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THE SLAYING OF THE DUTCH FILMMAKER – Religiously motivated violence or Islamist terrorism in the name of global jihad?

NESSER Petter

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| 8) ABSTRACT <p>This report surveys in depth the available open source information about the ritualistic murder of the filmmaker Theo Van Gogh on the streets of Amsterdam on November 2, 2004. The report makes the case that the murder of Van Gogh was a terrorist attack implemented by an al-Qaida inspired radical Islamist group within the framework of global jihad, and not an act of religious violence by a lone fanatic. The report also argues that the invasion of Iraq was an important motivational factor for the assassin and his accomplices, in addition to grievances related to the Dutch government's policies concerning immigration and Dutch counter-terrorism measures.</p> | | |
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THE SLAYING OF THE DUTCH FILMMAKER – Religiously motivated violence or Islamist terrorism in the name of global jihad?

1 INTRODUCTION

“There will be no mercy for the wicked, only the sword will be raised against them“

Note pinned to the chest of the assassinated Theo Van Gogh.

On 2 November, 2004, the presumed killer of Theo Van Gogh, the 26-year-old Dutch-Moroccan, Muhammad Bouyeri, aka Abu Zubair, preyed on his victim and attacked him as he was riding his bicycle near a park in the middle of Amsterdam. Theo Van Gogh was a descendant of the famous painter Vincent Van Gogh. He was a filmmaker, a TV-producer, a talk-show host, and has been described as a “radical libertarian”, and a “provocateur”. Bouyeri first shot the victim and then stabbed him with a butcher’s knife, before slitting the filmmaker’s throat in a ritualistic manner. He also tried to behead him, but gave this up, and pinned two letters to his body with a second knife.¹ One of the letters instigated jihad and foresaw the downfall of the US, Europe, the Netherlands and a female Dutch-Somali politician. It also mentioned other Dutch politicians who have voiced criticisms against Muslims and Islam in Holland. Shortly after the slaying, a spokesman for the Dutch authorities said, “the case increasingly appears to be the first Islamic terrorist attack in the Netherlands”.² One law-enforcement official described it as a “small version of a terrorist attack”.³

The note pinned to Van Gogh’s body was written in Dutch, and entitled “Open letter to Hirshi Ali”. It addressed a female Dutch-Somali liberal politician, Ayan Hirshi Ali, a self-proclaimed “ex-Muslim” and member of parliament representing the right-wing populist party *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD - People’s Party for Liberty and Democracy).. She also wrote the script for Van Gogh’s latest short film “Submission”. This film is about domestic violence against Muslim women. It utilizes visual effects aimed to upset and offend conservative Muslims. For example it shows Quranic texts projected on a veiled woman, who is visibly naked beneath her fully transparent robe. Recently, another VVD representative, a member of parliament, and an Islam-critic, Geert Wilders, was threatened with beheading on a radical Islamist website for insulting Islam. Both Hirshi Ali and Wilders have been put under police protection. What the Dutch prime minister dubbed “a maelstrom of violence” followed the slaying.⁴ It involved more than 20 arson attacks against mosques, churches and schools in the Netherlands. Muslims and non-Muslims launched a violent campaign against each other,

¹ See Appendix for photocopies and translation of the letters.

² Sebastian Rotella and Douglas Heingartner, “Suspect in Slaying of Filmmaker Faces Terrorism Charges?,” *Los Angeles Times*, 06 November 2004.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Justin Sparks, “Muslim mole panics Dutch secret service,” *The Times* 14 November 2004.

but fortunately it did not result in any human casualties or serious injuries. The majority of attacks struck Muslim targets.⁵ Opinion polls recorded in Holland after the murder of Theo Van Gogh showed that as many as 40% of the Dutch hope Muslim immigrants “no longer feel at home in the Netherlands”, and that 80% of the population “want tougher policies against immigrants”.⁶

At first glance, the slaying of the filmmaker looked like a spontaneous, religiously motivated murder triggered by the release of his provocative short film. However, investigations have revealed that the assassin belonged to a more or less organized group of individuals subscribing to radical Islamism, and supporting al-Qaida’s ideology of global jihad against the United States and its allies. Political assassinations were also conceived of and planned in these circles. The following analysis outlines and discusses the information about the murder case currently available in open sources. Pieces of information that seemed uncertain and/or inaccurate were consulted upon with an informed Dutch intelligence official, in order to increase the reliability of facts upon which this analysis is based. The hypothesis generated from the mass of information about the case surveyed thus far is that the slaying of Theo Van Gogh was an act of global jihad, following the new patterns of Islamist terrorism in Western Europe, and cannot be reduced to the deed of a religious fanatic who was acting on his own.

This analysis finds that the motivations for the attack appear to be more ideological-political in response to the escalation in the conflict between radical Islamists and the US, Israel and their European allies, than cultural-religious, generated from a provocative short film about the treatment of Muslim women. The release of the short film affected the selection of Van Gogh by the terrorists because it made him visible as a potential target. The paper argues that it is highly plausible that the killer was motivated by the jihadist notion that Muslims in Holland and around the globe are under attack as part of the “global war on terrorism”. The assassination occurred in the context of an escalation in the conflict in Iraq, and intensified counter-terrorism efforts against radical Islamists in the Netherlands. The Van Gogh case, it seems, reveals patterns of recruitment, motivations and *modus operandi* similar to those addressed in the report “Jihad in Europe”, released by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment in April 2004.⁷

The following patterns are typical of the Islamist terrorist cases revealed after 2000, and will be addressed in more detail below. First, the target selection and the method of assassination do represent commonly used tactical means for radical Islamists associated with al-Qaida. Secondly, the assassin, Muhammad Bouyeri, belonged to a semi-organized multinational radical Islamist milieu consisting mainly of second-generation immigrants to Holland from North African countries. This group operated mainly in the Netherlands, but also across state

⁵ “AFP Lists Violence in Holland Since Murder of Controversial Filmmaker,” *Agence France Presse* 10 November 2004 via FBIS.

⁶ Justin Sparks, “Muslim mole panics Dutch secret service,” *The Times* 14 November 2004.

⁷ Petter Nesser, *Jihad un Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report, 2004/01146. The report surveyed four thwarted terrorist plots in depth, and listed multiple failed mass casualty attacks in several European countries.

boundaries, and maintained international jihadist contacts. Individuals in the group have been linked to terrorist activities in other European countries, and in Morocco. Investigations have revealed that they planned assassinations of politicians in the Netherlands as well as in Portugal. Thirdly, the presumed assassin, Muhammad Bouyeri, has been described as a bright and integrated second-generation immigrant to the Netherlands, who was recruited to militancy by Islamist radicals in his European home country. Fourthly, a survey of Bouyeri's background indicates that he was drawn towards militancy after the September 11 attacks, after his mother died from cancer, and after he failed to fulfill his ambition of establishing a youth centre for immigrants in his hometown. The pattern of pre-recruitment personal crises and failed ambitions is also a familiar feature in several terrorist conspiracies unravelled in the Western Muslim Diasporas of Europe and the US.⁸ Finally, the available information about the Van Gogh case strongly suggests that motivations for the murder may have involved grievances related to the US-led invasion of Iraq. There is evidence that Bouyeri was very supportive of the Sunni Islamist resistance in Iraq. In addition, two men belonging to the same radical Islamist milieu as Bouyeri in Holland are suspected of involvement in plans to assassinate the former Portuguese prime minister during the 2004 European soccer championship in Portugal. Both Portugal and the Netherlands have deployed troops to Iraq. It should also be noted that the murder coincided with the mobilization of coalition forces for the recapture of the stronghold of Islamist resistance in Iraq, Fallujah.

2 THE MODUS OPERANDI OF THE ATTACK

On the morning of 2 November, 2004, at 08.45 Muhammad Bouyeri attacked Theo Van Gogh as he was riding his bicycle in Linaeusstraat near the Oosterpark in central Amsterdam. The assassin cycled up to his victim, stepped off the bike, drew an automatic pistol, and shot Van Gogh several times. He fell off his bike but managed to cross the street heading towards a public building for shelter while begging for mercy. However, Bouyeri was determined, and even beforehand he had written an answer to the filmmaker's final plea on the five-page letter written in Dutch he pinned to the victim's body, "*There will be no mercy for the wicked, only the sword will be raised against them*".⁹ The killer followed Van Gogh across the street and shot him several times, and then he slit his throat and attempted to decapitate him with a butcher's knife, before he stabbed a smaller knife through the two letters he had brought with him, and into his chest. He then walked slowly away from the murder site and headed for Oosterpark.

Police from a nearby police station followed him to the park, and there was a shootout in which one police officer, the assassin, and one by passer were wounded. Muhammad Bouyeri was taken into custody, body searched and interrogated. It turned out he was carrying a "last will" in his pocket, strongly indicating that the attack was planned as a suicide mission. The letter read, "*So these are my last words... riddled with bullets... baptized in blood... as I had*

⁸ *Ibid.*; Petter Nesser, *Sunni Islamist Terrorism in North-America - patterns and profiles*, 2005, working paper.

⁹ Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

hoped."¹⁰ It seems Bouyeri wanted to be shot by the police and thus become a martyr. The will was written in Dutch, and it was entitled "*Baptized in Blood*".¹¹ In it he urged other Islamist fighters to conduct martyrdom operations, reassuring them that Allah would give those who did "*a garden... instead of the Earthly rubble*".¹² The "last will" was written as a typical Dutch rhyming poem, indicating that Bouyeri was fully assimilated, and familiar with Dutch traditions.¹³ The killer had indeed put some effort into communicating why he killed the artist, and what he wanted to achieve by doing this. The contents of the letters will be discussed in more detail below in the section about motivational factors.

The *modus operandi* of the attack against Van Gogh is not the most typical for al-Qaida and associated radical Islamists, but nor is it atypical. Al-Qaida has preferred mass casualty attacks against civilian as well as military targets, most often using powerful bombs delivered by suicide operatives in cars, boats or airplanes. However, over the years the repertoire of attacks gradually has become more diverse. Al-Qaida associates and other radical Islamist groups have used assassinations and political murders both historically and recently. For example, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, which was more or less absorbed into al-Qaida in 1998, used this type of attack against the Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat in 1981. Al-Qaida associated terrorists shot and killed the American diplomat Lawrence Foley in Amman in October 2002, and decapitated the American journalist Daniel Pearl in Pakistan in February 2002. Various insurgent groups in Iraq have abducted and beheaded a number of international workers, US and allied soldiers, as well as Arabs and Muslims, who have collaborated, or have been accused of collaborating with, the coalition forces.¹⁴

Strategic and tactical jihadist literature published on the Internet elaborates and assesses how and under what circumstances assassinations should be used during jihad.¹⁵ Several assassinations and kidnapping operations attributed to militant Islamists have involved elements of martyrdom operations. The kidnapping of children in Beslan, North Ossetia, in September 2004, is a case in point. It shows how the mixing of kidnapping, assassination and suicide elements has become an option for insurgents and terrorists, and that this mix might constitute a very powerful tool in terms of spreading fear and demoralizing the enemy, which is indeed the essence of terrorism. The slaying of Van Gogh was the first assassination attributed to radical Islamists in Western Europe after 2000. The Algerian radical Islamist group GIA used political assassinations as a tactic against Algerian secularists in Algeria and France, but there has been no such attack by radical Sunni Islamist groups in Europe in recent years.

¹⁰ See Appendix A.2.1.1.

¹¹ See Appendix A.2.1.1.

¹² Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

¹³ E-mail correspondence with Dutch Intelligence official, January 2005.

¹⁴ See for example Thomas Hegghammer, *The Iraqi Hostage Crisis: abductions in Iraq April-August 2004*, FFI/report-2004/03105.

¹⁵ Brynjar Lia, lecture given at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, September 2004.

3 PROFILE OF THE PRESUMED ASSASSIN AND HIS NETWORK

3.1 Muhammad Bouyeri: A profile

Muhammad Bouyeri was born and raised in the suburb Slotervaart, West of Amsterdam, dominated by Moroccan and Turkish immigrants.¹⁶ Muhammad's parents came as immigrants to Holland from Morocco. He and his three sisters were born in the Netherlands. The publicly available sources about his family and his upbringing are relatively scarce and based on interviews with friends, colleagues, school personnel and neighbours. The family has not talked to journalists, and many of his closest friends were detained after the murder of Van Gogh. Neighbours have described the family as "quiet" and said they prayed in a moderate mosque. The young Bouyeri has been described as "a good boy", "gentle and cooperative", and as "a promising member of the second generation of Moroccan immigrants to Holland".¹⁷

He went to the local Mondrian College, and his teachers have described him as a "B-level student". He went on to study accounting and Information Technology at a technical educational institute in the town of Diemen south of Amsterdam. While studying he is said to have spent much time on the streets of Slotervaart. Some of his friends have told a Dutch newspaper he was arrested and imprisoned for seven months due to a "violence-related crime". Bouyeri was known to have problems controlling his temper, and this was not the only time he had been arrested for violent behaviour.¹⁸ His friends said he was angry and frustrated because of political issues such as the conflict in Palestine. He supported HAMAS, and studied their suicide operations in detail. Bouyeri's friends believed he became more religious and fundamentalist during his imprisonment, and that the death of his mother from breast-cancer possibly contributed to his radicalisation. The September 11 attacks in the US have also been cited as a possible source of inspiration.¹⁹ He started to wear traditional Islamic clothing and grew a beard in order to emulate the Prophet Muhammad and the Companions. He also became increasingly engaged in social activism and community work.²⁰

When he had served his time in prison, he started to study social work instead of accounting and became a volunteer worker for the Stichting Eigenwijks community centre. One of the workers at the centre has highlighted one event staged by Bouyeri in February 2002, in which local politicians had to face neighbourhood youths, and listen to their political opinions and views.²¹ He has been described as an idealist, staging several events for youths, such as a

¹⁶ Glenn Frankel, "From civic activist to alleged murderer. Suspect in killing of director turned to radical Islam, officials say," *Washington Post* 28 November 2004; Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

¹⁷ Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

¹⁸ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

¹⁹ Glenn Frankel, "From civic activist to alleged murderer. Suspect in killing of director turned to radical Islam, officials say," *Washington Post* 28 November 2004; Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Glenn Frankel, "From civic activist to alleged murderer. Suspect in killing of director turned to radical Islam, officials say," *Washington Post* 28 November 2004.

soccer tournament, a neighbourhood clean-up campaign, in addition to writing for the centre's bulletin "Over 't Veld" (Over the Fields). It has also been said he had a dream about establishing a youth centre in his home community. He lobbied for support of this idea in the Dutch parliament and the Amsterdam city council, but did not receive the necessary financial support.

Bouyeri gradually became more radical, and focused on Iraq. According to the *Washington Post's* backgrounder, his change was reflected in his writings for "Over 't Veld". The earliest articles called for cross-cultural and cross-religion understanding and tolerance, whereas articles from early 2003 appeared more fundamentalist and aggressive. For example, he reportedly compared Dutch police with Nazis, he used "sexual insults" when referring to American troops inside Iraq, and said they deserved to be beheaded. In the summer of 2003 he wrote the following in the bulletin:

"the Netherlands is now our enemy, because they participate in the occupation of Iraq. We shall not attack our neighbours but we will those who are apostates and those who are behaving like our enemy. Ayan Hirshi Ali is an apostate and our enemy".²²

It appears he increasingly interlinked grievances related to the treatment of Muslims in Holland with the "global war on terrorism" and the invasion of Iraq. In line with his gradually more fundamentalist and intolerant approach, Bouyeri wanted to ban the sale of beer at the community centre he worked for, and he also "discouraged women from attending the events he organized".²³ As this was not acceptable to the centre's staff he stopped working there and moved to Amsterdam.

In Amsterdam he was recruited by a group of Islamist militants. The group later convened regularly, twice a week, in the house Bouyeri rented at Marianne Philipsstraat 27 in the district of Geuzenveld-Slotermeer in Amsterdam, and held their religious sermons under the guidance of an elusive Syrian radical preacher going by the name of Ridwan al-Issar aka Abu Khatib. A number of Abu Khatib's followers had been under surveillance by the Dutch secret service AIVD for more than two years, and the milieu had been code-named the Hofstad Network. "Hofstad" is another name for the city of Hague, where a few of the militants lived, although the centre of the group's activities was in Amsterdam. The police, at one point during 2003, had questioned Bouyeri, but he had not been considered an important player at that time, and was subsequently released.²⁴ The mysterious Syrian preacher vanished from Holland, reportedly on the very day of the slaying of Van Gogh. His current whereabouts is unknown, but according to a Dutch intelligence official there are indications that he might have headed back to Syria.²⁵ The other members of the group have been detained and questioned after the attack.

²² E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

²³ Toby Sterling, "Changes sway Holland slaying suspect," *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

²⁴ This was probably in November 2003 as part of the investigation of an alleged terrorist conspiracy attributed to several members of the "Hofstad Network". The incident is elaborated below.

²⁵ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

Exactly how Bouyeri was recruited to the Hofstad Network remains unclear. Seemingly, his way to jihadism resembled patterns of recruitment seen in the other thwarted terrorist conspiracies in Western Europe and the US.²⁶ The typical pattern is that radical recruiters have approached alienated young Muslims in transitional phases of their lives, often after some kind of personal crisis, or failed ambition. A spokesman for the semi-radical Amsterdam El Tawheed mosque, which is said to have been visited once, during a conference, by prominent al-Qaida figures like Muhammad Atta and Ramzi Binalshibh and Marwan al-Shehhi (possibly also Monir al-Mutassadeq), said that young second-generation Muslims in Europe are “vulnerable to recruitment by radicals” because they are not “accepted by society <Western>, and not accepted at home <North-Africa/Morocco> either”. Such young men thus become easy targets for “extremists who uses religion as a bait”.²⁷

In a 2003 report the Dutch secret service Director Sybrand van Hulst stated that Islamist militants impress youth with a “certain fascination” with terrorism. According to the *Associated Press*, the report described the recruitment process like this: “After striking up a friendship, militants tell youths that modern mosques are too lax and take them to isolated, sect-like surroundings to convince them that taking part in jihad is a Muslim duty, with martyrdom the highest achievement”. Quoting analyses based on the intelligence report, Associated Press continues, “They watch jihad videos with each other and go to readings, congresses and (Muslim) summer camps [...] In addition, they participate in Internet chat rooms that discuss jihad and Islamic martyrdom”. In the final phase of the training the young recruits are asked to write a martyr’s testament similar to the one found in Bouyeri’s pocket when he was arrested.²⁸

3.2 The Hofstad Network and its international contacts

Muhammad Bouyeri joined an organized radical Islamist milieu in Amsterdam that planned terrorist attacks both in Holland and abroad. The members of the Hofstad Network were mainly young, Dutch, second-generation Muslim immigrants of North African origin. Of the first eight suspects who were arrested shortly after the slaying of Van Gogh, six were of Moroccan ancestry, one of Algerian, and one was a dual Moroccan-Spanish national. On 10 November, 2004 Dutch police launched an anti-terrorism operation in The Hague and arrested another three members of the network. This anti-terrorism operation was large-scale, and the armed suspects barricaded themselves in their house near a train station in The Hague. They threw a grenade at the police and hurt two officers badly. Air corridors above the capital were closed during the operation. After a 15 hour siege, police pumped tear gas into the building,

²⁶ Petter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report 2004/01146; Petter Nesser, *Sunni Islamist Terrorism in North America – Patterns and profiles*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report (working paper). CHECK FOOTNOTE 8 ON PAGE 4 FOR CONSISTENCY OF THIS REFERENCE

²⁷ Cited in Glenn Frankel, “From civic activist to alleged murderer. Suspect in killing of director turned to radical Islam, officials say,” *Washington Post* 28 November 2004.

²⁸ Toby Sterling, “Changes sway Holland slaying suspect,” *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

stormed the hideout and arrested the suspects.²⁹ At the time of writing the total number of arrested suspects has reached 13.³⁰ Six of the detainees have been eliminated from the murder enquiry, but remain charged with belonging to a terrorist organization.

According to the Dutch Interior Minister, Johan Remkes, a terrorist cell formed by members of the Hofstad Network started to show “conspiratorial behaviour” in 2003.³¹ The group is suspected of having planned a series of assassinations of Dutch politicians who were critical of Islam and Muslims, and also of having planned bomb attacks against several high-profile targets in the Netherlands, including the county’s only nuclear reactor, Borssele nuclear power station, in November 2003. It has been confirmed that the militants maintained extensive international contacts. They communicated amongst themselves and with jihadists abroad through the use of the Internet, mobile phones, in addition to meetings. As noted above, after Bouyeri joined the group, they met twice a week in his house. It has also been confirmed that three members of the network trained in Kashmiri jihad camps in Pakistan, and that two members attended a training facility in Afghanistan.³² It is a common pattern of the other Islamist terrorist cases in Western Europe that operatives received para-military and/or urban terrorism training in jihad-camps in Afghanistan.³³ The core members of the group have been identified, and at the time of writing it is possible give a sketchy picture of the structure of the Amsterdam-based network, and the most important profiles.

The Syrian preacher Ridwan al-Issar was the ideological leader of the group. He applied for asylum in Germany in 1995, but the application was eventually rejected. In Germany he did not appear to be religious. According to Dutch newspapers he went to discotheques, drank beer and watched porn movies. In 1996 he was arrested at a railway station in the town of Aachen in possession of small amounts of heroin and hashish. He arrived in the Netherlands in 1998, and filed an application for asylum there also. While the application was pending he stayed at two different asylum seekers’ centres in the east of Holland. He appears to have undergone a process of soul-searching. He turned to Islam, and studied jihadist literature on the Internet. After a while he seems to have felt competent enough to give lectures about the Quran in several Dutch mosques. In one of the mosques, the radical al-Tawheed mosque in Amsterdam, he met Bouyeri and the other members of the Hofstad network and became their leader. When his application for asylum to Holland finally was rejected he went underground, but continued to guide the group. It appears al-Issar travelled back and forth between Germany and the Netherlands using fake documents. He was arrested once in Frankfurt in January 2003, but disappeared and showed up in Holland again. In November 2003 he was transferred to Germany by Dutch police, but managed to find his way back, and it is alleged that he was in Holland on the day of the Van Gogh murder.³⁴ According to *Radio Holland*, al-Issar had stolen

²⁹ Sebastian Rotella, “Islamic Militants Arrested After Standoff at the Hague,” *Los Angeles Times* 10 November 2004.

³⁰ “Muslims arrested in Van Gogh murder belong to militant group,” *The Associated Press* 13 November 2004.

³¹ Craig S. Smith, “Dutch Look for Qaeda Link After Killing of Filmmaker,” *New York Times* 06 November 2004.

³² E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

³³ Petter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report 2004/01146.

³⁴ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005

the identity of a member of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood who has been imprisoned in Syria.³⁵ The fact that al-Issar held a leading position in the group, and that he, according to the Dutch Interior Minister, radiated “charisma” and exercised “great influence on youth from this network”, strongly indicates he had experience from one of the most important theatres of jihad before the invasion of Iraq, Afghanistan or Chechnya. The study “Jihad in Europe” showed how most leaders and core activists of terrorist cells that have been detected in Europe had an “Afghanistan record”.³⁶

Mohammed Bouyeri probably had a more important role in the group than was first perceived. The fact that the group regularly convened in his house is an indicator that he played an important role.³⁷ In addition, his profile matches those of leading operatives and coordinators of planned attacks throughout Western Europe. There are indications that Bouyeri was the “communications coordinator” of the Hofstad Network. He was very active on the Internet, and hosted a MSN group called *Muwahhidin* <http://groups.msn.com/MuwahhidinDeWareMoslims>.³⁸ Using his alias Abu Zubair, he wrote articles about Islam and translated texts of influential radical Islamist thinkers, such as Abu Ala Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb. Investigations of the Internet lives of Bouyeri and other members of the Hofstad Network revealed the existence of a radical and Iraq-focused discourse on seemingly harmless chat-rooms for young North African immigrants to Holland.³⁹

Despite his young age, the 18-year-old Dutch-Moroccan Samir Azzouz appears to have held a central position in the group. He was arrested together with two accomplices in November 2003, in possession of chemicals suited for bomb making. Despite this, he, and the others, were released due to lack of evidence. Azzouz was rearrested in June 2004, and at this point he was in possession of “more complete bomb-making ingredients”, as well as maps and floor plans of Borssele nuclear power station, Schiphol Airport, the Dutch Parliament, the Dutch Ministry of Defence and other public buildings in The Hague.⁴⁰ According to *The New York Times*, Samir Azzouz wanted to go to Chechnya in order to participate in jihad against the

³⁵ Ferry Biedermann, “Syrian mystery man sought in Van Gogh case” *Radio Holland* 3 December 2004.

³⁶ Petter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report, 2004/01146.

³⁷ E-mail correspondence with Dutch Intelligence official, January 2005.

³⁸ The web forum was active between July 2004 and 30 August 2004, a short time before the attack.

³⁹ For example, Shortly after the murder, the Dutch *Radio 1* reported that Bouyeri had been active on the Moroccan web forum *Maghreb.nl* and that he dispatched approximately 100 messages using the alias *rifo79* to this site in the three days before the murder, in which he hailed the Islamist fighters inside Iraq as “men of courage”, and said he hoped Western soldiers in Iraq would return “in pieces”. He also dubbed Iraq’s Prime Minister Ayad Allawi a “fat pig”. Later it turned out that *rifo79* was not Bouyeri after all. Another visitor of the web forum posted a message saying *rifo79* was active on the net after the murder of Van Gogh. Later *rifo79* himself appeared on the site denying that he was Bouyeri, and ridiculing the Dutch press for suggesting he was. However, the messages posted to this site visited by “ten-thousands of young people” every day indicate that the invasion of Iraq has stirred anger amongst broader Islamist segments in Holland. See Glenn Frankel, “From civic activist to alleged murderer. Suspect in killing of director turned to radical Islam, officials say,” *Washington Post* 28 November 2004 and “Rifo79’ toch niet Mohammed B.” *Het Parool* 17 November 2004 <http://www.parool.nl/nieuws/2004/NOV/17/bin2.html>, text translated by Arjan Kloppers 04 January 2005.

⁴⁰ Craig S. Smith, “Dutch Look for Qaeda Link After Killing of Filmmaker,” *New York Times* 06 November 2004.

Russians.⁴¹ In 2002, he was stopped in Ukraine on his way to Russia, and had to return to Holland.

Bouyeri befriended Samir Azzouz when he came to Amsterdam from Slotervaart, and the two have been observed together in five different apartments in Western Amsterdam that were frequented by members of the group.⁴²

Another key member of the group was Ahmed Hamdi. He was probably the militants' "treasurer", playing a similar role to Said Bahaji of the 9/11 Hamburg cell. He administered the finances of the Hofstad network (such as paying rent for apartments and fees for communication devices, as well as wiring money to operatives who travelled abroad).

The militants also managed to place a "mole" inside the AIVD. Outhman Ben Ali (34) worked as a translator for the secret service, and he was leaking transcripts of telephone taps to the Hofstad Network, as well as to the radical Islamist Hassan O. Outhman belonging to a group of militants situated in the city of Utrecht.⁴³

The group's members who travelled to Pakistan and Afghanistan for training were identified as Jason Walters (19), Ismail Akhnikh and the Zakaria T (21). According to *The Associated Press*, Ismail Akhnikh received bomb-making training in Afghanistan.⁴⁴ Jason Walters also managed to cross the Afghan border and join a training facility on his second journey, and flew back to Holland from Jalalabad.⁴⁵ He is the son of an African American and a Dutch woman, and converted to Islam when he was 16. The young convert was harassed and exposed to racism in school. He was radicalised, joined the Hofstad Network, and went to Pakistan and Afghanistan for training. He and his younger brother Jermaine were expelled from the Amsterdam El Fath mosque for voicing radical views. The two brothers imposed strict religious rules in the home of their divorced mother, who decided to move out of the house with her daughter. Shortly afterwards, the brothers moved from Amsterdam to The Hague.⁴⁶

It seems Holland-based Islamist radicals have been relatively active in the European networks. A group headed by the French-Algerian militant Jamal Beghal planned to launch attacks against US targets in Europe. These plans were partly conceived in Holland. A Holland-based group dubbed the "Trabelsi-network" provided fake documents and took part in other support activities for Beghal and his cadre who also planned an attack against the canteen of the US

⁴¹ It appears Chechnya has been a popular place among militants in Europe, for waging jihad. According to the 9/11 Commission report, the members of the Hamburg cell initially wanted to go to Chechnya, but were talked into going to Afghanistan instead by a German based radical Islamist they met on a train. See Thomas H. Kean et al, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company 2004, p 165 ff.

⁴² Craig S. Smith, "Dutch Look for Qaeda Link After Killing of Filmmaker," *New York Times* 06 November 2004.

⁴³ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

⁴⁴ Toby Sterling, "Muslims arrested in Van Gogh murder belong to militant group," *The Associated Press* 13 November 2004.

⁴⁵ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

⁴⁶ Keith B. Richburg, "From Quiet Teen to Terrorist Suspect, Son of African American Held After Dutch Raid Suspected Muslim Extremist Cells" *Washington Post* 05 December 2004.

airbase Kleine Brogel in Belgium, near the Dutch border. There have been no reports in open sources that the group of Bouyeri had any direct links to the “Trabelsi-network”. However, one Spain-based militant allegedly had connections in both milieus.⁴⁷

Our studies of Islamist terrorist conspiracies in Western Europe suggest the existence of a substantial support-network for jihadist groups in the Netherlands and in Belgium.⁴⁸ Apart from the Trabelsi-network there were other incidents that indicated a jihadist “infrastructure” in Holland. For example, in June 2003, Dutch police launched an investigation into a milieu of suspected Islamist militants clustered around a scuba diving school run by the Iraqi-born Kasim Ali. The incident invoked fears that Islamist militants were planning maritime terrorist attacks in Europe.⁴⁹

Dutch authorities appear to have been increasingly aware of the threat of Islamist terrorism since 2001. The Van Gogh case shows that the services had taken steps to monitor suspected militants. According to the *New York Times*, a spokesman for the Dutch intelligence service said that “almost 40 people had been arrested over the last several years on suspicion of planning acts of terrorism or recruiting militants.”⁵⁰ The *Associated Press* quoted officials in the Dutch secret service saying “several dozen” Islamist militants or “muhjahidin” constitute a “hard core of about 150 radicals who are active in the Netherlands”.⁵¹ A spokesman for the Dutch secret service described the radical structures as diffuse “they <the radicals> are not members of groups, but rather individuals with a common ideology”, “people who think alike”.⁵² According to a report by the Dutch intelligence cited in the press, al-Qaida was “stealthily taking root in Dutch society” by recruiting alienated second-generation Muslim immigrants to Holland in mosques, cafes and prisons.⁵³ The activities and contacts of the Holland-based Hofstad network were indeed parallel to those seen in terrorist conspiracies attributed to al-Qaida associated radical Islamist groups in other European countries after 2000.

The Hofstad Network was involved in activities outside the Netherlands, and established multiple international jihadist connections. The group allegedly maintained contacts with Islamist militants in Morocco, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland and Saudi Arabia. The terrorist suspects who were arrested in October 2003 allegedly exchanged “coded communications” with a Moroccan Islamist militant, imprisoned in Spain, who has been identified as Abdeladim Akoudad aka Naoufel. In Naoufel’s calendar police found encoded telephone numbers of

⁴⁷ See below, 4.1.

⁴⁸ Petter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report, 2004/01146.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p 88.

⁵⁰ Marlise Simons, “Police Arrest 8 Tied to Suspect in Killing of Dutch Filmmaker,” *New York Times* 04 November 2004.

⁵¹ Toby Sterling, “Changes sway Holland slaying suspect,” *The Associated Press* 08 November 2004.

⁵² *Ibid*.

⁵³ Ambrose Evans-Pritchard and Joan Clement, “Crackdown on radicals as Dutch mourn film maker,” *The Telegraph* 10 November 2004,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/11/10/wneth10.xml&sSheet=/portal/2004/11/10/ixportal.html>.

members of the Hofstad Network.⁵⁴ Naoufel allegedly is a member of a Moroccan Salafist-Jihadist group established by so-called “Afghan Arabs” who returned to Morocco. This group has been dubbed the Moroccan Islamic Fighting Group (GICM or *al-Jama`ah al-Islamiyya al-Muqatila bi'l- Maghrib*), and it is suspected that members of this group formed the terrorist network that launched the Madrid bombings (M-11). Moroccan authorities want Naoufel because they believe he was involved in the terrorist operation in Casablanca on May 16, 2003.⁵⁵ Another radical Salafist group formed by jihad veterans with experience from Afghanistan – *al-Salafiyya al-Jihadiyya* - allegedly staged the Casablanca attacks. However, in an interview in September 2004 a Spanish intelligence official, informed about the investigations of the terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March 2004, expressed doubts concerning the utility of differentiating between the various Moroccan Salafist-Jihadist groups, because they seem to share the same ideology and support al-Qaida’s doctrine of global jihad.⁵⁶

According to *Le Monde*, Naoufel maintained ties to prominent jihadist-leaders and people belonging to the “al-Qaida hardcore”.⁵⁷ Allegedly, he also was frequently in contact with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who is seen as the leader of the Islamic resistance in Iraq. Al-Zarqawi is known to have coordinated the activities of at least one active terrorist cell in Western Europe, and he is suspected of coordinating a broader network of Islamist terrorists operating in multiple European countries, but mainly in Italy, France, the UK and Germany.⁵⁸

Reportedly, investigators have also been probing a possible relationship between members of the Hofstad Network, and a group of Moroccan militants that has been referred to as “*Martyrs for Morocco*”, arrested in Madrid in October 2004 and suspected of planning suicide bomb attacks against the Spanish National High Court, and possibly also Santiago Bernabeu soccer stadium (home field of Real Madrid).⁵⁹ The terrorist cell reportedly “made necessary arrangements” for acquiring 1000 kgs of the plastic explosive Goma 2 Eco, the explosive that was used in the Madrid bombings. 500 kgs was planned to be used in a suicide attack against the High Court.⁶⁰ The militants probably planned the attack as a response to increased Spanish counter-terrorism efforts after M-11, and wanted to kill the head of the Spanish terrorism investigations, Judge Baltazar Garson.⁶¹ The suspected leader of *Martyrs for Morocco* is an Algerian militant currently imprisoned in Switzerland, Muhammad Achraf (31). Achraf was

⁵⁴ The Holland-based militants had multiple contacts with several like-minded people in Spain, who are suspected of involvement in the Casablanca-bombings and M-11, and a recent conspiracy to blow up the Spanish counter-terrorism court. See Craig S. Smith, “Dutch Look for Qaeda Link After Killing of Filmmaker,” *New York Times* 06 November 2004.

⁵⁵ Toby Sterling, “Muslims arrested in Van Gogh murder belong to militant group,” *The Associated Press* 13 November 2004.

⁵⁶ Interview with Spanish intelligence official, September 2004.

⁵⁷ Jean-Pierre Stroobants, Martine Silber, and Eric Leser; first paragraph in introduction: “The ‘Hofstad’ Islamist Network Was Solidly Anchored in Europe,” *Le Monde* 10 December 2004 via FBIS.

⁵⁸ Petter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe*, Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004, report, 2004/01146.

⁵⁹ “Spanish link to Dutch film-maker’s killing is probed,” *El Pais* (excerpt) 09 November 2004 via FBIS.

⁶⁰ Kathryn Haahr-escolano, “Algerian Salafists and The New Face of Terrorism in Spain,” *Jamestown Foundation* 04 November 2004.

⁶¹ Jean-Pierre Stroobants, Martine Silber, and Eric Leser; first paragraph in introduction: “The ‘Hofstad’ Islamist Network Was Solidly Anchored in Europe,” *Le Monde* 10 December 2004 via FBIS.

regularly in contact with militants in Spain and members of the Hofstad Network in Holland. For example, he made several phone calls to Muhammad Bouyeri. According to *The New York Times* he also wired money to members of the Hofstad Network.⁶² One of the detainees held in Spain in connection with the High Court – plot, Abdol Ghaffar Hashemi, held a Dutch passport, whereas another, Mourad Yala, a friend of Samir Azzouz, was arrested in Holland in 2003, suspected of falsifying travel documents. Spanish investigators believe these two militants had been trying to convert laptops into bombs that could be used in terrorist attacks in the Netherlands.⁶³

The Hofstad Network was also involved in planning attacks outside the Netherlands. On 11 June, 2004, Portuguese police arrested a group of Islamist militants in Porto. It is suspected that they planned to assassinate the Portuguese president-designate of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, as well as other foreign guests, at a reception at the Freixo Palace on the night before the opening match of the Euro 2004 championship soccer tournament. Portuguese intelligence received a warning from their Dutch colleagues that three Dutch-Moroccan members of the Hofstad Network had travelled to Portugal. One of the terrorist suspects had shared an apartment with Van Gogh’s killer, and they drove from the Netherlands to Portugal in a VW Golf registered in the name of Bouyeri.⁶⁴

Another of the Holland-based militants has been identified as Nouredine el Fatmi. Dutch police searched the apartment of el Fatmi and found a “last will”, saying that he wanted to die for jihad.⁶⁵ According to the director of Judiciary Police, Adelino Salvado, the militants acted in a way that “pointed to the idea that something was being planned”.⁶⁶ For example, they regularly collected small amounts of cash from Lisbon International Airport. Salvado made the decision to warn the potential targets about the threat, and had the suspected terrorists arrested and expelled from Portugal. Other police forces insisted that one should allow the plot to develop further in order establish a solid case against the suspects.⁶⁷ Judging by Bouyeri’s and the Hofstad Network’s international contacts it seems safe to conclude that they were part of the numerous terrorist plots that have been unravelled over the past years in Western Europe. Islamist terrorist cells in Europe have planned to attack a wide spectre of targets, and commonly and routinely operated beyond state boundaries.

4 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

The following analysis is based on indicators and circumstantial evidence, not on any detailed interview or psychoanalysis of the perpetrators. These indicators include; *the modus operandi*,

⁶² Craig S. Smith, “Dutch Look for Qaeda Link After Killing of Filmmaker,” *New York Times* 06 November 2004.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Joao Pedro Fonseca, “Group planned attack in Porto,” *Diario de Noticias* 15 November 2004, via FBIS.

⁶⁵ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

⁶⁶ Joao Pedro Fonseca, “Group planned attack in Porto,” *Diario de Noticias* 15 November 2004, via FBIS.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

timing and the target selection of the terrorists; the collected evidence⁶⁸; the social background of the killer; information about the milieu he belonged to; and the political context of the attack.

Suggestions about motivational factors can indeed be generated from the social and political contexts relevant to the militants, in Holland, regionally in Europe, and on the global scene. Of course, the motivations discussed here are to be considered hypotheses only. It is important to underscore that this is a study of processes. Information will become available during forthcoming investigations and trials in the Netherlands, Spain, and Belgium etc, and might alter the very basis of the analysis.

The information currently available in open sources strengthens the hypothesis from the study “Jihad in Europe” indicating multiple social, political and religious motivations drawn from various contexts. These motivations seemingly merge into a perception that Muslims are under attack from the US and its allies on all fronts, both in the Muslim world and in the West. In the eyes of the militants, the “global war on terrorism”, as it is fought in various contexts, confirms the ideology of Usama Bin Ladin, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and al-Qaida’s “godfather”, the late shaykh Abdallah Azzam. According to their doctrine, it is an individual duty for every Muslim to participate in defensive global jihad.

Based on the above-mentioned indicators, this report argues that the attack on Van Gogh was mainly motivated by anger with tougher immigration policies, criticisms of Islam, and counter-terrorism efforts in Holland, in combination with rage against the invasion and occupation of Iraq. The analysis suggests that the Iraqi war was a significant motivating factor for the group. As noted above, Muhammad Bouyeri explicitly declared Holland an enemy because the country deployed troops to Iraq.

The targets selection indicated that the slaying of the filmmaker was a violent cultural-religious response to the provocative short-film “Submission”. It appeared as if a religious fanatic decided to punish the filmmaker for insults against the Islamic faith. However, the fact that the letters he pinned to Van Gogh’s body were addressing Hirshi Ali, and did not mention Van Gogh at all, suggests that neither he, nor his short film, was of particular importance. Probably he was a “substitute target”.⁶⁹ According to *The Weekly Standard*, associates of Ayan Hirshi Ali support this theory. They believe that she was the preferred target of the militants, but that they were unable to reach her because she was under police protection.⁷⁰ By killing Van Gogh the terrorists managed to strike indirectly the Dutch-Somali politician and her party colleagues, as well as spreading fear amongst the Dutch and stirring up violence.

⁶⁸ Especially the communicative evidence, the letters written by the assassin and possibly his accomplices.

⁶⁹ For perspectives on terrorists’ target selection, see C.J.M. Drake, *Terrorists’ Target Selection*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd 1998, p 180.

⁷⁰ Christopher Caldwell “Holland Daze,” *The Weekly Standard* (Issue 15 - 12/27/2004) via Yahoo 22 December 2004.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, investigators said the letter “reflected the influence of the militant *Takfir wal Hijra* movement”.⁷¹ So-called takfiris allegedly played important roles in several of the Islamist terrorist cases in Europe after 2000. *Al-Takfir wa'l Hijra*, originally known as *Jama`a al-Muslimun* (The Society of Muslims) was a militant group established by Shukri Mustafa in Egypt in the 1970s. It was the Egyptian press that dubbed the movement *al-Takfir wa'l Hijra*, because of its ideology, stemming from a literal interpretation of Sayyid Qutb’s famous book “Milestones”. Takfir is the Arabic verbal noun for deeming someone an infidel (excommunication). Hijra is the Arabic word for flight or emigration, and is used about the Prophet Muhammad’s flight to Medina in 622, where the first Muslim community was established. The Society of Muslims excommunicated the society surrounding the group, fled, and established military camps or bases in the Egyptian mountains. In the mountain bases they prepared themselves to topple the regime and re-instate the Rule of God, Islamic law, al-Sharia in Egypt. In 1977 the militants felt strong enough to attack the regime, and murdered an Egyptian minister. Subsequently the group was crushed, and its leaders hanged. During the 1990s, it appears that the ideology of the group has resurfaced in militant Islamist milieus in North Africa, the Middle East and in Europe.

The magistrate Jean-Louis Bruguiere who heads the investigations into terrorist networks in France, believes *al-Takfir wa'l Hijra* is more of an ideology or way of thought than a clearly defined group or organization.⁷² The letter to Hirshi Ali did focus on her apostasy, but this alone does not necessarily mean that Bouyeri belonged to *al-Takfir wa'l Hijra*. Salafist groups emphasize takfir to varying degrees, and there have been conflicts between different groups concerning the legitimacy of excommunicating Muslims, and viewing Muslims as legitimate targets of the jihad. This is one of multiple conflict-dimensions in the relationships between Islamist groups. Deeming Hirshi Ali as an infidel would probably be an uncontroversial decision among most Islamist radicals given the fact that she herself publicly proclaimed that she was an “ex-Muslim”, and once called the Prophet Muhammad a paedophile because he married a 12-year-old girl.⁷³ The point is that the target selection could indicate mainly religious motivation, an attack by extreme fundamentalists (takfiris), against public figures seen as infidels. However, in this report’s interpretation, the letter to Hirshi Ali focused more on politics than on religious belief. The broader message appears to be mainly political, “global jihadish”, and less religious, takfiri.

The *modus operandi* of the slaughter in Amsterdam certainly did not exclude the involvement of al-Qaida associates or sympathizers. Assassinations have been used many times by Islamist militants waging global jihad. However, the “al-Qaida hardcore” has most frequently launched attacks aiming at inflicting mass casualties amongst enemy populations or the military. In addition the police found a “last will” in Bouyeri’s pocket when he was arrested entitled “Baptized in Blood”, showing that the murder was in fact planned as a suicide mission.

⁷¹ Sebastian Rotella and Douglas Heingartner, “Suspect in Slaying of Filmmaker Faces Terrorism Charges?”, *Los Angeles Times* 06 November 2004.

⁷² Interviewed by Brynjar Lia in Oslo, November 2004.

⁷³ Rachael Bell, “The Murder of Theo Van Gogh,” *Crime Library*, downloaded January 2005 from http://www.crimelibrary.com/notorious_murders/famous/theo_van_gogh/3.html?sect=7.

“Martyrdom operations” are certainly one of al-Qaida’s trademarks. Furthermore, the milieu in Amsterdam that Bouyeri belonged to bore strong similarities to the other al-Qaida inspired Islamist terrorist networks that have been detected in post-millennium Europe, in terms of member profiles, group structure and modus operandi. For example, it resembled the network that succeeded in launching the lethal attack in Spain. In addition it appears there were close contacts and possibly cooperation between the Hofstad Network and Islamist militants involved in the M-11 operation and the May 2003 attacks in Casablanca.

The Hofstad Network planned a series of assassinations in the Netherlands and in Portugal after the Iraq war erupted. This might indeed point to a “spill-over effect” from Iraq, considering the fact that both Portugal and the Netherlands deployed troops in Iraq. The fact that Bouyeri tried to decapitate the victim could also be an indication that the killer was influenced by events in Iraq. The abductions and beheadings in Iraq dominated the public media in the months before Van Gogh was murdered, and videos of beheadings flourished on Islamist web-pages.⁷⁴ This is a relevant factor, given the fact that the killer was very active on the Internet, and that his friends and colleagues believe his radicalisation accelerated after the invasion of Iraq.

The notes pinned to the body of the victim indicated that the murder was mainly motivated by events in Holland, and that it was part of a broader conspiracy aimed at killing several Dutch politicians who have criticized Muslims living in the Netherlands and called for tougher immigration laws. The document lashed out against Dutch policies towards Muslims and Islam in general, as well as a concrete proposal by Hirshi Ali’s party VVD, to “screen” Muslim immigrants to make sure they did not sympathize with radical ideologies. The author(s) of the letter voiced strong anti-Semitism, and argued Dutch politics is “dominated by Jews”. The claim was exemplified with reference to the Jewish mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen. The letter accused Hirshi Ali of being part of a Jewish conspiracy aimed at “*terrorizing Muslims and Islam*”, leading a “*crusade against Islam*”, on the “*political arena of Holland*”.

The “Open letter to Hirshi Ali” mentioned other politicians such as VVD’s leader Jozias Van Aartsen, and the Jewish mayor of Amsterdam Job Cohen. Hirshi Ali and another high profile member of VVD, Geert Wilders, had been threatened on radical Islamist websites prior to the murder of Van Gogh. Wilders has also received threats in the aftermath of the attack. According to *The Weekly Standard*, a video circulating on the Internet shows machine guns, then pictures of Hirshi Ali and Wilders followed by the following text; “*name: Geert wilders occupation: idolatorsin: mocking Islam punishment: beheading reward: Paradise, in sha Allah*”.⁷⁵ On the website Maghreb.nl someone posted direct threats against Hirshi Ali, and wrote they had located her house. It has not been confirmed that members of the Hofstad Network posted these threats, but similar threats were found in a computer belonging to Jason Walters.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Thomas Hegghammer, *The Iraqi Hostage Crisis: abductions in Iraq April-August 2004* FFI/report-2004/03105.

⁷⁵ Christopher Caldwell “Holland Daze,” *The Weekly Standard* (Issue 15 - 12/27/2004) via Yahoo 22 December 2004.

⁷⁶ E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005.

In addition to pointing to the “crusade against Islam” in Holland, the letter to Hirshi Ali contained clear references to al-Qaida’s ideology.⁷⁷ For example, the author(s) cites the famous slogan of al-Qaida founder the Palestinian shaykh Abdallah Azzam, “Jihad and the rifle alone. NO negotiations, NO conferences and NO dialogue”. In Bouyeri’s wording the slogan goes, “*There shall be no mercy for the unjust, only the sword raised at them. No discussion, no demonstrations, no parades, no petitions; merely DEATH shall separate the Truth from the LIE*”.⁷⁸ The conclusion of the letter shows the essence of “al-Qaidaism”, by prophesising the defeat of the enemy on the individual, local, regional and global levels in prioritised order,

And like a great prophet once said: "I deem thee lost, O Pharaoh." (17:102) And so we want to use similar words and send these before us, so that the heavens and the stars will gather this news and spread it over the corners of the universe like a tidal wave. "I deem thee lost, O America." "I deem thee lost, O Europe." "I deem thee lost, O Holland." "I deem thee lost, O Hirshi Ali" "I deem thee lost, O unbelieving fundamentalist." ⁷⁹

One may surmise that the motivations for the attack correspond to these prioritised levels, ranging from the global forces of unbelief to the individual infidel, seen from the perspective of the assassin and his associates.

Bouyeri’s social background corresponds to those of key activists of the European based Islamist terrorist cells who were clearly inspired by the doctrine of global jihad, such as Jamal Beghal and Kamil Daoudi of the 2001 al-Takfir wa’l Hijra inspired cell planning to strike US targets, and Jamal Zougam of the M-11 cell. They were seemingly integrated and bright second-generation immigrants, or immigrants who had lived in European countries since childhood. They were politically conscious, and concerned with political developments in the Middle East and North Africa, but they were not active members of political parties. As for their personal motives for joining militant groups not enough is known yet, but we see some patterns across the cases. The leaders and the key operatives were educated. However, it is a common pattern that they dropped out of higher education as a result of personal crises or failed ambitions, and were subsequently recruited to militancy. Some of them experienced social problems related to petty crime and drugs, etc. Others experienced psychological problems or were exposed to racism. They all found comfort in Islam and became “new-born” Muslims. Most were recruited directly by militants, but there are examples in Europe and the US that terrorists first joined apolitical and peaceful Islamic movements such as the Jamaat al-Tablighi and later became radicalised. Prior to the invasion of Afghanistan in the fall of 2001, recruits travelled to, or were sent to, Pakistan and Afghanistan for religious studies and military and/or terrorist training. After the invasion, they probably increasingly received

⁷⁷ According to a Dutch intelligence official, parts of the text resemble speeches by one of the London based Salafist-Jihadist shaykhs, Abu Hamza al-Masri, a long time promoter of “al-Qaidaism” in Western Europe (E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official, January 2005).

⁷⁸ See “Open letter to Hirshi Ali”, Appendix 2.1.1.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

training through the Internet, or travelled to other theatres of jihad, for example Chechnya and Iraq. Bouyeri dropped out of his education, and was imprisoned for an episode of violence. He failed to realize his dream of establishing a youth centre for immigrants in the suburb where he grew up. He was reportedly influenced by the September 11 attacks, and further radicalised after the invasion of Iraq. Bouyeri clearly fitted the profile of potential al-Qaida recruits.

Islamist terrorist activity in Western Europe increased significantly after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and after al-Qaida's no. 2, Ayman al-Zawahiri started to direct specific threats against the United States' European allies in 2002. The activity increased further after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and remained at a high level in 2004. 2004 saw the first successful mass casualty attack by an al-Qaida associated Islamist group in a European country. The threats against Dutch rightwing politicians in the letter pinned to Van Gogh and on the Internet must be understood in the context of growing xenophobia tensions between the Dutch and immigrants to Holland following the September 11 operation, as well as more rigid immigration legislation and pressure on Muslim immigrants to assimilate. The latter is exemplified by the decision of the Dutch Integration Minister, Rita Verdonk, to deport 26,000 immigrants, of whom some had lived in Holland for more than five years.⁸⁰ Another plausible motivating factor for Islamist militants in Holland is the increased counter-terrorism efforts in the country in recent years. Other terrorist cases in Europe indicate that counter-terrorism efforts towards Islamist milieus might have a "blow-back" function, because surveillance, arrests, questioning and other measures often stir anger and motivate young Muslim immigrants to join radical groups and take part in terrorist activities.⁸¹

The Islamist milieus in the Netherlands, radical and moderate, have been put under pressure following the disclosure of multiple Islamist terrorist conspiracies in several European countries since 2001. As noted above, Dutch police have arrested more than 40 terrorist suspects. The tensions and xenophobia have increased social problems among Muslim immigrants, struggling to complete their education and to obtain decent jobs. In this climate the Dutch have also seen the rise of right-wing extremism that adds to the tensions. The Dutch government's support for Israel, their inclusion of HAMAS on the list of terrorist organizations, the support for the US-led invasion of Iraq, and the deployment of more than one thousand troops to the country, are other factors that might be used by Islamist radicals to explain how Holland joined the US-led "crusade against Islam", and to justify terrorist attacks against Dutch targets.

Lastly, because of the assassin's explicit support for the resistance in Iraq, and the fact that he declared Netherlands as an enemy because of Dutch support for the occupation of Iraq, it should be taken into consideration that the slaying of Van Gogh coincided with the mobilization for an all-out attack against Fallujah, the centre of Islamist resistance in Iraq, on 8

⁸⁰ Jörg Victor, "Theo van Gogh murdered on the streets of Amsterdam," *World Socialist Web Site* 10 November 2004 <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2004/nov2004/gogh-n10.shtml>.

⁸¹ See for example the interview with Salim Bokhari, one of the Algerian militants imprisoned for his role in the conspiracy to launch a bomb attack against the Notre Dame Cathedral in Strasbourg, France, "Inside story, A Jihad warrior in London" *The Guardian* 09 February 2004.

November, 2004. This city was believed to be the base of the famous Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who headed the *al-Tawhid wa'l Jihad* group that recently changed its name to "The al-Qaida al-Jihad organization in the Land of the Two Rivers". As noted above, Zarqawi allegedly coordinates terrorist cells throughout Europe, and was involved in a conspiracy to launch terrorist attacks against Jewish targets in Germany in April 2002. He has been in contact with Islamist militants in Italy, France, Germany and Spain, who are believed to belong to groups bearing names such as Ansar al-Islam, al-Tawhid (the European wing of Zarqawi's originally Jordanian group), the Zarqawi-network, and the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group. According to Jean-Louis Bruguière, who heads the terrorism investigations in France, "dozens" of recruits travelled from the radical milieus in Europe to Iraq shortly after the invasion, and according to one "senior intelligence source" quoted in the *Financial Times* "some" have returned to Europe "with security experience, ranging from skills in how to lose people who are trailing them, as well as having the qualities of guerrilla fighters".⁸² In the light of the contacts and coordination between Europe-based radicals and the Sunni Islamist resistance in Iraq, and the Iraq-focused discourse amongst radical Islamists in Holland, it must be considered highly plausible that the Iraqi war and the attack on Fallujah were important motivational factors for Bouyeri and the milieu of Islamist militants to which he belonged.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis above indicates that the slaying of Theo Van Gogh should be considered a terrorist attack, not by a lone fanatic, but by a member of an al-Qaida inspired Sunni Islamist ad-hoc terrorist network. For example, the *modus operandi* of the attack was typical of al-Qaida and its associated groups waging global jihad against the US and its allies around the world. The radical Islamist milieu the killer belonged to, the Hofstad Network, was involved in the same type of activities and "organized" itself in the same way as other al-Qaida associated or inspired terrorist networks that have been detected in Western Europe recent years. In addition, the social profiles of Bouyeri, and other members of the Hofstad Network, resemble those of incarcerated militant Islamists who have been planning attacks in European countries.

Contextual analysis of the operation in Amsterdam indicates potential motivations related to multiple contexts that could be considered relevant for Muslim immigrants to Holland, such as Dutch immigration policy and counter-terrorism efforts, the "global war on terrorism" and the invasion of Iraq, as well as increased conflict-levels in areas of political grievance and symbolic value to Islamists and Muslims in general, such as in Palestine, Chechnya and Kashmir. In addition the Van Gogh case suggests that statements by high-profile persons that are exposed in the media might be interpreted as "insults against Islam", and thus serve as partial motivation for terrorism, or at least affect the target selection of the Islamist militants, who have chosen terrorism as a strategy in the battle against the US and its allies. The murder of the filmmaker also showed the effectiveness of an assassination of a public figure in

⁸² Don Van Natta Jr. and Desmond Butler, "Calls to Jihad Are Said to Lure Hundreds of Militants Into Iraq" *The New York Times* 01 November 2003; Mark Huband, "Muslim radicals "head to Europe with Iraq skills"" *Financial Times* 17 November 2004.

spreading fear and escalating the levels of conflict between the Dutch and immigrants to Holland, adding to a growing xenophobia, which in turn might lead to increased problems of integration, and make alienated young Muslim immigrants receptive of al-Qaida's vision of global jihad.

From a counter terrorism perspective, the concept of complex motivations, or multiple social, political and religious motivations (related to different contexts), implies that the police and intelligence services working to prevent terrorist attacks should pay careful attention to political developments beyond the geographical area they police, and be aware that Islamist terrorism might occur as a response by developments in other countries, or faraway areas of the world. There is an urgent need for systematically mapping motivational factors and "triggers", as well as mapping the various types of targets that might be attacked, the timing and the operational patterns of the terrorist cells, in order to develop effective early warning systems. In this respect one has to find out more about who the terrorists are, and the social contexts that "produce" potential terrorists. In addition it seems important, in the prosecution of terrorist suspects, to strike a balance between being firm, on the one hand, and being prudent and just on the other. This in order not to stir unnecessary anger among broader segments of the Diaspora communities and create new incentives for joining militant groups.⁸³ On the political level, as much as possible should be done to reduce social and political grievances locally and internationally, that might motivate Islamist terrorists, and might be interpreted in terms of al-Qaida's ideology that Islam is under a worldwide attack by the US and its allies.

⁸³ Martin Wainwright, "Police Chief attacks terror labelling of Muslims," *The Guardian* 07 February 2005.

A APPENDIX

A.1 Definitions

Islamism: The religio-political program, ideology and movement, calling for “an Islamic state governed by the principles of al-Shariah, the non-codified Islamic law, emanating from the Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad”.⁸⁴ Islamists make no distinction between religion and politics.⁸⁵ According to them al-Sharia represents an all-encompassing system, governing all aspects of human life. The grievances motivating Islamist terrorists are thus indeed political, or more accurately religio-political. Students of Islamism make a distinction between radical and moderate Islamism. Moderate Islamists like the international Muslim Brotherhood organization want to implement al-Sharia through non-violent political participation, and bottom-up religious socialization of societies, by calling to Islam and religious education.⁸⁶ Radical groups like al-Qaida and the GIA are revolutionary movements that want to overthrow what they consider to be pagan regimes and implement al-Sharia through armed jihad. The dominant ideological trend within radical Sunni Islamism today is Salafist-Jihadism. All the movements involved in the conspiracies analysed above might be defined as Salafist-Jihadist movements.

Jihad: The word jihad has two main meanings. The literal meaning is “striving in the cause of God”, and refers to the inner struggle of the believer to resist worldly temptations and sins in order to follow the straight path of Islam.⁸⁷ The word jihad is also used with reference to defensive and offensive holy war against the infidels. If the religious authority proclaims defensive holy war, it is an individual duty for every Muslim. Defensive holy war implies that the Muslim must do everything in their capacity to protect Islam, even sacrifice their own life or commit martyrdom. The Prophet Muhammad told his followers that the inner struggle for submission to God was the “greater jihad”, and that warfare in the name of God is “the lesser jihad”.⁸⁸ Islamists interpret the Quran differently, and see armed struggle as the “greater jihad”.⁸⁹ They perceive Islam to be under permanent attack from Western crusaders and the hypocrite, and quasi-Islamic regimes in the Middle East and North Africa.

⁸⁴ Brynjar Lia and Åshild Kjøl, *Islamist Insurgencies, Diasporic Support Networks, and Their Host States: The Case of the Algerian GIA in Europe 1993-2000*, Oslo: The Norwegian Defence Research Institute. Report, 2001/03789, p 8.

⁸⁵ Kari Vogt, *Islams hus. Verdensreligion på fremmarsj*, Oslo: J. W. Cappelens Forlag AS, 1993.

⁸⁶ See for example Mohamed El-Ghazali, *The way to the revival of the Muslim Ummah*, Cairo: al-Falah Foundation, 2002.

⁸⁷ James Turner Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions*, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*: 35.

⁸⁹ Charles Wendell, “Five tracts of Hasan al-Banna (A selection from the Majumat rasail al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna)”, California: University of California Press, 1978.

Terrorism: Political violence designed to communicate political grievances and demands, and to have psychological effects beyond the immediate target.⁹⁰ Target selection is thus an important factor when assessing terrorists' motivations. Terrorism is most often aimed indirectly or directly at civilians.⁹¹ The terms "terrorism" and "terrorist" are sensitive to the political, sociological, cultural, geographical and historical contexts. Terrorism means different things to different people and the meaning changes with time. Islamist militants view acts of terrorism legitimate measures to retaliate for atrocities carried out by Westerners and Jews against Muslims worldwide. They label the terrorists "mujahidin" or "holy warriors".

Al-Qaidism: Defined here as the doctrine, developed by the leading ideologues of al-Qaida, Abdallah Azzam, Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri, saying it is an individual duty for every Muslim to wage global defensive jihad against the US, Israel and their allies.

A.2 Documents

A.2.1 Open letter to Hirshi Ali

OPEN BRIEF AAN HIRSHI ALI

In Naam van Allah de Barmhartige, de Genadevolle.

Vrede en zegeningen op de Emir van de Mujahideen, de iachende doder Mohammed Rasooloe Allah (Salla Allahu alaihe wa Sallam), zijn familie en metgezellen en degenen die hen oprecht volgen tot aan de Dag des Oordeels.

Er is geen agressie behalve tegen de agressors.

Het volgende:

Vrede en zegeningen op ieder die de Leiding volgt.

Dit is een open brief aan de ongeleefde fundamentalist, Ayaan Hirshi Ali, van de Thegheet partij VVD.

Geachte mevrouw Hirshi Ali,

Siende uw aantreden in de politieke arena van Nederland bent u constant bezig om de Moslims en de Islam te terroriseren met uw uitdagingen. U bent hierna niet de eerste en zal ook niet de laatste zijn die zich hebben aangesloten bij de kruistocht tegen de Islam.

U heeft met uw afvalligheid niet alleen de Waarheid de rug toegekeerd, maar u marcheert ook nog eens in de ranken van de soldaten van het kwaad. U steekt uw vijandigheid tegen de Islam niet onder stoelen of banken en hiervoor bent u door uw meesters beloofd met een zetel in het parlement. Zij hebben in u een medestander gevonden in hun kruistocht tegen de Islam en Moslims. Een medestander die hen alle "kruit" aanreikt zodat zij hun handen zelf niet vuil hooven te maken. Aangezien uw verblift bent door de brandende ongelovigheid die in uw woedt, bent u niet in staat om in te zien dat uw slechts een instrument bent van de ware vijanden van de Islam.

U wordt gebruikt om allerlei vijandigheden over de Islam en de meest edele mens, Mohammed Rasooloe Allah (Salla Allahu alaihe wa Sallam), uit te spuien. Dit alles mevrouw Hirshi Ali neem ik u niet kwalijk, als soldaat van het kwaad doet u slechts uw werk.

Het feit dat u zo openlijk uw kwaad uit kunt spuien is niet aan u zelf te danken, maar aan de Islamitische Ummah. Zij heeft haar taak van verzetten tegen het onrecht en het kwaad laten liggen en ligt haar roes uit te slapen. Al uw vijandelijkheden tegen de Islam is dus alleen de Islamitische Ummah kwalijk te nemen.

Deze brief is Insha Allah een poging om uw kwaad voor eens en altijd het zwijgen te doen opleggen. Deze geschreven woorden zullen Insha Allah uw masker doen laten vallen.

Ik zou graag willen beginnen bij uw onlangs opgegoelde voorstel om de Moslims te screenen op hun ideologie bij sollicitaties.

Uw voorstel is zeer interessant, temeer omdat de invoering hiervan het rotte gezicht van uw politieke meesters tevoorschijn laat komen (wanneer het natuurlijk

A.2.1.1 English translation

Downloaded from the web resource <http://www.faithfreedom.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=5270>

Translator's comments are inserted in parentheses,

The letter was written in Dutch, with a few Quran references in Arabic. The presumed assassin did not master Arabic language.

⁹⁰ See for example, Whittaker (2001), p 9; *Patterns of Global Terrorism* (2003). The US State Department's definition reads: premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2002/html/19977.htm>.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Important passages set in bold font by author.

Quality of translation is uncertain.

A Dutch version may be downloaded via Expatica.com from www.justitie.nl,
http://www.justitie.nl/Images/11_59707.pdf

OPEN LETTER TO HIRSHI ALI

In the name of Allah the kind, the merciful.

Peace and blessings upon the Emir of the Mujahideen, the laughing killer Mohammed Rasoulou Allah (Sala Allaho alaihie wa Sallam), his family and companions and those who follow him truthfully till the day of judgment.

There is no aggression except against the aggressors.

The following:

Peace and blessings upon any who follows the Leadership [could be 'guidance' instead of 'Leadership'].

This is an open letter to an infidel fundamentalists, Ayaan Hirshi Ali, of the Thaghoet party VVD.

Dear miss Hirshi Ali,

Since your entrance into the political arena of Holland you have been constantly terrorising Muslims and Islam with your words. You are not the first and you won't be the last to join the crusade against Islam.

With your apostacy, you have not only turned your back on the truth, but you also march along the ranks of the soldiers of evil. You mince no words about your hostility against Islam, and for this your masters have rewarded you with a seat in parliament. They have found in you a companion in their crusade against Islam and Muslims. A companion who gives them the "gunpowder" so they don't have to do the dirty work. Seeing as that you're blind by the burning infidelity which rages inside you, you are incapable of seeing that you are just an instrument of the true enemies of Islam.

U are being used to spew various hostilities about Islam and the most noble, Mohammed Rasoul Allah (Salla Allaho aleihie wa Sallam).

I don't blame you for all of this Miss Hirshi Ali. as a soldier of evil you are merely doing your job.

The fact that you can openly spew your hatred is not to blame on you, but on the Islamic ummah. They have ceased their task of resistance against injustice and is sleeping it off.

All your hostilities can thus only be blamed on the Islamic ummah.

This letter is Insha Allah an attempt at silencing your evil once and for all. These written words will Insha Allah make you drop your mask

I would like to start with your recent proposal to 'screen' [profile] on their ideology at job interviews. [could maybe be the request for a staying permit/passport])

Your proposal is very interesting, more so because the application of it unveils the rotten faces of your political masters (when they would of course be tested honestly and they would openly reveal their ideology)

It is a fact that Dutch politics is dominated by many Jews who are a product of the Talmud schools; that includes your political party-members.

Seeing as you always propagate "self-criticism", we shall test your proposal in your own political surroundings.

The same politics that with their policies has joined the terrorism against Islam and Muslims.

I would like to ask you the following questions:

How do you feel about the fact that Van Aartsen [leader of the VVD] subscribes to an ideology where non-Jews are considered as non-humans?

Baba Mezie 114a-114b: Only Jews are people ["Only you are called people"]. Also see Kerlthoth 6b under subtitle ["Oil of anointing"] and Barakath 56a, where gentile (non-Jews) females are called animals ("female-donkeys")

Yebamoth 92a: All Gentile children are animals.

How do you feel about the fact that a mayor is leading Amsterdam, whom subscribes to an ideology where Jews can lie to non-Jews?

Baba Kamma 113a: Jews may lie ["listen"] to mislead a Gentile.

How do you feel about the fact that you are part of a government that supports the state with an ideology that proposes genocide?

Sofarim 15, line 10 (Minor Tarcctates): These are the words by rabbi Simom ben Yohai: Tod shebe goyim herog ("Even the best of the Gentiles should be killed").

Since you are a fighter for equal rights, you will probably (after learning this knowledge) ask with your Jewish masters in chambers to reject the teachings of the Talmud. You will also probably make work of asking the Jewish community in Holland to reject it.

Our actions now and then betrays your cowardly courage with which you ask attention for your battle. Like how you had the 'cowardly courage' to ask Islamic children in school to make a choice between their creator and the constitution.

The answer from these young, clean souls you have used immediately to come up with arguments to justify your crusade. With these hostilities you have released a boomerang and you know its only a matter of time before this boomerang will seal your fate.

However, you will get the opportunity, Miss Hirshi Ali, to prove you're right and crave it forever in the pages:

There is one certainty in the whole of existence; and that is that everything comes to an end.

A child born unto this world and fills this universe with its presence in the form of its first life's cries, shall ultimately leave this world with its death cry.

A blade of grass sticking up its head from the dark earth and being caressed by the sunlight and fed by the descending rain, shall ultimately whither and turn to dust.

Death, Miss Hirshi Ali, is the common theme of all that exists. You, me and the rest of creation can not disconnect from this truth.

There shall be a Day where one soul can not help another soul. A Day with terrible tortures and torments. a Day where the unjust shall force from their longues horrible screams. Screams, Miss Hirshi Ali, that will cause shivers to roll down one's spine; that will make hairs stand up from heads. People will be seen drunk with fear while they are not drunk. FEAR shall fill the atmosphere on that Great Day:

When the sun is overthrown,

And when the stars fall,

And when the hills are moved,

And when the camels big with young are abandoned,
 And when the wild beasts are herded together,
 And when the seas rise,
 And when souls are reunited,
 And when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked
 For what sin she was slain,
 And when the pages are laid open,
 And when the sky is torn away,
 And when hell is lighted,
 And when the Garden is brought nigh,
 (Then) every soul will know what it hath made ready. (81:1-14)

On the day when a man fleeth from his brother
 And his mother and his father
 And his wife and his children,
 Every man that day will have concern enough to make him heedless (of others).
 On that day faces will be bright as dawn,
 Laughing, rejoicing at good news;
 And other faces, on that day, with dust upon them,
 Veiled in darkness,
 Those are the disbelievers, the wicked. (80:34-42)

[the killer has actually left out some verses in his letter which i added by looking at the sequence in the Quran. e.g. He left out 80:39-40]

You as unbelieving extremist of course won't believe in the above described scene. For you the above is merely a made-up drama piece from a Book like many. And yet, Miss Hirshi Ali, i'd bet my life to claim that you are sweating with FEAR when you read this.

You, as unbelieving fundamentalist, of course do not believe that a Supreme being controls the entire universe.

You do not believe that your heart, with which you cast away truth, has to ask permission from the Supreme being for every beat.

You do not believe that your tongue with which you deny the Guidance from the Supreme being is subject to his Laws.

You do not believe that life and death has been given you by this Supreme being.

If you really believe this, then the following challenge should be no problem for you.

I challenge you with this letter to prove you are right.

You don't have to do much:

Miss Hirshi Ali: WISH for DEATH if you are really convinced you are right.

If you will not accept this challenge; know then that my master, the Most High, has unmasked you as an unjust one.

"then long for death (for ye must long for death) if ye are truthful. But they will never long for it, because of that which their own hands have sent before them. Allah is aware of evil-doers."
(2:94-95)

To prevent that i were to be accused of the same, i shall wish this wish FOR you:

My Rabb, give us death to make up happy with martyrdom.

Allahoemma Amien.

Miss Hirshi Ali and the rest of the extremist infidels: Islam has resisted many hostilities and oppressions in History. Every time the pressure on Islam was added, the fire of Faith was merely alighted.

Islam is like a withered plant, which has been rendered by the years-long pressure and extreme high temperatures, a diamond.

A withered plant which is formed by the fancies of time into the strongest jewel on this Earth. A jewel on which the hardest hammer breaks itself.

AYAAN HIRSHI ALI YOU SHALL BREAK YOURSELF ON ISLAM !

You and your companions know very well that the current Islamic youth is a rough diamond that only needs smoothing, so that it may spread her all-invading light of Truth. Your intellectual terrorism will not stop this, on the contrary you will only hasten it.

Islam will conquer by the blood of the martyrs. It will spread its light to every corner of this Earth and it will, if necessary, drive evil to its dark hole by the sword.

This unleashed battle is different from previous battles. The unbelieving fundamentalists have started it and Insha Allah the true believers will end it.

There shall be no mercy for the unjust, only the sword raised at them. No discussion, no demonstrations, no parades, no petitions; merely DEATH shall separate the Truth from the LIE.

Say: Lo! the death from which ye shrink will surely meet you, and afterward ye will be returned unto the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible, and He will tell you what ye used to do. (62:

And like a great prophet once said:

"I deem thee lost, O Pharaoh." (17:102)

And so we want to use similar words and send these before us, so that the heavens and the stars will gather this news and spread it over the corners of the universe like a tidal wave.

"I deem thee lost, O America."

"I deem thee lost, O Europe."

"I deem thee lost, O Holland."

"I deem thee lost, O Hirshi Ali."

"I deem thee lost, O unbelieving fundamentalist."

Hasboena Allah wa ni3ma alwakeel

Ni3ma alMawla wa Ni3ma anNasseer

Saifu Deen al Muwahhied

A.2.2 Baptized In Blood

IN BLOED GEDOOPT

Dit is dan mijn laatste woord...
 Door kogels doorboord...
 In bloed gedoopt...
 Zoals ik had gehoopt

Ik laat een boodschap achter...
 Voor jou... de vechter...
 De boom van Tawheed is afwachting...
 Naar jouw bloed smachtend...
 Ga de koop aan
 En Allah geeft je ruimte aan...
 Hij geeft je de Tuin
 In plaats van het aardse puin.

Tegen de vijand heb ik ook wat te zeggen...
 Je zal zeker het loodje leggen...
 Al ga je over de hele wereld op Tour...
 De dood is je op de Loer...
 Op de hielen gezeten door de Ridders van de DOOD...
 Die de straten kleuren met Rood.

Tegen de hypocrieten zeg ik tenslotte dit:
 Wenst de DOOD of hou anders je mond en... zit.

Beste broeders en zusters ik naar mijn einde...
 Maar hiermee is het verhaal zeker niet ten einde.

A.2.2.1 English translation

Downloaded from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed_Bouyeri#Notes

Quality of translation uncertain.

Important passages set in bold font by author. A copy of the Dutch document may be downloaded via

Expatica.com from www.justitie.nl

BAPTIZED IN BLOOD

So these are my last words...

riddled with bullets...

baptized in blood...

as I had hoped.

I am leaving a message...

for you... the fighter...

the Tawheed tree is waiting...

yearning for your blood...

enter the bargain...

and Allah opens the way...

He gives you a garden...

instead of the Earthly rubble.

To the enemy I say...

You will surely die...

Wherever in the world you go...

Death is waiting for you...

Chased by the knights of DEATH...

who paint the streets with Red.

For the hypocrites I have one final word...
 Wish DEATH or hold your tongue... and sit.
 Dear Brothers and Sisters, my end is nigh...
 But this does not end the story.

A.3 The Hofstad Network

The members of the group;⁹²

Samir Azzouz

Mohammed Bouyeri aka Abu Zubair

Ahmed Hamdi

Mohammed Fahmi Boughabe aka Abu Mussab

Zine L.

Ismail Akhnikh aka Suheib

Jason Walters aka Abu Mujahied al-Amriki

Mohamed Bassem al-Issa aka Radwan al-Issa aka Abu Khaled

Yousef E.

Mohammed El Morabit

Nouredine El Fatmi

Mohammed El Bouklaoui

Rachid Bousana

Zakaria T.

Nadir A.

Jermain Walters

⁹² E-mail correspondence with Dutch intelligence official January 2005.