Nordic Journal
of **Migration Research**

SPUR TO VIOLENCE?

Anders Behring Breivik and the Eurabia conspiracy

Abstract
This article analyzes the conspiratorial dimensions of Breivik's body of thought. The position is defended that conspiracy theorizing is the discursive mechanism by which the ruling political elite is depicted as a hostile conspiratorial actor that betrays the interests of the true people. As conspiracism also contains an operational spur to urgent, extraordinary or violent action in order to rescue civilization from destruction, it is argued that the conspiratorial dimensions of Breiviks body of thought are an important explanation for his choice to attack the governmental seat of Norway and the youth camp of the Labour Party at the island of Utøya. Finally, it is argued that the performative dimensions resulting from the 'Casting Society' contains the spur for individuals to expose themselves violently to the world as heroes in front of their imagined communities in order to gain notoriety. A close reading of Breivik's manifesto seems to confirm these propositions.

Jelle van Buuren*

Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism,
Campus The Hague, Leiden University,
The Hague, The Netherlands

> If I had met myself 12 years ago I would probably think I was an extreme and paranoid nut, who believed in conspiracy theories - Anders Behring Breivik (Berwick 2011: 762).

1 Introduction

The deadly attacks Anders Behring Breivik launched against the governmental seat of Norway and the youth camp of the Labour Party at the island of Utøya are in a sense unique and idiosyncratic. They are unique regarding the cold bloodedness and cruelty by which Breivik killed 77 mostly young people. The attacks are also unique as they were the first full-fledged terrorist attacks in Europe motivated and legitimised by a mixture of anti-Islam and anti-Leftish ideology. The attacks seem at first sight idiosyncratic; the work of a lone, disturbed individual without any connections to organised political opposition or networks. However, the mixture of anti-Islam and anti-Leftish ideology shows that the attacks transcend their seemingly idiosyncratic dimension. The ideology Breivik is referring to in the compendium (Berwick 2011) in which he explained and justified his attacks resonates widely on the Internet. Whether Breivik indeed is a "member" of a European cultural conservative resistance movement (Knights Templar) as he claims is not the most interesting question. Apparently Breivik understood himself as being part of a broader "community of belief" or "ideology of extremism and validation" (COT 2007: 7). Scholars recently have pointed out that seemingly "Lone Wolves" in fact are more often than not somehow part of a "digital ecology" (Bartlett & Miller 2012: 3) or a "community of loners" (Pantucci 2011: 6). Virtual group dynamics, therefore, may influence at least to some extent individuals who operate autonomously and, conversely, these individuals may also influence wider movements (Spaaij 2010: 866; see also Van Buuren 2012). Therefore, Breivik's account of the Knights Templar is better understood as a narrative attempt to create such a movement by referring to it than a description of a standing organisation.With his "fictional approach", as Breivik qualifies the third part of his compendium in which he describes in detail the "fictional group" called PCCTS (Pauperes commilitones Christi

* E-mail: g.m.van.buuren@cdh.leidenuniv.nl

Templique Solomonici), Breivik is indebted to a tradition in right-wing and nationalist movements in which fiction is used as propaganda and as blueprints for revolution and terrorist campaigns (Michael 2010: 149).

In this article, we will focus on the conspiracy constructions that flourish within the "community of belief" Breivik felt part of. Breivik's compendium contains a conglomerate of anti-multiculturalist, anti-Islam and anti-elitist positions glued together by conspiracy thinking. Breivik refers in his compendium, for instance, 171 times to "Eurabia". This term was originally coined in a book by the British-Swiss historian Bat Ye'or (2005) to describe what she identified as a secret plot of European politicians and the Arab World for the "Islamization" of Europe. The role of conspiracy constructions and their relationship with political violence executed by lone operators currently receive a lot of attention, at least by different security and intelligence services. The Dutch authorities, for instance, pointed in the "National Counterterrorism Strategy 2011–2015" (NCTb 2011) at the risk originating from individuals inspired by both conspiracy discourses as well as "hatred against the system": a fundamental and hateful distrust in the political system. Some "unfortunate individuals" could believe that this justifies their decision to take the law into their own hands. An attack is, therefore, not only a form of retribution but also a form of self-realisation. This is according to Dutch authorities the case when a loner intends to carry out an ultimate deed in the presence of a large audience and thereby reveal himself to be someone who has the power to make life and death decisions. Also the Norwegian Police Security Service PST hinted in their 2013 National Threat Assessment on the dangerous influence of conspiracy thinking combined with a strong hatred of the authorities (PST 2013). "They blame the authorities for treason and for oppressing the Norwegian population. Many see a strong disdain for politicians and hatred of the authorities as more important than any opposition to Islam and Muslims", as PST states. According to PST, this type of extremism fails any clear ideological position but has often "key enemies strongly based on conspiracy theories". Although conspiracy theories that are presented seldom contain direct requests to commit acts of violence, conspiracy theorists believe that they are some of the few chosen ones who have discovered the lies that dominate society. "Some may therefore be of the belief that they have a duty to act", PST concludes.

2   Two-faced enemy of the people

Without pretending that the conspiratorial dimensions of Breivik's body of thought are the sole or main explanation for his terrorist attacks or that any clear-cut generalised causal relationship can be established between conspiracy discourse and political violence, we think it is both of academic as well as of societal importance to look more in-depth into both the discursive as well as the operational dimensions and the performative dimensions of conspiracy thinking. We conceptualise conspiracy theorising as the discursive mechanism by which, in this case, a two-faced enemy of the people, namely Islam and the Left (labelled by Breivik as "cultural-Marxism") is being constructed in which the ruling political elite is depicted as a hostile conspiratorial actor that betrays the interests of the people and, therefore, is the legitimate object of violent resistance. In contrast to Sprinzak's (1991: 64,65) influential analysis of extreme rights, populists or nationalists conflict with democratic regimes as being of "secondary interest" – the primary conflict is with "hostile ethnic communities or classes of undesired people" – the combination of conspiracy thinking and hatred against the system Breivik showed could be an explanation for his choice not to attack Islamist targets but the "real enemy": Cultural Marxists. This could be an indication that indeed new forms of extremism surface based on a mixture of conspiracy constructions and hatred of the authorities.

> Conspiracy theorising, however, also can have its effects beyond the discursive domain as it contains an operational spur – the quest to act – to urgent, extraordinary or violent action in order to rescue civilisation from destruction. This way, conspiracism functions as a "radicalising multiplier" that magnifies and exacerbates existing dynamics of extremism in three interrelated ways: They exacerbate demonologies – "the Other" or the enemy – that the group defines itself against, they delegitimise and condemn voices of dissent and moderation as being part of the conspiracy and they are a spur to violent action: a rhetorical device to justify the killing of innocents, often to "awaken" the people from their acquiescent slumber (Bartlett & Miller 2010: 24).

Further, we will look more closely into the performative dimensions of the Breivik attacks as we conceptualise that this is of importance in understanding the current dynamics between conspiracism, political violence and lone operators. Whereas conspiracism presents the personalised discourse for legitimising violence and determining targets, the performative dimensions resulting from the "Casting Society" or "Personal Branding Society" contains the spur for individuals to expose themselves to the world as heroes in front of their imagined communities and gain notoriety (Van Buuren 2012: 19) – attacks as a form of self-realisation, as Dutch authorities pose it. With "personalized discourse" we do not suggest that ideologies and discourse are a pure

individual concern. Following Van Dijk (1995: 20,21), we understand ideologies as being localised between societal structures and the structures of the minds of social members and indirectly through attitudes and knowledge "control" how people understand themselves and their social practices. At the same time, however, personal, bibliographical information and experiences and personal interpretations of group ideologies explain individual variation. Facilitated by the wide availability of an eclectic supply of ideas, thoughts, ideologies, conspiracy constructions and rumours on the Internet, we imagine that individuals nowadays are more capable of constructing their own "copy–paste ideologies" combining broader political, religious or social ideologies and personal frustrations and aversion and that way transcend existing categories and classifications while botching together a narrative that suits them. Reflecting the cultural script of modern society, which poses a premium on self-exhibition, individual responsibility, authenticity, celebrity status and self-expression, the "Personal Branding Society" paves way to understanding oneself and presenting oneself to the outworld as a brand ("the brand Me"). Performative violence, therefore, foremost refers to itself. It is the construction of identity or position through active expression. Performative violence is not directed so much against the world, but clamours for attention from audiences, demands audiences to look intently to the actor/perpetrator and by doing so recognising and acknowledging the actor/perpetrator in its very existence and uniqueness (Van Buuren 2012: 20).

In this article, we will first briefly address some theoretical insights into the essence and functions of conspiracy theorising. Then we will elaborate on the supposed intimate connection between conspiracy and security in framing enemies and legitimising violence. After outlining the "Eurabia" conspiracy theory, we will study more in detail the function of the Eurabia conspiracy in the legitimation of violence against the cultural-Marxist elite by Breivik and the operational spur to violence it embeds. Finally, we will look into the performative dimensions of Breivik's attacks and the way he poses as a "brave European crusader hero".

3 Conspiracy theories

Introducing the concept of conspiracy theories comes with some difficulties as invoking conspiracy theories has inherently attributive and pejorative effects: few will admit that they are part of a conspiracy or will describe themselves as conspiracy theorists and the observation that someone is part of a conspiracy or is a conspiracy theorist is never complimentary. Labelling ideas as conspiracy theories, therefore, has a social function. It is a way of delegitimising

critique and deflects the attention from its content. On the other hand, accusing an individual or a group of being part of a conspiracy also functions as a delegitimising strategy placing the individual or group outside the realm of democratic politics or acceptable critique and discussion. Conspiracy theorising, therefore, can be conceptualised as an ideological struggle not only about the trustworthiness and legitimacy of political and social institutions but also about epistemological regulation in society; what kind of knowledge is "true" is not a matter of objectivity but a social construction reflecting the power positions of those who are capable of discriminating between "real knowledge" and "false knowledge". To avoid these potential attributive and pejorative pitfalls, we will define in this article a conspiracy theory as "a narrative that is constructed in order to explain an event or sequence of events as the result of a group of people secretly cooperating with evil intentions" (Birchall 2006: 34). We will, therefore, not make any comments on the truthfulness of the body of thought of Breivik or disqualify him in advance as a conspiratorial nutcase. Therefore, if we refer to the conspiratorial dimensions of his body of thought, we refer simply to the narrative Breivik constructed by which he explained an event or sequence of events – the Islamisation of Europe – as a result of a group of people – the "Cultural-Marxists" – secretly cooperating with evil intentions – destroying fundamental structures of European societies. Further, we think it is justified to label Breivik's body of thought as "conspiratorial" as Breivik himself repeatedly refers to the alleged Islamisation of Europe as a conspiratorial master plan of the Cultural-Marxists.

Although conspiracy theories come in different forms and categories, an elementary distinction can be made between "top-down" conspiracy theories launched by governmental actors or supporters of an existing political regime and "bottom-up" conspiracy theories arising from the heart of society and directed against the state or the ruling classes (Van Buuren 2013). The first type of conspiracy theories identifies and frames "enemies" in order to mobilise support against them, vote for more resources to combat this threat and to legitimise adoption of new security measures, laws and practices (De Graaf 2012). Notions of the enemy in our everyday life world suggest pathology of the social organism serious enough to require the most far-reaching remedies: quarantine, political excision or liquidation and expulsion (Aho 1994: 115; see also Berlet 1998). Heins (2007: 789) has mentioned points at the devastating historical examples showing what the consequences can be when collective anxieties become focussed on a single constructed enemy. Christians were accused of conspiring in setting fire to Rome; Jews conspired to spread the Black Death in the Middle Ages; the charges of a Jewish conspiracy against the world are in any case firm part of a range of conspiracy

theories used to mobilise the population and legitimise harsh and violent security practices, whether by the Hitler regime or current regimes in the Middle-East. A famous example of conspiracy theorising from the US is Joseph McCarthy, claiming to speak for the threatened majority of native Americans while suggesting that "enemies within" were accessory to communism's expressed intent to remake America in an atheistic socialist dictatorship. Whether or not such "conspiracies" existed in real life is not the main question. As McArthur (1995: 40) states, "if the claims of such conspiracy entrepreneurs strike a responsive chord with the public they can have enormous political influence". Conspiracy claims build on existing resentments, hatred and recurring obsession with various external or internal enemies. Conspiracy theories are "political clubs to be wielded against threatening minorities" portrayed as cunning and in possession of nearly supernatural powers and organisational acumen (McArthur 1995: 42).

The other types of conspiracy theories – bottom-up conspiracies that are the subject of this article – are directed against the state or the ruling classes. According to Miller (2002), to avoid the pejorative mechanism, these kinds of conspiracy theories should be treated as "coded social critiques" in which not only facts and truth are contested but also the ethos and legitimacy of society's main institutions. In a similar vein, Fenster (1999: 109) notes that conspiracy theory must be recognised as a "cultural practice that attempts to map, in narrative form, the trajectories and effects of power". That is not to say that conspiracy theories are inherently true, but that they are forms of "alternative knowledge" expressing competing visions on social and political reality. Conspiracy entrepreneurs operate the conspiracy dispositive with the aim of delegitimising the state's rule and ruling practices and legitimising violent resistance against the powers that be. The conspiracy mechanism gets appropriated by oppositional actors, factions or parties to legitimise resistance to the perceived despotic rule that "conspired" to continue the exploitation and repression of the true "people" and perverted the "nation". That way, conspiracism functions as a political mechanism for oppressed or disadvantaged groups seeking redress for their conditions. Those who feel negated by politics, or consider themselves to be insignificant, powerless and voiceless, find a powerful explanation for their feelings of unease in the rhetoric of conspiracy thinking (Goldzwig 2002: 496). Conspiracy theorising is a way of becoming political relevant for those who have no access to traditional and formal political channels, or find politics incomprehensible and encircled with layers of secrecy (Fenster 1999: xiii). Social conflicts are being simplified by attributing all kinds of problems to demonised elites (White 2001: 954). Conspiracy theories that way enable both the reduction of complexity and

offer a way of rationalising and objectifying uncertainty in a social and political setting experienced as hostile. Especially political institutions and political elites are a grateful object and crystallisation points to work on one's anger and discomfort (Goldzwig 2002: 496).

Goldzwig (2002: 498) argues that the popularity of conspiracy theories is a sign of political disenfranchisement and can be the forerunner of violence. Acts of terrorism in the United States (the Oklahoma Bombing, de UNA-bomber and the Branch Davidians) for instance had not only political-ideological stamps but also indistinct and paranoia motives that can be subscribed to conspiracy theories and, for their part, nourished other conspiracy theories. Mayer (2001: 362) states that the risk of violence seems to be present at most if conspiracism is combined with religious and apocalyptical views, as conspiracism can create a state of mind that legitimise violent actions, since vital, existential interests are understood to be at stake in front of the powerful forces of evil involved in a worldwide conspiracy (2001: 372). Apocalyptic beliefs, thus, provide the atmosphere of urgency that is needed to act and help violence to unfold, especially when violence is being rationalised as a defence or reaction against this threat and the threat itself is depicted as an almost cosmic fight between good and evil (2001: 368,369). It is this quest to act that is embedded within conspiratorial and apocalyptic discourse that forms the risk of violent outcomes.

A "bottom-up" conspiracy dispositive, therefore (1) supplies a discursive frame in which societal developments or certain governmental policies that are perceived to be unjust or inacceptable are presented not as just inaccurate, defective, not well thought-out or fitting within the parameters of legitimate political divisions or conflict, but delegitimised as a deliberate strategy deployed by conspiratorial forces (2) with apocalyptic effects on civilisation, culture, nation or the "true people" (3), which therefore hardly can be resisted with democratic actions and strategies and (4) therefore, inevitable contain a spur to urgent, extraordinary or violent action in order to rescue civilisation from destruction.

4   The Eurabia conspiracy

"Eurabia" as a term was slowly introduced from 2002 onwards in articles written by Bat Ye'or (2002), on websites (Jihadwatch 2012) and in the writings of Oriana Fallaci (2002, 2005). "Eurabia", however, only was fully introduced in the public debate as a synonym for the deliberate Islamisation of Europe when Bat Ye'or (2005) published her book Eurabia – The Euro-Arab Axis. Bat Ye'or was no novice in the debate about Islam. Earlier she wrote about

"Dhimmitude" – the mental state of non-Muslims who, in order to prevent being enslaved or murdered, subject themselves to Islamic power and that way become second-class citizens (Bat Ye'or 1985). In the book Eurabia – The Euro-Arab Axis, Bat Ye'or argues that Europe is the deliberate target of Islamisation secretly approved by the highest political European authorities. The origin of the conspiracy is situated in the 1973 started dialogue between the European Community and the Arabic League resulting in the formal Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD). The oil crisis in the 1970s is according to Bat Ye'or the defining moment for the European elites to throw themselves at the feet of the Arab World. In exchange for entrance to Arab oil and markets in the Middle East, the European elites approved secretly with the creeping Islamisation of Europe. The political goal of European integration was traded in for a new political goal: the integration of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East into a new geopolitical entity – Eurabia. Bat Ye'or depicts this change as an expression of Dhimmitude. The "agents of Dhimmitude" especially can be found in certain Christian denominations, the liberal-left political and societal elite and business elites profiting from the oil trade.

Inside Europe, the Dhimmitude attitude is expressed by officially propagated anti-Semitism, mass immigration from Muslims to Europe and the foundation on European soil of mosques and other Islamic centres from which the religious and political development of Europe is being influenced and directed unhindered. Due to their population growth, Muslims will become in the nearby future by themselves the majority of the European population. The "cultural preconceptions of Eurabia" are summed up by Bat Ye'or as the rewriting of history, anti-Semitism, self-hatred and weakness. In support of this deliberate policy, the EAD is accused of raising a secret programme in order to take "preventive control of thoughts and consciousness" and turn media, universities and schools into "channels for Islamic propaganda". That way, the Arab culture and language would be spreading through Europe and history books will be rewritten. Eurabia is not the "result of coincidence, but the result of a cold-blooded and planned ideology that uses political, strategic and cultural means to attain these goals", Bat Ye'or stated.

The body of thought expressed in Eurabia was first well received in the United States, where for some considerable time writers, columnists, researchers and reporters were united in think tanks and research institutes with as common theme the threat emerging from Islam (Carr 2006; Wajahat et al. 2011). "Eurabia" functioned not only as a discourse underpinning the need for a permanent war against militant Islam but also as a legitimising discourse for the broader neoconservative agenda, since Europe's coming demise is partly perceived as the result of "an ageing European population's fatal addiction to a social model based on high pensions, early retirement and social security benefits" (Carr 2006: 11). A consequential discourse consisting of repeating elements was propagated through websites, books, talk radio, television channels and some regular media outlets, referred to by Wayahat et al (2011: 5) as "The Islamophobia echo chamber". Against a predatory, imperialistic Islam stands weak, liberal leftish political elite that together with its stooges in the politically correct main stream media (MSM), universities, the civil rights movement and the antiracist movement throw deliberately the American Christian culture and traditions for a scramble. Only the small but growing movement of patriotic anti-Jihadist resistance fighter's stands firm for the traditional values of Western civilisation and sees through the real evil intentions of Islam and recognises the coming Third World War. The term "Eurabia" stands for this discursive complex of treason by political elites, conspiracy between European and Arab elites, (self) Islamisation, Dhimmitude, threat of war, anti-Semitism, attacks against freedom of expression and politically correct censorship under the banner of antiracism (the "leftish Thought Police") and the threat for Western values emerging from the invasion of, and colonisation by Muslim immigrants. Sometimes the same complex is referred to by the collective term "oil for immigration". It is this transnational community of belief, Breivik was attracted to ("The Islamophobia echo chamber"), by which he was informed politically and which he felt part of as shown by the numerous citations in his compendium of articles and books published by these network.

In the following years, the Eurabia thesis also touched down in Europe. In the Netherlands, for instance, when searching the Internet with the catchwords Eurabia and Eurabië restricted to web pages from the Netherlands, almost 50,000 hits were returned. A colourful audience of supporters of right wing populism and anti-Islamism, such as former supporters of Pim Fortuyn and supporters of Geert Wilders' Freedom Party, Christian Fundamentalists including End-of-the-Times apologists, Pro-Israel activists, Libertarians, Serb nationalists and Anti-EU activists, are supportive of the Eurabia counter-conspiracy dispositive.The Eurabia thesis was supported on the establishment side by some mainstream media and strongly supported on the political level by Geert Wilders. In a December 2007 interview with the weekly HP/De Tijd Wilders stated: "The book Bat Ye'or wrote in 2005 made a deep impression. I think she is right. It is only difficult to prove if there indeed has been a deliberate policy choice for Eurabia" (Niemöller 2007). Wilders refers frequently to Eurabia in articles in news papers (Wilders 2007), during debates in Parliament (Kamerstukken 2006-2007), during the European elections (Dirks 2009) and during visits abroad (Floret 2009). Eurabia also figured prominently

in the concluding speech of Wilders before court during a criminal trial against him on charges of hate crime. He stated that not he, the parliamentary representative stood trial, but freedom of speech in the free West. In an apocalyptic speech, Wilders sketched how all over Europe the lights are slowly extinguishing. The fact that Europe is converting into Eurabia happens because the societal elites are bending for the ideology of Islam, "a desert ideology that preaches murder and man slaughter and all over the world is resulting in societal deprivation and impoverishment". According to Wilders, his trial was not an isolated one. "Only fools believe this is an incident. Throughout Europe the multiculturalists are waging a total war against their own populations. Their aim is to continue mass immigration, resulting in an Islamic Europe – a Europe without freedom: Eurabia" (Kuypers 2011; De Jong 2011).

5   Discursive delegitimation

We conceptualised conspiracy theorising as the discursive mechanism by which a two-faced enemy of the people, namely Islam and the Left (labelled by Breivik as "cultural-Marxism") is being constructed in which the ruling political elite is depicted as a hostile conspiratorial actor that betrays the interests of the people and therefore is the legitimate object of violent resistance. "Unfortunately for me", Breivik wrote, "I found out through the years of research and study that everything is connected" (Berwick 2011: 762). The phrase "everything is connected" can be considered as the meta-narrative of conspiracism. Breivik "discovered" the connections between World War II, the Cold War and cultural Marxism/multiculturalism and political correctness as main explanations for "our present situation". An important element of Breivik's analysis and explaining his choice to attack the governmental seat of Norway and the youth camp of the Labour Party at the island of Utøya is that although major parts of his compendium are aimed at depicting Islam in the most pejorative terms, the real and primary enemy consists of the Cultural Marxists. As Breivik writes: Islamisation cannot be defeated without first removing the political doctrines of multiculturalism and cultural Marxism because these doctrines are the root causes of the Islamic colonisation of Europe (Berwick 2011: 4). For Breivik, "cultural-Marxism" and the "political elite" are general terms capturing "more than 90% of the EU and national parliamentarians" and "more than 95% of journalists" as they are supporters of European multiculturalism and "therefore" supporters of the ongoing Islamic colonisation of Europe (Berwick 2011: 4). Multiculturalism has not only taken over both political wings, left and right, but also the media and entertainment industry, public and higher education and the higher clergy in Christian churches (2011: 8,9; 14). According

to Breivik, these "New Totalitarians" are the "most dangerous" generation in Western history that managed to destroy fundamental structures of European society (2011: 31). Every individual "indirectly or directly" implicated in justifying or propagating multiculturalism belongs to the cultural-Marxists (2011: 364). "They know exactly what they are doing. They know they are contributing to a process of indirect cultural and demographic genocide and they need to be held accountable for their actions" (2011: 762).

A special place is reserved for the European Union as a master project of the cultural-Marxists as this is the domain from which the Eurabia project has been launched (2011: 280). Quoting Bat Ye'or (2005) assentingly, Breivik underscores that the Eurabia project is an "intentional policy", fundamentally undemocratic, decided on between behind closed doors without official minutes and covered as "dialogue" (2011: 281,282). Dissidents are silenced or boycotted and a "totalitarian web cohesion" of teachers, professors, the media, politicians, government agency workers, talking heads on television and NGO's is being established in order to indoctrinate the "politically correct" (2011: 296). In line with conspiracism discourse, Breivik argues that "everything" was done by the elites to prevent the peoples of Europe from learning the truth about the conspiracy to establish Eurabia (2011: 328). Democratic instruments like national elections are said to be futile, as real power has been moved elsewhere: to the European Union (2011: 303). The Eurabia Project is depicted as a Big Lie: telling a lie so colossal that it would be impossible to believe anyone could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously (2011: 304). "If a small group of people sideline the democratic process in one country and start imposing their own laws on the public it is called a coup d'état. If they do so on an entire continent, it's called the European Union." The creation of Eurabia not only ranks as one of the "greatest betrayals" in history but also as a massive social experiment in order to create a new kind of "European Man" (2011: 305). In essence, "the EU is formally surrendering an entire continent to Islam while destroying established national cultures and is prepared to harass those who disagree with this policy" (2011: 310). The Eurabian Empire is a "naked power grab by the elites" (2011: 311).

6   Spur to violence

Conspiracism in itself cannot be the sole explanation for outbursts of political violence. We suggest that counter-conspiracism contains an operational spur – the quest to act – to urgent or violent action in order to rescue civilisation from destruction, especially when combined with religious and apocalyptical views, since vital, existential interests are

understood to be at stake in front of the powerful forces of evil involved in a worldwide conspiracy and the threat itself is depicted as an almost cosmic fight between good and evil. Breivik's compendium is full with alarmist propositions. The Western system is deemed to "crash down within two to seven decades" if the "Western European Resistance" will fail (Berwick 2011: 5). Breivik refers to an "ongoing Western European cultural war", a "state of civil war" (2011: 474) and "demographic warfare facilitated by our own leaders" and speaks of the "duty" to prevent the annihilation of Western identities, cultures, traditions and nation states (2011: 5,6). The very survival of Western culture is at stake (2011: 704). "Time is of the essence", according to Breivik. "We have only a few decades (...) to avoid our future dhimmitude (enslavement) under Islamic majority rule in our own countries" (2011: 8,9). Throughout the text, an occupational metaphor is being articulated (2011: 296) and the creation of Eurabia is depicted as the "greatest act of treason in the history of Western civilisation" (2011: 328). Europe is said to be under siege (2011: 563). The Eurabian elites are depicted as generals on a war path. Ordinary citizens are simply "cannon fodder", "pawns" to be sacrificed (2011: 311). The cultural-Marxists are creating a "civilisational breakdown" as the "barbarians" are overrunning the continent. Eurabia can only be prevented by "destroying the organisation that created it in the first place: the European Union" (2011: 328).

According to Breivik, there are only forces of Good and Evil. After stating that almost every sector of society has fallen into the hands of the cultural-Marxists, he also rejects any idea of a moderate Islam. The whole idea of a moderate Muslim is just the manifestation of an "appeasement culture". "No more dialogue. The only way to deal with a bully is to punch him in the nose and make him back down" (2011: 311). Muslims cannot be trusted and there is only a difference in degree between radicals and "so-called" moderates. "At the end of the day what counts isn't the difference between, if any, between moderate Muslims and radical Muslims, but between Muslims and non-Muslims" (2011: 523). In preluding on the coming civil war, Breivik predicts that morality will lose its meaning as the question of good and evil will be reduced to one simple choice: survive or perish (2011: 651). The necessary cultural conservative and nationalist para-military organisations should, however, be seen as a "purely defensive movement", as the cultural Marxists and the multiculturalists started "this fight that is leading us to cultural suicide" (2011: 655). The predicted civil war will be filthy: the cultural conservative militants ("an increasingly vulnerable minority in an often hostile world") need to be prepared to make sacrifices and attack the enemy where it hurts most; the political elites are "collaborators" implementing the agenda of the enemies and should be treated accordingly (2011: 704).

Europe can only be saved by overthrowing the multiculturalists regimes by seizing power through armed resistance and a military coup. "Sure, it will be bloody", Breivik admits. "We are in the very beginning of a very bloody cultural war" (2011: 724; 762). Cruelty is necessary. "Refusing to apply necessary cruelty is a betrayal of the people whom you wish to protect" (2011: 837).

7   Performativity

The conspiratorial dimensions of the body of thought of Breivik as written down in his European Declaration of Independence also give insights into the performative dimensions of his actions. Within the framework of the cosmic struggle between the forces of Good and Evil, a lot of space is traditionally devoted to the fearless heroic militant willing to risk his life in order to rescue civilisation. According to Breivik, he almost reluctantly takes on his role as Knights Templar. Sometimes, he wanted to never have learned the truth. That would be much easier. However, his children would have hated him for his cowardice as they would have to suffer due to his cowardice. Therefore, he had to take his "individual responsibility" and contribute to create more resistance fighters by "spreading the truth"; spreading the truth is imperative: "our survival depends on it" (2011: 762).

Breivik first refers to the importance of propaganda and communication as an integral part of the cultural conservative battle. "A Justiciar Knight is not only a one man army; he is a one man marketing agency as well. Resistance fighters are in many ways sales representatives. They are marketers and ambassadors to not only their specific organisations and movements but to the future we wish to create" (2011: 1065). This could be interpreted as the acknowledgement that political violence is an alternative form of political communication – we are in the middle of a war of perceptions, Breivik states. However, Breivik promotes a strongly individualised performativity in which not only the noble political goals or the resistance movement as such holds a prominent place, but foremost the individual exposing himself to the world as hero in front of his imagined community and the world at large in order to gain notoriety. "As a Justiciar Knight you will go into history as one of the most influential individuals of your time. So you need to look your absolute best and ensure that you produce quality marketing material prior to operation", Breivik states. "You will forever be celebrated by your people as a martyr for your country, protecting your culture and fighting for your kin and for Christendom", Breivik preaches to his followers (2011: 940). "You will be remembered as one of the brave European Crusader Heroes who said: enough is enough (...) you will become a role model for hundreds,

perhaps thousands of new emerging martyr fighting the good fight (...) (2011: 940).

Therefore, Breivik advices his comrades to devote sincere attention to the professional and appealing image of the struggle, invest enough resources into marketing material and make sure that professional photos are available of all resistance fighters prior to their operations because the cultural-Marxists will "illustrate the nationalist resistance fighters in the worst possible light, without makeup, in bad lighting, without editing, and often in unfortunate postures". Therefore, a fighter should prior to a photo shoot take a few hours in a solarium to look fresher, train hard, cut their hair shave, apply light makeup and use their best clothing (2011: 1067). As a service, Breivik published his own photos at the end of his compendium as an example of how a good Knight should look like. During his trial, Breivik also "factualised" other parts of his fictional portrait of the PCCTS, for instance by saluting with the clenched fist. "The clenched fist symbolizes strength, honour and defiance against the Marxist tyrants of Europe while the white glove symbolizes purity, duty, kinship and martyrdom" (2011: 1102). Further, Breivik advised his followers to arrange, when possible, photo sessions with female patriotic models to use in online marketing/recruitment campaigns as "sexy projections of females sell and inspire. As there will primarily be men taking most of the risks it should be a priority to appeal to a broadest selection of European males" (2011: 1066). All this reflects the spur for individuals to expose themselves to the world as heroes in front of their imagined communities and gain notoriety the "Casting Society" or "Personal Branding Society" contains. The "brand Breivik" presents itself to the world and clamours for attention from audiences, demands audiences to look intently to the actor/perpetrator and by doing so recognising and acknowledging the actor/perpetrator in its very existence and uniqueness (Van Buuren 2012: 20).

8 Conclusion

In this article, we have focussed on the conspiratorial dimensions that lay the foundations for the legitimisation of the attacks by Breivik in Norway. We looked especially into the function conspiracy theorising has in delegitimising the existing political order, the construction of enemies and the legitimisation of violence as a political instrument. We suggested that the conspiratorial dimensions of Breivik's body of thought have both discursive, operational and performative effects. Conspiracism was conceptualised as the discursive mechanism by which, in this case, a two-faced enemy of the people, namely Islam and the Left (labelled by Breivik as "cultural-Marxism") is being constructed in which the ruling political elite

is depicted as a hostile conspiratorial actor that betrays the interests of the people and, therefore, is the legitimate object of violent resistance. Conspiracy theorising, however, also can have its effects beyond the discursive domain as it contains an operational spur – the quest to act – to urgent, extraordinary or violent action in order to rescue civilisation from destruction. Finally, we suggested that the performative dimensions of the Breivik attacks are of importance in understanding the current dynamics between conspiracism, political violence and lone wolves. Whereas conspiracism presents the personalised discourse for legitimising violence and determining targets, the performative dimensions resulting from the "Casting Society" contains the spur for individuals to expose themselves to the world as heroes in front of their imagined communities and gain notoriety.

The compendium Breivik published on the Internet prior to his deadly attacks confirms the functioning of the Eurabia conspiracy as the glue by which two enemies of the true people were inextricably bounded up with each other and turned into objects of anger and hate: Islam and the left political establishment (the cultural-Marxists). Of course, anti-Islam positions or aversion to multiculturalism is a not new phenomenon and is not in need of conspiracism in order to flourish. The Eurabia thesis, however, articulated the radical position that immigration and multiculturalism were not just the result of inaccurate, defective or not well thought-out policies but the outcome of a deliberate and malicious conspiracy by leftish elites against their own population. That way, leftish and multiculturalists' positions are being delegitimised as not just another legitimate political belief but as conspiratorial policies destroying democracy and freedom. Conspiracism has the capacity to construct new political dividing lines and unite otherwise fragmented audiences in individualised and fragmented societies, in which classical societal and political cleavages have lost much of their strength and the classical political parties wrestle with their representational status and political programs. This is not only realised by counter positioning cultural-Marxists and cultural conservatives in the field of multiculturalism but also by connecting a range of other societal "wrongs" (be it the lack of sexual moral, feminism, economical setbacks, greed or weakness) to this demonology. That way, "Eurabia" also functions as a condensation symbol or sticky concept, connecting inchoate feelings of unease and providing an all-embracing discourse not in need of further argumentation or proof. Bottom-up conspiracy theories that way produce inherently delegitimising effects as the democratic political order is not longer experienced as the legitimate system in which different political position can be expressed based on respect for minority positions, but as a hostile system captured by malicious elite suppressing the true people.

The Eurabia conspiracy further supplied audiences with an uncluttered division of the world in Good and Evil and that way inspire further polarisation and extremism as every conspiracy construction leaves room for only two positions: Good and Evil. Intermediate positions are not possible. Every position that inclines to nuance, compromises, moderateness or diversity is delegitimised as a blunt lie, collaboration or high treason. Moderate Muslims do not exist, according to Breivik. This mechanism is shadowed in the "occupational metaphor" of Eurabia. According to Breivik, almost everyone belonging to the economical, political and cultural establishment is a complicit in the deliberate colonisation of Europe. Lies, deception, secrecy and indoctrination are the explanatory variables for the seemingly apathy of European citizens. The idea that Europe is being occupied by Islam inevitably introduces a more violent discourse. Frequently references are being made to the coming civil war, politicians are being accused of high treason, during occupations armed resistance is almost a necessity and belief in democracy is on the wane as democratic institutions are being believed to be hijacked by left politicians. The Eurabia conspiracy that way serves as a necessary argument in order to legitimise hard resistance against politics and government as enemy of the people. Embedded within the occupational metaphor are violent connotations and implicit solutions. Combined with apocalyptic visions on the future and alarmist positions on what will happen if resistance fails and a tight time schedule for the apocalypse to come; the Eurabia thesis contains an individual quest to act: enough is enough, it is now or never if we want European civilisation rescued from destruction. Civilisation itself is at stake, as are freedom, sovereignty, democracy and the cultural heritage. That way conspiracism shows its potential as a rhetorical device to justify the killing of innocents, often to "awaken" the people from their acquiescent slumber. Apocalyptic beliefs thus provide the atmosphere of urgency that is needed to act and help violence to unfold, especially when violence is being rationalised as a defence or reaction against this threat. As Breivik stated: we are a defensive movement. We did not start this war.

Finally, the individualised performativity Breivik is propagating can be understood as a reflection of the cultural script of the Casting Society. By transforming into an "Justiciar Knight", being not only an one man army but also an one man marketing agency, Breivik expects to go into history as "one of the most influential man" of his time, for ever celebrated as a martyr and remembered as a brave European Crusader Hero. And for his followers, of course, the same notoriety is awaiting. Judging by the websites and blogspots heralding "Commander Anders Behring Breivik of Knights Templar Europe" Breivik is not the only one who has factualised his fictional portrait of the Knights Templar. Whether these supporters are really hardcore cultural conservatives wanting to follow Breiviks footsteps, digital big mouths, copy cats, disturbed individuals or thrill seekers is not the main question. The "copy–paste" ideology of Breivik is not "just" a random ideology of a lunatic. It is, for the people involved, a highly sophisticated worldview that gives meaning to the world, provides a sense of direction and enables a person to express his or her position in the world. Together, they establish and secure their identity as small but brave vanguard consisting of political dissidents and freedom fighters taking a stand against the forces of Evil. Lone operators tend to create their own individualised ideologies from broader political, religious or social aims and personal frustrations and aversion and that way transcend existing categories and classifications while botching together a narrative that suits them. Mixed with an individualised quest to act in order to gain notoriety, mirroring the current societal emphasis on individual responsibility, personal branding and a good understanding of the spectacle embraced by modern media logic, a cultural script has been presented that could be attractive to copy cats of different standing. In the absence of clear-cut ideologies, individuals inform themselves by conspiracy theories and create their own individualised ideologies that legitimise their performative violence. "I found out through years of research and study that everything is connected", Breivik wrote. "The truth needs to come out. The only way of achieving this is to take individual responsibility and to contribute to create more resistance fighters by spreading the truth" (2011: 762). As his conspiratorial ideas and motivations are shared widely, it would be a mistake to keep Breivik aside as simply as an idiosyncratic and disturbed individual. Breivik signals the surface of new forms of extremism in which conspiracism is combined with hatred against the system and attacks are also to be understood as forms of self-realisation.

Jelle van Buuren is a PhD-researcher and lecturer at the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism, Campus The Hague, Leiden University. His main research fields and interests are lone wolf terrorism, social movements, digital resistance, conspiracy theories, international police cooperation, surveillance society and the governance of security. His PhD research concentrates on the dynamics between political legitimacy, conspiracism and hatred of the system."

Van Buuren's publications include "Performative violence? The Multitude of Lone Wolf Terrorism", *Terrorism: An Electronic Journal and Knowledge Base*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1–25, 2012, and also in 2012 "Runaway Bureaucracy? The European Police Chiefs Task Force", *Policing*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 281–290.

References

Aho, JA 1994, *This thing of darkness: a sociology of the enemy*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, pp. 107–121.

Bartlett, J & Miller, C 2010, *The power of unreason. Conspiracy theories, extremismand counter-terrorism*, Demos, London.

Bartlett, J & Miller, C 2012, 'The edge of violence: Towards telling the difference between violent and non-violent radicalization', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 1–21.

Berlet, C 1998, 'Dances with devils - How apocalyptic and millennialist themes influence right wing scapegoating and conspiracism', *The Public Eye magazine*, Fall 1998.

Berwick, A 2011, *2083 – A European Declaration of Independence*. De Laude Novae Militiae Pauperes commilitones Christi Templique Solomonici, London (pseudonym of Anders Behring Breivik).

Birchall, C. (2006) Knowledge Goes Pop: From Conspiracy Theory to Gossip. Londen: Berg

Buuren, J. van 2012, 'Performative violence? The multitude of lone wolf terrorism', *Terrorism: A Electronic Journal and Knowledge Base*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–25.

Buuren, J. van 2013, 'Hollands own Kennedy affair. Conspiracy theories on the murder of pim fortuyn', *Historical Social Research*, vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 257–285

Carr, M 2006, 'You are now entering Eurabia', *Race & Class*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 1–22.

COT 2007, Lone wolf terrorism. Final draft 6.7.2007. Case study for work package 3'Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society'.

Dijk, T. van 1995, 'Discourse analysis as ideology analysis', in *Language and peace*, eds C. Schäffner & A. Dartmouth Publishing, Wenden, Aldershot, pp. 17–33.

Dirks, B 2009, 'Voor Nederland en tegen Brussel; Verkiezingen voor het Europees Parlement in juni draaien vooral om nationale belangen', *De Volkskrant*, 11 April 2009.

Fallaci, O 2002, *The rage and the pride*, Rizzoli International Publications, New York.

Fallaci, O 2005, *The force of reason*, Rizzoli International Publications, New York.

Fenster, M 1999, *Conspiracy theories: secrecy and power in American culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Floret, S 2009, 'Waar halen we die tientallen miljoenen moslims vandaan?', *Het Parool*, 17 juni 2009.

Goldzwig, SR 2002, 'Conspiracy rhetoric at the dawn of the new millennium: a response', *Western Journal of Communication*, vol. 66, no. 4, pp. 492–506.

Graaf, B de 2012, 'Historicizing security. Entering the conspiracy dispositive'. Paper presented at the *Conference Security and Conspiracy Dispositives in Modern History*, Leiden University/Bochum University, 1-2 June 2012, The Hague.

Heins, V 2007, 'Critical theory and the traps of conspiracy thinking', *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, vol. 37, no. 7, pp. 787–801.

Jihadwatch 2012, Available from: www.jihadwatch.org [Last accessed 3.10.2012].

Jong, P de 2011, 'Wilders' oorlogstaal en het nazisme, *Nederlands Dagblad*, 12 februari 2011.

Kamerstukken 2006-2007, 'Debat over kabinetsstandpunt t.a.v. het WRR-rapport 'Dynamiek in islamitisch activisme' (30800 VI, nr. 115)', pp. 5261–5265.

Kuypers, H 2011, 'Wilders: strijd tegen islam is mijn plicht', *ANP*, 7 februari 2011.

Mayer, J 2001, 'Cults, violence and religious terrorism: an international perspective', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 24, no. 5, pp. 361–376.

McArthur, B 1995 'They're out to Get Us: another look at our paranoid tradition', T*he History Teacher*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 37–50.

Michael, G 2010, 'Blueprints and fantasies: a review and analysis of extremist fiction', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 149–170.

Miller, S 2002, 'Conspiracy theories: public arguments as coded social critiques: a rhetorical analysis of the TWA flight 800 conspiracy theories', *Argumentation and Advocacy*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 40–56.

NCTb 2011, *National counterterrorism strategy 2011-2015*, NCTb, The Hague.

Niemöller, J 2007, 'Wilders: ik capituleer niet', *HP De Tijd*, 12 december 2007.

Pantucci, R 2011, *A Typology of lone wolves: preliminary analysis of Lone Islamist Terrorists*, ICSR, London.

PST 2013, Annual threat assessment 2013. Available from: http://www.pst.no/media/utgivelser/annual-threat-assessment-2013/

Spaaij, R 2010, 'The enigma of lone wolf terrorism: an assessment', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 33, no. 9, pp. 854–870.

Sprinzak, E 1991, 'The process of delegitimation: towards a linkage theory of political terrorism', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 50–68.

Wajahat, A, Clifton, E, Duss, M, Fang, L, Keyes, S & Shakir, F 2011, *Fear Inc.The roots of the Islamophobia network in America*, Centre for American Progress, Washington.

White, JR 2001, 'Political Eschatology: A theology of antigovernment extremism', *American Behavioral*

Scientist, vol. 44, no. 6, pp. 937–956.

Wilders, G 2007, 'Genoeg is genoeg: verbied de Koran', *De Volkskrant*, 8 augustus 2007.

Ye'or, B 2002,'Le Dialogue Euro-Arabe et la naissance d'Eurabia', *Observatoire du monde juif*, Bulletin no. 4/5, Décembre 2002, pp. 44–55.

Ye'or, B 1985, *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians Under Islam*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Madison.

Ye'or, B 2005, *Eurabia – The Euro-Arab Axis,* Farleigh Dickinson University Press, Madison.