

Radicals with a cause

How Nordiska motståndsrörelsen expresses grievances in its
violent political mobilization

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Abstract

Radicalization is a debated concept and should a consensus arrive on its meaning, the ambiguity of the process would most likely remain. This research paper does not side with any model of radicalization but instead chooses to focus on one concept present in much of this research, namely grievance. Through the horizontal inequality thesis, grievance is operationalized as an inequality pertaining to a specific group in different domains of life. Using this understanding, the paper examines how the Swedish right-wing organization Nordiska motståndsrörelsen perceives itself economically, politically, socially and culturally disadvantaged. This is examined through the organization's articulations of grievance in its propaganda material. The material is examined through qualitative content analysis, and this confirms that grievances are indeed found according to these categories within the material. The political and cultural grievances dominate the narratives and are most influential in shaping the identity of the organization. Moreover, the grievances illustrate a deeply unjust society in which extremism is presented as the only means of meaningful change. These insights provide a deep understanding of one aspect of radicalization.

Keywords: Radicalization, extremism, violent political mobilization, right-wing, grievance, horizontal inequality, identity, relative deprivation, Nordiska motståndsrörelsen

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1. Introduction

Issues of radicalization and extremism are ever-present in society and in academia concerned with security studies. Yet, there is no definitive answer as to why people choose violence in their political strife. Radicalization is a cloudy process, but this work is part of an endeavor to illuminate it. By examining grievances in one of Sweden's most hostile extremist organizations (ETC, 2017), this paper aims to study closer the worldview shared by Nordiska motståndsrörelsen (NMR) and its members. This belief system cannot be taken for granted and the grievances here expressed are part of a process in which the organization situates itself in the world. How this is done, and through what means, can give important insights to the radicalization process. This does not seek to justify violent actions, but instead asks how these *are* justified, according to the extremists. Although this study does little more than poke at this immense task, I humbly hope that its findings will contribute to future research in the field.

I also hope that an understanding of the reasoning behind NMR can contribute to efforts that seek to restrict violent nationalism in the world. With hateful movements becoming mainstream politics, this study is attempting to illuminate one core aspect of this development. For this, an examination of the grievances aired by extremist organizations is imperative.

1.1. Research question

The research question is formulated as following:

What narratives of grievance are expressed by Nordiska motståndsrörelsen in its propaganda material?

1.1.1. Research aim and scope of research paper

It is not this paper's objective to examine *if* grievances are important in the radicalization process. This is presumed on behalf of the radicalization literature's focus on the matter (as detailed by later sections). Rather, this paper seeks to examine grievances more closely and analyze how these are expressed by an extremist organization. Thus, the research will be descriptive in that it conveys grievances within the organization, and it can only theorize on what this means for possible members or individuals within a radicalization process. Grievance has a significant effect on radicalization according to the literature on the subject (King & Taylor, 2011; SOU, 2014: 45-46), but this study will not be able to provide any more than a thorough conceptualization and examination of the concept. By employing the thesis on

horizontal inequality, grievances are nonetheless clearly connected to violent group mobilization. But, again, the paper can only theorize on how the grievances are interpreted in the material. This leaves to future research to examine to what extent grievances affect an individual's decision to join an extremist organization. Moreover, while the interest on grievance in an extremist setting might be interpreted as an evaluation of the ideology of the organization, this is not the focus of the study. The aim is to examine the overarching expressions of grievance, and this could be applied to extremist organizations all over the ideological spectrum.

2. Definitions

2.1. Radicalization

Radicalization is a relative concept. A neutral definition could be that radicalization is “...a degree of difference in views and agendas from the societal mainstream, however that may be defined” along with some notion of activism (Richards, 2017:57-58). The Swedish Security Police (SÄPO) states that the support or practice of violence in relation to an ideology is a key aspect of the concept, which goes beyond simply having deviating or extreme views (SOU, 2014:22-23). However, as radicalization is a noun to describe a process (Richards, 2017:55), it can be difficult to know whether the beginning of a radicalization process will end in support of violence or not. Radicalization, defined as a process that leads to the adoption of extremist views which condones the use of violence, is the definition henceforth used in this paper. The following, subordinate concepts, are closely related to radicalization as a concept.

2.1.1. Extremism and extremist

Extremism and extremist are likewise relative concepts. One definition is as someone who holds beliefs that are outside of the mainstream, but for this to be useful there must be a definition of the mainstream (Richards, 2017:17). SÄPO defines extremism as movements, ideologies and individuals who do not accept a democratic social order. Within this definition is an understanding of a sanction of violent methods to change the democratic order (SOU, 2014:21). Extremism in this paper is defined according to this latter understanding.

2.1.2. Terrorism

Terrorism is also a disputed concept, but it could be likened to the final, most extreme station of the two previous concepts. A general definition of terrorism is as violence committed by non-state actors against civilians with a political goal to change others' perceptions (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013:58). As it will not be thoroughly discussed in this paper, the emphasis is that it is connected to, and encompassed within, the two concepts above.

2.1.3. Right-wing

To little surprise, right-wing is also a difficult concept to pinpoint. It is used by SÄPO (SÄPO, 2018) and by much of the research on radicalization (Kruglanski, Webber & Koehler, 2019; van Prooijena & Kuijper, 2020; Frischlich, Rieger, Morten & Bente, 2018). There are other recognized definitions as well that, along with right-wing, are largely umbrella terms for

ideologies characterized by white-power ideology and xenophobia. These overarching terms can conceal important aspects of a movement, and the organization examined in this paper is more closely related to radical nationalism. This is defined as ideologies that propagate ideas about the white race as superior and under attack (Ranstorp & Ahlin, 2020, 18-19). However, as right-wing is an established term within the research and the focus here is on extremism as a phenomenon rather than ideology, the paper will use right-wing to describe the broader ideological context in which NMR can be found, to emphasize this.

2.2. Grievance

Grievance is a concept whose meaning is often taken for granted. Initially, the term originated in a prison context where it is defined as “A complaint filed in the criminal justice system by an inmate or group of inmates against a specific employee or the correctional institution itself” (Sullivan, 2009). In this context, it is cited as a cause for riot (ibid.) and this connotation to unrest has followed the concept to other areas as well. In peace and conflict studies, grievance has been used to term perceptions of injustice that are cited to instigate violent conflict (Levy & Thompson, 2010:187). However, a definitive definition of the word is conspicuously absent here and thus grievance will be defined as a feeling of injustice, shared by a social group, in relation to one’s societal position, in this paper.

2.3 Identity

Identity is here used to describe social identity, rather than individual, as groups and organizations are of interest to the paper. Social identity can be defined as “the individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (Hogg, 2006:113).

2.4. Narrative

While narrative is a complex concept that can contain many different components (Reissman, 2008, ch.1; Bal, 2017:5), I will use the word to describe one aspect of the process of creating a frame. A frame is defined in research on radicalization as the context in which extremist groups describe their movement and enemies. “[F]rames thereby represent the group’s perception of the world, which can subsequently be extended to define and describe people, events and occurrences” (Smit & Meines, 2019:2). As this is interchangeable with narrative, narrative will primarily be used in the paper as this is commonly connected to the telling of something.

3. Background

While the research paper is situated within a larger field of research on radicalization, the background will present the relevant context for this study, i.e., right-wing extremism and Nordiska motståndsrörelsen.

3.1. Violent right-wing movements in Sweden

Right-wing extremism has a long history in Sweden (CVE, 2020:19), but the ideological themes in these movements today come mainly from National Socialist ideologies, the skinhead ideology in England and the white-power movement in the United States (SOU, 2014:33). The mutual goal for these movements is a racially homogenous nation, but what should fall into this concept varies between different factions (Expo, 2019). The ideology is guided by a belief that humans can be divided into different races and that the white race is superior (SOU, 2014:33). Within this larger field of right-wing ideologies is the National Socialist ideology which, besides being xenophobic and right-wing, also is anti-Semite (ibid. 33-34). Here is where we find Nordiska motståndsrörelsen.

3.2. Nordiska motståndsrörelsen

Nordiska motståndsrörelsen (NMR; the Nordic Resistance Movement) was formed in 1997 and was originally called Svenska motståndsrörelsen (SMR; the Swedish Resistance Movement) (Ranstorp, Ahlin & Normark, 2020:146). The individuals came from other right-wing movements (ibid.; NE, 2021) and it was on behalf of the dissolution of another organization that NMR was fundamentally rebuilt in 2015. Since, the organization has had a big influence on not only the Swedish, but also Nordic, right-wing milieu (Ranstorp, Ahlin & Normark, 2020:146-147). The organization's ideology is based on the German and Swedish Nazism from the interwar period (ibid.), where society is characterized by a struggle between different races. Zionist elites are understood to undermine this struggle by introducing corrupted ideals and movements to the people. Finally, a dichotomy between the sexes is present where the man is seen as an aggressor and defender and the woman is responsible for carrying forward the race (Mattson, 2018:6-7). SMR extremists have been connected to and convicted for several crimes and acts against, e.g., political dissidents and asylum seekers (Ranstorp, Ahlin & Normark, 2020:186-188). The organization is influenced by, and reveres, military capability which its members are expected to participate in (ibid. 169). NMR has also, despite its anti-democratic stance (ibid. 149), received two seats in communal elections (NE, 2021). A stronger focus on

party politics has in recent years given the organization a bigger platform and presence in the Swedish society (Ranstorp, Ahlin & Normark, 2020:176-178). Important events in the recent past are the prohibition of NMR in Finland (ibid. 147) which gained legal force in 2020 (Vergara, 2020), and the unsuccessful demonstration in Gothenburg in 2017 which resulted in a large legal process concerning a multitude of the members (Lodenus, 2020:122).

4. Previous research

Research on radicalization has gradually become ever-present in academia and has in this time gone through several stages and levels of analysis. The field today is a rich flora of possible explanations for extremism. The movements and ideologies of interest have primarily been Islamist and right-wing movements in recent years (Smit & Meines, 2019). Some argue that there is a discrepancy in how different ideologies are treated within research and policy decisions regarding extremism - where right-wing extremism has been neglected on behalf of Islamist extremism (Berczyk & Vermeulen, 2015:89; Bentley, 2015:106). However, despite remarks of a varying application of explanation models on respectively right-wing (Richards, 2017:93) and Islamist extremism (Mansoob Murshed & Pavan, 2009:3-4), current research generally acknowledges that radicalization is a similar process irrespective of the ideology (SOU, 2014:45). What follows is a review of the more recent research on radicalization that has bearing on this paper.

In the many models of radicalization, a variety of factors are given different status and there is no united support behind a single model (SOU, 2014:51). The research is often conducted on different levels of analysis (CVE, 2020:9; Kruglanski, Bélanger & Gunaratna, 2019:85), which makes a comparison of results difficult. In a review of five different models, a theme can nonetheless be discerned where the process in all models involves a social-psychological transformation. Here, relative deprivation and identity-related issues are of import (King & Taylor, 2011:608-609). Relative deprivation is defined as people experiencing “feelings of relative deprivation by comparing their material conditions to that of other groups, and viewing their group’s disadvantage as an injustice” (King & Taylor, 2011:609). The identity-related issues concern discrimination, integration and identity management, all of which is relevant to group-identity (ibid. 611-612). While not explicit in this work, the factors here highlighted are related. For relative deprivation to become relevant, a clearly defined group needs to exist that an individual identifies with. Additionally, the issues related to identity (discrimination and integration) could be argued to fit into relative deprivation (Gurr, 2016:xi). It is unfortunate that this connection is not made more evident here and in other works on radicalization.

By applying an identity-based approach to radicalization, theorist Julian Richards intersects these two concepts and illustrates how the political construction of identity is manipulated in a radicalization process (Richards, 2017:viii). He delineates how a perceived disadvantage to other groups affects group-opinion and group-feelings of deprivation socio-

economically, even when this is inaccurate on an individual level (ibid. 71). The relative positions between groups are posited to influence identity-formation and grievance-formation in Richards' review of the far-right (ibid. 89). The grievances instrumentalized in the identity-formation of far-right supporters could however be further nuanced. Included are anxiety over socio-economic issues and a radical Islamism (ibid. 97) as well as a distrust against state authorities and politicians (ibid. 103). The concepts of relative deprivation and grievance could be conceptualized more firmly. If a group distrust both the government and immigrants, the distrust probably develops around different issues, and this differentiation could explain important aspects of how the extremist organization perceives itself in the world.

In other works, these concepts are marginally expanded. In a structuralist tradition, apperceptive to the objective realities of socio-economic issues, it is argued that both relative deprivation and horizontal inequalities (inequalities which befall a culturally defined group) promote radicalization among Muslims in Europe (Mansoob Murshed & Pavan, 2009:3, 13-14, 29). It is suggested that "individual identification with group grievances is central to collective action surrounding Muslim radicalization" (Mansoob Murshed & Pavan, 2009:4). Grievances are defined as discrimination, socio-economic disadvantage and historical grievances – all which befall Muslims as a group (ibid. 18, 4, 8). While this review has strengths in its expansion of two important concepts, an understanding, of how these grievances are linked to identity, is lacking. The reverse is true in another study which takes an identity-based approach on radicalization. This illustrates how stigmatization and a strong identification with the Muslim faith (and weak national identification) are correlated to believing that terrorists have valid grievances (Williamson, Murphy & Sargeant, 2020:214, 222). These collective (Islamist) grievances are defined as injustices, persecution, victimization and marginalization which occur in relation to socio-political and cultural factors (ibid. 210). While this examination of grievance and its relation to group-identity is welcome, a deeper analysis of the grievances is absent. Relative deprivation is likewise overlooked despite its relevance to the topics discussed. A final study, which links group-victimization and radicalization, takes a discursive approach. This examines how discourses, formulated by IS-sympathizers, create a victim identity. By telling stories of grievance, injustices become intertwined with the Muslim identity, creating an identity that simultaneously needs protection and vengeance (Renaut, 2019:1-2, 11-13, 20-21). This illustrates how group-level grievances become personal and allows for individuals to incarnate and reinterpret these into their own lives (ibid. 19). While the grievances of Daesh are explicitly constructed with political, social, economic and religious elements (ibid. 2), such a distribution is absent in the analysis of the discourse (ibid. 27). There

is likewise no mention of relative deprivation here. A closer inspection of the grievances present in the discursive practices could be helpful as this connect them to broader societal processes.

Identification with the grievances of a certain group is clearly imperative for a radicalization process. However, the connection between this and relative deprivation is not always evident. One perspective which makes this slightly clearer, is the significance quest theory. Here, it is argued that relative deprivation can be incorporated into the three tenets of this theory: Need, Narrative and Network (Kruglanski, Bélanger & Gunaratna, 2019:4, 47-48, 69). The primary interest of the theory is the psychological and cognitive processes leading to extremism where a Need, triggered by a perceived grievance, is translated to a search for significance (ibid. 42). Again, grievance is somewhat loosely defined. It is present in the Narrative part of the model (ibid. 58), where collective narratives and personal motivations meet up in group-grievances. Despite the manifested relationship between personal and group perceptions, however, this theory takes an individual perspective (ibid. 35). The Network is more of a supporting group rather than an extremist milieu (ibid. 51). This means that while relative deprivation can be incorporated into the theory, identification processes are paid little attention. Circling back to the emphasis put on *both* relative-deprivation and identity-processes by the first review, this is a possible weakness in the significance quest theory. The connection between grievance and identity cannot be ignored, and neither can the specificity of the identity adopted. Identity labels attached to various groups are formed under specific circumstances and for specific purposes - and this goes for the grievances that are expressed as well (Richards, 2017: 91-93).

What was promised in the introduction of this section was a rich flora of different perspectives on radicalization. Despite the narrow focus on grievances and how this interacts with relative deprivation and identity, no clear-cut path has been left to follow seeing to the plurality of the previous research. It is evident that the grievance-concept – while ever-present - lacks a definition or any recognition of this need. Likewise, the group is given an ambiguous role in the radicalization process. Its influence is found to be both active and passive (King & Taylor, 2011:612) and yet, the group is clearly relevant when it comes to relative deprivation and identity, as well as the expressions of this (Kruglanski, Bélanger & Gunaratna, 2019:80; SÄPO, 2019:56; Smit & Meines, 2019:2; King & Taylor, 2011:617). By adopting a constructionist perspective and viewing these concepts as connected to and dependent on one another, this paper will examine grievances thoroughly as to better understand *one* part of the radicalization process.

5. Theory

Grievance makes a frequent appearance in research on radicalization - sometimes in tandem with relative deprivation and often in relation to group-identity. It can be interpreted in many ways and so evidently is. This research paper borrows its interpretation of grievance from grievance theory in peace and conflict studies and how this relates to political violence. Here, grievance is seen as a possible explanation for intra-state conflicts and one early formulation of this is the relative deprivation (RD) thesis (which makes the connection between the concepts clearer) (Levy & Thompson, 2010:187). Since, grievance theory has been refined and developed and, while it has been harshly contested, it continues to have merit. It is argued that grievance is imperative for understanding conflicts and violent group mobilization (Newman, 2014:23-24). In peace and conflict studies, grievances are one of several vulnerability factors that influence intrastate armed conflicts, although its prominence varies between theorists (Newman & DeRouen, Jr., 2014:5-6). A grievance can be an injustice in a societal sense that pertains to a certain group. If this grievance cannot be overcome by peaceful means, and if there are opportunity factors, the grievance could lead to violent conflict (Wallensteen, 2014:17). I argue that both grievance and relative deprivation could be advantageously operationalized as horizontal inequalities when in a radicalization context. This uncovers the connection between grievance and identity and examines how an extremist organization interprets the world around it and transmits this interpretation to others.

5.1. The horizontal inequality thesis

The horizontal inequality (HI) thesis stems from the same logical underpinnings as the RD thesis. The latter posits that “deprivation-induced discontent and a sense of group cultural identity” are powerful motivators for political mobilization (Langer, 2005:26). Relative deprivation occurs “when communities believe that they are not receiving something to which they are entitled” (Newman, 2014, 24) and when they relate this situation to that of their contemporaries (Langer & Stewart, 2014:104). Relative deprivation is criticized for being difficult to measure (Levy & Thompson, 2010:187; Wallensteen, 2014:17) and that it requires a comparative component (Smith & Ortiz, 2009:94-95). While the comparison may be made to one’s past (Gurr, 2016:25), this makes grievances without an explicit comparison group, difficult to assess. The HI thesis goes beyond relative deprivation and instead highlights inequalities. It hypothesizes that not only unfulfilled expectations, but also expectations of possible future loss (of status and resources) can trigger political mobilization (Langer &

Stewart, 2014:104-105). I argue that the HI thesis discards the relativeness of grievance as secondary and focuses more on the expression of inequality. Some comparison is required when assessing this, but it is of lesser import. Based on the many commonalities between the two theses, the HI thesis is in many aspects an extension of the RD thesis. The decision to exclusively use the HI thesis, is nevertheless justified by the distinct conceptualization of grievances that this theory enables. The focus of this paper is grievance and thus its framework is deemed the most fitting for answering the research question.

This strand of theoretical work is situated within the constructionist tradition in peace and conflict studies. This examines, inter alia, how social identities can be constructed by leaders for political or social motivations (Jackson, 2009:7-8). This does not mean that identities apparate out of thin air - some commonalities must exist for people to ascribe to a group - but this can be enhanced through internal group identification or by external forces (Stewart, 2008:9-11). These identity groups matter as they become the touchstone for certain inequalities which are shared by, and connected to, these groups and their identity. Horizontal inequalities are defined as "...inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions and/or cultural status between culturally defined groups" (Stewart, 2008:3). The focus of this research paper is on how HIs are interpreted and consequently expressed by an organization. This gives the extremist organization an agency in the radicalization process by implying that it can frame the world around it in a certain way. While structural perspectives maintain that objective inequalities are important (Richards, 2017:62-63, 76), research on radicalization has discredited that extremism is the consequence of, e.g., poverty alone (CVE, 2020:9; Neumann, 2008:5; Lieven, 2008:20). Yet, extremist narratives can express collective economical grievances even when inaccurate on an individual level (Richards, 2017:94, 71). Thus, looking into the perception of grievance makes sense, as the fashion in which an inequality is framed shapes the group-identity (ibid). This is also supported by the HI thesis, which argues that people act because of perceived injustices and that this perception can be shaped by many forces in society (Langer & Stewart, 2014:112).

5.2. Operationalization

5.2.1. Grievance

Grievance is operationalized based on the HI thesis. This means that grievance is measured as a perceived or objective inequality in the fields of political, economic, social, and cultural rights that pertains to a specific identity-group (Langer & Stewart, 2014:105). Horizontal inequalities

are usually measured by numbers (Langer & Stewart, 2014:107-109). The theory primarily looks at objective measurements such as Demography and Health Surveys, household asset indexes and years of education within a particular group, which is categorized by ethnicity, religion or region of residence (Østby, 2008:142-143). When perceived inequalities are measured however, these can be studied through surveys in which the respondents identify themselves within a certain group and then answer with their estimation of the equality of conditions in society, e.g., if a certain group dominate a specific sphere (Langer & Ukiwo, 2008:220).

Applying this onto an extremist organization, the identity group is already fixed. The four subcategories of horizontal inequalities (economic, political, social and cultural) need some adaptation in an extremist context however. Many of the features of the categories in the HI thesis, e.g., the political inequality (partly defined as the ability to participate in politics) are not relevant in a Swedish case. When political participation within the democratic system is a right by law, applied to all Swedish citizens, it is unlikely that someone who fulfils the requirements of this law, would be objectively barred from political activity. Thus, objective measurements are too broad to capture any grievance in this context and the closed nature of an extremist organization makes direct perceptions of inequality difficult to measure. Therefore, horizontal inequality and its subcategories are operationalized as *formulations of inequalities* that pertain to a defined group in the economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of life. How this will be measured and defined is continued in *Method*.

6. Method

6.1. Case study

The primary objective of this study is to look at the particular - how narratives of grievance are expressed by an extremist organization. A comparative study of this would allow possible insights to be supported by more cases, but the new framework provided by the HI thesis calls for a focus on development rather than multitude, which results in a single case study. Furthermore, narratives of grievance have been analyzed in other settings (Williamson, Murphy & Sargeant, 2020; Kruglanski, Webber & Koehler, 2019; Glazzard, 2017; van Eerten, Doosje, Konijn, de Graaf & de Goede, 2017) which accords some comparison. A good case study should have something interesting to add, both to the literature on the subject and to the case, as well as internal validity (Halperin & Heath, 2007:205). Regarding the first point, this study takes a new look at grievances to improve this fluid concept in extremist settings. This contributes to research on radicalization as well as on Nordiska motståndsrörelsen. The second point will be further detailed in the following sections.

6.1.1. Case

The case examined is the Swedish right-wing organization Nordiska motståndsrörelsen (NMR). This decision is supported by the desire to look at a right-wing organization, as much research on extremist narratives has focused on Islamist extremism (Renaut, 2019; Leuprecht, Hataley, Moskalenko, & Mccauley, 2010; Mahood, & Rane, 2017). Influencing this is also that the National Centre for Terrorist Threat Assessment has identified right-wing extremism as a threat to the Swedish society in recent years (NCT, 2020:3-4; NCT, 2021:2), and specifically NMR has received much attention (SOU, 2014:121). Finally, looking at a Swedish organization allows for my Swedish skills to be utilized in the close contact with the material. Research on radicalization accords varying importance to groups in the radicalization process (King & Taylor, 2011:612-614). Yet, they affect uncertainty regarding identity issues (*ibid.* 612) and shape narratives around ideologies, which can also influence lone-wolf actors (Kruglanski, Bélanger & Gunaratna, 2019:56; SOU, 2014:97-100). Putting the level of analysis on an organization thus makes sense as this is where grievances are formulated most coherently. The group level of analysis is also of interest from the theoretical perspective as the HI thesis deals with political mobilization (Stewart, 2008:7-11).

6.2. Material

To examine the narratives of grievance within NMR, many different options could have been chosen as material for the study (Motståndsrörelsen.se, 2021; Palmblad, 2015: Nordfront, 2010, Schori, 2017; gab, 2021). Only official and open material was chosen as they “front” the organization’s opinions to the public. For the sake of resources, audio/video-material was discarded as transcribing this would have taken additional time. The news website of the organization, *Nordfront*, and its manifesto *Vår väg* (2017) were chosen as they represent an active formation of propaganda. When deciding between different articles on *Nordfront*, purposeful sampling was applied by picking one relevant article for each month of 2017. This strengthens the analysis by confirming that the narratives of grievance are present continually in the organization’s material. Time and resources made it impossible to systematically look through the 7,304 articles of 2017, and without prior knowledge of the material, keywords to search for suitable articles were of little use. The articles were instead chosen by reading their headlines and skimming through those of interest, but even this was not applied to all material. This method of data collection brought bias, but the study was better served from material that could showcase grievances than material that was null. The articles chosen are of different formats which gives a richness to the material and illustrates the multitude of narratives. The letters to the press are not written by NMR as an organization, but by publishing it on *Nordfront* and mentioning the organization in the text, I concluded that they do represent the grievances of the group. The second type of material chosen is the manifesto, *Vår väg*. This was originally published in 2015 and published in a second edition in 2017 (*Vår väg*, 2017). I have chosen the second edition as this should most closely correspond to the organization’s current values.

6.2.1. Translation process

The material is in Swedish which is the primary language of the organization (*Vår väg*, 2017:7). By also conducting the analysis in Swedish, I have avoided the ambiguity present in a translation process (Reissman, 2008: ch.2). Nevertheless, relevant excerpts were translated when showcased in the *Analysis*. If I faltered in this, it could lead me to have drawn conclusions which the reader might not agree with since they look at the translated version and I look at the original. I have mitigated this by being thorough in my translation and with experience of reading, writing and working in English, I am confident in my capability to do so.

6.3. Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis was chosen for its capacity to systematically describe meaning of qualitative data - ensuring internal validity to the paper. By reducing data and organizing it, it allows the researcher to focus on the specific parts of the data which are chosen beforehand from the research question (Schreier, 2013:170). It is used to “expose the meanings, motives, and purposes embedded within the text” (Halperin & Heath, 2007:319). The aim is to provide a detailed description of the narratives of grievance found within NMR and to analyze this data (Schreier, 2013:173). Qualitative content analysis is a descriptive method (ibid. 181), which suits the research question well.

6.3.1. Methodology

To analyze the material, a coding frame was constructed. The categories in it were derived from the HI thesis, but these were also expanded and adapted. The main category of interest is grievance, and its subcategories were deductively chosen from the HI thesis, and these are: economic inequality, political inequality, social inequality and cultural inequality. During the pilot study, I was open to grievances that did not correspond with the set categories. Such data would then have been put into a residual category, which, if analytically interesting, would have become its own subcategory (Schreier, 2013:175-176). This did not happen however, but my definition of the categories was slightly tweaked after the pilot study. This back and forth in an initial analysis created flexibility to the framework which ensured a better fit (Williamson, Given & Scifleet, 2018:465).

The categories have indicators and a definition (Schreier, 2013:176) as shown by *Table 1*. The definitions are from the HI thesis (Langer & Stewart, 2014:105), with my additions to these in cursive text to fit the current context. The economic category corresponds to narratives that express economic degradation, exploitation or discrimination (e.g., in terms of employment opportunities) which befall a certain group. The political category concerns passages that convey faults in the political and governing systems that affect or work against the group. I have chosen to include systems of power in a broader sense within this category, such as unequal treatment by the media, as this relates to issues of freedom of speech. Throughout the pilot study, the media was also portrayed as a tool for the political elites. Included in the political inequality are also bodies that perform functions within the state’s monopoly of violence (e.g. the police). The social category involves narratives that concern a range of services and the quality of these (e.g. education, health and housing). Security, both

physical and psychological, is included into the social category. It is implicit that the state should provide safety from violence, so a deficient execution of this service that affects a specific group is classified as a social inequality. Finally, cultural inequality concerns the loss of status of, or an attack on (in a more abstract sense), a group's traditions, customs or historic way of living. The indicators are words of interest within a certain subcategory. These could, in some cases, be found directly within a subcategory, but some of them needed to be put into context within the grievance. Hostile was one of the words that could be present in several categories. However, it was primarily used in a political context (Article 3), where politicians were either hostile to the organization or to its members, and as such it was included into this subcategory. To ensure internal validity, the coding was processed once during a pilot study to ascertain the validity of the coding frame (Schreier, 2013:178-179). During this occasion, only the articles from *Nordfront* were used as this was a more manageable amount. During the main analysis, all material was looked through, including these articles one more time, with a fixed coding frame.

While qualitative content analysis states that each category should be mutually exclusive (Schreier, 2013:175), this proved difficult when conducting the pilot study. The grievances in the material are often connected to each other and this is something that is confirmed by the HI thesis (Langer & Stewart, 2014:105). To ensure reliability when coding, my decision rule was to focus on the dominant grievance when ambiguity was present (Schreier, 2013:177). While almost all the grievances could be backtracked to a political inequality, some accorded more urgency to the fact that, e.g., the white race was being attacked rather than that political elites stood behind this. This then allowed for another categorization (as a cultural grievance) rather than a political one.

6.3.2. Coding frame

Narratives of grievance	<i>HI thesis-based definition</i>	<i>Coding indicators</i>
<i>Economic inequality</i>	Inequality in ownership of assets – financial, natural, resource-based, human and social – and of incomes and employment opportunities that depend on these assets and general economic conditions <i>+ economic degradation, exploitation or discrimination. *</i>	Banks, bank directors, cost, crisis, economically impossible, competitiveness, credit market, deregulation, elderly, financial/economic elite, governmental subsidies, greedy, hard-working, labor market, loans, mismanagement, pension, social security, usury interests, wealth, welfare system, widespread poverty, worker’s rights.
<i>Political inequality</i>	Inequality in group distribution of political opportunities and power, including control over the presidency, the cabinet, parliamentary assemblies, the army, police and regional and local government. Capabilities to participate politically and voice their needs <i>+ systems of power in a broader sense and a sense of unequal treatment from these. Being disfavored by the media (closely related to issues of freedom of speech), the police (and other bodies that perform functions within the state’s monopoly of violence, and other political groups and/or elites. *</i>	Arbitrary decisions, authorities, censure, civil war, corruption, criminal, derailed immigration politics, dirty work, fake news, free speech, hate speech, hide the truth, hostile, illegitimate, incompetence, international conflicts, international organizations, international politics, international regime, keeping people in the dark, labelled, lawless, lying, media, meritocracy, military, objective, oligarchy, opinion, oppression, political agenda, political elites, political initiative, propaganda, prosperity, public debate, refuse to listen, slavery to interest, stir up hate, the Establishment, the Extreme Leftists, the Globalists, the journalistic body, the police, the right to protest, the Zionists, unholy alliance, unjust, without freedom and/or rights, world order.
<i>Social inequality</i>	Inequality in education, health and housing – and inequalities in health and educational outcomes <i>+ inequality or disadvantage in the welfare system as well as security (physical and psychological) in those cases where the state is seen as deficient in providing this for a certain group. *</i>	Acts of violence, assault, criminality, danger, demography, dependent on social security, education, human development, immigrant/multicultural neighborhoods, immigration as a cause for problems, increasing insecurity, infrastructure, integrate, lazy, murder, physical (in)security, problems, prosperity, rape, rural, scared, sexual assault, terror, underachievers, victim, village, worry.
<i>Cultural inequality</i>	Inequality in differences in recognition and (de facto) hierarchical status of different groups’ cultural norms, customs and practices <i>+ an attack on (in an abstract/metaphorical sense) on the group’s traditions, customs and its historic way of living.. *</i>	Biology, blood, cultural values, customs, differences between races, family, feminism, genetical traits, genocide, heritage, humiliation, indigenous people, live in peace, minority, native Europeans, native Swedes, natural order of things, Northerners, our people’s survival, Pride (celebration), pride, racist, struggle(s), “the homo lobby”, the people, the right to live by one’s own culture, tradition, Týr-rune, uncomfortable, Viking, Western civilization, what once was.

Table 1 (Langer & Stewart, 2014:105).

* my additions to the definition

7. Analysis

The following sections present the analysis, which the qualitative content analysis on the propaganda material of NMR, yielded. The purpose of the analysis is to examine the narratives of grievance expressed by NMR. The four subcategories (economic, political, social and cultural inequality) were all present in the material to a varying extent. They are presented from the most dominant narrative to the least dominant. There was also a variation in how the narratives were expressed in the articles at *Nordfront* and in the manifesto, and how the horizontal inequalities could be interpreted. The names of people and villages in the citations are redacted as I do not feel comfortable sharing these.

7.1. Political inequality

The indisputably most dominant narrative of grievance is a political inequality. This grievance is present in all articles and throughout the manifesto. However, different perspectives of political plights could be glimpsed within the narrative. One such perspective is when the ordinary people of the Nordics are subjected to politicians that ignore their anxieties, frustration and well-being. An example of this is present in *Article 1* where the local authorities were said to keep their constituents in the dark about selling a piece of land from the municipality to an organization planning to build a mosque there. A meeting between the politicians and concerned citizens is portrayed where one participant is quoted saying “*Listen to the public opinion. Are you crazy - think! You’re running over the people*” (Article 1). By siding with “the people”, NMR situates itself within their grievance. Although the identity group in this case is not clearly defined as the organization, the fact that this grievance is aired indicates that this horizontal inequality is of importance to NMR and their struggle. This is also present in an article about how a group of asylum seekers are presented as colonizing a little Swedish village.

“The decision to colonize [city] was taken without the knowledge of its citizens and was made public two weeks ago, only after pressures from [a public figure in the city]” (Article 12).

Finally, this narrative is represented in an article which heavily expresses an economical grievance. A bank chairman and former politician is portrayed as a crooked individual who exploits senior citizens. Through guilt by association, readers are expected to connect his supposed transgressions to the present state power. “*The Social Democrats have never*

disassociated themselves from [name]. This kind of scheme is typical of their so-called values” (Article 5).

Another, somewhat connected political narrative, is when the politicians are described as actively working against the survival of their people. This is clearly a horizontal inequality as NMR sees itself as a defender of the Nordic race. An elite is oppressing the Swedish and European peoples, causing a degradation of their cultures, which is completely out of the hands of the public (Article 2). In *Article 3*, which opposes the prohibition of the organization in Finland, the Police is seen as wanting to eradicate the white race by working against NMR.

“...[O]bviously, the Police board is for the genocide of whites as it is trying to use our statement against us. Why does the Police board want to murder the people of Finland?” (Article 3).

Not only politicians or governmental agencies, but the entire system, is culpable for causing this. In the manifesto, it is stated that the liberal democracy has given the world countless wars and floods of immigrants (Vår väg, 2017:6). The EU is pointed out as a tool for Zionist interests and this unholy alliance must be broken (ibid. 15). Overall, the current expression of democracy is seen as a dogma introducing feminism, mass immigration and anti-Nationalism to society (ibid. 19), destroying the society that the Nordic people *should* have. The state today is argued to be *“criminal and downright demented in its nature”* (Vår väg, 2017:20) for wanting this.

The most prominent aspect of the political narrative, and the most connected to NMR as an identity-group, is when the political, police and media powers are seen as obstructing NMR as an organization and circumscribing its political freedoms. The media is seen as working for the political powers by propagating for multiculturalism, but even more so by exposing Swedes, who oppose the genocide, as criminals (Vår väg, 2017:26). The media is argued to spew lies about NMR (Article 7), but also inciting hate toward its members because of their political engagement. In an article urging people to join the 2017 demonstration, the mass media is said to *“use such ill-hidden threats against presumed demonstration participants, that one could think that the journalistic body wants to see someone get killed”* (Article 9). That the media is so closely connected to the political forces in society, allows for its threats to be interpreted as political. The organization sees itself as persecuted by the law and its defenders, which is heightened by the legal process in Finland. Here, NMR conceives itself as a dangerous precedent case for other organizations that disagree with the current political opinion.

“The Police board also sincerely notifies that National Socialists ought not to enjoy freedom of expression or freedom of organization. The authority thus wants to decide on the whole who can participate in the public debate in Finland” (Article 3).

In a letter to the press, written after the 2017 demonstration, the writer illustrates how the social contract between the state and its constituents is broken. The Police is seen as actively pursuing members of NMR instead of other, more dangerous forces in society (Article 11). In the manifesto, laws are also blamed for this oppression.

“In today’s ‘democracy’ particular laws have been instituted to protect privileged groups (minorities) and oppress the own population. One example of this is the law against incitement to racial hatred which makes it impossible or heavily obstructs for people to question those in power and their ambitions” (Vår väg, 2017:25).

The political narrative concerns different identity groups, but these could all be interpreted to be connected to NMR through the horizontal inequality thesis. While some of it addresses grievances that are felt by “ordinary people”, the political nature of the propaganda material and the fact that it is aired, points to the importance of this narrative to the organization. Furthermore, by putting “ordinary people” in opposition to, e.g., immigrants, this group is conveyed to be equated to Nordic/Swedish/white (used interchangeably in the material) people who NMR sees itself as part of.

7.2. Cultural inequality

NMR states in the first section of its manifesto that the survival and freedom of their race (i.e., the Nordic race) is without doubt the most important goal for their political struggle (Vår väg, 2017:8). Consequently, the cultural narrative of grievance is prominent within the material. The Nordic race is argued to be under the threat of extinction through the introduction of non-Nordic people to these societies. It is implicated that the unique set of genes, culture and ingenuity will be lost along with the race (ibid.).

One origin of this grievance is the state, whose actions cause an existential threat to its people. While such a grievance could be interpreted as a political one, the cultural and ideological domain in which these ideas reside, goes beyond the authorization and the exercising of power. It is less a grievance of corrupt politicians and an unjust system as in the category above, and more about the loss of culture and tradition. Democracy is part of this system as it paves way for subversive ideologies and ideas that morally corrupt and decrease the resistance against the extinction in a cultural sense. The democratic right of homosexual couples to marry and adopt children is one example of such a decay (Vår väg, 2017:21). Similar ideas are spread through the media.

“To confuse and destabilize, mass media is also propagating for norm-subversive Cultural Marxism and other degenerating ideologies. In short, the media is working adversely against the people which have catastrophic consequences ethnically, culturally and racially” (Vår väg, 2017:26).

When NMR fights back against these degenerating ideals and upholds its true tradition, this is unjustly attacked. A highlight of such an event is presented in a long interview with an NMR member who was banned from a festival for wearing a Týr-rune (a Nazi symbol, Sundkvist, Svensson & Wiman, 2017) t-shirt. This event is telling for their movement. By conveying throughout the article how the festival was Viking-themed and heavily influenced by such elements, it is made disproportionate that someone was dismissed for a similar symbol.

“The organizers behind [the festival] use runes on their website. However, it is not equally appreciated if a festival participant does the same” (Article 8).

By highlighting that three policemen escorted the person out of the festival (Article 8.), the article emphasizes the reaction that NMR provokes by holding on to its culture which is distinctly connected to its identity. This continues into the idea that white people are culturally oppressed in today’s society. By evoking cases in history where minority rights have been transgressed, a sense of urgency is created in relation to Swedish traditions. Both the people and its culture are viewed as endangered by excessive immigration.

“We, the original Swedes, are Sweden and together with other European peoples we are Europe, and we have fought with blood and sweat to deserve the right to live and exist here on our own terms and with our own culture” (Article 2).

NMR also expresses biological grievances in which “mixing” with other peoples and cultures are viewed as an existential threat to the citizens of the Nordic regions. The biological diversity has clearly a larger meaning as, seen in previous examples, this is posited to bring with it important cultural aspects of the Nordic race.

“The Nordic Resistance Movement is concerned about the invasion of alien species who, in an unnatural way, establish themselves in the Nordic nature as these constitute a threat to the populations, the ecosystem and the biological diversity” (Vår väg, 2017:32).

The cultural grievance originates in the idea of a racial war that is dominant within NMR’s ideology. It is argued that there is a genocide of the Nordic people, and this race is closely linked to its culture and traditions. The importance of this grievance is clearly stated by the organization itself, which strongly indicates the close connection that this grievance has to the identity of the organization. The race and its culture are degenerated in both a biological and an ideological sense, and anyone who takes pride in their (Nordic) origin is seen as harshly attacked by society.

7.3. Social inequality

The social inequality is not as clearly related to the identity-group of NMR, as the two previous narratives. Rather, the social inequality transmits the insecurities and injustices which “ordinary people” are subjected to as a consequence to political and cultural grievances. Again, people in general can be interpreted to mean Nordic/Swedish/white as they are continually put in opposition to e.g., immigrants. This constant comparison serves as a reminder that “ordinary people” are not general people in society, but members of a specific identity group, i.e., the Nordic race. This could also explain why NMR are conveying ordinary people’s grievances - that the organization feels a closeness to this group identity-wise.

Physical insecurity and anxiety over this, is one aspect of the social inequality. In one article, citizens feel threatened by the scheduled construction of a mosque because this might entail that another identity group wants to move into the area in large numbers. That violence and terror organizations could accompany the building is implicated.

“Other fears that were aired was how Muslims from other localities such as [city 2], [city 3] and [city 4] might move to the already multiculturally-affected [city 1] when the mosque is completed” (Article 1).

In another article, the terror attack in Stockholm on the 7th of April 2017 is directly linked to political decisions by an elite that is hostile against its people – resulting in violence.

“This is not the first terror attack in Sweden and mark my words when I say that it is far, far, far from the last. As long as the treacherous politicians remain in power, robberies, rapes, murders and terror will continue at an unabated pace” (Article 4).

The urgency of these grievances is exacerbated when compared to the issues that NMR’s opponents are communicating. When an ideological opponent means that the removal of a Pride-flag in a village is the worst thing that has happened there, the writer at *Nordfront* begs to disagree. Instead, violent attacks and sexual assaults connected to the increasing immigration and multiculturalism in this city, are ventilated and it is implied that this is worse than the removal of a flag (Article 7). This could be interpreted to portray that NMR is the only force standing for reason and for the security of ordinary people, as its political opponents concern themselves with menial tasks instead of real security issues. In another small village, the introduction of 30 asylum seekers causes worrying among the citizens. Violent attacks in the surrounding areas are blamed on, and connected to, asylum seekers in general. Consequently, it is implied that this will be introduced to the village with the new group of asylum seekers (Article 12).

The social grievances do not have to be of violent character. In an article that conveys information about a new prognosis from the UN, immigration is linked to worsened conditions in society. That Sweden is expected to fall in ranking in the UN’s Human Development Index is a result of the immigration crisis, and ordinary Swedes are understood

to be the victims of this. One such aspect is that the Swedish school system has lost its ability to compete (Article 6), essentially giving worse education than before large-scale immigration was introduced. Another article illustrates how the Police in a city wants to close schools in areas with many immigrants and move these children to Swedish schools. These “low-achieving immigrants” will be forcefully integrated with Swedish children and this “eagerness to mix peoples” is initiated because of the low educational results in these schools (Article 10). Again, this will result in Swedish children receiving inferior education.

In the manifesto, the social grievances are primarily portrayed as caused by other ideologies and/or modernity. This makes sense as the articles focus more on real life events, and the manifesto on a way forward for NMR’s ideology. Feminism is the cause for Swedish women’s decaying psychological health (Vår väg, 2017:41), urban living is diminishing the feeling of community among the people (ibid. 31) and the modern way of living in general is causing humans to feel deeply unhappy (ibid. 6).

As reiterated above, the social inequality is not an evident identity-linkage to NMR. However, its stance for the rights and the safety of “ordinary people” could be interpreted to have bearing on the organization’s identity. It is also implicit in this narrative that ordinary people are equated to Nordic people, which as an extension, is the very core identity of NMR. Also, if relative deprivation in its original sense (rather than through the HI thesis) was the focus of this study, a closer inspection of this concept would be particularly worthwhile within the social inequality.

7.4. Economic inequality

The narratives of economic grievances play a similar role as those of social grievances. The main victim in this narrative is ordinary people, but new generations are singled out as they, during the prevailing system, are expected to pay for the loans that the current state takes to pay for the welfare (Vår väg, 2017:17). Senior citizens are likewise highlighted as victims of the current system.

” Today, many elderly are forced to go to work despite being sick and weak and when they are finally granted pension, a struggle to keep the economy afloat is launched. In many cases, immigrant, unemployed racial strangers have a better economy than those who have lived and worked their entire lives in this country” (Vår väg, 2017:42).

This is also supported in the article of the former politician exploiting the elderly. The bank chairman is said to be involved in a scheme where old people are encouraged to take loans that they cannot repay, leaving the politician and his associates to acquire their houses once they are dead, as repayment (Article 5).

The economic inequality is also tightly interwoven with the political narrative. An unjust economy is portrayed as an obstacle to NMR's revolutionary goals.

“The Nordic Resistance Movement will also nationalize the monetary infrastructure, abolish the interest slavery and leave the current economic order so as to reclaim the state's and the citizen's resources from the banking elite” (Vår väg, 2017:6).

Today, people are subjected to an economic system whose large expenses and high taxing could be abolished through another political system which would not be burdened by the costs generated by mass immigration and the EU (Vår väg, 2017:43). Multiculturalism is singled out as the broken promise that the Establishment propagated as pillar in Swedish society, but which turned out to be a destabilizing force and cause of the decline to the Swedish economy (Article 6). As with the political narrative, there is no way to change this inequality from within the system. The elites controlling this and gaining money from it, make sure to keep their riches and the power that comes with it, in a close-knit circle (Vår väg, 2017:13). Money is consistently portrayed as something fickle and almost incomprehensible.

“There is no real value that corresponds to the amount of money in circulation. The governmental, and, above all, the popular control over this system practically amounts to nothing. This entire construction is an intricate method of robbing the world's states, but also private citizens, of resources that go to the banking elite's interests” (Vår väg, 2017:17).

The economic grievance is mainly expressed in relation to NMR in the sense that it concerns the group of ordinary people that the organization aligns and identifies with. That this only pertains to Nordic people is, again, demonstrated by the fact that the elderly are put in opposition to “racial strangers”, making the two terms exclusionary.

7.5. Narratives of grievance within Nordiska motståndsrörelsen

The analysis illustrates how the grievances expressed by NMR become focal points for the identity of the organization. By continually referring to itself, the Nordic people and “ordinary people”, having these identities becomes a prerequisite to feel victimized. The political and the cultural narratives are of the greatest importance. These have a direct linkage to the identity of the organization as a political dissident and as a race under attack. The social and economic grievances primarily align NMR with the struggles of ordinary people. That ordinary people are categorized in opposition to racial strangers and immigrants heavily implies that these are considered Nordic by NMR and recognized as members of its overarching identity-group. Inferred from this could be that it is primarily the political and cultural grievances that are intertwined with the organization’s identity.

The way that these inequalities are framed welcomes a distinct identification with NMR. If an individual should agree with the idea that humans can be divided by race, that the Nordic race is endangered and that individuals are politically persecuted for these sentiments in society, NMR presents itself as the only force that truly opposes this. The political narrative, with help from the economic narrative, makes sure to emphasize that these grievances cannot be contended within the system, as the system does not allow for meaningful change. This presents extremism as the only option. The cultural narrative then strengthens the urgency of the movement and vulnerability of the identity-group on an existential level, while the social narrative presents real-life consequences that current political decisions have for the overarching identity-group. That the identity of NMR is not explicitly present in the social (and economic) narrative could be explained by the aggressive and militarized image of the organization. Portraying itself and its members as victims of physical or psychological insecurity would heavily contradict this image. By distancing itself from the victims in these two narratives – portraying them as “ordinary people” rather than as NMR members – it can instead construct itself as a strong defender of this group.

It is evident that grievances reinforce each other, which is also confirmed by the HI thesis as inequalities in the political realm will spill over into the cultural and so on. This is noticeable in the analysis when the line between two particular narratives is hazy. This ambiguity could be interpreted as a fault in the theory, but I argue that the subcategories derived from the HI thesis are sufficiently distinct to be useful in an analysis of the grievances. Going back far enough, a political perpetrator could presumably be found in every grievance but categorizing this as political would obscure the important perspectives that the other categories brought forward in the analysis.

8. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine the narratives of grievance expressed by the Swedish right-wing organization Nordiska motståndsrörelsen. By employing a theory from peace and conflict studies, the paper assigned a definition and operationalization to grievance that allowed for a systematic study of the concept. Using the thesis on horizontal inequality, grievance was divided into four subcategories which were adapted to fit an extremist and a Swedish setting. The categories – economic, political, social and cultural inequality – were used in the analysis to capture the grievances of NMR. This was done through a qualitative content analysis on the organization's propaganda material. The result of the study confirmed that political, cultural, social and economic grievances were expressed by the organization. Nevertheless, the grievances were of varying importance for the organization, and distinctly so in how they related to NMR's identity, with political and cultural grievances being of the most influence. These two narratives also frame NMR as an attractive organization for overcoming the injustices and inequalities, should an identification with these struggles exist. Finally, the political and economic narratives detail the deeply embedded corruption of the current system, legitimizing the extremist character of NMR as the sole means of change.

The narratives of grievance within NMR cannot be fully fathomed without a larger study of the group's material. However, this initial examination has proven that it is a rich and worthwhile subject as it allows for a closer examination of the grievances of the organization. The HI thesis posits that horizontal inequality, i.e., the grievances here examined, can aid in explaining a group's violent political mobilization. Without any material that speak for how these grievances are interpreted by extremist individuals and how they have influenced their radicalization process, this study cannot say anything about the bearing that it has on the violent political mobilization of the organization. Instead, what it can do is to describe the grievances present in NMR's political material and how these can be interpreted.

Finally, this framework may well be used in other extremist contexts. By connecting two relevant concepts in the radicalization process, relative deprivation and identity, the horizontal inequality thesis allows for a deeper understanding of grievances in an extremist setting and how these can be expressed by an extremist group. Knowing what is perceived as a grievance by an extremist organization can also have valuable insights for efforts seeking to delimit these groups' presence and purpose in society.

9. Literature

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