9. Chapter: Synopsis

This work has set out to answer the question, how Münkler & Wassermann's abstract concept of *Strategic Resilience* can be actualised in open, pluralist societies faced with a *jihadi* terrorist threat.

The relevance of this question is based upon the system-inherent, unavoidable vulnerabilities open, complex and pluralist societies such as the liberal democracies of Europe are facing:[1138] In addition to the vulnerabilities posed by natural disasters and diseases, the deliberate exploitation of these vulnerabilities by strategically acting adversaries such as terrorist organisations, leads to a "strategic vulnerability".[1139] The exploitation of the "strategic vulnerability" of modern, "post-heroic societies"[1140] by terrorists presents these societies and their authorities with the dilemma of finding the right balance between prosperity and freedom on the one hand, and security on the other hand, in order to meet the society's basic need of security and demand for protection.[1141]

In view of these strategic vulnerabilities, the understanding that the attempt to successfully defend a society in a traditional sense against all possible terrorist threats is sure to fail, has cleared the way for a widely shared understanding among security professionals and academics that only a resilient society can respond to unexpected threats and events in a successful manner that promotes security and deals with the threats adequately.[1142]

Confronting this threat by terrorism, requires the societies to open up to and to pursue the concept of *Strategic Resilience* which describes the will and ability of a society to prevent, withstand and recover from incidents which have been deliberately caused with a terrorist intent and which threaten to negatively alter connections and relationships (including the

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1138 See Gearson 2012, 193 ; See Münkler 2015, 245, See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 91.
1139 See *ibid.*, 91.
1140 *ibid.*, 92.
1141 See *ibid.*, 91 ; See Kaufmann 2015.
1142 See Giebel 2014, 370.

trust in them) in the society and to the society, by mustering its material, social and psychological capital in a concerted effort.[1143]

Strategic Resilience does not only require the society's passive heroic endurance[1144], but also needs to support the prevention of, response to and the coping with an attack or other type of shocks. Consequentially, the effect of *Strategic Resilience* does not start only when an attack has occurred, but does so long before such an event, and does not end with it. *Strategic Resilience* affects the question of how to deal with the mere threat of an attack, how to react to an attack and how to manage its potential consequences. To resolve this issue, the population is not primarily seen as a possible victim by the authorities but is understood as an equal partner and useful supporter for emergency responders who are first on the scene during the *isolation period*. This philosophy creates a force-multiplier effect, allows for a much faster response in case of an emergency and has a positive effect on the population themselves who through their involvement and active participation, have the feeling that they are better able to control the situation and are not just helpless victims. After an attack, it is crucial for the keeping up of the resilience of those people affected, if and how quickly normalcy can be restored to their lives. This also represents a message to the outside, that is to the rest of the society and to (potential future) terrorists, that through such attacks they will not be able to achieve their strategic objective. So, beyond the effect of helping to directly reduce the psychological impact of attacks on the population and at least trying to prevent or to reduce the success of an attack, credible *Strategic Resilience* is intended to obstruct the adversary's incentive to carry out his attacks in the first place, as the desired effect of the plot which motivates terrorist to act, is denied to him. Through this benefit-denial, *Strategic Resilience* can also have a deterrence effect.[1145]

Despite the knowledge that resilience is something that can be actively created and shaped, at least to a large extent[1146], European societies and their leaders[1147] have struggled to achieve *Strategic Resilience* as conceptualised by Münkler & Wassermann – although they have been facing an

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1143 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 77.
1144 See *ibid.*, 93.
1145 ; See Gearson 2012 ; See Kroenig and Pavel 2012 ; See Trager and Zagorcheva 2006 ; See Quinlan 2006 ; See Gray 2002.
1146 See Baban 2014, 9.
1147 See ABC News 2016.

particularly dreadful terrorist threat as posed by *jihadi* groups of *Al Qaida* and *Daesh:* Representative surveys in societies targeted by *jihadi* attacks consistently demonstrate increased levels of fear, uncertainty and more pessimistic outlooks and show signs of co-radicalisation through prevalence of negative stereotypes of Muslims and revenge attacks on Muslims.[1148]

To close this gap between the conceptual knowledge and the implementation of *Strategic Resilience*, this work has dissected the concept's underlying interdisciplinary theories and models, in order to identify an interdisciplinary organising framework which can provide practical guidance for the adoption of a complex whole-of-government multi-agency and cross-sector approach, necessary to successfully counter the *jihadi* threat.

As a result of this process the author has identified nine critical tasks a government should focus its efforts on if it wants to achieve, to strengthen or to preserve *Strategic Resilience* against terrorism:

Coping-Friendly Meaning Making

Through the deliberate and seemingly random targeting of civilians, jihadi terrorists intend to create a feeling of senseless and disproportionate suffering in the targeted *Western* societies. The psychological effect of the attacks is reinforced through their justification by terrorist groups and their sympathizers in the *West* as a just-response to wrongs done to the Muslim and/or Arab world in the past or present. Thereby the terrorists deliberately exploit held *Just-World-Beliefs* in *Western* societies, to break the will of these societies to defend themselves.

To counter this real and psychological warfare, authorities need to carefully choose their actions and their communication strategy, creating their own narrative. This requires the identification and analysis of the existing held *Global Meaning* (including the *Just-World-Beliefs*) in the society and the anticipation of the threat and an impact posed to the meaning by terrorism, and prophylactically proceeding to uncover and distil meaning and purpose from these threat scenarios. Having done that, these results should then be infused into the prevailing *Global Meaning*.

This amended narrative should establish a shared meaning and purpose in the society to ensure its defiance and unity in the face of the terrorist

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1148   See Ipsos MORI 2020 ; See PEW Research Center 2019 ; See Infocenter der R+V Versicherung 2019 ; See Atkinson 2017 ; See Ipsos Public Affairs 2017 ; See Hecker and Tenenbaum 2017.

threat. This narrative needs to compellingly explain who the terrorists are and what they are fighting for. It should further provide the population with a compelling meaning and purpose WHY they must endure the hardship and suffering which terrorists may inflict on them through their brutal killings and atrocities.

The process of transforming held beliefs is usually a long-term process. But authorities should be prepared to use the opportunities opened through a traumatic event like a terror attack. Their effort should focus on weaving, sustaining and strengthening a defiant meaning-orientated narrative which will promote an attitudinal heroism towards the threat of death from terrorism. The nationalistic excitement usually evoked by a terror threat or act, can help prepared authorities to shift opinions and beliefs and to galvanize the cohesion of the society.

While the authorities may establish a sense of suffering in the population, they must also consider the population's need for justice or just-revenge after an attack to support their coping. Authorities must ensure their ability to adequately respond to an attack in a timely manner to satisfy the *Just-World-Beliefs*, which may involve law enforcement, justice system, and health and social system.

Authorities should support the selection and weaving of different memories into a meaningful narrative which lets people find a sense in previous traumatic events in their lives and in their relationship to others, and allows them to re-write history – or rather the memory of it. This allows individuals as well as the society to turn moments of defeat into moments of triumphant defiance and of personal growth.

Whether established in the long-run or in the short-term, newly established meaning will require continuous care, even after it has been accepted. Authorities must consistently live up to the shared values and meaning they proclaim in their words and actions, and this must be aligned across the whole-of-government. The objective of the whole-of-government approach needs to establish a culture which provides "*a shared symbolic conception of reality that imputes order, predictability, significance, and permanence.*"[1149]

1149 Greenberg *et al.* 1986, 206.

Ensure Cognitive Clarity

Providing informational support and assuring cognitive clarity in a society faced with a terrorism threat, is important for maintaining its *Strategic Resilience*. A relatively accurate description of a terrorist incident may only be given by that small amount of people directly affected by it. Those directly affected by an attack will still struggle to grasp and to precisely assess the overall threat situation and to draw accurate conclusions of their own. The rest of the population who were no direct witness to the attack, must form their opinion about the attack following the reporting of the social and mass media on the incident and the witnessed reactions of the authorities, as well as based on terrorist propaganda and official government statements. All this received information will be unconsciously interpreted, built on the person's held views and beliefs of the world. It is no surprise that uncertainty-induced anxiety and fear are frequently experienced emotions connected with terrorist incidents and threats.

By ensuring that the population is consistently provided with accurate, timely and relevant information, which is perceived to be credible, transparent and actionable, authorities may significantly reduce fear and uncertainty-induced anxiety from terrorism in the population, and thus may improve their self-help abilities in a crisis situation. This must be done conscious of the mass and social media impact and in consideration of the special communication needs of vulnerable groups.

Management of Fear

The fear of death caused by the "*dread risk*"[1150] of terrorism can greatly challenge the normal functioning of individuals and may negatively impact their resilience before, during and after an incident. Through emotional contagion, social influence and media it also may undermine collective *Strategic Resilience*. Through the dynamic of a reciprocal threat perception, the collective fear may then even function as an incitement for more attacks. Managing this fear, reducing or eliminating it and preventing its spread, will help the sustainment of the *Strategic Resilience*. Government measures under this category are falling into four areas:

1150   Gigerenzer 2004, 286.

1. Avoiding unwarranted fear reactions through prudent threat communication,
2. The provision of practical coping information,
3. Fear mitigation through psychological fear management techniques, social support and public reassurance measures,
4. Limiting the spread and impact of fear in collaboration with the social and mass media.

Raise Individual and Organisational Self-Efficacy

The perceived personal self-efficacy of individuals or organisations to be able to cope effectively with a crisis situation is a core component for the creation of *Strategic Resilience* of the society. Mastering this competency has a positive effect for the physical and emotional well-being of an individual or an organisation. But as a more general advantage, all individuals and organisations who are able to help themselves due to their acquired self-efficacy, may free up official emergency response capacity which then may be deployed otherwise. Strong self-efficacy may also help to deter terrorist attacks by functioning as an effective *indirect denial* of the objectives the terrorists aim to achieve through their attack, as it reduces the potential coercive effect of these attacks on the population. In the eyes of the individual or organisations, the constituents of self-efficacy are context-dependent and overlapping. Therefore, authorities should support its coherent development, strengthening and confirmation.

Impact Prevention and Reduction

Strategic Resilience of a society may be strengthened by the authorities preemptively denying anticipated malicious attacks from unfolding and from having a notable impact on the society. This covers *direct-denial* measures like target hardening and additional security presence by the authorities which make it hard for terrorists to conduct large-scale operations and which thereby reduce the perceived potential scale of an attack.

Such measures include the public communication on these (potential) actions. The aim is to show the low probability of such attacks being successful, to potential perpetrators as well as to the public. This also

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includes the readiness and preparedness of effective and resilient crisis and emergency response capabilities.

As jihadis' target selection has been focusing on soft targets (such as random commuters, shoppers, concert goers, tourists), impact prevention also includes addressing the society and its critical stakeholders like providers of critical infrastructure and the private sector. If they were negatively impacted by an attack, it would be felt by the community as a whole. Impact prevention includes alerting these stakeholders and informing them about what they can do to reduce the risk of attacks from happening at their site and how to reduce the impact of a "successful" attack. It may further cover encouraging stakeholders to invest in their security (e.g. building security) and to prepare business continuity plans, including the creation of necessary redundancies in preparation for terror attacks.

Authorities should equally recognise and make use of the ordinary citizens as "experts of everyday life" and take them seriously, consciously integrating their skills into the preventive, proactive and reactive security management.[1151] This may include the citizens' self-help and personal preparedness as well as community lay first responder schemes which will provide support to those requiring help in the "golden hour", directly after an attack and before professional responders arrive.

As the media would be an important conduit for presenting the impact of a terrorist attack to all who were not directly affected, they necessarily need to be included in impact prevention efforts in the preparatory phase.

Strengthen Emotion-Focused coping skills

Developing the individual's proficiency to cope with negative emotions, is an important element in sustaining *Strategic Resilience* in the population, when faced with terrorist attacks. Emotion-focused coping skills enable an individual to achieve congruence between the *Situational Meaning* of an attack and his held *Global Beliefs / Just-World-Beliefs* through their positive reframing and re-interpreting when necessary. Measures by the authorities which are supportive of individual emotion-focused coping skills stretch along a time continuum. They start in the short-term, i.e. with deliberately designed and carefully committed speech acts. In the long-term they require efforts to establish symbolic means for the positive

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1151   See Giebel 2014, 370.

confirmation of individuals' personal world-view and their self-image. This includes responsible risk-communication and the promotion of an open culture of debate which will make individuals stay comfortable when being confronted with opposing information or opinions, without triggering fear or anger in them.

Limit Indirect (Psychological) Impact

The government measures under this category focus on the reduction of the indirect impact of an ongoing or recent attack on the society, both in the response and in the coping phase. The main attention is placed on those people who are affected indirectly by an attack. Their numbers are much higher than of those directly caught up in a terrorist incident. As terrorism is an act of communication which uses violence as a means to intimidate and coerce the population, limiting the communicative reach and impact of such an act can reduce its effectiveness. Counter-measures comprise the reduction of the visual and practical impact of an attack by the rapid removal of tangible and visible damages to the infrastructure and ensuring its operation as soon as possible, as well as managing the possible visual (psychological) impact distributed through the mass media and social media. To reduce the impact on those directly caught up and affected by an attack the categories of the prevention phase like problem-focused coping skills, emotion- focused coping skills as well as victim support and impact prevention and reduction will pay off during the response and coping phase.

Strengthen Societal Cohesion

Societal cohesion is a critical element for the *Strategic Resilience* of a society. Strong social bonds based on mutual trust in shared values and reciprocity, help a society to remain defiant against terrorism and produce a patriotic "we-are-all-in-this-together sentiment" during a crisis. Jihadi terrorists purposefully undertake various efforts to polarise and divide a society along ideological/religious lines. Through carefully targeted attacks and communication they aim to replace social trust with suspicion, and to achieve reciprocal co-radicalisation as a consequence of the thus generated moral outrage, pitting one group in the society against another. To be able to

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withstand these forces and to bounce back from these attacks without further ascending the escalatory ladder, social bonds need to be strengthened before the need arises.

Authorities have a critical role as a facilitator who supports an inclusive community dialogue which will allow communities to be sensitized and to be reassured of their inclusiveness before the need arises, and to help disperse divisive rumours or suspicions. If the authorities give this role some substance, they can counteract the potentially corrosive effect of a religiously or ethnically motivated attack on the feeling of community embeddedness and cohesion. Through their example and policies authorities can facilitate the building up and the use of personal relations at the community level to overcome the in- versus outgroup set-up in a crisis, and can promote exchanges and interactions across ethnic groups, in order to quench stereotypes and to build relationships before an incident happens.

Irrespective of whether an incident has been caused by a malign actor or by a natural disaster, strong social bonds and cohesion are important resources for a better community preparedness and crisis response. In a post-disaster scenario strong social cohesion is also identified as a positive factor for mitigating adverse psychological reactions and for promoting psychological well-being.

Provide Dedicated Support to Directly Affected

Providing victim support is a critical element in sustaining the *Strategic Resilience* of a society. By establishing and declaring generous and effective compensation and care policies which credibly promise to provide for all medical, material, financial, psychological and social needs of a possible victim to an attack, authorities can counter and substantially reduce the coercive effect of a terrorist threat to society.

Equally important are sources of non- governmental social support which help to preserve the sense of togetherness and connectedness in victims. This social support should be broadly based and nourished from the community level, and most importantly from the individual level.

To avoid compounding trauma and functional impairment after exposure to an attack, procedures for trauma intervention/therapy need to be established and monitored. This is especially important for front line staff, but equally for those who have been indirectly exposed or with previous trauma experiences. For direct victims the timely replacement of and com-

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pensation for lost resources (material, social and psychological), based on confirmed relative needs and not just based on status, is most important. The objective should be to bring the victims back to a "status quo ante" of the attack as close as possible. This strongly increases the chance for their recovery and successful coping.

Besides generous but fairly distributed victim support which acts as a tangible public acknowledgment of sacrifice and innocent suffering, bringing perpetrators to justice is an important duty of authorities that helps to sustain *Just-World-Beliefs* of the victims and society and may prevent victim blaming.[1152]

When dealing with direct victims and their families, authorities should embrace the idea that the provision of meaning in a crisis is as important as material and social support. Authorities need to help the citizens to find meaning as these can endure the worst conditions if they can find a meaning in it. Dealing with those directly affected by terrorist attacks like first responders and direct victims and their families, the narrative poses a special challenge. These people require a compelling meaning and purpose beyond the general acceptance of life with risk, i.e. why they and their families must endure greater hardship due to the society's conflict with terrorists, than the rest of the citizens.

The accomplishments resulting from the nine critical tasks described above, are interconnected and interdependent. The potency/efficacy of each task is affected by the level of accomplishment achieved, regarding the other tasks. The benefits from and the effect of the government's efforts will be maximised, if these are organised in a whole-of-government effort and executed in a multi-agency approach. In their efforts to accomplish the tasks, authorities need to consider both, the technical aspect like the resilience of critical infrastructure and the social aspect like the resilience of communities, organisations or individuals as the interwoven components of an overall resilience.

The analysis has further revealed that the timing and order of addressing the nine critical tasks is important, especially that the task of early prevention and that of long-term engagement as a country's ability to respond to an attack with resilience, is strongly dependent on what governments did to prevent an attack and how they have been preparing for such an event and its aftermath.

1152   See Kaniasty and Norris 2004, 217.

The work distinguishes between three different critical phases of a terror attack – the *Mitigation and Preparedness Phase*, the *Response Phase, and the Recovery and Coping Phase*, in each of which to assess the situation and to direct government action towards accomplishing the nine critical tasks:

Mitigation and Preparedness Phase

Before an attack the focus is on mitigation and preparedness. In the *Mitigation and Preparedness Phase* the focus is mostly on the wider population, with the media as a conduit. An emphasis is placed on reducing the number of people who will become victims and who as such would have to rely on outside help, because they cannot help themselves due to the impact of a terrorist attack. This is achieved by strengthening individual and collective resourcefulness and self-efficacy and by building up social-emotional capital and strong community and social bonds. A key component is assuring psychological preparedness by instilling a coping-friendly meaning and purpose to the society, which is faced with a terrorist threat, supported by efforts to eliminate fear-creating factors. Measures also include the anticipation and the mitigation of the expected impact of an attack – and the preventive limiting of the factors which could amplify or prolong an attack's effect on the population. This can be done by protecting critical infrastructure, by improving business' security and continuity planning, by educating and training the citizenry to improve awareness, and by mandating responsible media reporting.

Response Phase

Triggered by an attack, the *Response Phase* focusses on the elimination of an immediate threat and on limiting its negative effect through proactive crisis management and communication. During the *Response Phase* the focus is placed on supporting the population in coping with the situation. While authorities need to undertake all efforts to end an incident (such as a marauding terrorist firearms or knife attack) as soon as possible, an equal level of importance is placed on informing and reassuring the population about the event and about, what the authority's response to it is, and what the citizens can do themselves. A close liaison with the mass media is a

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critical element for achieving this goal. Those who cannot help themselves (vulnerable groups), especially need to be taken care of.

Recovery and Coping Phase

The then following *Recovery and Coping Phase* focusses on the reactive management of the consequences of the attack (and the public reaction to them) and on learning from this experience to be better prepared for the future. In the *Recovery and Coping Phase* resilience-enhancing measures focus on the reactive management of the "fallout" by mitigating potential material, physical, social, psychological impact. This involves activating preventively prepared resources for those affected, and supporting the mean-making process by framing the attack, by actively managing fear and anxiety in the society and by bringing perpetrators to justice to permit the closure of the event and the return of the society to a state similar to or better than before the attack.
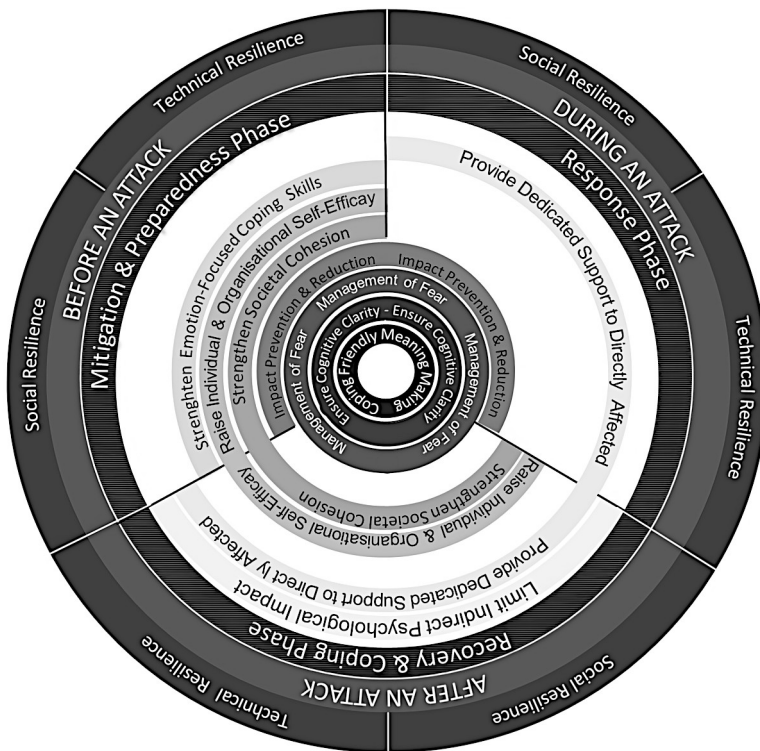
Applying the nine critical tasks to the three phases described above, the work suggests that measuring and managing the fear of the population is required in all phases, preferably even before an attack happens, as fear and anxiety are the key levers terrorists utilise to cajole a society to follow their demands. At all times, ensuring transparency and clarity of information through a competent and trustworthy risk and crisis communication is important to maintain resilience in the society, especially during the *Response Phase*.

The same continuous attention is necessary to the shared coping-friendly meaning. Authorities need to use the *Mitigation and Preparedness Phase* to create a shared meaning on shared values which ensures a shared interpretation of events if an attack has happened. This established meaning may come under threat due to the potentially cataclysmic effect of an attack and possible accompanying hostile psychological warfare measures. To safeguard this shared meaning therefore requires continuous nurture and a flexible response during the *Response Phase* before it will have to settle in and may then have to be readjusted to assure adequate coping in the after-attack period.

Just as *Impact Reduction and Prevention* measures need to be put in place long before an attack, individuals in a society must be instigated to strengthen their individual emotional and practical skills to deal with the potential effect of an attack. This must be part of the *Mitigation and*

Preparedness Phase before the practical need arises. After an attack, also the potential psychological impact on those not directly affected, has to be actively managed. To help those who have been directly affected by an attack it is critical to swiftly provide them with the necessary resources, with the major effort stretched out over a longer period into the *Recovery and Coping Phase*. To allow the society to profit from societal cohesion in the aftermath of an attack, this cohesion should already be strengthened in the *Mitigation and Preparedness Phase*, and promoting measures should be prepared for the *Response* and *Recovery and Coping Phases.*

Figure 58: Rings of Resilience Model.[1153]

Combining the above findings, the author has designed a graphical model which offers a birds-eye view of the complex system of a multitude of

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1153 Author's own work.

interrelated tasks which need to be considered by authorities during the different phases of a threat situation to then bring Münkler and Wassermanns *Strategic Resilience* concept to life, and to keep it up-to-date.

The model allows to easily distinguish between the three different phases and which respective tasks need to be prioritized at what time. Thus, the model instantly reveals the important role of the mitigation and preparedness efforts in identifying how well a society will be able cope with a terrorist attack. The importance of providing and preserving a coping-friendly meaning, ensuring continuous informational support and an effective fear management is reflected by placing them at the centre of the model. Through its interlocked and seamless visual presentation of the tasks over the timeline, the model proves the necessity for a whole-of-government-effort and an inter-agency involvement as well as the inclusion of stakeholders who might not usually deal with security topics and makes it easily comprehensible.

Viewed from the outside, with all underlying ring layers strong and interlocking, the ring is showing a solid and robust structure which should be able to deflect attacks – exuding its potential deterrent effect.

To test the validity and relevance of the model, the author utilised a multiple-case replication design case study approach by Yin (2001)[1154.] This was done by examining two countries and their resilience-based counter-terrorism strategies to assess whether the work's findings are reflected in the practical world of policies and programmes which these countries have installed to counter the threat *jihadi* terrorism poses to their societies. To better judge its practical relevance the work has chosen to look at two countries on the two extremes of the spectrum of parliamentary democracies, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Singapore.

Since 2001, both the United Kingdom and Singapore have become the target of *jihadi* terrorism from *Al-Quaida* and *Daesh* and since then have both supported supra-national counter-terrorism efforts. As ideologically and politically pluralist, secular societies with prototypical cosmopolitan urban centres, both countries are facing the same threat resulting from the Muslim radicalisation of their own nationals and of foreigners living on their soil. As a consequence, both countries also have to deal with the challenges posed by co-radicalisation and xenophobia.
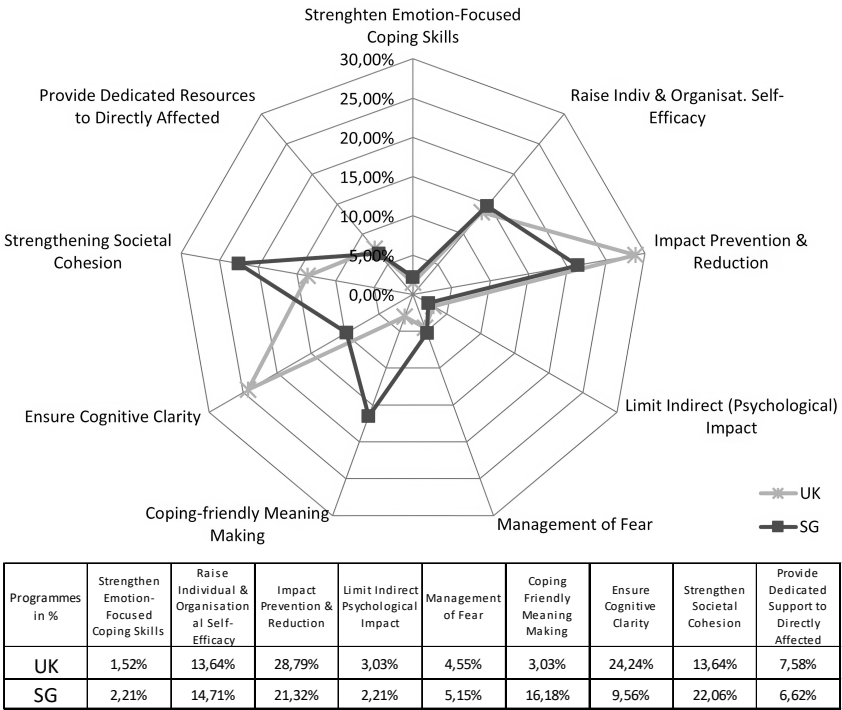
Despite these shared commonalities, the two countries represent opposite sides of the spectrum of practiced parliamentary democracy: The United

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1154   Yin 2001, 44-51.

Kingdom historically has placed a strong emphasis on limiting government power, a strong parliament and on protecting individual freedom. Singapore on the other hand was founded on a different external and internal environment and thereby has opted for a dominant government, a practically limited role of the parliament and for the safeguarding of the societal well-being to be more important than individual freedoms. Both countries also have experienced different levels of exposure to *jihadi* terror attacks, with Britain suffering multiple serious *jihadi* attacks a since 2001, while Singapore has suffered none so far. Other factors including size, their respective geopolitical neighbourhood as well as their demographic and ethnic structure, add to the dissimilarity between the two countries.

Figure 59: Visual Comparison of UK and Singapore .[1155]

Programmes in %	Strengthen Emotion-Focused Coping Skills	Raise Individual & Organisational Self-Efficacy	Impact Prevention & Reduction	Limit Indirect Psychological Impact	Management of Fear	Coping Friendly Meaning Making	Ensure Cognitive Clarity	Strengthen Societal Cohesion	Provide Dedicated Support to Directly Affected
UK	1,52%	13,64%	28,79%	3,03%	4,55%	3,03%	24,24%	13,64%	7,58%
SG	2,21%	14,71%	21,32%	2,21%	5,15%	16,18%	9,56%	22,06%	6,62%

1155   Author's own work.

When comparing the mix of programmes that were measured and assessed for each case in the chapters five and six and visualising the percentage-share of the total number of programmes in each country across the nine categories, which contribute to *Strategic Resilience*, the UK and Singapore show differing centres of gravity in their national approach to achieve *Strategic Resilience.*

Stronger emphasis on *strengthening societal cohesion* in Singapore than in the UK is to be expected considering the collectivist nature of Singaporean society compared to the UK, which is based on differing social norms that value social responsibility over personal freedom and is woven into the national narrative and self-concept. The ability to galvanise collective action is also one important way for small countries with a small population to try to fulfil their security needs.

Similarly, Singapore's emphasis on providing and preserving an *effective coping-friendly meaning*, is reflective of the necessity to strengthen and preserve societal cohesion, especially, considering the challenges that stem from the heterogeneous multi-ethnic and multicultural fabric of its society in a volatile geographic neighbourhood. It is also reflective of Singapore's ability to promote one dominant narrative through a big government with centralized control and a high *Power Distance* in society. The environment for and role of government in the UK is very different, and consequently its ability to successfully promote one central narrative is much more restricted and actively challenged.

This may well explain the UK's multi-layered effort to assure *cognitive clarity* through informational support. As the role of and the trust in government is lower, with more focus on the individual than on the community and its needs to operate in a contested media environment, there is a high need for communication. That requirement has further been repeatedly amplified through terror incidents and has led to new channels and protocols being introduced. In comparison to the UK situation the Singapore government has great control over the media environment, it operates in. On top of that, the Singapore government it also able to further amplify its messages through government and non-governmental organisations.

Efforts to *prevent and reduce direct impact* of a jihadi terrorist attack, play an important role in both countries. However, the case analysis identified comparatively more measures in the UK than in Singapore. This is to be expected considering that the UK has had a long list of terrorist attacks

which it suffered on its soil even before the *jihadi wave* started. As a result of such attacks the country has continuously responded with new measures to mitigate future threats and is doing so today. Singapore, as a country that has suffered little to no attacks in its history, could be expected to lag behind in implemented programmes and policies, but is actively taking lessons from the UK.[1156] The recently updated infrastructure protection guidelines[1157] and increased CCTV surveillance are examples.[1158]

Across the remaining categories in *Figure 90* the number of programmes in both countries is similarly distributed. It is important to note that a low number of contributing activities to one task does not allow coming to a simple conclusion about the level of resilience and preparedness created in the society as whole. Administrations in both case countries for example work hard to *limit the indirect (psychological) impact* from attacks on the rest of the population through their prudent risk and crisis communication and using legislation and a mix of inducements and coercion to limit negative media impacts. However, there is not a high number of dedicated programmes that can be counted under this category. Similarly, tolerance to dissenting views and beliefs, uncertainty acceptance and openness to change and resilience in adversity are taught as virtues in the UK and Singapore in order to raise *emotion focused-coping-skill.* In Singapore, they even form part of the national narrative and are encouraged in all aspects of life. Cognitive congruence between the *Situational Meaning* of an attack and the held *Global Beliefs* in the Singaporean population is further strengthened at the highest government level by repeatedly issuing a "*Not if, but When*"-message concerning the probability of the next terror attack.

Therefore, the comparative quantification at the surface level of two profound qualitative assessments has limitations. The visual overview does however give practitioners an indication where a government's focus is currently placed and where requirements for additional efforts or the need for further assessment may exist, in order to further improve *Strategic Resilience.*

So, despite the strongly dissimilar circumstances in the case countries as shown above, that do affect the direction or impetus of counter-terrorism efforts in each country, the case study found all programmes and measures identified and assessed across the two case countries to positively contrib-

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1156   See Vasu 2007.
1157   See Singapore Police Force 06.2019.
1158   See Today Online 2016.

ute to at least one of the nine critical tasks proposed in the *Rings-Of-Resilience* model.

The analysis of the cases has also confirmed the pivotal role which providing, nurturing and protecting an effective coping-friendly meaning can play, when a pluralist society is challenged to physical and psychological battle by jihadi terrorists.[1159] To accept the limits of security and to cope with potential suffering due to exploited vulnerabilities, the individual requires for the suffering to have a meaning.[1160] For the authorities, this means not only fulfilling society's quest for more security, but also to credibly communicate the countering concept of a meaning-based acceptance.[1161] Governments unable to precisely define what their societies' shared values, purpose and identity are, will likely struggle to understand the intellectual conflict with the enemy. Therefore, they will fail to compellingly explain the situation to their own people in a credible comprehensive narrative of their own making which could provide a coping-friendly shared meaning and offer direction.[1162] As a further consequence their societies are in danger to be polarised along the lines of falsely attributed irreconcilable identities. This can lead to the disintegration of the societies into in-groups and out-groups, pitted against each other. Adding to this, the increased ease to fuel the internal debates with non-attributable "vitriol" and disinformation for adverse foreign state actors, has further exacerbated the risk of a negative impact in recent years. Examples for effective targeted amplification of divisions by foreign actors are the 2016 election in the US, or the Covid-Crisis in the European Union in 2020.

In consideration of the strong dissimilarities between the two countries examined in the case study, the fact that both have opted to address the *jihadi* terrorist threat in a similar way, is a good indicator that the nine critical tasks are of general relevance beyond these two cases. The work therefore concludes, that embedded in the *Rings-of-Resilience* model, the critical tasks can function as an organisational analytical framework for governments in their efforts to build up, strengthen and sustain *Strategic Resilience* against terrorism as proposed by Münkler & Wassermann (2012). Utilised in this way, the model can support the assessment and improvement of an existing programs portfolio by identifying weaknesses or gaps in

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1159   See Kilcullen 2009, 247.
1160   See Frankl 2006, 51.
1161   See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.
1162   See Furedi 2007, 77–101.

actual efforts. It can help countries to recognise scope-limiting preferences (how they choose to address the terrorist threat and to build resilience) which might have developed over time. It can also indicate where countries have chances to increase the effectiveness of their programme portfolio by adding or amending programmes.

9.1. Implications for Academia

a. Like the term "terrorism" whose use and meaning is highly ambiguous, the meaning of the term resilience also is very context specific. During the research for this work, the author found that similarly the term "*Strategic Resilience*" without any further explanation or defined context can mean a million things to a million people. When trying to use the terms "terrorism resilience" or "resilience against terrorism" for example as a pointer for the definition of *Strategic Resilience*, they turned out as misnomers, as i.e. they were understood as describing the ability of a society to prevent and withstand the radicalisation and recruitment of its members by terrorist groups. The lack of a precise and universally understood and agreed wording as well as the interdisciplinary nature of the concept of *Strategic Resilience* has hindered the academic debate. Vice versa, without such a debate there has been no push for precise wording, even though all *Western* pluralist societies which are faced with the same *jihadi* terrorist threat, would equally profit from a stream of sound *Strategic Resilience* research founded on a broadly based cross-national interdisciplinary academic discourse. This work has taken up the baton by substantiating the term *Strategic Resilience* with a detailed multi-phased model which can lower the threshold for a necessary interdisciplinary scientific dialogue and can encourage debate and further research in this area.

b. The work has shown that *Strategic Resilience* can offer open, post-heroic societies a potential approach to credibly and effectively support a *benefit-denial* strategy, directed against terrorism.[1163] Beyond the effect of helping to directly reduce the impact of terrorist attacks on the society, and of at least preventing or reducing the success of such an attack, *Strategic Resilience* can also function as a *Strategic Denial* according to

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1163   See Chapter 1 page 19-21.

Kroenig & Pavel's (2012) deterrence theory of conventional terrorism. It can deter adversaries from carrying out attacks in the first place, since the desired psychological effect of the attack which uppermost motivates the act of terrorism, is credibly denied.[1164] Understood in this way, *Strategic Resilience* becomes a means of communication to respond to the message of terror, by signaling to the population and to potential terrorists that through their attack the terrorists will not achieve their strategic objective. As in strategic nuclear deterrence, credibility is just as crucial in deterring conventional terrorism. This work has identified nine critical elements for building, strengthening and sustaining *Strategic Resilience.* In the course of this, it has become clear that all nine elements are not likely to always be present and not always in equal strength in each country. Building on this, further research in criminal psychology would be desirable to understand the importance the terrorists ascribe to individual constituting elements of *Strategic Resilience,* for keeping up an overall credible deterrence effect.

c. This works has identified and defined nine critical tasks governments should invest their time and focus in if they want to achieve, strengthen or to preserve *Strategic Resilience* in their country. The work has also provided a list of exemplary measures which can underpin and help to complete each task. Further research would be recommendable into the function, effectiveness and the appropriateness of individual measures and actions that could show which of the measures under a certain category are the most effective to fulfil their task in a specific situation and which specific combination of measures maybe the most effective. Due to the mutual dependencies of the different measures and the many data required as a consequence, it may be a challenging task. But it could be highly beneficial identifying the marginal rate of return on investments in specific measures through an input-output model.

d. The case analysis has indicated that a strong national identity founded on shared meaning, mutual values and a common purpose can be helpful to protect the social resilience of pluralist societies against the challenge of divisive jihadi rhetoric and attacks. In contrast to these findings, there exists a popular belief in progressive political and academic circles in Western Europe which demonises the pursuit of a strong national identity as incompatible, even antagonistic to the flourishment

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1164   See chapter 1 page 19-21.

of a pluralist multi-ethnic society or community. Such a restricted view is problematic as it may preclude research being conducted or funded which assumes a neutral or positive view on shared national identity and patriotism. Thereby any positive findings which could help in the formation of a strategically resilient society, might be prevented. This in turn may lead to suboptimal scientific advice given to governments, as this would be based on incomplete research. The questioning of the legitimacy of the nation state through its blanket stigmatization by equating it to the extreme deformities of nationalist chauvinism and racism, is problematic. It may give jihadis the chance to reinforce their de-legitimisation attempts and their divisive propaganda which includes an alleged conspiracy of the non-believers with the aim of destroying Islam and all Muslims.[1165] In the knowledge of such possible negative consequences, academic research should challenge unsubstantiated and undifferentiated criticism of the nation-state concept and question non-factual research limitations.

9.2. Implications for Practitioners

a. To practitioners in the respective agencies and ministries the findings of this work and specifically the model offers an easy-to-use analytical framework. It should help practitioners to take stock of their existing efforts to protect their country from the consequences of terrorist threats, to assess their requirements across government functions, to understand and justify necessary expenditures, and to utilise it as an easily comprehensible tool to communicate with decision makers.

b. The model visualises the contributing factors across disciplines and agencies to reach the common shared goal of achieving *Strategic Resilience*. It can provide the necessary shared focus and the justification for planning and implementing the required steps in the necessary multi-sectoral cross-government way. The many and diverse underlying measures across the different government sectors identified in this work, provide further practical arguments for multi-disciplinary and cross-agency collaboration and for also including such people and groups not usually counted among those concerned with counter-terrorism. Clearly displaying the interdependencies of using soft measures and hard meas-

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1165 See Frankenberger 2017, 64.

ures in achieving the *Strategic Resilience* of the society, the model can also help to overcome the reluctance of policy makers who are tasked with protecting their society from the threat of terrorism, to equally invest in soft social measures.

c. The findings also have shown that trust is a critical resource in a government's effort to maintain cognitive clarity, to uphold coping-friendly meaning and to manage fear, which are prerequisites to foster a strategic resilient response from the population faced with a terrorist threat. Just as the trust and confidence in the government is challenged by the attack itself; it is also challenged by the government's handling of the threat and by attacks in the information space. This requires the authorities' commitment to upholding a constant, transparent and consistent communication before, in and after a crisis. At the same time, they continuously have to monitor the information space to be able to quickly identify and respond to malicious information operations. There it does not make a difference whether such information originates at home or from abroad, is motivated by financial gains or political objectives or whether the conduct itself is criminal or legal. As a first step, governments need to invest in better media literacy of their citizens to reduce a potential negative impact. This will not be enough though: As these threats to and from the information domain are likely to increase due to easier access to technological tools for covert foreign actors as well as foreign-owned state media, *Western* open societies have to decide about how they want to mitigate the risk posed by malign actors, who exploit the information space, without throwing out their own values of freedom of expression and privacy.

d. In order to create an understanding for the need for personal preparedness and winning the acceptance of the population for this necessity, the importance of an early and transparent risk communication as a prerequisite for instilling resilience was underlined by this work's findings. Upfront openness about potential risks also reduces the negative psychological impact if an incident does occur and can build trust into the then following crisis communication. To signal their urgency and resolve to prepare against the terrorist threat, governments should consider organising regular scenario-based public counter-terrorism exercises a part of their risk communication.

e. Testing the model with the help of the case studies has shown that a society can greatly benefit from having a National Service when imple-

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menting a concept of *Strategic Resilience*, an idea mirrored in a recent OpEd by the Vice President of the *Federal Academy for Security Policy* (BAKS) in Germany, who endorsed National Service as a chance for strengthening resilience and societal cohesion.[1166]

Beyond raising the relevant preparedness skills in the population and increasing the pool of citizens trained in the military and/or civil defence, in medical emergency services or as police officers, a National Service drives home the idea that security is a responsibility shared by the whole society. Depending on the specific national set-up and political environment, a National Service as a side effect can also be a socially integrating force and a deeply meaningful shared experience. It can offer satisfaction for the people's emotional needs for personal significance, for close personal connections, for a sense of contribution, for confidence of belonging, for the chance for personal growth, and for adventure. To maximise the positive influence of a National Service on the nation, and to fully benefit from its integrative effect, governments should consider permanent residents (as introduced in Singapore for permanent residents of the second generation) to be drafted into the National Service duty. As a consequence, such a government has to consider also the described potential benefits to the whole society when doing a cost-benefit calculation comparing National Service versus a professional force. Consequently, the control over organisational decisions on National Service matters should be at the Prime Minister's Office or also the Ministry of the Interior rather than just at the Ministry of Defence.

f. Even if an across-government political consensus for adopting a whole-of-society Strate*gic Resilience* concept-*based* counter-terrorism approach cannot be agreed upon, the work's findings can empower sub-state stakeholders or units to independently introduce policies and actions from the bottom-up which may move a society forward on the path towards improved *Strategic Resilience*. The work's findings also give options for smaller incremental steps to such governments who want to improve the *Strategic Resilience* of their country but who organisationally and/or politically cannot gain acceptance for the wholesale-adoption of the *Strategic Resilience* concept: With the 9-factor model as a guide, the long list of concrete measures from chapter four and five, offers a toolbox of proposals for direct action in the different areas.

1166   Keller 2020.

g. This work has identified a framework which may help governments to organise their comprehensive response to the threat from non-state, i.e. *jihadi* terrorist actors. But the same *Strategic Resilience* framework may also be applicable for governments under grey zone / hybrid threats emanating from malevolent state actors who clandestinely wage psychological warfare in order to weaken the society's trust in the government and to damage its legitimacy. The use of such irregular tactics like coercion and disinformation, by such actors shows a strong similarity to the threats emanating from terrorism. These tactics also try to split the society through fear and uncertainty in order to achieve their ideological/political objectives. In the absence of a presently existing comprehensive model to guide a whole-of government response to mitigate state actor-led hybrid-/ grey zone threats, the author suggests testing his model's practicality for such a scenario.