1. Chapter: Research Question & Approach

1.1. Description of the Problem

Open, complex and networked societies such as the liberal democracies of Europe have unavoidable vulnerabilities.[1] In addition to the threats of natural disasters and diseases, the deliberate exploitation of vulnerabilities by strategically acting adversaries leads to "strategic vulnerability".[2]

The diffuse, asymmetrical threat posed today by international terrorism as a tactical means of rationally-acting perpetrators from the homeland and from abroad has crossed all dividing lines between internal and external security.[3]

The exploitation of the "strategic vulnerability" of modern, [liberal] post-heroic societies[4] presents these societies with the dilemma of balancing between prosperity and freedom on the one hand, and security on the other hand, in order to meet the society's demand for protection.[5]

Immediacy

In Europe, in the recent past, we have been seeing a trend by terrorist groups away from outbidding each other through daring and complex attacks, such as 9/11, towards action-oriented, higher-frequency, low-signature terrorism.[6]

This type of terrorism has increased the field of recruitment because the required skills for participation can be extremely reduced and accelerated by appeals and detailed instructions on social media. Autonomously operating small groups or single offenders ("inspired" perpetrators) without relevant criminal records and without an infiltratable environment offer few opportunities for early detection and for prevention by police and

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1 See Gearson 2012, 193 ; Münkler 2015, 247 ; Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 91.
2 See *ibid.*, 91.
3 See Bakker 2015 See Baban 2014.
4 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 16.
5 See Kaufmann 2015.
6 See Kydd and Walter 2006 ; Fahmy 2017, 736 ; Laqueur 2016.

intelligence services. More comprehensive surveillance of society is politically undesirable in democracies (*Security Policy Vulnerability Paradox*) and would also be financially priceless.[7]

In June 2019, the German domestic intelligence service reports that it observed a shift within the Islamist scene in recent years towards militancy and jihadism respectively.[8] Within the Islamist/Islamist Terrorism spectrum the agency observes, those activists attributed to the Salafist movement alone make up over 11,300 people.[9]

This agency also counts 12,700 right-wing extremists and 9,000 left-wing extremists who show a tendency towards violence ("*gewaltorientiert*").[10] In France and in UK the picture is not very different, according to MI5 it "*has more than 3,000 subjects of interest (SOIs) on its watch list, more than it is capable of monitoring around the clock, as well as a pool of over 20,000 former SOIs some of whom are thought capable of moving to violent action.*"[11]

France faces a similar challenge of keeping track of over 20,000 suspected extremists.[12] MI5's director is unequivocal that the agency considers "*homegrown Islamist extremists still UK's biggest threat*"[13] as 80% of terrorist attacks which MI5 was able to thwart were IS-inspired.[14] Foreign fighters returning from Syria and Iraq have further increased the radicalization efforts inside of several European countries due to the "*veteran effect*"[15]: The technical and tactical knowledge these people acquired in the war zone can further increase the effectiveness of future attacks. The failed attacks in the past due to technical inadequacies as in the local train in Cologne 2006 or at Parsons Green Underground Station in London 2017 are more unlikely in the future.[16] Due to a lack of a comprehensive strategy and to a lack of capacity necessary for de-radicalization, young fighters returning to Europe are at best detained and then released into society after serving

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7 See Kaufmann 2015 ; Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 91.
8 Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat Juni / 2019, 177.
9 *ibid.*, 178.
10 *ibid.*, 110 ; *ibid.*, 50.
11 See Gardner 2019, online.
12 See News Wires 2018 online.
13 See Bond 2019 online.
14 *ibid.*
15 See Nesser 2018 ; Holman 2016, 12.
16 See Dearden 2017 online.

their sentence with the stigma of a criminal record and with new, often problematic prison relationships.[17]

New reach

As the rise of *Daesh* has shown the terrorists have created a powerful non-kinetic weapon through the professional use of social media. They have also cleverly exploited the public media by deliberately escalating violence and brutality, adhering to the rule book of "*mass-mediated terrorism.*"[18]

They use the resulting media content for their propaganda, radicalization and internal recruitment, and even failed missions are transformed by narration and imagery into a powerful appeal for heroism and sacrifice.[19] Most important, however, is the impact of the media on the outside world.[20] The terrorists' use and public broadcast of acts of extreme violence "*provide the battering ram terrorist need to gain access to the mass media.*" [21] The slick content is precisely targeted and is proof of a profound understanding of today's infotainment news format that "*thrives on the very images and themes that terrorist incidents offer – drama, tragedy, shock, anger, grief, fear, panic – ideal ingredients [...] to captivate and stir up audiences.*"[22] The global news, web-and TV networks feed the 24/7 news cycle with these stories from around the world with the effect of "*blurred lines between domestic and international terrorism*"[23] in the viewer's perception, helping the terrorists in achieving their tactical goal to spread fear in the population.[24]

The perpetrators not only want to spread fear among the direct victims.[25] They want more. The *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Response to Terrorism* at the University of Maryland describes the perpetrators' "*intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a*

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17 See Vidino and Brandon 2012.
18 See Schmid 2005 ; Nacos 2007.
19 See Wilner 2011.
20 See Comer *et al.* 2008 ; See Carruthers 2011.
21 Livingstone 1987, 216.
22 Nacos 2007, 37.
23 *ibid.*, 17.
24 See Zimmermann 2003, 49.
25 See Carruthers 2011.

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larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims" as important criterion for the inclusion into the Global Terrorism Database.[26]

If the direct target is "well" chosen, an attack on an individual can be a felt by a whole nation.[27] The murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam 2004, the murder of the soldier Lee Rigby in Woolwich 2013 or the attack on the editors of the journal Charlie Hebdo in Paris 2014 are examples of this.

> *Terrorism works not simply because it instils fear in target populations, but because it causes governments and individuals to respond in ways that aid the terrorists' cause.*[28]

As attacks create insecurity in the public space this fear, developing as a consequence, has a negative impact on society.[29] It leads to mistrust and stereotyping, overreactions and often to retaliatory attacks.[30] Research shows that on the one hand, this leads to a preference for decisive, action-oriented reactions; on the other hand, simple explanations, such as after 9/11, that can lead to sub-optimal political decisions, risk avoidance behaviour and a culture of fear.[31] This can keep society in a state of fatalism and pessimism.[32] Fear of terrorism as a self-fulfilling prophecy can lead to [even] more terrorism.[33]

Social relevance

While before the *Attack on the Berlin Christmas Market*, most of the attacks in Germany had been thwarted, the population in Germany had already shown strong signs of vulnerability as it is psychologically touched by attacks abroad. This must not be surprising considering that since 9/11 there has been a tendency by the media and political leaders to frame

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26 LaFree and Dugan 2007, 188.
27 See Rothkopf 2016; See Gearson 2012, 172 ; See Arce and Sandler 2016, 183.
28 Kydd and Walter 2006, 50.
29 See Gautier *et al.* 2009.
30 See Ivandic *et al.* 2019 ; Sikorski *et al.* 2017, 845 ; Hanes and Machin 2014.
31 See Nacos 2007, 180 ; See ; See Maguen *et al.* 2008, 15; See Levine and Levine 2006, 616; See Rothkopf 2016, 11–12; See Sikorski *et al.* 2017, 845.
32 See Furedi 2007, 13.
33 See Rothkopf 2016, 11–12 ; Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier 2007, 16 ; Schmid 2005 ; Zimmermann 2003, 56.

single attacks not as albeit tragic, yet locally limited events perpetrated by a specific jihadi group, but as a declaration of war of Islamic radicals against "the West" as and the values it holds dear, alluding to Samuel Huntington (1996) thesis of the "*clash of civilizations*".[34] This pattern of a collective European response of horror and solidarity repeated itself after the 2004 commuter train attacks in Madrid and the 2015 attacks in Paris.[35]

A representative study conducted April-November of 2016, found that 80% of Germans were strongly concerned about the global increase in terrorism, with 70% expressing a strong fear of an attack in Germany.[36] Only about a third of the respondents were confident about the government response to the terror threat.[37] These low confidence levels in the official response to attacks may be partially explained with the visible effects of austerity measures in the public services and the lack of judges and prosecutors, as well as massive overtime at state and federal police level. The results are however consistent with a continuously low level of confidence in politicians identified in a long-term study conducted by the *R+V insurance group* in Germany.[38]

Six months after the *Berlin Christmas Market Attack*, (yet still before the *Manchester Arena Attack*), in a representative study conducted in the election year 2017, 38% of Germans selected terrorism as the number one concern in their country. [39] This is a stark difference to the 2013 election, where the same view was expressed by only 7%.[40] Over time, it can be seen that this value is significantly influenced by terrorist attacks in Europe.[41]

Outside of Germany a similar picture is emerging. The survey results from France for example, collected at the beginning of 2017 suggest that the attacks, the country has suffered in 2015, have left a strong impact.[42] According to a representative survey French society showed signs of *fragmentatio*n and *uncertainty* and a more pessimistic outlook with 80% of the French saying that they believe in 2017 they *live in a dangerous world*. [43]

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34   See Huntington 1996.
35   Truc 2017.
36   Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (IfD) 2016, 1.
37   See *ibid.*, 24.
38   See Infocenter der R+V Versicherung 2019, 3.
39   See Ipsos Public Affairs 2017, 1–2.
40   See *ibid.*, 1-2.
41   See *ibid.*
42   See Hecker and Tenenbaum 2017.
43   See Atkinson 2017.

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This anxiety has been echoed across several European nations, whose publics believe immigrants increase risk of terrorism according to a representative *Pew Research Center* survey. [44] While recent research shows that fear of terrorism in Germany has decreased from the high points in 2016 and 2017 in 2019 it is still 100% over the 2001 pre- September-11 attacks level with strong concerns over Islamic influence on Germany and Islamist extremism.[45]

The situation in 2020 is similar across Europe where publics still strongly over-estimate the risk of terrorism according to an *Ipsos MORI* survey.[46] The resultant distrust towards Muslims as a result of a process of co-radicalisation of the majority population is an intended consequence of the Islamist's attacks, a phenomenon seen in the Netherlands, a process that arguably started with a single murder, of Theo van Gogh in 2004.[47] This ensuing hostility can further alienate the fellow Muslim citizens, possibly driving the latter into the folds of radical Islam.[48]

The continuous shift in political and public sentiment against Muslims and Muslim immigration since 2015 and "revenge attacks" like the Finsbury Park Mosque car ramming attack (United Kingdom) 2017 and the firearms attacks in Christchurch (New Zealand) 2019, are indicators of the potential troubles, if the masses were to move into action triggered through the power of invoked images of a new Islamist outrageous terror attack or crime committed.[49]

In his work on mass psychology Le Bon warns that hundreds of small crimes, or a hundred small incidents, might not have the slightest effect on the imagination of the masses; but they may be deeply shaken by a single unprecedented crime, a single great misfortune, though it is much less bloody than the hundred small accidents combined.[50]

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44 See PEW Research Center 2019.
45 See Infocenter der R+V Versicherung 2019, 4-5.
46 SeeIpsos MORI 2020.
47 See Eyerman 2008; The murder of Film maker Theo van Gogh, who was shot and had his throat cut with a knife in broad daylight on his way to work by a Dutch-Moroccan man, who took offence with a documentary shown on national television produced by van Goghs in cooperation with Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Somali-born female politician, which is strongly critical of the treatment of woman in Islam, send shockwaves through the Dutch society.
48 See Huijnk 2018 ; See Meaker 2017.
49 See Le Bon 2015, 69.
50 *ibid.*, 71.

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Successful terrorist attacks damage morale, weakens public and government confidence in counter terrorism agencies, and can even lead to backlashes against minority populations that in the long run produce more terrorists. Botched raids or the inability to achieve convictions similarly damage morale, while alienating minority populations whose cooperation is crucial.[51]

1.2. Approach Strategic Resilience

In view of these strategic vulnerabilities, the attempt to successfully defend against all possible terrorist threats in the sense of a defence (the attempt to ward off the direct consequences of an attack) does not appear to be a realistic option.[52] If terrorist attacks prove to be so effective, a rational actor would continue to do so.[53] On the same assumption of a rational actor, his cost-benefit equation can be altered through cost-imposing and benefit-denial strategies, and in consequence his behaviour can also be influenced.[54]

Table 1: In the Deterrence Theory of Conventional Terrorism, Kroenig & Pavel distinguish between four strategies[55]

Cost Imposition Strategies:

– *Direct Punishment*: Deterrence by the threat of persecution and punishment of the perpetrators

– *Indirect Punishment*: Deterrence by the threat of collective punishment of the perpetrator's environment

Benefit-denial Strategies:

– *Tactical Denial*: Deterrence by hardening possible targets and thereby reducing the likelihood of tactical success of an attack

– *Strategic Denial*: Deterrence by the credible refusal to grant the strategic success of an attack (i.e., instilling terror and fear in the population)

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51 Zaidi 2012, online.
52 See Enders and Sandler 1993, 829 ; Zimmermann 2003, 64.
53 See Gearson 2012, 193 ; Crenshaw 2009, 373.
54 See Enders and Sandler 1993, 830 ; Trager and Zagorcheva 2006, 88.
55 See Kroenig and Pavel 2012, 25.

Credibility of deterrence

Just like in military nuclear deterrence, credibility is crucial in deterring conventional terrorism. Denial strategies are therefore more credibly to convey by liberal, democratic countries, as it is more convincing that these countries are not doing something rather than doing something.

If the desired effect of an attack (instilling fear in the population) is denied, the choice of terrorist attacks as a means of communication will not be rewarded but may still be penalized in conjunction with cost-imposing strategies.[56] Due to the lack of effectiveness, the rational acting opponent would subsequently seek other available means than terrorism to achieve his political/strategic goals.[57]

The research results of Bakker[58] and Schmid[59] show that the strength of the perceived threat posed by terrorism is not primarily dependent on the number of victims or the number of attacks. A successful reduction of the terrorist attacks therefore does not necessarily lead to a reduction of the fear of terrorism and its consequences, *"it is [...] in people's psyches and not on the battlefields that terrorists ultimately can be defeated"* as Rothkopf concludes.[60] Ergo, a purely punitive or tactical response therefore does not solve the terrorism problem. Any response must equally have the population as addressees in mind.

A promising approach that appears to be able to credibly and effectively support a benefit-denial strategy directed against terrorism in an open and networked liberal society is *Strategic Resilience.*[61]

Strategic Resilience as a credible deterrent

Münkler and Wassermann who introduced the concept of *"Strategische Resilienz"* in 2011, define the term *Strategic Resilience* as the resilience of a society against premeditated disturbances and shocks through "uncertainty acceptance".[62] Münkler and Wassermann understand the term *Strategic*

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56 *ibid.*
57 See Bakker 2015 ; Gearson 2012 ; Wilner 2011 ; Trager and Zagorcheva 2006, 94.
58 Bakker 2015.
59 See Schmid 2005.
60 Rothkopf 2016, 325.
61 See Bakker 2015.
62 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 90.

Resilience as a counterpart to *Strategic Vulnerability*, which refers to the premeditated exploitation of existing vulnerabilities by an adversary.[63] According to Münkler and Wassermann the strategically resilient society is able to face the intended damage with "*heroic serenity*"[64] based on its consciousness and acceptance of the demands placed on individuals in the modern "risk society" as described by Beck.[65]

Thus to meet the challenges that the modern society places on the individual and the society requires conceptual shifts, away from the ideal of invulnerability, and the concept of total protection under a security paradigm, towards acknowledging inevitable remaining vulnerabilities, embracing the concept of coping and the conscious acceptance of life with its inherent risks, [66]

Strategic Resilience does not only require the population's passive heroic endurance,[67] but also support of prevention of, response to and the coping with an attack or other type of shocks. Consequentially, the effect of *Strategic Resilience* does not start once an attack has occurred, but long before that and does not end afterwards. *Strategic Resilience* affects dealing with the mere threat of an attack, reacting to an attack and managing its potential consequences.

In this constellation, the population is not primarily seen by the authorities as a possible victim, but on an equal footing as a partner and supporter for emergency responders, who are first on the scene during the *isolation period*. This creates a force-multiplier effect, allows for a much faster response in case of emergency and has a positive effect on the population themselves, who through involvement / active participation have the feeling that they are better able to control the situation and are not just helpless victims.

Instances when citizens bravely responded to an ongoing attack, or helped prevent them in the preparation phase are well documented in the press as shown on the following page.[68]

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63 See *ibid.*, 93.
64 *ibid.*
65 See Beck 2016.
66 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 87.
67 *ibid.*, 93.
68 Examples include the *Glasgow Airport attack* in July 2007 where citizen overpowered the assailants who had driven their vehicle loaded with combustibles into the airport terminal building and prevented them from igniting their explosive cargo. (See figure 1), in 2015 a vigilant shop assistant at a home improvement retailer prevented a

After an attack, it is crucial for the resilience of those 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 population and to potential terrorists that through the attack the terrorists do not achieve their strategic objective. So, if terrorism is a means of communication, then *Strategic Resilience* is also a means of communication to respond to the message of terror.

So beyond the effect of helping to directly reduce the psychological impact of attacks on the population, and at least preventing or reducing the success of an attack, credible *Strategic Resilience* destroys the adversary's incentive to carry out attacks in the first place, since the desired effect of the plot that motivates the act of terrorism is denied.

Figure 1: *Left image gives an example of the reported resilient response to Glasgow Airport Attack 2007.*[69]

Figure 2: *Right image gives an example of the reported resilient response to the London Bridge attack in 2019.*[70]

Salafist bomb attack at the Frankfurt cycling race by alarming the police of suspicious purchases. (See Jansen 2015), In December 2019 civilians stopped the stabbing spree of a previously convicted terrorist armed with knives and a fake suicide belt, with the help of a whale tusk and a fire extinguisher (see figure 2)

69 The Daily Record, 4 July 2007, 1.
70 The Scottish Daily Mail, 30 November 2019, 1.

An escalation and return to large, complex attacks in Europe (as we know them from abroad, for example Sri Lanka), is not expected, according to estimates of the security authorities as these would require appropriate coordination and preparations, which are associated with a higher risk of discovery by the strengthened police and intelligence services.

Instilling and growing *Strategic Resilience* in a society Münkler & Wassermann admit, can however be a complex and long-term process as a society has to cope with three paradoxes when it tries to address its strategic vulnerabilities:[71]

1. *The Security Policy Vulnerability Paradox*,
2. *The Security Psychological Vulnerability Paradox* and
3. *The Security Communicative Vulnerability Paradox*

The Security Policy Vulnerability Paradox

According to the *Security Policy Vulnerability Paradox* the more resolutely and effectively a society strives to reduce its vulnerability through the means of security policy, the greater its vulnerability can become.[72]

When a society takes security measures to close its identified weaknesses the cost of such measures can outweigh their usefulness and ultimately lead to a rather greater than reduced vulnerability as an unintended consequence.[73]

Increasing security in "*Western*" open societies beyond certain levels impacts prosperity as it may lead to self-paralysis.[74] Damages could be rising taxes to pay for protection i.e. against disasters or terrorism, or restrictions on personal freedom, i.e. racial profiling in exchange for the possible prevention of terrorist acts.

Trying to counter terrorism, governments have the choice between a rock and a hard place as they have to find a balance between traditional security and prosperity. One of these goods has to stand back. Terrorist groups like *Al Qaida* have prominently revealed this dilemma with comparatively limited resources on 9/11, making it a serious strategic vulnerab-

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71 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 90.
72 See *ibid.*
73 See *ibid.*, 91 ; Rothkopf 2016, 10.
74 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 88.

ility.[75] In a verdict already in 1967, the German Supreme Court (Bundes-gerichtshof) established that no money in the world and no measures taken can make all risks in life go away. The court developed the concept of the "concrete expression of hazards of life" (*Konkretisiertes Lebensrisiko*) which had to be accepted and with which one had to live.[76]

If total security is not possible because it is politically and economically undesirable, authorities have to decide which areas they consider critical (and undertake all efforts to protect and defend them) and which vulnerab-ilities are allowed to persist with the risk that they may be exploited. In order to counteract the vulnerabilities in other ways than through target hardening and direct punishment, but rather through 'heroic composure' of the population, an open and honest debate in the society is necessary.[77]

Acceptance of risk therefore does not mean inaction. But it is necessary to come to an arrangement with the fact that there will always be disasters. To be able to achieve the desired social consensus and thus the *Strategic Resilience* of that society, the government and the people must agree which uncertainties they consider to be "critical" and which vulnerabilities they do not intend to eliminate for good reasons. [78]

Gearson accordingly states that

openness and sharing of information [...] is likely to allow populations to understand the nature of the challenges their communities face, [...] [and to] better support the development of resilient societies that terrorism finds difficult to coerce.[79]

The Security Communicative Vulnerability Paradox

Communicating openly with the public about a society's vulnerabilities however risks unintendedly informing terrorists about the community's weaknesses, who listen to what Western governments say, and are adaptive, flexible and interested in what they value.[80] Münkler & Wassermann call this the *Security Communicative Vulnerability Paradox* which posits that

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75 See *ibid.*, 93.
76 See Bundesgerichtshof 1967.
77 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.
78 See *ibid.*
79 Gearson 2012, 192.
80 See *ibid.*, 193.

the more openly a society communicates about its vulnerability, the more vulnerable it may become.[81]

In the knowledge that potential perpetrators are witnessing the risk communication between authorities and the population, these must carefully weigh between the unintended consequences of exposing unknown vulnerabilities to a malevolent third party and threatening the normative foundations of the open society and ultimately its *Strategic Resilience* by censorship and secrecy measures.[82] Gearson suggest that in knowledge of the perpetrator's intended maximisation of his audience of the terrorising effect beyond the very limited direct target, authorities should opt for openness in order to avoid a potentially counterproductive effect by unintentionally scaring a large part of society through unnecessary secrecy.[83] Kroenig & Pavel propose placing more importance on the benefits of the deterrence effect that societies can achieve by *"developing and publicizing their resilience, including through adequate disaster planning and emergency responses systems"* than on the potential risks of openness.[84]

Münkler and Wasserman suggest that the prerequisite for this strategy to be successful will require an eye-level exchange and arbitration between the security experts who supposedly have fact-based strategic knowledge of security research and policy, and the citizens who are laymen in the field of security but who are having their own perception and subjective opinions about the situation.[85] Whether a concept such as that of "heroic composure" can develop its desired effect in such an exchange depends above all on how convincingly, sensitively and calmly the political and scientific security experts communicate about uncertainty.[86] This all depends on the finding the right time/occasion, the right channel, the right tone, the right message and the right sender. A consensus found on what the society really feels strongly threatened by and which disadvantages it is ready to accept in

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81 See Münkler & Wassermann 2012: 93.

82 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.

83 See Gearson 2012, 192 ; An often quoted sample of misplaced secrecy that unintentionally increases public anxiety took place on November 17, 2015, shortly after the Paris attacks during the press conference on the short-term cancellation of the international soccer match Germany against the Netherlands in Hanover, when the Federal Minister of the Interior, when asked whether there was still a persistent risk situation, responded with "*Part of these answers would be unsettling for the population.*" Munzinger 2015.

84 Kroenig and Pavel 2012, 30.

85 Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.

86 *ibid.*

exchange for more security, is not permanent – it may change over time and may need to be renegotiated.

Security Psychological Vulnerability Paradox

Even if a society, on the basis of a consensus about its 'most critical' vulnerabilities, is making efforts to minimize them, and these efforts then increase security both objectively and subjectively, the vulnerability of this society may paradoxically rise overall insofar as the improvement in the safety or the sense of security increases the negative effect of any damage occurring, in particular intentional menaces (like terror attacks), to possibly strategic dimensions.[87]

Münkler & Wassermann describe this as the *Security Psychological Vulnerability Paradox* that states that the less vulnerable a society is or perceives itself to be, the more stressful and psychologically impacting are any breaches.[88] Attacks can shatter the sense of security of the society and create a feeling of vulnerability.[89] Thus, a terrorist who recognizes these dialectics and takes these into account in his plans, in the same way as he does the high security need of post-heroic societies, will try to attack precisely those areas in which there is supposed security.[90]

Efforts to preclude these vulnerabilities in the traditional style, in particular through the tightening of protective measures and security precautions in "critical" areas, will not only lead to further losses – in freedom and prosperity but can – due to the Security *Psychological Vulnerability Paradox* – also have the effect that vulnerability increases rather than decreases due to and instigated by media coverage.[91]

This underlines the importance of *Strategic Resilience* and preparedness which requires the deliberate consideration of risks and vulnerabilities as a pre-requisite.[92] The strategically resilient response to the *Security Psychological Vulnerability Paradox*, therefore, exists in heroic calmness as a conscious and deliberate paradox: It is important to generate *Strategic Resi-*

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87 See *ibid.*, 91.
88 See *ibid.*, 92.
89 See Rothkopf 2016, 6.
90 See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 92.
91 See *ibid.*, 91.
92 See Diederichs 2017, 51.

lience not through the manufacturing of added protection, but through the acceptance of [certain levels of] risk and uncertainty[93], an idea seconded by Rothkopf who posits that *"The real victory occurs the day after an attack, when life goes on undisturbed."*[94]

To accept the limits of security and to cope with potential suffering due to exploited vulnerabilities, the individual requires the suffering to have a meaning.[95] According to Frankl *"suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning.""*[96]

For the authorities, this means not only fulfilling society's quest for more security, but also communicating the countering concept of a meaning-based acceptance of uncertainty far and wide for the greatest possible impact.[97] Gearson summarises well the multiple interacting constituents that make up the *Strategic Resilience* of society as portrayed in Vasu's model of *"Resilience as a complex system"*.[98]

> *"Terrorism's violence as communication [is] replied to by society's capacity for community strength and determination, which derives from informed and stoic acceptance of the limits of security, but also belief in its ability to cope with many challenges thanks to preparatory measures and information."*[99]

1.3. Research Questions

Despite the widespread understanding among security professionals and academics that only a resilient society can respond to unexpected threats and events in a way that promotes security and deals with them appropriately[100], European societies and their leaders have struggled to achieve strategic resilience as conceptualized by Münkler & Wassermann. This struggle persists even though they possess knowledge that resilience can be actively

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93   See Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.
94   Rothkopf 2016, 325.
95   Frankl 2006, 51.
96   *ibid.*, 51.
97   Münkler and Wassermann 2012, 93.
98   Vasu 2007, 4.
99   Gearson 2012, 191.
100 See Giebel 2014, 370.

cultivated and shaped, at least to a large extent[101], as they face a particularly terrible terrorist threat from the *jihadi* groups like *Al-Qaeda* and *Daesh*.

Strategic Resilience as described by Münkler & Wassermann in the face of terrorism, especially jihadi terrorism, is still seen as special, as outside of the norm in post-heroic societies. Cases where this behaviour is shown, garner attention and they are highlighted and celebrated by the media and authorities.[102] This seemingly re-validates Gigerenzer's observation made in 2004, that society expects that people *"faced with 'dread risk', which refers to events that are very unlikely and rare but that cause devastating damage to […] react strongly with avoidance behavior, different than to other life risks, like traffic accidents, in which many people, distributed over a longer period of time, perish, so to speak, unspectacularly."*[103]

This work sets out to help in closing this gap between abstract conceptual knowledge and action by concretizing Münkler & Wasserman's concept of *Strategic Resilience* and to make it actionable. The objective is to develop a mid-level theory/model that can be tested, an organising and analytical framework that can function as a starting point for governments who want to actualise the Münkler & Wassermann's concept across the government.

The research question of this work is therefore:

How can Münkler & Wasserman's abstract concept of *Strategic Resilience* be actualised in open, pluralist societies faced with a jihadi terrorism threat?

To answer this question, the work relies on three sub-questions:

– Sub-Question One: What are the underlying research-based theories of the *Strategic Resilience* concept?
– Sub-Question Two: What are the critical elements that can form a model, that may be distilled from the assessment of the identified theories in sub-question one, that can help build strengthen and sustain *Strategic Resilience* against terrorism?
– Sub-Questions Three: Can the findings of sub-question two be applied to the concrete challenge of jihadi terrorism in the open, pluralist society?

While sub-question one and two support theory building, sub-question three tests the theory through a multiple-case study with a literal replication design. The to-be-tested-hypothesis assumes that if the proposed frame-

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101 See Baban 2014, 9.
102 See Hassan and O'Grady 2019 ; BBC News 2017 ; BBC News 2016.
103 See Gigerenzer 2004, 286 .

work is valid and effective in answering the overall research question, it should be reflected in the resilience-focused counter-terrorism strategies employed by open-pluralist societies faced with jihadi terrorism. The units of analysis are the programmes and underlying measures taken by the authorities in case countries.

Cognisant of the temporary threat picture[104], the work focuses on jihadi terrorism due to its special qualities that will be laid out in detail in Chapter Three, which make it especially fearsome in the eyes of the public and thereby especially dreadful and effective to create fear and rage.[105] The result should however be transferable to other types of terrorist threats.

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104 EU Terrorism Report 2020.
105 Moyes and Mackenzie July/2018, 10 ; Ashour 2009, 8.