Karadžić Lead your Aussies? An exploratory thesis on the relationship between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and the Christchurch shooting

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Introduction:

On the 15th of March 2019, the 28-year-old Brenton Tarrant attacked the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch (Roy and Martin, 2019). The attack, which had been attracting up to 200 viewers on his Facebook livestream, resulted in the deaths of 51 people along with injuring 49 more (Macklin p.19). Despite the fact that this attack seems to fit into a broader pattern of rising right-wing extremist violence in the West, the shooter`s association with cultural artefacts and historical, mythological, figures from the Balkans (Koziol, 2019). For instance, in Tarrant`s livestream, the song *"Karadžić Lead your Serbs!"* (also known as *"God is a Serb and he will protect us!"*) which is a propaganda song made by Serbian paramilitaries during the Bosnian War (Coalson, 2019). This song, and its subsequent clip, feature clips of Bosnians in internment camps along with lyrics that warned the "Turks and Ustashe" that Karadžić and his men are coming to get them. (ibid.) Moreover, the confiscated weapons and armour of Tarrant featured the names of Montenegrin Hajduks[1], like Novak Vuijošević, Bajo Pivljanin and Marko Miljanov Popović, along with those of the Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović and Miloš Obilić (Koziol, 2019).

Although this is not the first instance of right-wing extremists evoking the history of the Balkans, as Anders Breivik had done so before in his manifesto (Gec, 2019), the inclusion of Prince Lazar and Milos Obilić are significant, as these figures are constitutive of Serbia`s national mythology: the Kosovo Myth. This particular myth is built around the battle of Kosovo Field (косово поље) in 1389, where the Serbs suffered a defeat at the hands of the Ottomans. (Bieber p.96) This subsequent traumatic event and the "loss of Empire" became mythologized to have constituted a choice by Prince Lazar to realise a Heavenly Kingdom for the Serbian people (Anzulovic p.11). As a consequence of this, the battle of Kosovo Field became seen as a moral victory over the Islamic Other (ibid p.12) along with proclaiming that Lazar`s sacrifice would, eventually, lead to the resurrection of a Serbian, and thereby, Heavenly empire (ibid. p.5).

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[1] According to Carmichael, the Hajduks are best understood as small bands of bandits who became increasingly important in the liberation wars of the 19th century (Carmichael p.39-40). However, it is important to note that these Hajduks also lent their services to the Venetians and the Habsburgians (ibid. p.39)

This aforementioned myth and its contents, according to Anzulovic, are constitutive of the Heavenly Serbia discourse and argues that this discourse helped facilitate the genocidal violence seen during the Yugoslav wars in the 90s (p.2). This is, on the one hand, the product of the myth`s portrayal of the Serbs as victims of the immorality of the Islamic Other/Turk (Anzulovic p.33). Whereas, on the other hand, the inclusion of more nationalist elements within the Kosovo Myth created ideological structures which considered violence and warfare to constitute a form of national, and thereby, spiritual salvation –linked to the establishment of a Second Serbian Empire (Anzulovic p.30-31). The adherents of this promised return of a Second Serbian Empire seemingly evoked the discourse at critical moments in Serbian history (Anzulovic p.5). For instance, the increasing ethnic tensions and anxiety in 1980s Yugoslavia provided the fuel for a re-articulation of this discourse, as can be seen in the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) of 1986 (Anzulovic p.108). In this memorandum, the 16 member committee of the SANU argued that the Yugoslav government has been actively discriminating against the Serbian people (SANU, 1986). Moreover, it argued that the Yugoslav government was aiding in the "physical, political, legal and cultural genocide against the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija…" (ibid.). According to Anzulovic, this document "… painted an apocalyptic picture of the state of their nation and accepted violence against their neighbors as a solution…" (p.118). As a consequence of this, the violence seen in the Yugoslav wars and its subsequent artefacts, arguably, continue to shape and determine the perception of the Islamic Other and the Serbs. For instance, this can be seen back in the Serbian government`s mission to receive international support for the derecognition of Kosovo (see Giannangeli 2019 and Palickova 2019).

Apart from Tarrant`s association with elements and facets of the Heavenly Serbia discourse, Tarrant had cited NATO`s intervention in 1999 as one of his motives behind the attack. In particular, Tarrant that his attack sought "to create conflict between the two ideologies within the United States on the ownership of firearms in order to further the social, cultural, political and racial divide within the United States" (Tarrant, p.6). According to Tarrant, "this conflict over the 2nd amendment and the attempted removal of firearms will ultimately balkanize the US along political, cultural and most importantly, racial lines" (ibid.). Consequentially, this informs Tarrant`s belief that "… this balkanization will also reduce the USA`s ability to project power globally, and thereby ensure that never again can such a situation as US involvement in Kosovo ever occur again…" (ibid.). In addition to this, Tarrant described himself as a "kebab-removalist" (Tarrant, p.3). This term has its origin

from the "Remove Kebab" meme, which is based off the "God is a Serb" song, and became popular among gamers that played strategy games, like *Europa Universalis IV*[2], made by Paradox Interactive (Katz, 2017). Within these communities, the term was used to describe whenever a Christian nation sought to fight, drive away and even destroy the Ottoman Empire in game (ibid.). However, the term has been banned on Paradox`s forums, due to its association with ethnic cleansing and genocide (Winkie, 2018).

In light of this information, this paper seeks to understand the relationship between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and the perpetrator: Brenton Tarrant. More specifically, it seeks to understand to what extent the Christchurch shooting has been motivated by and/or related to the Heavenly Serbia discourse. Moreover, it further seeks to explore and understand how this particular discourse has travelled from its ethno-centric roots into the ideology of right-wing extremist from Australia. As such, this paper will attempt to answer the following research question: *To what extent is the Heavenly Serbia discourse connected to the discourse of the Christchurch shooter?*

In order to answer this question, this paper will, firstly, provide an overview on right-wing extremism, focusing on its core ideological tenets and its contemporary development, along with exploring the relationship between right-wing extremists and the Heavenly Serbia discourse. From there, this paper explains and discusses the Heavenly Serbia discourse along with define this discourse`s ideological tenets. Through the lens of these two sorts of ideological tenets, the discussion section will contrast and compare both discourses through a discourse analysis of Tarrant`s manifesto: The Great Replacement. In addition to this, this section discusses other potential explanations for Tarrant`s association with the Heavenly Serbia discourse.

Through this approach, the author of this work wishes to provide a critical and logically sound answer to this research puzzle and question. In addition to this, this paper seeks to establish an overview and understanding related to the ideological positions of right-wing extremists, like Tarrant, along with important voices/actors within this community. In doing so, this paper seeks to raise awareness to these particular discourse(s), its relevant actors along with its development, as greater insight on these elements might explain future association(s) between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and right-wing extremists in the future.

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[2] According to the official page of the game, Europa Universalis IV "gives you control of a nation to guide through the years in order to create a dominant global empire. Rule your nation through the centuries, with unparalleled freedom, depth and historical accuracy." (Paradox Interactive)

Literature review:

Contextualising right-wing extremism:

Before discussing the current features of contemporary right-wing extremism, it is important to stress the wide spectrum of right-wing extremism. Firstly, there are considerable differences between the specific groupings that fit within the spectrum of right-wing extremism and therefore can be antagonistic of nature (Heitmeyer 2005 p.401). For instance, Neo-Nazis and the `New Right`[3] both belong within the spectrum of right-wing extremism but are ideologically incompatible, as Neo-Nazis are clearly anti-Semitic versus the `New Right` which is far more philosemitic. Secondly, there are also clear differences between right-wing extremism within the Western world. These differences can be seen by the targets of right-wing extremist violence, as there is a propensity for right-wing extremists to utilise violence against minorities (ibid p.401). However, this differs greatly from the United States where the targets of violence often include both minorities and the state (ibid p.416). Finally, there is also a difference regarding the membership of right-wing extremist groups in the West. In particular, Heitmeyer has found that members of right-wing extremist groups in Europe tend to be younger than their American counterparts (Heitmeyer 2003 p.149).

Nevertheless, despite these differences, there are scholars who have extensively covered right-wing extremism and identified some of its core ideological features. Some of these core ideological features have been articulated in Cas Mudde`s article of 1995, where he sought to "create an operational definition of the concept of right-wing extremism" (p.204). To establish this operational definition, Mudde analysed the party literature of three political parties across Europe that were considered ideologically extremist (p.209). The analysis of this literature was done by contrasting the ideas of the party with some core aspects of right-wing extremist ideology. These core aspects of right-wing extremist ideology are identified by Mudde as: (1) Nationalism, (2) Racism, (3) Xenophobia, (4) Anti-Democracy, (5) The Strong State.

The five core aspects are described by Cas Mudde as follows: (1): "a political doctrine that proclaims the congruence of the political unit, the state, and the cultural unit, the nation"

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[3] The New Right is described by Vieten and Poynting as a right-wing movement that formed as a response to the New Left of the 60s-70s (p.534).

(p.209), (2): "a view that there are natural and permanent differences between groups and people "(p.211), (3): "as fear, hate or hostility regarding `foreigners`'" (p.213), (4): According to Mudde, anti-democracy can be broken down into two groups. There is one group that perceives democracy as a *process* – democracy is seen to promote pluralism which some right-wing extremists are against. There is the *substantive* nature of democracy which promotes fundamental equality among people which some right-wing extremists reject (p.214), (5): The Strong state consists out of three categories: anti-pluralism, law-and-order and militarism (p.216). Law-and-order refers to the strengthening of the state`s punitive measures to achieve order and authority (p.216). Militarism is seen as a "call for a strong army to protect national interests" (ibid.).

Although these five core features have been used by other scholars to analyse potential right-wing extremist parties, some disagreement persists over one of the features. The feature of anti-democracy has been identified as problematic, not due to its content, but to what extent it cannot be better described as `anti-system` (Carter p.166). This question arises, as while many right-wing extremist groups do show signs of rejecting democratic values, they often participate in the political process (ibid p.166). In addition to this, Minkenburg argues that "this new radical right does not echo the ideas of inter-war fascism and the outright rejection of democracy" (p.153). As such, this has prompted Ignazi and Carter to argue that these parties are `anti-system` considering that their participation in the democratic process questions the legitimacy of the structures of the political system (Carter p.166).

Despite this small disagreement regarding the naming of the fourth feature, the remainder of the features are still considered inherent to right-wing extremism. Nonetheless, as can be seen from the quote by Minkenburg, there clearly has been a development in the ideology of the right-wing extremists. This `new` version of the right has been dubbed the `New Right`. The `New Right`, according to Vieten and Poynting, is a response to the `New Left` of the 60s and 70s, and it champions some of the core tenets of neo-liberalism (p.534).

However, despite being perceived as different from the `old right`, it still embodies much of its ideological core. For instance, the `New Right` combines notions of nationalism, racism and xenophobia by championing a system that protects the "native population" from "dangers" such as immigration. From their perspective, immigration poses an existential threat to the norms and values/identity of its native population (Vieten and Poynting p.537). As such, the `New Right` often champions solutions that are deemed anti-system since it seeks to overturn the rights of certain groups of people based on a constructed sense of fear.

Another feature that the `New Right` shares with the `old right` is its creation and dissemination of conspiracies (Zúquete p.160). These movements have constructed the notion that there is a secret society of elites that are operating independently from the nation to pursue their own interests (Betz and Meret p.331). The difference between the `old` and `new` right relates to who is part of this elitist society. In the conspiracies of the `old right`, Jews were predominantly featured as the main existential threat (Traverso p.143-144). However, the `New Right` has distanced themselves from perceiving Jews as a danger and have moved to identify Islam and its adherents of posing an existential threat to the West (Bangstad p.386).

This change of targets has been identified by several scholars that have analysed this shift. This shift is explained to be motivated by two factors: the desire to participate in the political process and the rise of radical Islamism. The desire of right-wing extremists to participate in the political process helps explain their aversion of propelling conspiracies or policies that are anti-Semitic (Hafez p.483). This is in part because anti-Semitic rhetoric and tropes might evoke sentiments of Nazism and interwar fascism that might warrant states to exclude groups that hold these views. As a result, Hafez notes that the `New Right` has been associating itself (and lending support) to extreme right-wing political parties in Israel from which they derive a sense of legitimacy for not being "anti-Semitic" (p.485-486).

This relationship between right-wing extremists in the West and that of Israel can be described as a marriage of convenience for the `New Right` to push its Islamophobic view. Israel, in this context, is often perceived as a fellow ally of the West, for it shares similar norms and values as that of the West, but it also is aware of the "potential threat" of Islam (Hafez p.485). Combining internal issues in Israel regarding its Islamic population has then become evidence to suggest that Islam and its values are in sharp contrast with Western norm and values which indicates a form of anxiety regarding Islam. This anxiety, in combination with pre-existing grievances caused by radical Islam in the West (like 9/11, the London and Madrid bombings), gives rise to this sense of fear of the `Other` that legitimises the concerns raised by right-wing extremists (Önnerfors p.164).

The fact that the `New Right` has substituted anti-Semitism with Islamophobia can also be seen from its efforts to create conspiracies that suggest that Islam is plotting to destroy the "West". Perhaps the most significant works have been written by Bat Ye`Or[4] whose conspiracies have resonated among the extreme right. For instance, in her book: *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, Bat Ye`Or argues that there has been a concerted effort by France (later the

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[4] Also known as Gisele Littman

European Union), the Arab nations, Muslims and other groups to create a union between Europe and the Arab world to target Israel and the United States (p.12). To argue her case, she particularly looks at the interactions between the European Union and the Arab world in 1974, where several conditions were laid out between the parties to ensure further cooperation (p.52). However, she argues that the European states have submitted themselves to the Arabic states to pursue anti-Semitic policies and anti-Western policies by condemning the state of Israel and allowing for the settlement of Muslim communities in Europe (68-69). This act of submission is what she coined as "*dhimmitude*" which according to her has been a system actualised throughout history due to the submission of Christian elites to Islam (p.34-35).

Furthermore, Bat Ye`Or`s books further problematise Islam by claiming that "*Jihad* is central to Islamic history and civilization." (p.30). Jihad, according to her, is "a formal set of rules to govern relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims … based upon Islamic conquests, practices, theology and jurisprudence" (p.32). From there, she argues that Jihad is a constant state of being and that there cannot be any peace between Muslims and non-believers and that it is the duty of Muslims to spread their faith through Jihad (p.32-33). The implications of her reading of Jihad presupposes that Muslims cannot be integrated or adopt Western norms and values – except in the case of those communities of "resentful Muslims" that had been colonised by the Western powers (ibid p.37).

This incompatibility between Islam and the West also features heavily in the work(s) of the French writer: Renaud Camus. According to his book, *Le Grande Remplacement: Suivi de Discourse Orange* (The Great Replacement: Follow the Orange Discourse), Camus argues that the native population of France is slowly being replaced (p.12). Despite the fact that Camus does attribute the Great Replacement to other factors, such as the degeneration of French culture and replacist elites, the immigration of Muslims to France and Europe seem to constitute the crux of the Great Replacement thesis. For instance, Camus argues that, the degeneration of French culture, is linked to the "hyper-democratisation" and multiculturalism of said culture (Camus 2008, p.27-28). In essence, this "hyper-democratisation" is perceived to have imposed values of egalitarianism to the French culture which Camus frames as an attempt to drive out the bourgeoisie – the gatekeepers of the French culture and "Frenchness" – and to replace them with the "ignorant, without use, without syntax, self-righteous, anti-racist, well-integrated" petite-bourgeoisie (p.142 and p.188-189). Moreover, the existence of Muslims in European lands and their association with "Europeanness" is framed by Camus to pose an existential dilemma regarding French identity. This is reflected in an excerpt from his 2008 book in which he states that:

"The paradox is that these French of culture who are at first sight "little/not very" French that are prompted to use in my esteem this absolute weapon of language: "I am just as French as you", they are very often well leaning in another identity/culture, Arab for example, that they do not bring into question for a single moment the solidity, pertinence, and depth all the while radically recusing the legitimacy and existence of my very own – as if they are as French as I am, I repeat, then French/being French does not mean much" (Camus 2008, p.43-44).

As such, the characterisation of Islamic immigration and the existence of this group in French lands is interpreted as a fundamental and existential threat to France and French culture.

In consideration of this view, Camus argues that the process of the Great Replacement can be averted, but that it requires the native population to come into resistance against these Islamic invaders and Occupiers. In his book, this form of resistance is coined as "contre-colonisation" and is based off of Camus` reading of the French departure from Algeria in 1962 (Camus, p.74-75). However, the real policy implementation of this principle seems to suggest that Muslims, with their higher fertility rates and conquering religion (Camus, p.71 and p.82) must be returned to their ethnic homes (Camus 2008, p.219). These ideas expressed by Camus, according to Önnerfors, seemingly connects with the discourses found in Tarrant`s manifesto (Önnerfors, 2019). For instance, he argues that "Tarrant is obsessed with birthrates (mentioned 12 times), population statistics, reproduction and `replacement fertility levels` Önnerfors, 2019). In addition to this, Tarrant holds a similar belief that the migration plays an integral role in the decline of Western culture (ibid.) In light of this, it remains important that this link is considered during the analysis of Tarrant`s manifesto, as it could potentially reveal potential connections between the discourse of Camus, Tarrant and that of the Heavenly Serbia discourse.

In the following section, the author attempts to provide an overview of the academic debate regarding the links the Heavenly Serbia discourse has with the right-wing extremism. However, preliminary research on the relationship between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and right-wing extremism shows this relationship has not yet been explored. This gap might stem from the fact that this co-option of the Heavenly Serbia discourse by right-wing extremists, like Tarrant and Breivik, has been relatively recent. Moreover, it seems that scholars have analysed the relationship between Jihadist ideology and that of counter-Jihadists, like Breivik, to showcase the similarities between both extremes (see Andre 2015,

Gardell 2014 and Berntzen & Sandberg 2014). Despite the lack of literature connecting the Heavenly Serbia discourse with right-wing extremists, there are other works that can help us understand how the Serbian discourse may have travelled from its ethnic-specific realm into the realm of right-wing extremism.

Exploring the links between right-wing extremists and the Heavenly Serbia discourse

The first link that can be established between right-wing extremism and the Heavenly Serbia discourse can be attributed to the interactions between right-wing extremists and Russia. In his book: *Russia and the Western Far Right: Tango Noir*, Anton Shekhovtsov analyses the historical links that Russia has with the far right in the West. He finds that since the Soviet-era, Russia established connections with far-right individuals and groups to gather intelligence (p.42). However, more recently, Russia has been using a wide range of actors[5] and economic incentives[6] to foster relations with extreme right political parties in Europe, in particular countries like France, Austria and Italy[7] (p.163-164). Although Shekhovtsov cannot assess to what extent these parties are being directly influenced by these Russian operations, there are clear signs that these political parties are championing a pro-Russian agenda (p.203-206).

This championing of a pro-Russian agenda is significant considering the fact that Russia has extremely close ties to Serbia. These close ties are the consequence of the spread of Pan-Slavism, an ideology that sought to promote the union of all Slavic people under one leadership (Kohn p.325), in the 19th century. Serbia, around this time, was rather susceptible to the message of Pan-Slavism due to its historical ties with Russia which fostered positive views towards Russia/Russians among Serbians (Konitzer p.108-109). As a result, these historical ties and interactions have constructed a narrative of "togetherness" that assumes that the Serbians and Russians are part of the same "*Bratvsto*".[8]

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[5] According to Shekhovtsov, these actors range from far-right individuals, organisations and political actors from Russia. Although these non-state actors can be seen to act independently, these individuals and groups often have ties with the Russian government.

[6] Shekhovtsov`s chapter on the Far-right structures in Europe as pro-Moscow front organisations, gives examples of how Russian funding has been used to bankroll the operations of parties like the FPO, RN and Lega Nord.

[7] These parties include the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), The Northern League (Lega Nord) (Italy) and National rally (Rassemblement national) (France).

[8] Bratvsto is Serbian for brotherhood.

Although this narrative is highly distorted (see Mendeloff 2012), Russia has been able to turn itself into a significant partner for Serbia in recent years. In particular, Russia has used its veto right to block a UN resolution condemning Srebrenica as a genocide (Patelekh p.518). In addition to this, Russia rearticulated Serbian talking points regarding the NATO bombing of 1999, framing it predominantly as "Western aggression that intervened in a conflict between Serbs and Albanians" which in turn is framed as a tactic to further encircle Russia[9].

The second link also closely relates to the presence of the Heavenly SERBIA discourse in online spaces. Perhaps the most significant one has been the meme "*Remove Kebab*" which has its origins in a wartime song[10] known as either: "*Karadžić, Lead your Serbs*!" or "*God is a Serb and He Will Protect Us*". The song was produced during the war and was meant to instill fear into "Muslims and the Ustashe[11]" for "[Radovan] Karadžić and his men were coming to get them" ("Serbia Strong/ Remove Kebab," *Know Your Meme*). However, this song and its video has turned into a meme[12] which is heavily featured on social media websites like 4chan[13] and Gab[14] (Zannetou et al 2018 p.9). In addition to this, Jones also found that a certain Serbian poem named "*Gorski Vijenac*"[15] has also been featured on the white supremacist website *Stormfront* (p.241). Although the Mountain Wreath will be discussed later on this paper, the poem was written by Prince-Bishop/Poet Petar II Petrović-Njegoš in the 19th century and it features extremely graphic content and themes that justify, and somewhat glorify, violence against Muslims (Anzulovic p.51). The poem is considered a classic in Serbia and has been

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[9] The source referenced here is a Facebook video posted by "In the Now". In the Now is part of Maffick GMBH which has ties with the state sponsored Russia Today (O`Sullivan et al. 2019). The video mentioned discusses a recent revelation regarding the fact that NATO has used depleted uranium ammunition during its bombing campaign of 1999. As a result, the video claims that there has been a spike in the amount of people bearing cancer. However, there still persists much disagreement about the claims being made – NATO argues that depleted uranium ammunition is not harmful and even Serbian experts remain skeptical (Rudic 2018). https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=829875367162834

[10] The song was produced in 1993 – during the Yugoslav wars, in particular the Bosnian war.

[11] The Ustashe was a Croatian terrorist movement that believed in race theory and has perpetuated extremely forms of systemic violence against Serbians, Jews and other minorities during the Second World War (see chapter 11: *The Ustashe* by Tanner (2001).

[12] The song has spawned two types of memes: the "Remove Kebab" meme which is seen as an anti-Muslim meme and supportive of the idea of ethnically cleansing Muslims. The second variant relates to one of the me in the video, Novislav Dajic, who is known as "Dat Face Soldier" (Ward 2018). It is important to note that Novislav Dajic has been found guilty in partaking in the murder of 14 individuals during the Yugoslav war (Boyes 1997).

[13] According to Nissenbaum and Shifman, 4chan "is an image board, a forum site where users can upload images and textual comments." (p.487)

[14] According to their website, Gab describes itself as "a social network that champions free speech, individual liberty and the free flow of information online" (Gab.com). However, the platform has been considered a hub for extremist views and hate speech to thrive (Gilbert 2019).

[15] Gorski Vijenac is Serbian for Mountain Wreath.

considered by some to encapsulate some of the core tenets of the Heavenly Serbia discourse (ibid p.59).

The final link that this section will discuss is pertaining to the responses of right-wing extremists regarding the NATO intervention in Kosovo of 1999. It is important to note that NATO`s intervention accrued much condemnation from both the left and the right (White 1999). However, the right`s condemnation can be considered as relatively peculiar. For instance, Virchow writes that the far right in Germany was generally supportive of the independence movements of Croatia and Slovenia in the early 90s (p.74). In the case of Kosovo though, the German far right perceived NATO intervention as an attempt by the US to "preserve multiculturalism" (Virchow p.75). In addition to this, they believed that Kosovo was inherently Serbian and that Serbia`s actions in Kosovo were part of halting the Islamization of Europe (p.80).

However, this view of NATO`s intervention was not unique to the German far right. In Italy, Umberto Bossi[16] framed the Kosovo conflict as a "struggle between Christian Serbians desperate to defend their culture and values, and Muslim Albanians, the vast majority of whom had come as immigrants and now demanded independence and annexation to their Albanian motherland" (Betz and Meret p. 329). However, according to Clark, Bossi`s remark went even further as he framed the Serbians as victims for they were made to fight against the "bandits and organized criminals at the southern end of their country" (p.126). In the case of Denmark, similar condemnations were raised concerning the military involvement of their country in the conflict. For instance, the Danish Folkepartei argued that the Danish army were "helping the Muslims in their fight against Christians" (Betz and Meret p.329).

The international community`s recognition of Kosovo`s independence in 2008 also accrued condemnation from right-wing extremists. In particular, in 2008, Heinz-Christian Strache[17], argued that Kosovar independence went beyond sovereignty and attacked Serbia`s identity (Betz and Meret p.330). In addition to this, he also argued that European nations had to band together to protect the "Christian Occident" and that a failing to do so would entail that "Europe is likely to experience the same fate as Kosovo" (ibid p.330). Although it is important

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[16] Umberto Bossi was the former leader of the Lega Nord. However, he stepped down after he was alleged of embezzling taxpayer money (meant for the Lega Nord) for personal gain (Hooper 2012).

[17] Heinz-Christian Strache was a former Austrian politician (recently decided to step down from politics, see "Ex-leader…from politics.") for the FPO. He has served as the Vice-Chancellor of Austria but had to step down after Ibiza-gate (see Grobe 2019 for more information on Ibiza-gate),

to note that this argument came from a letter written by Strache to the Serbian community in Austria and could be seen as a pivot to gain more votes.[18]

Nevertheless, despite a lack of literature making explicit connections between right-wing extremists and the Heavenly Serbian discourse, it has become apparent that some connections exist between the Serbian discourse and that of right-wing extremists. It is important to note that these examples mentioned above do not suppose that right-wing extremists are Heavenly Serbianists. However, it does become apparent that historical events in the Balkans are being appropriated to fuel the apparent Islamophobia of the New Right. In that sense, Serbians conceptions regarding their conduct in the war can be framed to be part of this noble battle against the Islamization of Europe. This is also a view that many Serbians maintain regarding their identity to Europe (Di Lellio p.381). In consideration of the scope of this paper, it simply seeks to understand to what extent the notions of the Heavenly Serbia discourse have been adopted by right-wing extremists such as Tarrant. In the next chapter, the Heavenly Serbia discourse will be discussed at large and comparisons will be drawn between the literature discussed here.

Theoretical framework

Heavenly Serbia:

In the previous chapter, this paper discussed the conceptualisation of right-wing extremism along with exploring its relations to the Heavenly Serbia discourse. This particular discourse has been coined by Anzulovic in his book: *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide*. In this work, Anzulovic seeks to map out the development of the Heavenly Serbia discourse which, from his perspective, is connected to the extreme forms of violence which erupted in the region around the 1980s (p.2). Although it can be argued that this perception might suffer from over-ascribing relevance to a particular discourse, the actual content of the Heavenly Serbia discourse and its legacies are still present in Serbian politics and society.[19] As such, this section will provide the reader with an overview of the Heavenly Serbia discourse and its development over time. The main focus on this section will be placed on the

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[18] A recent newspaper article highlighting this interesting relationship between the FPO and the Serbian diaspora can be read here: https://balkaninsight.com/2019/09/26/deal-with-the-devil-austrian-serbs-embrace-anti-migrant-right/

[19] According to an article by Obradovic, the underlying narratives pertaining to Serbian nationality (such as the Kosovo Myth) still remains present in current day political discourses (2019, p.73).

Heavenly Serbia discourse`s representation and description of the Islamic "Other" and its relationship towards violence against this Islamic "Other". In doing so, this paper seeks to define the parameters of this discourse which will generate conceptual clarity for the analysis section of this paper.

Nevertheless, the question arises: what exactly constitutes the Heavenly Serbia discourse? According to Anzulovic, the Heavenly Serbia discourse has its origins in the Kosovo myth (p.4). The content of this particular myth focusses itself upon the battle of Kosovo Field in 1389 between the Ottomans and the Serbians (Mock p.157). However, its mythological content features the tale of Knez Lazar Hrebeljanović who is visited by the prophet Elijah, from the Old Testament[20] , on the night before the battle (Edwards p.5191). The prophet`s visit was crucial, as he poses a dilemma to Knez Lazar, as he could choose between an earthly kingdom or a heavenly kingdom (p.5191). However, Knez Lazar eventually chooses a heavenly kingdom over the earthly kingdom, despite the former requiring a major sacrifice. Nonetheless, Knez Lazar goes onto Christen his soldiers and march onto the battlefield where they will face a crushing "defeat" (ibid p.5191).

The content of this myth, from Anzulovic`s perspective, is significant for the fact that it transformed Knez Lazar`s self-sacrifice into a form of religious martyrdom (Anzulovic p.11). More specifically, Lazar`s act of self-sacrifice is considered to have been the catalyst between the establishment of a special relationship between the Serbian people and God (Mock p.159). Yet, this myth also created this notion that the Serbian people were "a holy people whose moral superiority makes them victims of the immortality of others" (Anzulovic p.33). As a consequence of this, the actual outcome of the Battle of Kosovo Field[21] has become insignificant for it asserts that the Serbians won it on a moral basis (Mylonas p.165).

However, the Kosovo myth and its contents would in turn become appropriated by Romanticists, such as Vuk Karadžić[22], in the 18th-19th century bringing forth considerable

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[20] Although the myth does not specify the exact nature and/or biblical interpretation of Elijah, the official website of the Serbian Orthodox Church biography on the prophet Elijah matches with that of the Old Testament. According to their website, the prophet Elijah was "Called to prophetic service, which put him in conflict with the Israelite king Ahab, the prophet became a fiery zealot of true faith and piety." ("Holy Prophet Elijah) Moreover, in a 2016 Youtube video "St. Prophet Elijah will come again" the Orthodox Patriarch of Belgrade, Ireneaus (Irinej) stated that Elijah "will come again as the second Lord`s forerunner," (0:27) and that "He would thunder, as he used to thunder with his word in his days." (1:28).

[21] Although the battle at Kosovo Field has been considered a defeat by the Serbians, there is no historical evidence that supports this claim (Mylonas p.153). Yet, the evidence does elude to the fact that this particular battle ended in a stalemate (ibid p.153).

[22] Vuk Karadžić was a philologist and linguist whose work helped in the creation of the modern Serbian language (Radić p.48-50). Moreover, his works are considered important artefacts which helped rearticulate the Serbian national identity (ibid p.53)

changes to its contents and narrative. For instance, Vuk Karadžić`s version of the Kosovo Myth removed the encounter of Knez Lazar with Prophet Elijah and supplemented it with Knez Lazar receiving a letter from Sultan Murad I (Mock p.160). According to this rendition, Lazar is given the option by Sultan Murad to surrender and join his side as a dhimmi or to perish (ibid p.160). In comparison to the original version of the Kosovo Myth, Vuk Karadžić`s version has removed the religious/moral dilemma from the equation and transformed this historic encounter into a nationalist dilemma, as it relates to concepts such as freedom and the right of collective self-determination.

Moreover, Karadzic`s version of the myth further blended nationalist elements, as the characters of the story embody certain roles that serve to delineate between a clear in-and-out group. For instance, Sultan Murad`s role was to function as the clear threat to the Serbian people through his role as `sacred executioner` of Knez Lazar (Mock p.194-195). Likewise, Vuk Branković[23] as the character of the `traitor` for his decision to betray the Serbians and subsequently side with the Ottomans was perceived to have led to the defeat in 1389 (ibid p.216-217). These changes to the content of the myth are significant for it created this notion that there was an ongoing struggle between the Serbian people and the Turks. However, as Anzulovic notes, this struggle was "not a part of the Serbian folk singers` repertoire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." (p.65) Rather, this struggle became far more evident in the cultural artefacts found in the region of the 19th century.

For instance, the poem *The Mountain Wreath*, written by Peter II Petrović Njegoš of Montenegro, refers to the mass killing of Muslim Montenegrins in 1702, as this group was `accused of aiding the Turks` (Poláčková and van Duin p.64). However, in this story, it focusses upon the debate between Danilo III and some of Montenegro`s ruling elite on how to achieve the freedom and unity of the Montenegrin people (Wachtel p.134). The disagreement lies in the fact that these elites believe that their goal can only be achieve through the cleansing of the Islamicized in their lands (ibid p.133). Whereas, Danilo wishes to avoid the killing of his fellow countrymen and seeks to reconvert them (ibid p.133). Nonetheless, this debate turns out to be superfluous, as Danilo changes his perception once he is notified that the lands had been cleansed from its Islamic influence (p.134).

Although the content of this poem concerned itself with the historical-political situation of Montenegro in the 19th century, it has been considered an important cultural

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[23] Vuk Brankovic was the landlord of Kosovo in the 14th century and was married to the first daughter of Prince Lazar (Ćirković p.82)

artefact by Serbians as well (Wachtel p.136). This, in part, stems from the historical ties between these two communities through their adherence to the Serbian Orthodox faith[24] (Banac p.44). However, more specifically though, is *the Mountain Wreath*`s praise of Karađorđe, the leader of the First Serbian uprising (1804-1813), as a liberty-loving and noble leader who sought to end the cycle of suffering of his people (Wachtel p.133).

However, this portrayal of Karađorđe was problematic for it created this image of the Serbian people to constitute a nation of heroic and freedom-loving people which would have significant implications for the region and its minorities in the 19th century. More specifically, the discourse allowed for Serbia`s elite to construct plan for a South Slavic kingdom, with Serbians being at the helm of it, which would seek to reunite all Serb lands.[25] In order to achieve this goal, the region had to rid itself from the Ottomans and the Austrian-Hungarians which were occupying these lands (Anzulovic p.88-91). However, these "wars of liberation" would see excessive forms of violence being utilised against Islamic minorities which were seen as part of the enemy. For instance, during the Balkan Wars, the conduct of Serbian/Montenegrin militias against Kosovar-Albanians was excessive, as this group became targets of mass-scale murder, rape and forceful expulsion (Biondich p.392).

Nonetheless, even when the conflicts subsided in the region and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was established, the perpetuation of violence against Muslims still continued. This continuation of violence against Muslims can be attributed to two factors: the dominance of Serbians within the power structures of the Kingdom and Serbian Islamophobia. The former allowed, for instance, for the colonisation of Kosovar lands by Montenegrin and Serbian farmers which saw Albanian farmers being given less fertile lands close to the border(s) between Kosovo and Albania (Banac p.300-301). In addition to this, the Yugoslav government authorities banned Albanian language schools and installed Serbian language schools in Kosovo to "Serbify" these lands (Banac p.298). These policies led to the battles between the Kacaks[26] and the Yugoslav authorities which prompted an agreement that saw Albanians and Turks emigrate to Turkey (Banac p.301).

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[24] However, Troch also argues that the historical memory of Montenegro`s inclusion into the Serbian medieval empire further strengthened the association with their identity to that of the Serbians (p.29).

[25] This notion is exemplified in Ilija Garašanin`s national program of Načertanije (the Draft) which was the first Serbian national program (Manetovic p.137) Although it has been argued that this document is part of the Greater Serbia ideal, Manetovic argues that Nacertanije "was a blueprint for the creation of an inclusive state for the South Slavs." (p.137)

[26] According to Biondich, the Kacaks were a combination of "Albanian nationalists and armed irregulars." (p.390)

In the case of the latter, the perception of Muslims by Serbians remained extremely problematic. On the one hand, the Serbians equated the Muslims in Bosnia with the "`blood-thirsty` and `beastly` Turks." (Banac p.362) Moreover, this group was also considered as `Asian`, `unstable`, `perverted` or even homosexual, and as such biologically inferior, due to their religious beliefs (Banac p.371-372). Yet, on the other hand, this group were still considered to possess an inherent from of "Serbianness" upon which the Serbs believed that this group could be saved through reconversion to the Orthodox faith (Banac p.362). Yet, this notion of saving the "Other" involved a so-called `social de-islamisation` which included either forcefully converting Muslims, forcing them into interethnic marriages with Orthodox individuals or resorting to mass-scale violence to eradicate this group (Banac p.372).

Even though the kingdom of Yugoslavia was eventually succeeded by the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia, the Communist leadership was unsuccessfully in neutralising elements of the Heavenly Serbia discourse (Anzulovic p.102). For instance, *the Mountain Wreath* continued to be considered an important regional literary work and therefore this work and its anti-Islamic content remained part of the education curriculum in Yugoslavia (Wachtel p.139). Moreover, the leadership did not crack down on the Serbian Orthodox Church, unlike the Catholic Church, which provided the opportunity for this institution to become an important voice and actor for the 80s onwards (Bieber p.99). In addition to this, Anzulovic argues that the adoption of fabricated war deaths[27] in the Second World War by the communists allowed for the proliferation of this self-victimisation narrative of the Serbians (p.100-102).

As a consequence of this, the position of Muslims within Yugoslavia remained relatively precarious. For instance, the split between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in 1948, along with Hoxha siding with the Soviet Union, it reaffirmed the view of Muslims as a threat (Mulaj p.34). Additionally, the Yugoslav leadership had to face further resistance within its borders, as there were uprisings in Bosnia, Croatia and even Macedonia in the 1950s (Glenny p.541-551). In light of these threat(s), the State Security Service (UDBa) (the Uprave Drzavne Bezbjednosti) was tasked with containing it. At the helm of this organisation was one of Tito`s close comrades: Aleksandar Ranković, a Greater Serbianist and a

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[27] These fabricated war deaths refer to the claim of the Serbians that a genocide had been committed against them by the Ustashe during the Second World War (MacDonald p.161). In order to solidify this claim, the Serbians overexaggerated the death count at the concentration camp of Jasenovac by asserting that over 1 million Serbians had been killed (ibid p.161).

proponent of centralism[28] (Anzulovic p.95-96). Under Ranković`s reign, the UDBa would employ several tactics, ranging from arbitrary arrests, torture and imprisonment, to quell dissent (Glenny, p.572). However, the reality of the matter was that these policies disproportionally affected the Islamic communities in Kosovo and Bosnia which seemingly was its intent, as the 1950s saw an increase in the migration of Muslims from Yugoslavia to Turkey (Mulaj p.45).

This situation became subject to change with the purge of Ranković in 1966[29] and other nationalist elements which allowed for the creation of a more inclusive union. In particular, the 1974 constitution symbolises this move, as it granted autonomy to Kosovo and Vojvodina (Hudson p.54). This decision to grant Kosovo autonomy led to protests from the Serbian communists which considered self-determination as a right only reserved for ethnic nations (Dimitrijević 2000, p.407). These changes, in addition to "the rising ethnic tensions"[30] in Kosovo, promulgated the fear of the "Muslim Other" which were accused of attempting to exterminate the Orthodox Serbs (Anzulovic p.108-109).

These fears, as a result, created an environment in Serbia which allowed for the spread of conspiracy theories that fed into the societal anxiety. For instance, the high birth rates in Albania were used to support this claim that "there was a demographic plot to out-birth Serbians." (MacDonald p.77) However, the most significant conspiracy theory was that of the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) of 1986 which accumulated past grievances to support their claim that the Serbians were being subjected to a genocide under the current leadership (Anzulovic p.108). Although these claims were highly fictitious, it did serve as a vehicle for Slobodan Milošević, the former banker turned leader of the League of Communists of Serbia in 1986, to rise to prominence and eventually into power (Edwards p.5193-5194).

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[28] The conflict between centralism and federalism within Yugoslavia is also known as the nationality question which has its origins since the first kingdom of Yugoslavia (see chapter "Great Serbia and Great Yugoslavia" in Banac for more information). In essence, the conflict lies within the distribution of power and who is in control. For instance, the centralist campaign (considered pro-Serbian) believed that all power should be centralised within Belgrade and that by virtue the Serbs should lead it (Banac p.214). Whereas, the decentralist camp favoured a federal system that recognised and respected the autonomy of each nationality within Yugoslavia (Banac p.231)

[29] According to Glenny, the purge of Rankovic came following the discovery that he had secretly recorded the upper echelons of the Yugoslav communist party (p.582). Furthermore, this discovery revealed the extent of the corrupt nature of the UDBa under Rankovic, as the UDBa had been involved in illegal activity (e.g. the selling of Western goods on the black market and the use of prisoners as personal labourers) along with actively purging suspected enemies of Rankovic (ibid.)

[30] Although there was an increase in protests in the 1980s, Serbian nationalists argued that the Serb minority was being subjected to rape and forceful expulsion from their lands (Velebit p.193). However, the Serb migration seems to have been influenced by increasing lands prices in Kosovo along with greater economic opportunities in Serbia proper (Velebit p.194).

The role of Milošević was relatively significant, as he rearticulated the themes of the Heavenly Serbia discourse once into power. During his speech in 1989, Milošević continued to assert that disunity had led to Serbia`s traumatic demise in 1389 (Edwards p.5195). More specifically, he attributed blame upon the elites which "led the Serbian people and Serbia into agony" (ibid p.5196). Nevertheless, Milošević identified that these elites still existed and that the "lack of unity and betrayal in Kosovo will continue to follow the Serbian people like an evil fate through the whole of history." (ibid p.5197) In consideration of this, the crisis in Yugoslavia was been seen as a crisis of disunity upon which the "Other" was assigned blame for it (Edwards p.5198). For instance, Milošević used the same speech to rearticulate the identity of the "Turk" which, according to him, were the Kosovar-Albanians (Bieber p.102).

This rearticulating of the "Turk" is significant for it served to further dehumanise this particular group along with asserting that this group was to blame for the suffering of the Serbs. However, as we have seen in the literature review, the "Turk" became synonymous with Muslims, as can be seen from the song "God is a Serb". This connotation of the Turk is highly problematic, as it strengthened the discourse that Muslims posed an existential threat to the prosperity and well-being of the Serbs. As a result of this perception, the extreme forms of violence exhibited in the conflicts of the 90s, especially towards Muslims, once more seem to reflect the negative stereotypes that were promoted by the Heavenly Serbia discourse.

In summation, this section sought to provide an analysis of Heavenly Serbia`s development over time and its real-life implications for Muslims. From this analysis, it can be argued that Heavenly Serbia is an intersection of religious narratives that had been appropriated by nationalists. The former allowed for the creation of this notion that the Serbians were a chosen people by God and that they have been victims of the "immorality" of the "Other". The latter`s contribution created a clear demarcation between a clear in-and-out group. Moreover, through these demarcations, nationalists sought to rationalise societal issues and historical developments through assigning blame on the "Other".

As a consequence of this intersection of these strains of ideologies, the Heavenly Serbia discourse allowed for the creation of a narrative upon which violence against the Muslim "Other" could be justified. This justification is seemingly built on this perception that the Muslim "Other" was an existential threat to the Serbs, as their conduct had led to the suffering of their own people. In light of this perspective, it allowed for the construction of social and political structures that facilitated violence upon this group. As such, this paper

perceives the Heavenly Serbia to possess these characteristics: (1) Nationalism, (2) Illiberal/Authoritarian, (3) Glorifies/Justifies Violence, (4) Religious, (5) Islamophobic.

Methodology:

In order to analyse the links between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and the right-wing extremist discourses in Tarrant`s work, this paper will utilise a critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Fairclough, a critical discourse analysis concerns itself with the power of language and how it constructs and justifies certain power structures within a society (Jorgensen and Philipps p.69). In addition to this, it analyses the relationship between power and language and its ability to construct structures which perpetuate social and political inequalities (Fairclough p.73). From this perspective, language holds significant power for it creates our understanding of reality through shaping and/or determining our self-perception and the material world around us. In that regard, the lack of a measurable objective reality strengthens the claims of Fairclough that language is constitutive of our own identity and our societies (p.6).

The decision to utilise a critical discourse analysis is based on the fact that Tarrant`s work is also subjected to the power of language, as it is not created in a vacuum, which informs and constructs own identity along with the world around him. In particular, the purpose of this paper is to understand the intersectionality between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and to what extent it led to the violence exhibited at Christchurch. In order to analyse this connection, the CDA focusses on the following: direct references to the Heavenly Serbia discourse along with thematical similarities between the former discourse and that of Tarrant.

These categories are selected on the premise that it allows for a CDA to detect, engage and distinguish between Tarrant`s discourse and that of the Heavenly Serbia discourse. As discussed previously, both discourses exhibit similar features and therefore comparing and contrasting these similar features would not produce any academically feasible and/or satisfactory results. However, as has been discussed in the previous section, the Heavenly Serbia discourse has led to the creation of ideological and real-life structures upon which one can construct their worldview around. Moreover, this worldview and perspective may serve as a potential legitimate source of truth upon which he justifies his attack. As such, the CDA method may serve as a strong methodological tool to face the

challenge of differentiating these discourses and to gain greater understanding on the research puzzle.

These four categories are selected on the premise that it allows for a CDA to detect, engage and distinguish between a right-wing extremist discourse and the Heavenly Serbia discourse. As has been discussed in this paper, both discourses exhibit similar features and therefore comparing and contrasting these similar features would not produce any academically feasible and/or satisfactory results. However, as has been discussed in the previous section, the Heavenly Serbia discourse has led to creation of structures, along with a repertoire of perspectives and events, upon which one can construct their worldview around. As such, the categories dealing with "Othering" along with Tarrant`s perspective are important to subject to analysis for his perspective, and justification of his act, must draw upon a discourse that can act as a legitimate source of "truth".

Nonetheless, this paper is aware of the fact that the CDA method is not flawless and has considerable drawbacks and/or issues. The first issue with the CDA method remains that it is susceptible to personal biases, as the analysis is done in accordance to a researcher`s political or even theoretical views upon which they engage with a source material (Breeze 2011, p.5). According to Verschueren, this has led to researcher`s failing to disclose empirical evidence along with producing results that align more with the author`s `convictions` (p.65). These convictions, as a consequence, affect CDA`s methodological rigour, as it is remains susceptible to making broad generalisations through an author`s analysis and/or interpretation of discourse(s) outside of their original context(s) (Breeze 2011, p.513). For instance, Widdowson argues that scholars such as Kress and Fairclough fail to engage with the original authors of the text and even the readers of the text to understand the purpose and/or perception a text (Widdowson 1998, p.142-143).

In consideration of these potential flaws, this paper`s analysis of Tarrant`s manifesto seeks to avoid these mistakes. In order to do so, the analysis section will be divided into three parts: Tarrant`s connection to the Balkans, an analysis of his manifesto along with a discussion section that discusses the results. The former is considered, as Tarrant`s personal connection to the region might shed more light into aforementioned connection with his attack and the Heavenly Serbia discourse. In regards to the analysis of Tarrant`s manifesto, the structure of this section will discuss direct and/or indirect references to the Heavenly Serbia discourse in his text. By doing so, this paper seeks to establish any ideological connection between these discourses, as it potentially sheds light on the relationship between them and the attack on the Islamic community in Christchurch. From there, the findings will

be discussed in order to determine if the results provide a clear answer towards the research question. If the results are not satisfactory, or raise further questions about the extent of the relationship between both discourses, this paper includes a section on potential alternative explanations. In doing so, this paper hopes to provide a comprehensive account which discusses and critically evaluates the connection between the Heavenly Serbia discourse, Tarrant and his violent attack in order to solve this research puzzle.

Analysis

Tarrant and the Balkans:

As discussed in the introduction, the Christchurch attack and Tarrant`s association with elements of the Heavenly Serbia discourse raised several questions regarding the shooter and his connection to the region. Shortly after the attack, several news outputs released several articles that provided a background into Tarrant. For instance, an article by *Reuters*, revealed that Tarrant was involved in cryptocurrency which profits he had used to fund his travels to France, Portugal and Spain in 2017 (Kaye, 2019). Moreover, in the same article, the Bulgarian Chief Prosecutor, Sotir Tsatsarov, revealed that Tarrant had visited Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Croatia prior to his visit to Western Europe (ibid.). Yet, this same prosecutor stated in an article of *Euronews* that Tarrant had also visited Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary in 2018 (Davies, 2019).

Although the exact purpose of his visits remains seemingly unknown, it is presumed that Tarrant had been touring several historic Ottoman battle sites (Gec, 2019). In order to assess this claim, this paper has pinpointed the locations of these battles within the region (from 1371 until 1877) on a map using colours to indicate either a defeat for the Ottomans (red), a victory (green) or a stalemate (blue). As illustrated below, if Tarrant`s purpose for his trip to visit these sites, it entails that he must have spent considerable amounts of time in the Balkans, as the sites total around 124[31]. Nevertheless, without the knowledge related to the duration and roadmap of his trip, this information does not provide us with any clear answers.

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[31] This number of battles is based on the conflicts that this paper could identify through literature that could confirm or specify the extent of these conflicts. Nevertheless, this author does believe that additional battles could be interested if more information was available and if the parameters were more broadly set. The data seen on the map is collected from the following sources: The sources used for this data can be found in the data bibliography section.
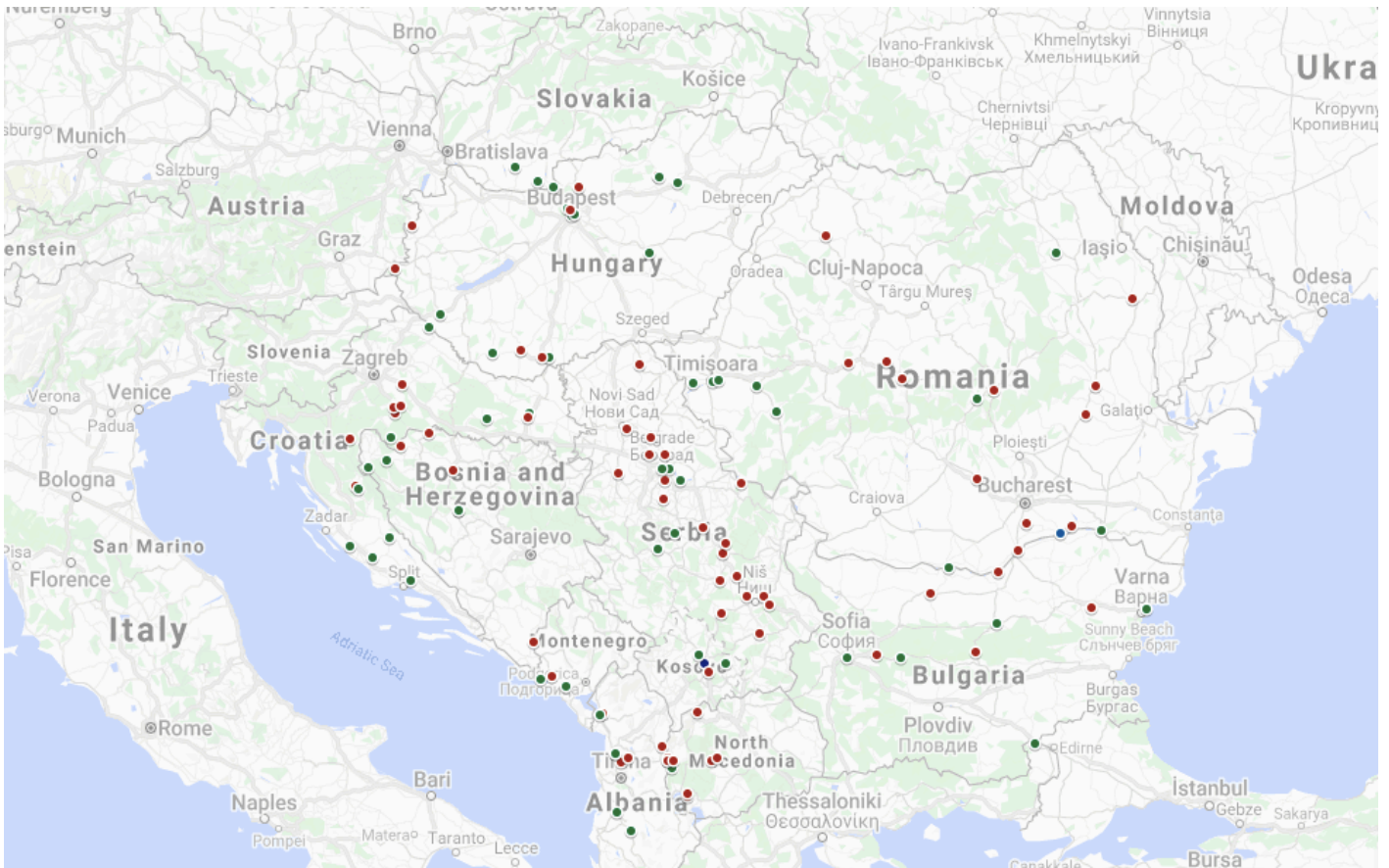
     Fortunately, a news article by *N1* reported that Tarrant had spent time in Zagreb, Porec, Zadar, Sibenik and Dubrovnik (Hina, 2019). According to the data on the map, it becomes apparent that this theory seems to hold, as there have been 5 battles that have taken place in the vicinity of the cities of Zadar and Sibenik (see image below). These battles, part of the Ottoman-Croat wars (1493-1593), saw the Ottomans beaten in 1491 at the battle of Krbava Field but eventually the Ottomans managed to beat the Croats at Krbava Field 1493, Knin in 1514, Skradin in 1522 and also in Vrana in 1527 (Tracey p. 37, 57, 62-63). Yet, the remainder of the cities: Zagreb, Porec and Dubrovnik have not been part of any of these wars between the Ottomans and the Christians.

     Although these anomalies do bring into question the validity of the Ottoman battle site theory, it must be stated that some of these locations still hold significance in relation to the aforementioned theory. For instance, the city of Dubrovnik was historically the centre of power for the Republic of Ragusa – a trading nation on the Adriatic seat (Sugar p.168/169). The Republic, up until 1458, had been part of the Venetian Republic until it was freed by the Hungarian king Lous the Great (1342-1392) (Sugar p.171). Yet, this independence was short-lived, as one hundred years later, the Republic of Ragusa would become a vassal state of the

Ottomans, albeit enjoying arguably more freedom than any other vassalized state within the region (Ibid. p.182-183). Whereas, Zagreb and Porec were situated close to the Croatian Military frontier (see index 1) that was erected as a buffer zone against the Ottomans from the 16th centuries onwards (Guldescu, p. 60-62).
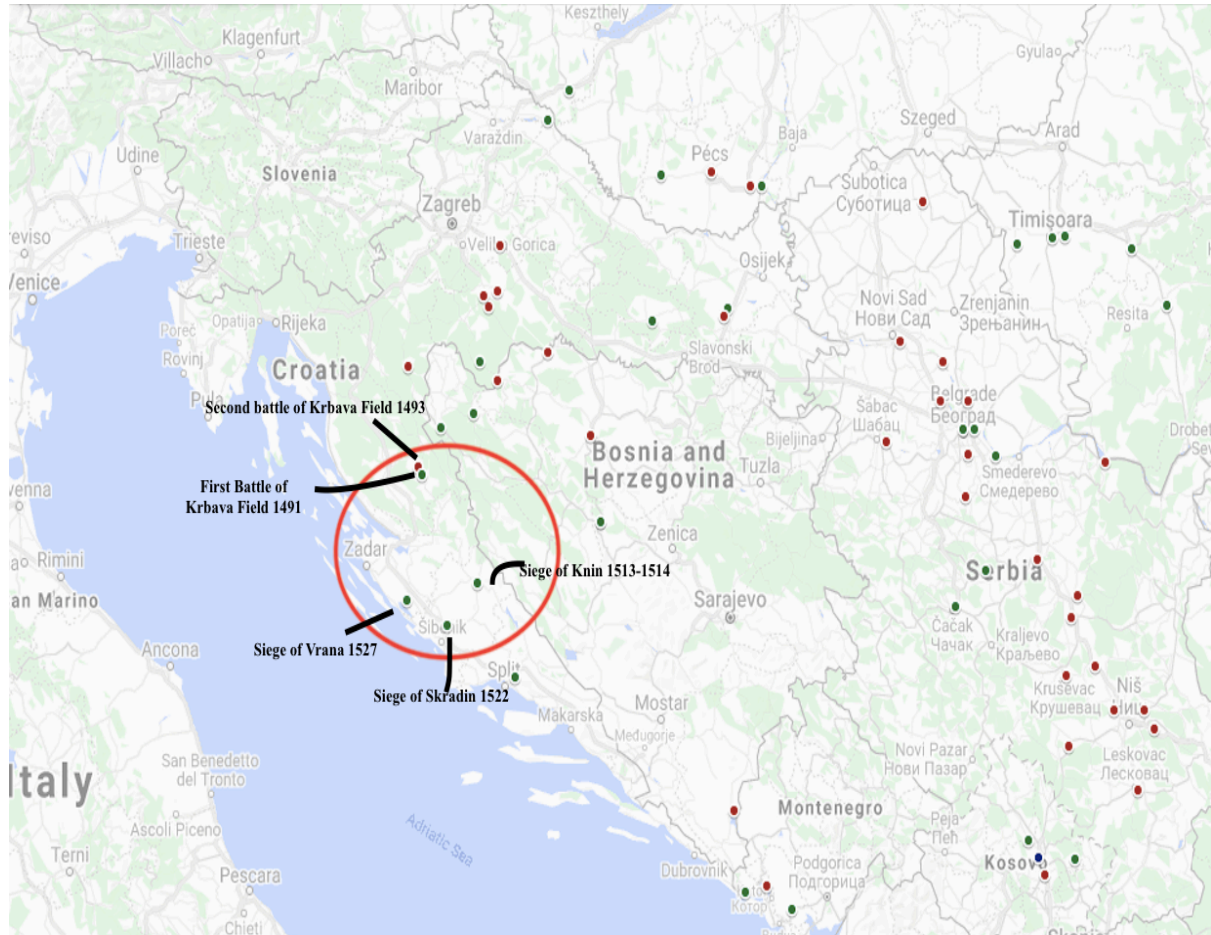
In light of this, it can be argued that the above-posited theory is rather plausible, but it fails to potentially explain his visits to places that have not been situated around these battles. Instead this paper posits the possibility that Tarrant`s visits focussed around the impact/implication of Ottoman interactions with other nations. For instance, it had been reported that Tarrant had also been to Pakistan which has not seen any battle between the Ottomans and the Pakistanis (Kirkpatrick, 2019). However, upon further research, this paper found that the Ottoman Empire and the Indian sub-continent had established some commercial and diplomatic relations since the 16th century (Qureshi, p.13-14). Moreover, Qureshi states that the customs, cultural practices and even the Urdu language borrowed elements of the Ottoman language and culture (ibid p.15). In consideration of this, Tarrant`s

visit to Pakistan seemingly indicates his interest in acquiring information about the cultural influence of the Ottoman Empire upon the Other.

Nonetheless, as can be seen from this section, the motives and whereabouts behind Tarrant`s visit to the region remain, at the time of writing, relatively mysterious and therefore subject to speculation. Unfortunately, this also seems to extend to his other visits to the region (Turkey, Hungary and Bulgaria), as the motives are once more placed towards him visiting these historic battle sites. In that regard, the information available at this moment does not allow for us to pinpoint his exact movements and determine to what extent these visits have any relevance in relation to the Heavenly Serbia discourse. Moreover, this information further requires more detailed information on his exact interaction within these spaces and how these interactions might have shaped Tarrant`s personal convictions and worldview. As such, with the current information at hand, it remains difficult to determine to what extent his travel through the region and how this may have formed his ideological dispositions.

Overview of Tarrant`s *The Great Replacement:*

Prior to his attack, Tarrant had uploaded his manifesto onto 8chan[32] and onto his personal Twitter account (Önnerfors 2019). The document, comprised out of 74 pages, features an introduction and is divided into four specific sections (New Zealand Classification Office, p.2). In his introduction, Tarrant presents the reader with his discourse, as he argues that increasing birth rates of non-Europeans are posing a fundamental threat to the lives of Europeans in the West (Tarrant p.1-2). In particular, Tarrant argues that European white nations are not failing to reach the replacement fertility levels of "2.06 births per woman" (ibid p.1). Despite this, Tarrant does state that, even with these low fertility rates in Europe, that the size of the population continues increase (ibid p.1-2). Tarrant, in light of this information, deduces that a white genocide is being orchestrated, as he argues that migrants are "Invited by the state and corporate entities to replace the White people (sic.) who have

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[32] 8chan is an online message board which was created by Frederick Brennan (Roose, 2019). Its creation was in response to a perceived increase of censorship on 4chan and therefore 8chan championed itself as a platform for promoting free-speech (ibid.). However, the website has been under ownership by Jim Watkins and has faced pressure to shut down its operations, as 8chan has become a platform upon which right-wing extremists, such as Tarrant, have shared their manifestos prior to their attacks (ibid.).

failed to reproduce, failed to create the cheap labour (sic.), new consumers and tax base that the corporations and states need to thrive" (ibid. p.2). Therefore, Tarrant posits that "We must crush immigration and deport those invaders already living on our soil. It is just not a matter of our prosperity, but the very survival of our own people" (ibid p.3).

Following this exposition of Tarrant`s discourse, the remainder of this section features an "answering possible questions" section which seems to model the Ask me Anything (AMA) [33] format found on Reddit (Önnerfors, 2019). In Tarrant`s AMA version, the section is further divided into sub-parts that seek to address a particular type of audience. For instance, Tarrant dedicates several pages on answering potential questions from either his "people/supporters" or even his "detractors". Despite this differentiation among his audience, it appears that Tarrant`s arguments remain relatively similar for each audience, albeit that it seems that Tarrant is more open to engage with his detractors to falsify their claims. For instance, Tarrant responds to the question "Violence isn`t the answer, why are you using force?" by stating that "There is no nation in the world that wasn`t founded by, or maintained by, the use of force. Force is power. History is the history of power. Violence is power and violence is the reality of history. Wake up" (Tarrant p.25).

Other than the introduction, the manifesto is comprised out of three more sections that are labelled as "Address to various groups," "General Thoughts and Potential Strategies" and "In conclusion." Although the content of these sections will be discussed more in-depth, the structure and style of these sections are relatively similar. For instance, in his address to conservatives, Tarrant asserts that contemporary conservatism is failing to uphold its own ideological beliefs in favour of profit and thereby he goes onto conclude that "CONSERVATISM IS DEAD, THANK GOD" (p.30-31). In a similar fashion, the "Radicalization of Western men" sub-section of his address to various groups, utilises a similar structure for Tarrant criticises contemporary Western culture for its "rampant nihilism, consumerism" which is closed off with another summation of his view: "RADICALIZATION IS THE RATIONAL RESPONSE TO DEGENERATION" (p.41).

In regards to other content found in the manifesto, it also includes two images and three poems in total. These images are found at the back of his manifesto and either depict Tarrant`s core pillars of his ideology, such as ethnic autonomy and the protection of heritage

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[33] According to Arumae, Qi and Liu, the Ask Me Anything thread on Reddit "emulates an online press conference. An AMA host initiates a discussions thread with `Ask Me Anything` or `Ask Me Almost/Absolutely Anything.` The host will provide a brief background description and invite others to ask any question about any topic." (p.26)

and culture etc. (see Index 2). Whereas, the second image is comprised out images of several Caucasian people within different contexts (see Index 3). For instance, one picture showcases a blue-eyed blonde-haired girl hugging another woman with the picture beneath showcasing two Caucasian soldiers inside of a helicopter. Furthermore, both of these images feature the "Black Sun" symbol. According to Saunders, the Black Sun symbolises death and resurrection and had been used by the head of the Schutzstaffel (SS), Heinrich Himmler, in attempt to "establish an occultist form of neo-Germanic paganism" (p.805, see note 10). This symbol can be found as a floor mosaic in Wewelsburg, a castle near Paderborn, which served as the headquarters of the SS (ibid. p.805). However, the symbol and its subsequent myth reappeared and became popularised among neo-Nazis by the works of the former SS member Wilhelm Landig and the Italian neo-fascist philosopher Julius Evola (p.4)

In a similar fashion to the images discussed above, the poems featured in Tarrant`s manifesto also seem to act as vehicles to convey his emotions in relation to his perspective. For instance, one of Rudyard Kipling`s poems, *The Beginnings*, is featured which in its original version commented on how anti-German sentiment was slowly transforming the English from a peace-loving nation towards a hate-filled one (Karlin p.64). However, Tarrant`s version of T*he Beginnings* is seemingly altered, as the English are replaced with Saxons which seems to be common among publications of this poem within extreme right-wing circles, as this version is readily available on websites found via Google, such www.europeanamericansunited.org. Likewise, in the case of the poems, I*nvictus* and *Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night*, written by William Ernest Henley and Thomas Dylan respectively, these works[34] and their content are seemingly hijacked by Tarrant to act as a vehicle to express his emotional response on the state of "Europe" through these works.

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[34] The content of these poems deals and/or covers with trauma`s on an individual scale and in one case the victory of this trauma. For instance, the Invictus poem had been written by Henley`s stay at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, where he was undergoing surgery on his right, and last remaining, leg. (Nakayama p.170) According to Nakayama, Henley`s surgery was successful, mainly due to his surgeon`s application of antiseptic surgery to combat gangrene (p.170 -171). In case of the latter poem, Cyr states that this poem was addressed to Dylan Thomas`s father David John – who increasingly became chronically ill (p.208)

Tarrant`s *The Great Replacement* and direct references to the Heavenly Serbia Discourse:

As discussed in the introduction, the Christchurch shooting and its perpetrator seemingly associated itself with representations associated with the Heavenly Serbia discourse. In particular, these representations are linked to the song "God is a Serb" (and the subsequent "remove kebab" meme) along with the names of Prince Lazar and Miloš Obilić which are important figures within the foundational myth of Serbia. From these abovementioned representations, the manifesto seemingly features one. On the third page of his manifesto, Tarrant discusses his personal background to reveal that "More recently (sic.) I have been working part time as a kebab removalist" (Tarrant, p.3).

The inclusion of this term is relatively significant, as it sheds further light on Tarrant`s relationship with the Heavenly Serbia discourse by means of his perception of the Islamic Other. As discussed previously in the methodology section, the association between the Islamic communities within Yugoslavia and the Turks seemingly was the product of Milosevic`s speech in 1989. However, within the same section, this association between these two groups can be explained through the logic of the Kosovo Myth which attributes the suffering of the Serbs to the aggressive Turk. Similarly, this reframing can also be seen the lyrics of the song "God is a Serb", as the Islamic foe are not the Bosnians but rather the Turks (see index 4). Therefore, one can conclude that Tarrant perceives the Islamic Other as the Turks.

Nevertheless, this is not the sole instance in which the Turk features in Tarrant`s manifesto. For instance, Tarrant`s aspiration for the attack was multi-faceted but he also sought for his attack "to drive a wedge between the nations of NATO that are European and the Turks that also make part of the NATO forces, thereby turning NATO once more into a united European army and pushing the Turkey (sic.) once more back to the true position of a foreign, enemy force" (p.5). In addition to this, the Turks are also addressed by Tarrant on page 34 in which he warns them that "… if you attempt to live in European lands, anywhere west of the Bosphorus (sic.). we will kill you and drive you roaches from our lands" (Tarrant p.34). Alongside this, Tarrant also threatens that "the Hagia Sophia will be free of minarets and Constantinople will be rightfully christian (sic.) owned once more" (ibid). In addition to this, Turkey`s president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is described by Tarrant, as "the leader of one of the oldest enemies of our people" and therefore also calls for his death which he argues would remove "a prime enemy of Russia" along with "destabilizing and fracturing

NATO" (p.46). Once again, this elevation of the Turks as a "one of the oldest enemies of our people" seems to suggest some relation between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and that of Tarrant.

Finally, apart from these examples, this paper identifies one more connection that had also been covered in the literature review: the 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo and Russia. As mentioned in the introduction, Tarrant`s attack sought to destabilise the US with the attempt to limit its capability to project its power globally (Tarrant p.6). This desire to dismantle NATO seems to stem from his conviction that the 1999 intervention in Kosovo constituted an example in which "(…US/NATO forces fought besides muslims (sic.) and slaughtered Christian Europeans attempting to remove these Islamic occupiers from Europe" (p.6). This framing of the 1999 intervention seems to match with the view that right-wing extremists hold/held towards NATO`s intervention. Yet, there is a slight distinction here though, as it seems that Tarrant`s ambition of NATO` s dismantlement seemingly acts in the interest of Russia. According to Shekhovtsov, there is evidence to support the claim that Russia had and still continues to have maintain its relations with right-wing extremist political parties and groups in the West. Moreover, the Russian state continues to play an active role in the promulgation of the Serbian narrative surrounding the Kosovo war and NATO`s intervention. In light of this, one could potentially pose the question to what extent these tactics by the Russian state could have exposed him to these discourses and perspectives. However, in order to test this assumption, it might warrant further research in the future.

Thematical similarities between Tarrant`s *The Great Replacement* and the Heavenly Serbia discourse:

Identity and Religion:

As highlighted in the theoretical framework section, the formation of the Serbian nationality and its mythology past has its roots in religious narratives about the Self. Within

this context, the Orthodox religion provided a narrative which elevated the battle of Kosovo Field into the realm of the holy, as it was argued that the sequences of events were determined by God. Whilst, on the other hand, adherence to the Orthodox religion also acted as tool for the Serbs to differentiate themselves from their neighbours, as the act of being Serbian was heavily associated with being Orthodox. These mechanics are visible in the inclusion and exclusion of groups in the Balkans, as exemplified by the Bosnian case in the 20th century in which the conversion of Muslims to Orthodoxy had been seen as a tool for these "confused" Serbs to return back to the fold. Whilst, in the Montenegrin case, their self-identification as Serbian mainly had been established through their adherence to Orthodoxy.

Although Tarrant does admit that his relationship with Christianity "is complicated", his conceptualisation of "Europeanness" bases itself around the Christian faith (p.17). For instance, in his address to the Turk, it becomes apparent that Tarrant demarcates the borders of the European lands by stating that the Turks should remain on the Eastern side of the Bosporus. These imagined borders seem to not differentiate among the different types of Christian beliefs but seemingly replicates the logic of Huntington`s clash of civilizations theory. According to this theory, the future of conflict will be determined on the basis of cultural differences (Huntington p.32). Within this theory, the cultural differences are determined by various factors but religion becomes an important marker of these cultural differences, as can be seen from Huntington`s conceptualisation of the world (see index 5). However, it must be stated that Huntington`s map does not shoehorn the Orthodox world into that of the Western Christian world, as is the case with Tarrant`s discourse.

This association between religion and identity is also visible in Tarrant`s argument for the culpability of the Islamic Other vis-à-vis the European. According to him, his attack sought to "to take revenge" upon "the invaders" which he deems responsible for the "… hundreds of thousands of deaths … in European lands throughout history.", "… the enslavement of millions of Europeans…" and "terror attacks throughout European lands" (Tarrant p.4-5). Through this accumulation of historical grievances, it can be argued that Tarrant`s discourse applies a Huntingtonian logic by assuming that any of these historical battles between any European power and Muslims constitutes an example of this civilizational clash. Moreover, this is further strengthened by Tarrant`s inclusion of the speech at the Council of Clermont in 1096 by Pope Urban II in address to Christians (p.32). This speech acted as the impetus for the First Crusade (1096-1099) but the speech`s content is seemingly utilised by Tarrant to both convey his message that Europe is under threat whilst also tapping into the mythical call to arms this speech embodies.

In light of this, the thematical similarities between both discourses can be identified by their conceptualisation of the Self through religion and through the utilisation of historical grievances that allow for the Self to differentiate itself from the Other. As a consequence, this conflation with religion and nationality becomes a sweeping force that either includes and/or excludes on the basis of these civilizational boundaries. However, it is important to note that these boundaries are imaginative and therefore can be constructed around a romanticised view of history. This construction of a romanticised history is also reflected in Tarrant`s conflation of Europeanness with Christianity and his inclusion of Pope Urban`s II speech, as it is assumed that the religious conflicts between and Islam and Christianity were one and the same battle. Although one may question to what extent this view holds, as history seems to suggest that these battles between Islam and Christianity was far more regionally situated.

National Disunity and Violence as a tool for emancipation/salvation:

Whilst the previous section sought to argue that thematical similarities between the role religion and identity plays in both discourses, the next thematical similarity that this research found is related to the discourses on national disunity and violence as a tool for emancipation/salvation. As discussed previously, the Kosovo myth provided the Serbs with a constructed narrative on the battle of Kosovo Field in 1389 which portrayed themselves as the victims of the Islamic Other`s immorality (Anzulovic p.33). Even though this self-victimisation narrative continues to persist, the reinterpretation and introduction of nationalist elements subsequently transformed the Kosovo myth. On the one hand, the introduction of these new elements created this narrative that the disunity among Serbian elites in the 14th century had created this cycle of suffering. Whilst, on the other hand, these elements perpetuated this notion that the removal of these suspected "sources" of national disunity would break the cycle of suffering and potentially bring salvation to the Serbs. Although these sources of disunity continue to be reimagined and renegotiated, the existence of the Islamic Other became associated with constituting a form of disunity, as can be seen in the Mountain Wreath, but also in the history of Serb discrimination of Muslims in Yugoslavia.

In Tarrant`s discourse, this association between the Islamic Other and societal issues is also present. According to Tarrant, Islamic migration is argued to constitute "the erosion of local and national identity…" which "… is a concerted and targeted effort against the European people" (p.67). The orchestrators of this "concerted and targeted effort" are

identified by Tarrant as the "elites" – NGOs, anti-white politicians, capitalists, Marxist, the media and corporations – who are compared to the Roman Emperor, Elagabalus, as they are "worshiping (sic.) all that is foreign, poisonous and subversive" (p.42). The invocation of Elagabalus may stem from the fact this 14-year-old Syrian boy, turned Roman Emperor, had introduced his own pagan God, Elagabal, as the new deity of the Roman Empire (Icks p.60-63). Nonetheless, this comparison serves to encapsulate the view of Tarrant regarding these elites, as he implies that the elites` "… own lust for power and wealth." (p.30) intentionally are using the Islamic Other to destroy the West.

This subsequent framing of the Islamic Other as a force of evil is further strengthened by Tarrant`s description of the Islamic Other in contrast to the European Self. Throughout his manifesto, Tarrant frames the Islamic Other either as an occupier or invader whose goal it is to "plunder, rape and ethnically displace the native European people" (p.67). The European Self though, and Tarrant himself by extension, are a people who "… wish to live in peace amongst their own traditions and deciding the future of their own kind" (p.10). Besides this, the existence of the Islamic Other in European lands is further problematised, as Tarrant argues that a diverse society cannot be peaceful for diversity is a source "… endless, social, political, religious and ethnic conflict" (p.40). Instead, Tarrant believes that this diversity is clearly weakening Western societies and therefore argues that "Unity, purpose, trust, traditions, nationalism and racial nationalism is what provides strength" (ibid.).

Yet, simultaneously, the threat of the Islamic Other is not merely related to the physical body of Europe, but also its identity. More specifically, Tarrant argues that the threat of the Islamic Other lies in the fact that it seeks to replace the European. Although Tarrant does mention assimilation in his manifesto, yet argues that the Islamic Other would refuse to assimilate itself to a "decaying, degenerate culture" (p.44). However, even if this were not to be the case, Tarrant upholds that "There are cultural, ethnic and RACIAL difference that makes interchanging one ethnic group with another an impossibility." (p.70) Moreover, Tarrant even goes further by arguing that "the idea that a Frenchmen need not speak the language, share the culture, believe in the same god (sic.) or even more importantly be ethnically French is ludicrous in the extreme. This is an attack on the very french (sic.) people themselves and is a strategy designed to destroy national, cultural, linguistic and ethnic unity" (p.70). As such, it is inferred from Tarrant`s perspective that the Islamic Other`s identity is fundamentally incompatible with his sense of "Europeanness" and therefore poses an existential threat.

Despite this, the existence of the Islamic Other in European lands, alongside this glaring issue of national disunity, is equally framed as an opportunity for the emancipation of the European people. For instance, in his section on the "Radicalization of Western men", Tarrant argues that critical state Western society in has allowed for some people to "… finally removing their blindfolds and seeing the reality of the (sic.) world and their peoples` future" (p.42). Whilst there are still some who "are expected to not combat these myriad, unending and dedicated interlopers, but to embrace them, accept their own disenfranchisement, accept the loss of their father lands, their own impoverishment, their own REPLACEMENT" (p.41). In line with this dichotomy and framing, it can be argued that Tarrant`s discourse situates the West as both the victim of aggression but also responsible for its own demise. More specifically, this can be inferred from his idea on the existence of those men and women whose radicalisation serves as evidence. Yet, more notably though, is the semi-rejection of the self-victimisation narrative which seems to match with the mutation of the Heavenly Serbia discourse under Milošević.

Nonetheless, the rejection of this self-victimisation narrative for society is paired together with alternatives that seek to promote emancipation and even salvation. In Milošević`s case, his decision to revert Kosovo`s autonomy and forcefully return it back to Serbia proper acted as evidence that his leadership sought to end the cycle of suffering for the Serbs. In that sense, "King Slobo"[35] offered the Serbian people a different alternative towards combating their anxieties and fears which included a more violent and assertive approach. Similarly, Tarrant also offers his readers an alternative method to emancipate themselves through "accelerationism". Accelerationism, according to Davey and Ebner, refers to this notion that social radical change can be achieved through the acceleration of specific process (p.6). In Tarrant`s context, accelerationism serves the purpose to "destabilize and discomfort society where ever (sic.) possible" (p.75). In doing so, this is perceived to accelerate the processes which will "radically and fundamentally change society" (ibid.)

In order to achieve the radical/fundamental change of society, Tarrant`s accelerationism requires the widespread of violence within societies. Within a domestic context, Tarrant calls for people to vote "… political candidates that radically change or challenge the entrenched systems, radicalizing public discourse by both supporting, attacking, vilifying, radicalizing and exaggerating all societal conflicts and attacking or even

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[35] According to Edwards, Milošević speech served to drive the argument that Knez Lazar failed in uniting the Serbian people but that Milosevic could "make Kosovo a symbol of unity" and thereby "become the true hero of Kosovo" (Edwards p.5196).

assassinating weak or less radical leaders on either side of societal conflicts" (p.74). In addition to this, he further advices people by locally inciting conflict through hanging posters "calling for sharia law, then in the next week place posters over such posters calling for the expulsion of all immigrants, repeat in every area of public life until the crisis arises" (ibid.). Whilst, in the international context, Tarrant calls onto his supporters to provide various forms of support to so-called "Brother Nations" that includes being "… ready to put boots on the ground, send them weapons and munitions, attack their enemies. If the media or state in your region attacks them, destroy the corporation and traitorous politicians responsible" (p.62).

In a similar sense, Tarrant`s accelerationism calls for the destruction of any perceived source of disunity and the subsequent destruction is perceived to possess some healing quality. For instance, Tarrant`s advocacy towards the destruction of drug dealers is predicated on his own view that "drug dealers are our racial enemies" who are "ruining the health, wealth, family structure and future of our people" (p.56). The destruction of the drug dealer, in Tarrant`s perspective, allows for the individual to become "… the Antidote (sic.) to their poison" (ibid.). Likewise, Tarrant`s call for the assassination of London mayor, Sadiq Khan, further strengthen this association between disunity, destruction and cleansing/healing. According to Tarrant, Sadiq Khan is "an open sign of the disenfranchisement and ethnic replacement of the british (sic.) people in the british isles (sic.)" and argues that "What better sign of the white rebirth than the removal of this invader?" (p.46). In that sense, violence possesses a healing/cleansing quality which seems to align with role violence plays within the Heavenly Serbia discourse.

Yet, this characterisation of the quality of violence is not merely visible in the aforementioned case, but also in Tarrant`s description of violence against the Islamic Other. On page 60 of his manifesto, Tarrant`s section on "Do not allow your enemies to grow unchecked" features an analogy that compares the Islamic Other with vipers. More specifically, Tarrant poses the question:

"When you discover a nest of vipers in your yard, do you spare the adolescents? Do you allow them to grow freely openly, to one day bite you (sic.) child as they play in their own yard? No. You burn the nest and kill the vipers, no matter their age" (Tarrant p.60).

Furthermore, he goes onto to argue that: "The enemies of our children are born in our lands right now, even as you read this. These same children will one day become teens, then adults, voting against the wishes of our people, practicing the cultural and religious practices of the

invaders, taking our peoples lands, work, houses and even attacking and killing our children" (ibid p.60).

Although this comparison seems to fit with Tarrant`s overall discourse regarding the Islamic Other as an existential threat, it also further reveals the connection between violence, salvation and even the immorality of the Other. In regards to the aforementioned connection, Tarrant`s argument that one must destroy the nest first is all predicated on this notion that "A ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." along with arguing that one should not make your "children fight" (Tarrant p.60). Yet, Tarrant does argue that "It will be distasteful, it will be damaging to the soul, but know that it is necessary and any invader you spare, no matter the age will one day be an enemy your people must face" (ibid.). In that sense, from this excerpt, it can be argued that Tarrant`s language use seems to suggest that the acts of the Islamic Other necessitates the European to commit immoral acts. Moreover, this perspective seems to further align with his framing of the European as "peaceful" and the Islamic Other as invasive and dangerous.

In light of this information, it seems that both the discourses share a similar logic that perceives their in-group to have fallen victim due to the immoral behaviour of the Other – the Islamic Other and elites. In essence, the immorality of the Other is grounded into the fact that their actions, such as promoting migration or living in European lands, constitutes a blatant attack and threat to the peaceful Self. Despite this self-victimisation narrative, both discourses do allocate some blame to the Self for allowing themselves to have fallen victim to the immorality of the Other and thereby assert that the Self can emancipate and save themselves. However, the expression of emancipation in both contexts seemingly supports the utilisation of violence to achieve this end-goal, even if this approach itself constitutes forms of cruel and immoral behaviour towards innocent bystanders or as Tarrant argues: "Radical, explosive action is the only desired, and required, response to an attempted genocide" (p.41).

Eco-fascism and the Kosovo Myth:

In this final sub-section on thematical similarities, the links between Eco-fascism and the Kosovo Myth will be discussed. In particular, this sub-section seeks to pose the question to what extent the Kosovo Myth can be considered an eco-fascist discourse? This question is related towards Tarrant`s admission that he considers himself "an Eco-fascist by nature" (p.18). Eco-fascism, according to Staudenmeier, is a particular branch of fascism that equates

the state of the environment with the health of a society (p.13-14). This particular form of fascism can be traced back to the German Romanticist Movement of the 19th century, as this group perceived the modernisation/industrialisation of society and the presence of non-Germans to constitute an obstacle to achieve German "wholeness" (p.17). Moreover, this eco-fascist discourse can also be seen back in Nazi Germany`s "blood and soil" policy which sought to establish a German/Aryan ethnostate (ibid p.13-14).

As mentioned in the previous section, the aforementioned association between the Other and perceived societal issues constitutes the core of Tarrant`s discourse. More specifically, the existence of the Islamic Other within European lands is problematised, as their existence is a fundamental threat to "Europeanness". These ideas are also visible in Tarrant`s eco-fascist discourse, as he argues that "the natural environments of our lands shaped us just as we shaped it. We were born from our lands and our culture was molded (sic.) by these same lands. The protection and preservation of these lands is of the same importance as the protection and preservation of our own ideals and beliefs" (Tarrant p.45). Moreover, this logic extends to nations for Tarrant argues that "Each nation and each ethnicity was melded (sic.) by their own environment and if they are to be protected so must their environments" (ibid.).

This requirement to protect these environments, or rather spaces, can be seen from the examples discussed above, as Tarrant`s accelerationism and overall tactics focus on dominating and gaining control over physical or ideological space. This desire to own both these spaces is seemingly reflected on page 76 of his manifesto, as Tarrant argues that an ethnocentric Europe cannot survive in a globalised capitalist system. On the one hand, this is related to Tarrant`s perspective on globalized capitalism as a structure that exploits cheap labour, through immigration, and thereby is destroying ethnic autonomy (Tarrant p.76). Whereas, on the other hand, Tarrant`s framing of the globalized market economy suggest that it is morally bankrupt due to its lack of "care for the natural world, dignity of workers, lasting culture or or (sic.) white civilizations (sic.) future should never be allowed into the new morally focused and ethnically focused European market" (ibid.) As can be seen from this example, the act of barring these goods arguably acts as form of determining the physical boundaries of "Europeanness" Whilst, simultaneously, this act reaffirms Tarrant`s conceptualisation of the ideological aspect of "Europeanness" which is morally superior by virtue.

In consideration of this information, it can be argued that the Kosovo myth might constitute an example of an eco-fascist discourse. As exemplified in this paper, there is a

similar attachment in both discourses towards territorial space/ownership of land and national wellbeing. This aforementioned perspective and/or discourse, according to Staudenmeier, constitutes an example of eco-fascism. Apart from this, Staudenmeier states that these eco-fascist discourses were a product of the German Romanticist movement of the 20th century. In this paper, the Romanticist movement has been briefly mentioned by means of Vuk Karadžić and his contribution in the reinterpretation of the Kosovo myth in the 20th century. However, it seems that Vuk Karadžić did have some level of contact with his fellow German Romanticists, as he had received significant recognition and support for his work from his peers (Anzulovic p.76). Although it must be stated that the extent of this relationship, along with assessing the possibility of classifying the Kosovo Myth as eco-fascist, warrants further research.

Conclusion:

This paper sought to understand the relationship between the Heavenly Serbia discourse and that of the Christchurch shooter, Brenton Tarrant. In particular, the research question sought to establish to what extent these discourses are related (or even similar for that matter) and how this potentially might have motivated the attack. Although this paper does agree with this notion that the latter question cannot be easily answered, the question was considered due to the Heavenly Serbia discourse`s link to violence, especially against Muslims. In order to answer the research question, this paper provided an overview of right-wing extremism along with featuring some of the works of Bat Ye`Or and Renaud Camus that are indicative of this group`s embracement of Islamophobia. This development within right-wing extremism is significant, as the literature showcases that elements of the Heavenly Serbia discourse, especially the 1999 NATO intervention and the Kosovo Myth, have been and continues to be appropriated by right-wing extremists. From there, the Heavenly Serbia discourse was discussed and how this discourse developed itself over time and how it facilitated forms of discrimination and violence against Muslims in the Balkans. This overview of the aforementioned discourse provided the interpretative lens upon which Tarrant`s manifesto was analysed. However, the results of this paper suggest that there are some similarities in both discourses, but that these similarities do not definitely point towards a strong mutual connection between them.

Although this result seems relatively odd, especially in light of Tarrant`s attack and his association with elements of the Heavenly Serbia discourse, it is important to note that

these figures and ideas do not feature prominently in Tarrant`s manifesto. For instance, Prince Lazar or Miloš Obilić or any cultural artefacts related to these figures are note featured in his manifesto. Instead, Tarrant`s manifesto does include the speech of Pope Urbanus II at the Council of Clermont of 1096. However, even though this paper could identify some instances of overlap between both discourses, the question still remains if this overlap constitutes a strong argument for arguing that Tarrant`s discourse is influenced by the Heavenly Serbia discourse. Instead, the argument that can be made here is that Tarrant`s association with these elements might stem from the appropriation of the Kosovo Myth and NATO`s intervention by right-wing extremists. More specifically, as discussed in the literature review, the Kosovo conflict is considered by right-wing extremists to constitute an example of the prospective future of Europe.

In light of this perspective, it can be argued that the representation of some elements of the Heavenly Serbia discourse in Tarrant`s case might be explained through their shared dispositions. For instance, both these discourses are based on the notion that a perceived degeneration of society can be linked back to the existence of foreign influences and powers which are considered to facilitate this degeneration of society. In consideration of this view, both discourses uphold a logic that the violent removal of these foreign influences is a necessity in order to counter this existential threat. This existential threat, in both discourses, is constituted by the Islamic Other whose immoral behaviour and "conquering" religion holds them liable for getting attacked. Whereas, violence in both contexts, are considered to possess some healing/cleansing quality for the native population under threat by the Islamic Other. Additionally, it is important to note that the Heavenly Serbia discourse has led to a legacy of source material and cultural artefacts that features several forms of violence against the Islamic Other which is relatively accessible online. As such, these thematical similarities and the presence of content online that depicts violence against this group might explain this phenomenon.

Nonetheless, despite the fact that it has been one year since the attack, there is still a lot of information that needs to be released. Recently, it has been reported that the court case against Tarrant has changed his plea from "innocent" to "guilty" but the finalization of the court trial has been pushed forward due to the Covid-19 pandemic (BBC, 2020). Moreover, the inquiry on the Christchurch shooting has also been delayed until the 31st of July due to the aforementioned pandemic (Royal Commission, 2020). In consideration of this, it is important to note that the findings and conclusions drawn from this research continue to be subject to potential change and/or criticism.

Therefore, this paper argues that further research is required in the following key areas: 1) Eco-fascism and the Kosovo Myth and 2) Tarrant, Breivik and the Knights Templar International. In regards to the first topic, further research could a more in-depth analysis and assess to what extent the Kosovo Myth constitutes an example of an eco-fascist discourse. Although this topic has been briefly touched upon in this paper, an analysis on this particular topic might provide some more clarity on the perceived connection found in this paper and assess its validity. Moreover, further research on this potential topic might shed more light on the diffusion of Romanticist discourses within Europe and how these discourses remain sources of knowledge and authority upon which right-wing extremists legitimise their discourses.

In case of the second recommendation, Tarrant cited in his manifesto that he "only had brief contact with Knight Justiciar Breivik, receiving a blessing for my mission after contacting his brother knights" (p.21). This information is quite significant, especially in light of the Heavenly Serbia discourse, as Breivik`s manifesto included over 500 mentions of the Yugoslav conflict which was not the case with Tarrant`s manifesto (Gec, 2019). Furthermore, Breivik had revealed during his court trail that he was part of the Knights Templar of which he had attended a meeting in London around 2002 (The Independent, 2012). Although Breivik`s claim has been brought into question, there is a far-right news organisation named the Knights Templar International which has been considerably active within the Balkans. For instance, the group and its leader, Jim Dowson[36] have cooperated with far-right groups in Hungary and Serbia and have been accused of attempting to smuggle arms to the Serbian enclaves in Kosovo (Collins, 2018). As such, the research here can be three-fold, as it can explore the potential relationship between and among the KTI, Breivik and Tarrant along with doing an analysis on the news content of the KTI. In particular, the analysis of their news operation could focus on if the KTI uses its platform to spread discourses from the Balkans along with how the KTI conveys these discourses. Whereas, further research could also focus on the analysing the relationship and influence the KTI has within the Serbian political world in order to assess if these groups cooperate together in the proliferation of certain discourses, such as the Kosovo myth.

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[36] Jim Dowson is the founder of the hate group Britain First and, according to Collins, "described previously as `the evil genius` of Britain`s far right." (Collins, 2018) Moreover, Collins goes on to state that" In the 10 years we have been following his trials and tribulations, there has been no more apt description." (ibid.)
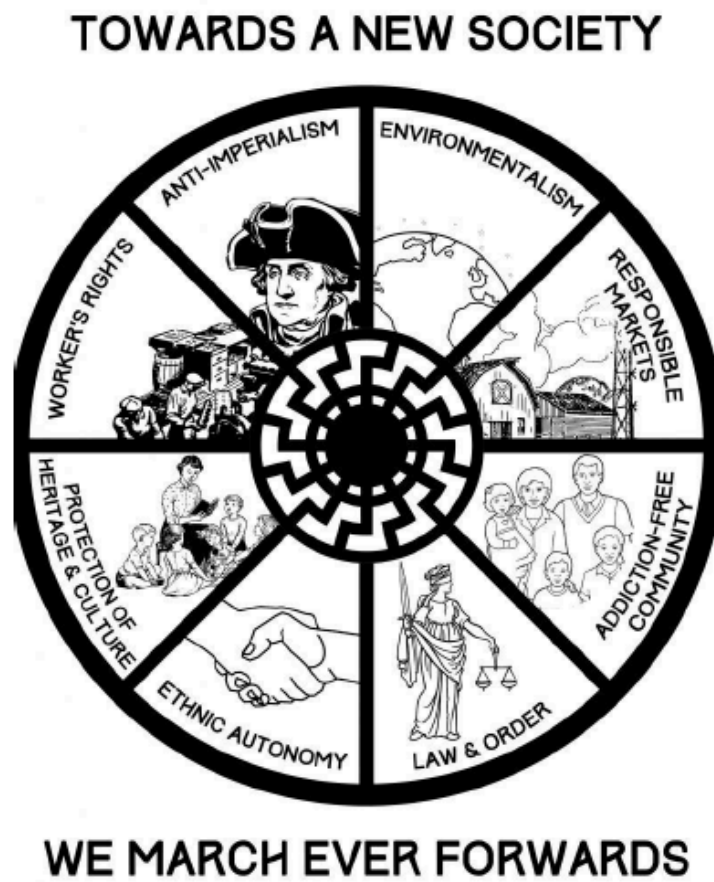
Index:

Index 1:

Source: Crkvencic, I. "The Posavina Border region of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina: Development up to 1918 (with special reference to changes in ethnic composition), p.302. According to this article, the grey filled area constitutes the Military frontier.

Index 2:

Index 3:

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Index 4:

English translation of "God is a Serb"

From Bihac to Petrovac Town
To Petrovac Town
The entire Serbian land is attacked
the entire land is attacked

Karadzic will lead the Serbs
Will lead the Serbs
Show them that they are not afraid of anything
They are not afraid of anything

Croatian fascists have woken up
Croatian fascists,
Don't touch our country
Don`t touch our country

Karadzic will lead the Serbs
Will lead the Serbs
Show them that they are not afraid of anything
They are not afraid of anything

From the Krajina, the wolves are coming
The wolves are coming
Be afraid, fascists and Turks
Fascists and Turks

Karadzic will lead the Serbs
Will lead the Serbs
Show them that they are not afraid of anything
They are not afraid of anything

In defence of the Serbian people
Defence of the Serbian people
We fight, glory to our freedom
Glory to our freedom

Karadzic will lead the Serbs
Will lead the Serbs
Show them that they are not afraid of anything
They are not afraid of anything
Show them that they are not afraid of anything
They are not afraid of anything

Source: Славииц арцивес (Slavic Archives). "Бог је Србин." (God is a Serb.) *Youtube.*

Accessed on 2 July 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAyUeRvxD9M

Author`s Note: the channel sharing this song has mentioned the fact that the video is subject to being pulled down by Youtube regularly. As such, the video might not be accessible at certain moments in time.

Index 5:
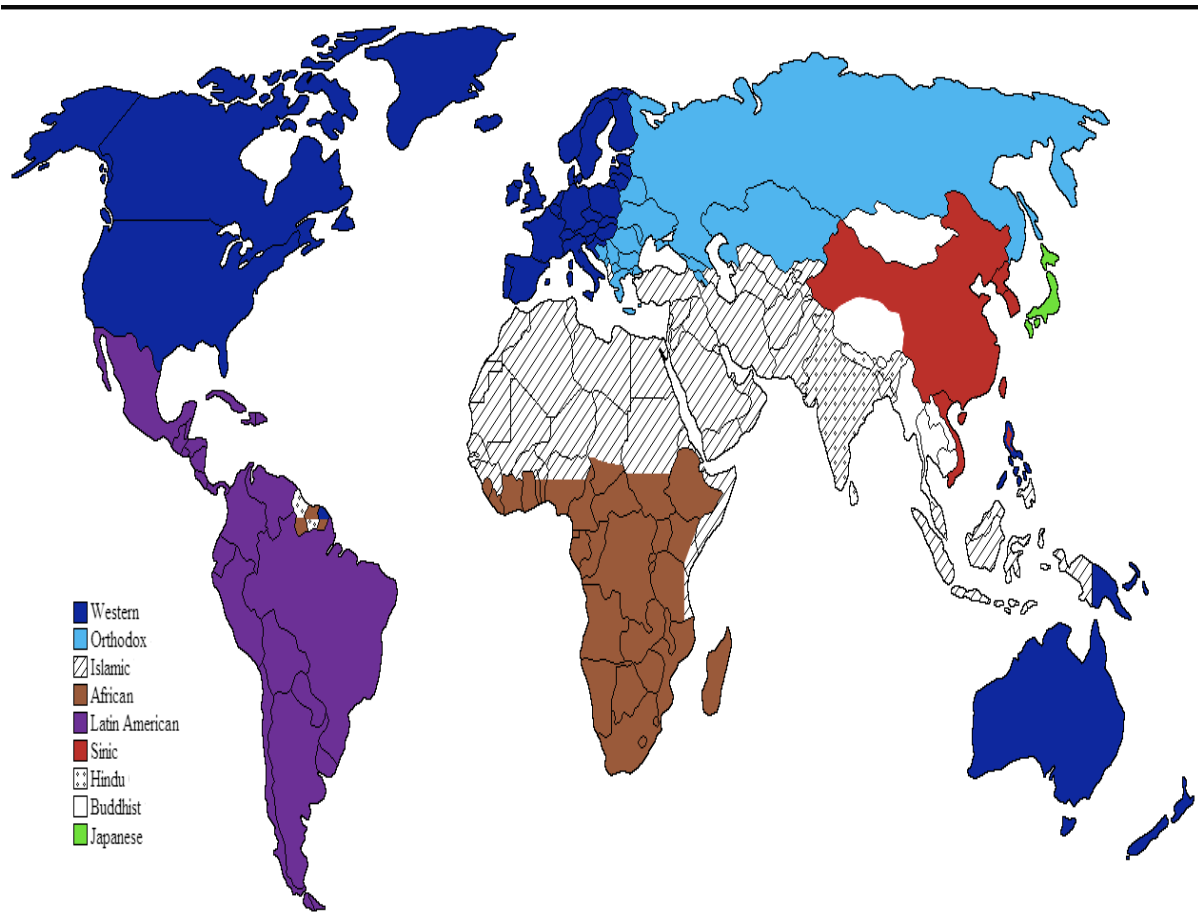
Source: Cronan, K and Olahus. Clash of Civilizations mapn2.png, accessed on 2 July 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Clash_of_Civilizations_mapn2.png

Author`s note: This map is not the original found within Huntington`s 1996 book, but it is an updated version/edit of the original map found in his book.

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