sciences. Those engaged in fundamental physics should be especially vigilant regarding their radical theories concerning the nature of the universe. The case of [Galileo Galilei](#) comes to mind. Perhaps universities in France could envisage deradicalisation programmes for those whose thinking is considered too radical.

**Technologists:** It is radical innovation which ensures the originality required of a viable patent -- or a [killer app](#) in computer marketing

jargon. In a period in which many are already terrified of not being able to find a job -- or of losing one -- the issue is especially relevant in the case of the widely articulated fear that radical innovation will result in the development of robots to replace humans in many forms of employment:

- Nate Church: *They Took Our Jobs: the amazing (and potentially terrifying) advance of robots* (20 February 2016)
- Szu Ping Chan: *Davos: Doctors and lawyers could be replaced by robots* (*The Telegraph*, 20 January 2016)
- Mark Leliniwalla: *Countries Most Likely To Lose Jobs To Robots In 2016*, (*Tech Times*, 3 March 2016)
- Ray Williams: *What Will We Do When Robots Take Our Jobs?* (*Psychology Today*, 21 December 2015)
- Nassos Stylianou, et al: *Will a robot take your job?* (*BBC News*, 11 September 2015)
- *Robots Will Cut 25% of US Jobs in 4 years, Transform Workforce* (*Global Research*, 27 August 2015)
- Mark Prigg: *Robots and artificial intelligence will kill off five million jobs by 2020 - and women will be worst hit* (MailOnline, 19 January 2016)

Characteristic of those who should now beware, are those formulating arguments like Nora van der Linden (*Radical Innovators take on Systemic Problems*, Kennisland, 2014):

Radical innovators are people or organisations who, on their own initiative, find solutions to problems in society and then implement these with courage, vision and creativity in order to make the world a better place. They are part of a larger movement, one that searches for new solutions, new concepts and new types of collaboration within society. This is the fabric of the knowledge-driven society, our knowledge capital in its most hopeful form.

Care should therefore be taken that innovation is not framed as "radical", for fear of attracting the attention of authorities -- in France, at least.

**Philosophers:** The pattern in the case of philosophy would now appear to be repeating that experienced in the past with the condemnation of views contrary to those favoured by authorities -- most notably the Catholic Church. Curiously the pattern has of course been more recently evident under dictatorships of various kinds -- a pattern vociferously criticized by French intellectuals in the past. These now seem incapable of calling into question the dubious arguments with regard to radical thinking, or recognising the range of ways in which people now live in a **culture of fear** which the Action Plan fails so systematically to address. It is this culture, seemingly carefully cultivated by authorities, which is variously noted in the following:

- Uli Linke and Danielle Smith: *Cultures of Fear: a critical reader* (2009)
- Frances Moore Lappe and Jeffrey Perkins: *You Have the Power: choosing courage in a culture of fear* (2005)
- **Frank Furedi**: *Politics of Fear: Beyond Left and Right* (2005)
- **Michael Crichton**: *State of Fear* (2004)
- **Wole Soyinka**: *The Climate of Fear* (2004)
- David L. Altheide and Aldine de Gruyter: *Creating Fear: News and the Construction of a Crisis* (2002)

**Deradicalisation as systematic "dumbing down"?** In the light of the arguments above, it could be suggested that "deradicalisation" is an effort by those who benefit most from the status quo to frame negatively those who think otherwise, whether politically, artistically, religiously, or socially. As with the famous slogan of Margaret Thatcher, *There Is No Alternative* (TINA), is it no longer advisable for intellectual and political authorities to **think "outside the box"** of their habitual mindset?

Could the new initiative be understood as an exercise in **negative campaigning** -- especially given the ease with which "others" are demonised, including those at extremes on the political spectrum? As noted above, the recent French cross-party approach to block the National Front could indeed be understood as a precursor to extending the mandate of the new initiative to encompass the far right -- or any "other", readily deprecated as a threat?

More subtle is the sense in which deradicalisation, in potentially constraining creativity and innovation of any kind, is part of a wider **"dumbing down"** agenda. This is understood as the deliberate oversimplification of intellectual content within education, literature, cinema, news, video games and culture (**John Taylor Gatto**, *Dumbing Us Down: the hidden curriculum of compulsory schooling*, 1992). The process may be justified as a means of relating to those unable to assimilate more sophisticated information -- beyond the norms to which they are habituated. However it may also be understood as a means for elites to control populations in support of their own agendas.

Through the emphasis on normalisation and integration, the process of deradicalisation may therefore be understood as the surreptitious cultivation of consent (**Edward Bernays**, *The Engineering of Consent*, 1947; **Edward S. Herman** and **Noam Chomsky**, *Manufacturing Consent: the political economy of the mass media*, 1988). The process can be seen as the anticipation of the condition envisaged by **Aldous Huxley** (*Brave New World*, 1931; *Brave New World Revisted*, 1958) and by **George Orwell** (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 1949)

**Evaluation of a deradicalisation strategy in the light of past initiatives:** Use of the checklist of measures against radicalisation and terrorism as a template enables the question to be asked as to how successful similar measures against XXXX have proven to be in the past. The most obvious example is those indicted for criminal activity -- where their successful rehabilitation is readily to be challenged. Indeed such environments have been recognised in which people developed their criminal tendencies.

More intriguing is the extent to which similar measures have been notably inadequate in dealing with organized crime and corruption. The complex of social issues and ineffectual responses calls for reflection on the possible ungovernability of society as currently understood (*Ungovernability of Sustainable Global Democracy?* 2011). It is curious how little attention is given to the historical pattern of failures of remedial action (*Recognizing the Psychosocial Boundaries of Remedial Action*, 2009).

The questionable results with respect to sects and cults (as mentioned above) also suggests that success in the case of "radicals" will be questionable.

Unqualified as the terms are in current usage, the future may recognise the political preoccupation with "radicals" and "radicalisation" as somewhat ridiculous, given the organization by an [international committee](#) of a biannual [International Symposium on Free Radicals](#) -- the first having been held in 1956, with the 34th planned for 2017 (see [checklist and archives](#)). In systemic terms, their vital role as intermediaries is appropriately recognised in that context. The radicalisation process by which free radicals are engendered is another matter. Any focus on "deradicalisation" could then prove to be cause for hilarity -- possibly recalling the tale of [King Canute and the waves](#).

## Arguments questioning the current framing of radicalisation and terrorism

The following papers are cited -- with details of their sections -- as a device to avoid revisiting contextual arguments already made with respect to the issues arising from the current French initiative. Each paper has extensive references.

### *Coming Out as a Radical -- or Coming In? Risks of cultivating negative capability in a caliphate of normality* (2015)

- General relativity of terror
- a context for both demonisation and empathy?
- Radical as a questionable focus of antipathy?
- Radical as a questionable focus of empathy?
- Radical quest: getting to the root of a problem?
- Radical identification of the root cause of terrorism
- Failure of radical analysis of root causes
- Radicalism vs Superficialism: definitional game-playing
- Radical exemplars disruptive of normality
- Pathetic policy, psychology, philosophy and propaganda
- Institution of a caliphate of normality by fiat
- Radical disposal of the disagreeable, the undesirable and the unbelievers
- Reframing the quest for root causes
- Radical speculation anticipating radical extraterrestrials?

### *Radical Localization in a Global Systemic Context: Distinguishing normality using playing card suits as a pattern language* (2015)

- Playing card suit patterns
- Systemic interpretations of playing card patterns
- Refining appreciation of distinctions by refining pattern geometry
- Finding the radicalising and the radical in a systemic context

### *Identifying the Root Cause Focus of Radical Identity: Reframing the complex space of radicalisation dynamics* (2015)

- Ordering multiple competing quests for radical causes
- Metaphorical frame offered by the periodic table of chemical elements
- Metaphorical frame offered by the relationship between hydrogen and helium as fundamental extremes
- Metaphorical frame offered by an 8x8 configuration typical of board games
- Metaphorical frame offered by 8x8 encoding patterns in Chinese tradition
- Metaphorical frame offered by 8x8 patterns comprehensible as "logical"
- Metaphorical frame offered by insight from an 8x8 magic square
- Metaphorical frame offered by understandings of axes of bias
- Beyond the tabular plan in a global context

### *Counteracting Extremes Enabling Normal Flying: insights for global governance from birds on the wing* (2015)

- Underside of normality?
- Lost art of bird watching?
- Bird flight as offering a global transformation of systemic perspective
- Styles of flight as styles of governance
- Empowering democratic take-off through coordinated wing flapping
- Lift, banking and control as functions of radical extremes
- Reducing extremism by reduction of "wing length"?
- Speculative alternatives for global governance?
- Evolutionary possibilities for global governance?

### *Radicalisation of Existence and Identity: Recognizing the global emergence and influence of daimonic dynamics* (2015)

- Indicative forms of radicalisation of existential focus
- Metaphorical clues to radicalisation of existence and identity
- Daimonisation as answering a radical question?
- Clues to radicalisation from astrophysics and solar evolution
- Clues to radicalisation from nature and the environment
- Clues to radicalisation from matter and its organization
- Radical implications of daimonisation for weather and climate change?
- Waveforms, catastrophe, singularity and annihilation
- Radicalisation in the light of mathematics (geometry, topology and logic)
- Metaphysics, mysticism and meditation
- Existence within daimonic reality?
- Identity within daimonic reality?

### *Radicalisation versus Demonisation? Enabling radical initiatives under conditions of strategic stalemate* (2015)

- Varieties of radical -- as a perspective or worldview
- Varieties of radicalism -- being radical or so perceived
- Varieties of radical action
- Varieties of radicalisation -- becoming a radical and adopting radical modalities
- Patterning the varieties of radical experience
- Radicalisation and demonisation: system dynamics of US and THEM
- Demonisation reframed as daimonisation?

### *Beheading versus Befooting: In quest of the lesser evil for the greater good* (2014)

- Befooting and befooled?
- Befooting by anti-personnel landmines
- Victims of befooting
- Befooting as a lesser evil?
- Degrees of evil
- Systemic imperceptibility of greater evil-- and of greater good?
- Paradoxes of framing the greater evil using the Devil's Gambit
- Engendering identification with the greater good, despite the necessity for lesser evil

*Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: "rooting for" normalization vs. "rooting out" extremism?* (2005)

- Rooting out extremists
- Concept of "extremism"
- Extremism as a quality control problem (Six Sigma methodology)
- Social deviance as extremism
- Other possible understandings of extremism
- Methodological reservations regarding a statistical approach
- Terrorizing others by extremism
- Condoning extremism and its potential for terrorism
- Struggle against extremism: the ultimate global challenge for norms
- Human quality control: activities susceptible to extremism
- Possible implications
- Moderation as extremism -- norms as extremist?

*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century? Indicative checklist of possible domains of application* (2014)

- Eradication as primarily inspired by the philosophy of weeding
- Preponderance of references to the eradication of zombies
- Indicative checklist of domains of strategic predisposition to eradication
- Evaluation of strategies of eradication and the possibility of alternatives
- Eradication in the light of radicalization, liminality and termination
- Unquestionable eradication and the eradication of questioning
- Toward comprehending the paradoxical eradication dilemma of the Abrahamic religions

*Systematic Gerrymandering of Declared Threats and Legality of Response: Opportunistic exceptionalism underlying promulgated rules of governance* (2013)

- Defining threat, especially from terrorism
- Defining legality, especially in response to threat
- Defining proof, especially in a context of perceived threat
- Enabling gerrymandering through doublespeak in response to threat
- Unsuspected "crown jewels" of intelligence community: backdoors to the mind?
- Ensuring confidence in democratic supervision
- Enabling oversight through simulation of requisite complexity
- Transforming from paranoia through metanoia and hyponoia?

*"Big Brother" Crying "Wolf"? But then "wolves" are a-changin' -- them's becomin' "werewolves"!* (2013)

- Big Brother crying "wolf"?
- Erosion of credibility of authority
- Trust, confidence, and credibility under a regime of total insecurity
- Appreciating the Emperor's new clothes -- as designed by NSA
- Clues for an existential turnaround?
- Questionable "existence" of Al-Qaida
- Questionable "existence" NSA/PRISM
- Cultivation of "terror", "terrorism" and "terrific"
- Ambiguity of "democratic oversight": institutionalisation of negligence?
- Fear of change: engaging otherwise with "werewolves"
- Embodying "malware" transformatively: No Security Anywhere (NSA)?
- Paradoxical correspondences and complementarity

*Guidelines in Response to Degrees of Anti-social Behaviour: Airline passengers and children as a case study* (2011)

- Existing institutional provisions
- Increasing frustration with "anti-social behaviour"
- Complicit relationships: "exporting" the problem
- What do you want me to do?
- Innovative options for consideration by airline authorities
- Possible guideline scale
- Simulation and testing
- Institutional initiatives
- Travel industry media and commentary
- Commentary by/for parents
- Documented research

*Global Incomprehension of Increasing Violence: Matching incapacity to question the reason why* (2016)

- Constraints on questioning why?
- Violence as primary means of getting attention in democratically deficient societies?
- In quest of extraterrestrials whilst ignoring terrestrial "extras"?
- Who speaks for the other?
- Thinking strategically otherwise?
- Mapping the system of uncritical thinking?

**Addendum 2017**

*France unveils first de-radicalisation centre to tackle Islamist threat* (France24, 14 September 2016)

*France's 'deradicalisation gravy train' runs out of steam* (France24, 2 August 2017)

*'Jihadi Rehab' Deradicalisation Centre Closes Doors Because Extremists Didn't Volunteer to Take Part* (Breitbart, 31 July 2017)

*France's only de-radicalisation centre closes its doors* (Agence France Presse, 28 July 2017)

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