

## The radicalization of Muslim youth in Europe

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Radicalization is widely conceived of as a process, where a person increasingly comes under the influence of *religious* ideas until eventually reaching the “tipping point”, where the radical ideas are put into action. In this lecture I question this approach. From the backdrop of recent events—the Charlie Hebdo attacks etc.—it appears that a prior experience with violence can on the contrary be a precondition for a radical religious engagement. Second, I argue that radicalization is not only a religious process, but also a political one. The form of Islam that is present in violent Islamist milieus is a *political* theology that proposes vague political utopias in stark opposition to the European societies. The current success of Islamic State is inter alia linked to its capacity to propose a *political* state building project. Finally, I touch upon the issue of online radicalization. Today young people in radical milieus are frequent users of videos from conflict areas that are shared on social media. This situation implies that “religion” is not only about text and religious concepts such as *jihad*, *mujahidin* etc., but also about images, sound etc. Hence, radicalization is not only intellectual, but also involves processes of imitation of models and events that appear in the videos.