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The Radicalization of Young Jihadi Convicted of Membership of Terrorist Organization in Spain: Analyzing the Pieces of the Puzzle

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the radicalization of all of the five young offenders -aged between fourteen and eighteen years- who have been convicted in Spain between 2004 and 2019 of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization. It is based on: a) unprecedented access to the assessments of these youths produced by the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders in the regional Government of Madrid; b) personal semi-structured interviews with the staff at this Agency responsible for their psycho-socio and educational intervention during their custodial measures; and c) judicial reports related to their cases. The article assesses the main features of the radicalization processes of these minors following a three-dimensional analysis at the micro, meso and macro level. It provides empirical evidence to test the validity of the main hypotheses on the causality of radicalization.

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Given the fact that radicalization is a result of a combination of factors, it is complex and sometimes impossible to single out motives that explain why an individual has become radicalized.¹ However, as Horgan has pointed out, identifying factors in particular situations can help to understand why certain life choices have been made and thus how the process of radicalization of some individuals have developed.² Taylor and Horgan have emphasized the relevance of understanding the involvement in terrorism “as a process rather than a state”.³ Such an approach can also be applied to radicalization, implying a focus on different “process variables” including the “psychological qualities” of the individual but also “the changing context that the individual operates in, and also the relationships between events and the individual as they affect behavior”.⁴ In a similar line, Borum argues that radicalization must be best viewed as a set of diverse processes.⁵ In fact, the uniqueness of each individual will also contribute to the diversity of radicalization processes. It is this diversity that prevents us from answering in a general way what leads a person to get radicalized. This has to be born in mind when assessing Sageman’s criticism of “terrorism research” for the alleged failure of academics in answering “the simple question of what leads a person to turn to political violence”.⁶ To this extent we must emphasize, as Schmid has put it, that the question

about what leads a person to radicalize is “context-dependent and cannot be answered in a general way”.⁷ In other words, similarities and differences must be embraced preventing a rigid and static approach to processes characterized by its diversity. As Hafez and Mullins have observed, radicalization is a “puzzle” which consists of different “pieces” such as “grievances, networks, ideologies, enabling environments and support structures”.⁸ They question the “orderly image of a process” used by some authors to explain radicalization proposing the “puzzle metaphor” as a more apt explanation. Our case study demonstrates that the radicalization of the five youngsters is both a process, albeit not a standardized one, and a puzzle. We do not envisage them as exclusive but complementary explanations of the transformation that radicalization entails.

These caveats are relevant for the understanding of the factors that have influenced the radicalization of the five minors convicted of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization in Spain. The analysis of their radicalization processes demonstrate that they have in common certain similar push and pull factors. Their involvement in offenses related to jihadist terrorism is based on a combination of factors such as: a) an environment defined by socio-economic deficits; b) the influence of violent conflicts abroad; c) direct contact with a radical Salafist jihadist ideology in their closer family and friends networks; d) the influence of Internet in their socialization process; e) real or perceived discrimination; and f) an identity crisis and the search for identity reinforcements. Nonetheless, within these broader categories individual differences can also be appreciated in these five young offenders. Human beings are different, and understandably so, the weight of factors that influence radicalization processes varies from individual to individual.

Accordingly, this analysis of the radicalization processes of the five minors convicted of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization in Spain is based on the examination of those factors at the micro, meso and macro level. This integrative approach allows us to properly assess radicalization processes which are not completely homogeneous albeit similar. The variety of sources consulted provides a varied range of information on the individual features, socialization networks, and wider social, political, economic and cultural environments of the five minors. Previous studies on radicalization demonstrate how appropriate the micro, meso and macro level analysis can be in order to investigate the main features, motivations and contexts of the radicalization process.⁹ Thus, by structuring this case study through these three closely related levels we can provide a more comprehensive assessment of the similarities and differences in the radicalization process of the five young offenders convicted in Spain of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization.

Who Are the Young Jihadi Convicted of Membership of Terrorist Organization?

In the last decades Spain has been the target of two major jihadist terrorist attacks, one perpetrated in March 2004 and another one in August 2017. Since 2004, a total of 841 individuals have been detained in connection to offenses related to jihadist terrorism.¹⁰ The radicalization and recruitment has mainly taken place at the younger stages of their lives.¹¹ Among those radicalized, five minors -aged between 14 and 18 years-¹² have also

been convicted of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization. Other minors have traveled to conflict areas but have not been detained,¹³ or have been detained but not indicted,¹⁴ or were killed in pursuit of terrorist actions,¹⁵ or have been convicted of offenses like exalting terrorism and humiliating victims of terrorism,¹⁶ or of transporting and supplying explosives to a terrorist organization.¹⁷

This study is based on these five cases of minors who were charged and convicted of membership of terrorist organization receiving sentences that entailed custody and deprivation of liberty in youth detention centers. During their confinement in these centers as a result of the judicial measures, the minors received psycho-sociological and educational attention. The minors were held in these centers on remand, a special regime that cannot be prolonged beyond six months or nine months if an extension period is granted. After this period the judge must finally establish whether the youngster is freed or sentenced. If found guilty the youth can continue in the detention center even when he or she becomes a legal adult if the staff provides a positive assessment. Otherwise, the youth will serve his or her time in prison.

The centers were supervised by the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders in the Autonomous Government of Madrid. The aim of the Agency is to “concentrate, develop and implement programmes and actions that contribute to the aims of reintegration and education” of juveniles between 14 and 18 years of age in relation to offenses envisaged by the Spanish Penal Code.¹⁸ The Agency, which is attached to the Regional Department with competence in the area of Justice, takes on the implementation of sentences imposed on young offenders involving custody (secure/semi-open/open/therapeutic detention) and not involving custody (probation, services on behalf of the community, living with another family or educational group, attending an attendance center, socio-educative tasks, outpatient treatment, weekend stay at home).¹⁹

The nature and content of the primary sources that constitute the basis of the current study recommend a methodological assessment based on a three-dimensional framework. There are several push and pull factors at the micro, macro and meso level that have affected the radicalization of the five young offenders detained in Spain. A theoretical framework that integrates these different levels has been applied to the study of the five minors based on several primary sources produced by the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders and other sources outlined as follows: a) Study Protocol of Remand Measures; b) Individualized Intervention Model; c) Review and Assessment Report; d) Other reports; e) Final Report of Remand Measures; f) Study Protocol of Firm Sentence; g) Individualized Implementation Program; h) Implementation Report and Final Report of Firm Measures; i) Judicial Reports; j) Personal semi-structured interviews with psychologists, educators, and social workers; k) other sources produced by the minors themselves.

The sample consists of five minors whose names have been anonymized and described as NADIA (Minor 1), OSCAR (Minor 2), DAYFA (Minor 3), THAMIR (Minor 4), and CALEB (Minor 5). All of them were held in custody at various youth detention centers under the Central Educational and Therapeutic Treatment Program for Young Offenders implemented by the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders. The following are some of their main biographical features of relevance to the analysis of their radicalization process.

NADIA²⁰

A girl aged fourteen at the time of her detention by the Spanish National Police on August 2014 in Ceuta, a Spanish city geographically located in the North of Africa bordering Morocco. She was convicted of membership of a terrorist organization while she attempted to travel to Iraq after having exalted radical ideas and the so-called Islamic State on social networks. She spent eleven months held in a youth detention center, nine of them on remand before she received a two-year sentence. She was granted probation in June 2015 as a result of her good behavior during her stay at the center. She returned to Ceuta where she continued her socio-educational intervention.

OSCAR²¹

A boy born in Asuncion (Paraguay), aged seventeen at the time of his detention in April 2015 in the city of Tarrasa, located in the province of Barcelona. His father died when he was nine prompting her mother to emigrate with him and two of his sisters to Spain, where they had some relatives. The lack of paternal ties and a maternal role model played a part in his conversion into Islam. As a result of the police investigations conducted, he was found guilty of membership of a terrorist organization involved in the planning of terrorist attacks and proselytism. He spent nine months in a juvenile center. After this period, and once he was already legally considered as an adult, he was moved on to a prison. He could have stayed at the youth center had it not been for the negative reports about his lack of development there. Further to completing his imprisonment he was expelled from Spain in 2019 on the grounds that he was a risk to national security.

DAYFA²²

A girl aged seventeen at the time of her detention in December 2014 in Melilla, a Spanish city geographically located in the North of Africa bordering Morocco. Spanish and Moroccan Police demonstrated her involvement through social networks in the indoctrination and recruitment of individuals aimed at supporting the terrorist group known as Islamic State. She was held on remand at the youth detention center for six months and later released on probation under the supervision of one of her aunts in the Spanish city of Castellon. Although she was found guilty of membership of a terrorist organization her sentence was suspended subject to the fulfillment of reintegration measures.

THAMIR and CALEB²³

Two twin brothers born in the Moroccan city of Tetouan who were aged sixteen at the time of their detention in March 2015 in the town of Badalona, in the province of Barcelona. Both their parents were also detained by the Spanish Civil Guard. The youths were indicted for membership of a terrorist organization. The father was released on probation and forbidden to leave the national territory while the mother was kept in prison for twenty months.²⁴ The family was part of a terrorist network involved in

sending recruits to Syria. The youngsters spent nine months under custodial measures in a youth center while waiting for trial. Extremely radicalized, they were about to travel to Turkey to follow their brother's steps who died while conducting the jihad. After their release from the center, and even though they were compelled to follow a schooling program, in May 2018 both youngsters were expelled from Spain by the authorities accused of being a "danger for national security".²⁵

The Micro Level Factors in the Radicalization Process

As several authors have summarized, the micro level refers to the individual dimension of the subject and includes several variables such as rational, emotional, psychological, theological, normative and identity factors.²⁶ The reports produced by the staff of the detention centers where the intervention with the young offenders took place, as well as the personal semi-structured interviews conducted by the authors of the article, allow us to structure this level in the following features: personality, emotional and cognitive features.

NADIA had a very distinctive way of approaching problems by avoiding their resolution, acting in a precipitous way and with a tendency to get distracted and frustrated. Although she showed the capacity to adapt to different contexts, she was emotionally unstable and with high levels of anxiety.²⁷ She had a very irritable and egocentric personality, her emotional harshness, lack of empathy and indifference toward others hindered her socialization.²⁸ Her behavior was very often histrionic and dramatic, in search of attention.²⁹ She was very vulnerable to the influence of peers, with a submissive tendency and a high level of social desirability. During her detention her impulsivity took her to the verge of hurting others and herself.³⁰ She was manipulative and resorted to lies as a means of demanding attention and interacting with others, showing no acknowledgment of wrongdoing. She showed no conscience of the gravity of the offenses that motivated her reclusion in the center. She was described by the staff in charge of her intervention as immature and completely destabilized.³¹

She was fascinated about the search for new experiences, among them traveling to Iraq in order to engage in combat and find out first-hand how it was to carry out jihad. She described this as "fashionable". In her own words: "When I talked to the caliph, he reassured me not to worry about anything, that when I went to Iraq, they would train me and then take me to combat. He filled my head with those things, telling me I shouldn't be afraid. And that's how I let myself go, in order to try new things. I didn't know well how it was, but I was intrigued because that [carrying out the jihad] was fashionable in Ceuta and other places".³² NADIA claimed that in the end she decided not to travel to Iraq, a decision which led the caliph to threaten her with "sending a man" for her.³³ As a result of her fear after receiving such a threat her lawyer accepted to extend her stay at the youth detention instead of returning to Ceuta.³⁴

Her mother and sisters claimed that NADIA had been "brainwashed" because "she didn't have a basic knowledge of Islam".³⁵ The staff at the juvenile center corroborated that her religious beliefs were not very developed showing scarce knowledge of the consequences of fanatical behavior. Rather, she lived her deviation as "a game or something

fashionable”,³⁶ highly influenced by radical role models who aided her progressive idealization of certain values.³⁷

OSCAR had a very introverted personality and socialized with others with coldness and limited affectivity. He showed signs of family detachment and uprooting, but also emotional stability, control and security, as well as emotional harshness and resilience to frustration. His social desirability and vulnerability to the influence of peers were both high and his empathy with them weak.³⁸ The lack of a paternal figure and a pathological mourning contributed to his insecurity, personal discomfort, evasive behavior and search for meaning through his conversion into Islam. As stated in one of the reports assessing his progress, he “showed limited social skills with peers, little affection, and a tendency to submit to the will of others” in the hope that such attitude would lessen his personal unease.³⁹

The intervention revealed that he was very rigid, hermetic and unable to empathize with others, with depressive characteristics.⁴⁰ His mother claimed that he was “marginalized” by peers, “he didn’t have friends, he hardly left home, and was very solitary”.⁴¹ His approach to Islam and the mosque derived in feelings of belonging and integration to a collective. This search of a new religious identity, conveniently exploited by ISIS sympathizers in that surrounding, acted as a conveyor belt to radicalization. Religion became the focus in his life, rejecting any other activity be it sports, formative or cultural.⁴² However, this new identity worsened his relationship with his mother. She explained that “he didn’t allow anybody to call into question his beliefs about Islam”.⁴³ He was very strict in his religious adherence and very critical of issues such as women’s liberalization and the laicity that he claimed some imams showed. He boasted he was more knowledgeable of Islam than one of the imams who visited the youth detention center.⁴⁴ OSCAR confronted a member of staff when she passed nearby when he was praying. He told her not to do it again because he could react violently to what he described as disrespectful.⁴⁵

He lacked the capacity to assume responsibility for his own acts and self-assess his behavior. As a result of this pattern, he distorted reality and resorted to guilt transfer with the aim of shirking responsibility and minimizing the consequences of his acts.⁴⁶ Despite the seriousness of the offenses that motivated his remand, he avoided the slightest self-criticism of his acts and radical ideas.⁴⁷ He showed a manipulative personality lying to his own family and educators at the intervention center.⁴⁸ Stressful situations for him derived in outbursts of rage and inability to control his impulses,⁴⁹ and “explosions of rage”.⁵⁰ His dysfunctional behavior was also seen in the use of illegal substances which negatively affected his socialization in the family, social and educational contexts. He resorted to Islam as a means of “confronting” such difficulties.⁵¹ He used religious texts to justify the deaths of Europeans in terrorist attacks, equating them with victims in Palestine and Syria,⁵² and also as a means of reinforcing a defiant “them and us” mentality and the defense of jihad.⁵³ He constantly talked about the need to carry out jihad and the reward in paradise for those who died fighting for Allah, evidencing a sense of purpose also noted in the socialization into violence of other children inspired by ISIS.⁵⁴ OSCAR also attempted to recruit others handing in propaganda material which explicitly encouraged terrorism by showing jihadist terrorist attacks.⁵⁵ He even tried to proselytize other inmates at the youth detention center although he failed.⁵⁶

DAYFA was a shy girl with high social desirability, without the emotional harshness of other juveniles on remand and with some deficits in handling the resolution of conflicts.⁵⁷ The latter was evident when she faced a “conflict between her personal identity and that of her group of reference”,⁵⁸ revealing an unresolved internal ideological conflict.⁵⁹ Unlike the other minors, she showed no dysfunctional personality features and normal levels of impulsivity and frustration control. She was respectful and collaborative with the educators and her inmates, showing no dangerous personality features and considerable psychological strength.⁶⁰ These features aided her in coping with the trauma she experienced when the police broke into her home and had to see her parents lying on the ground following police orders. As expressed by the staff at the center, initially she was not fully conscious of the seriousness of her offenses, but she gradually understood it albeit with some ambivalence. The latter, together with certain attitudes, raised questions about the real extent of her development. Members of staff at the youth detention center recall that the day she testified in Court she changed her physical appearance significantly. In an unusual gesture she abandoned the veil and her traditional clothing, put make up on, and asked for help to fix her hair. When she returned from Court, she immediately changed clothes and put the veil on again.⁶¹

Her boyfriend played a key role in her radicalization since she strove to please him and was eager to form a family with him.⁶² She was in an internal conflict when her boyfriend justified the beheadings spread on social networks which she didn’t understand.⁶³ Her boyfriend broke up with her claiming that her beliefs were not strong enough. This break up led her to deepen her religious commitment and justifying murders committed by the Islamic State arguing that “there was a reason for them”.⁶⁴ She had a strong emotional attachment to him which was used by her boyfriend for her indoctrination, as she recalled: “In the Ramadan in 2014 when the Islamic State was established, B. explained to me beautifully what it was about. Everything sounded perfect in his mouth. From then onwards I started to get more interested in the Islamic State and I developed a strong bond with him. I went on to publish things about the Islamic State and since I had the support of B. I was in a cloud. It was so strong what I felt that I saw as my enemies those who were against the Islamic State. Hatred entered my heart. I didn’t want to hear about from those who called them terrorists. I felt they were my brothers”.⁶⁵

DAYFA felt “pride” about the terrorist group and felt a “huge impulse to defend them”, which she did through Facebook, in what she described as a “vice”.⁶⁶ She devoted herself to proselytism through social networks where she had conversations like this: “It’s a joy that I have seen the truth and that I love the Islamic State and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the mujahideen”.⁶⁷ She admitted that she didn’t care that some people called her “deviant” as a result of her support for the Islamic State for she was also “lost” before that.⁶⁸ She acknowledged that herself and her boyfriend both cried at the proclamation of the Caliphate by the terror group, a moment they would never forget.⁶⁹

THAMIR had high levels of impulsivity, social desirability and competitiveness showing little emotional openness to others and the tendency to take up dominant positions over his peers. These features, together with his rigidity, hindered his socialization, and resulted in penalties for his inappropriate behavior toward other inmates.⁷⁰ These penalties, termed by the staff at the youth center as “educational correction measures”, varied

from restrictions in the participation of the youth in collective activities, to the withdrawal of privileges such as the use of electronic devices like an MP3 player, and the curtailing of exit permits. Contrary to other radicalized minors, he was aware of the gravity of his offenses but showed no anxiety or identity crisis as a result of his behavior. His upbringing in environments with strong religious and cultural traditional values related to Islam contributed to his cognitive rigidity and low willingness to change his deeply rooted values.⁷¹ He showed no self-questioning or self-criticism of his beliefs, resorting to the diffusion of responsibility for his actions and the full justification of his wrong-doings.⁷²

CALEB was very individualistic with deeply rooted family values. He had an important lack of resources for the expression of feelings and thoughts.⁷³ He had a distinctive emotional harshness and cognitive rigidity vis-à-vis his culture and religion. Nonetheless, and unlike his twin brother, THAMIR, he didn't show either high social desirability or the same degree of manipulation of reality.⁷⁴ He was disciplined for his aggressive behavior with some inmates while practicing sports and on several occasions for the same reason: he refused to follow the educator's indications in relation to his diet, which he neglected during Ramadan leading him to a state of considerable weakness.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, his penalties diminished through his detention demonstrating his adaptation to the center, albeit stressing that he had no desire to change his rigid religious belief system.

THAMIR and CALEB were highly influenced by the feelings of revenge and hatred toward other religions inoculated by their mother. This resulted in frequent contempt toward inmates and educators as well as intolerance toward other cultures.⁷⁶ On one occasion THAMIR confronted one of his female educators in the following terms: "If you do not respect my religion, I am not going to respect you. You don't pray. You are an infidel".⁷⁷ His brother, when watching a film about the lapidation of a woman, claimed that if she had married a man, "she deserved it and must be stoned as the law demands".⁷⁸ Both brothers socialized only with other inmates of Maghrebi origin. They claimed that they had experienced discrimination against them before their detention, as well as "conflicts with other minors from different nationalities as a result of xenophobic insults".⁷⁹

Both THAMIR and CALEB adhered to a very conservative and rigid interpretation of Islam.⁸⁰ By way of example, they even argued that music was forbidden by Islam.⁸¹ Their strict adherence to certain religious values hindered the intervention process and self-reflection.⁸² They boasted that they were more knowledgeable of Islam than many imams and in particular CALEB claimed that he used to study it for fourteen hours a day.⁸³ They endorsed "holy war" in Syria and Iraq and blamed the U.S. for the murder of Muslims, this being the reason for their wanting to travel there to defend them.⁸⁴ They referred to their educators in derogatory terms such as "You are a shitty atheist who doesn't believe in anything. Your life is empty".⁸⁵ When confronted by the educators, in an attempt to trigger some self-questioning, the twin brothers retorted that "God's gospel cannot be distorted" and that "this is the way I have been taught and that's the one I believe in".⁸⁶

The Meso Level Factors in the Radicalization Process

The meso or intermediate level refers to exogenous factors related to the closer political and social environment of the individual.⁸⁷ The reports produced by the staff of the

centers where the intervention with the juveniles took place, as well as the personal interviews conducted by the authors shed light on the family and friends networks, role models, social networks, and the Internet, as well as cells and recruiters.

NADIA and OSCAR shared the absence of a key parental figure. The former because of the imprisonment of her father on several occasions,⁸⁸ the latter because of his father's sudden death when he was nine years of age.⁸⁹ NADIA was the penultimate of eleven children in an unstructured family with constant conflicts, lack of communication and scarce imposition of norms by her parents. Her upbringing was one of a lack of parental control which led her to be fostered by one of her sisters. This improvement didn't overcome the lack of supervision which led to significant deficits on an educational, health and economic level.⁹⁰ OSCAR, who was part of a more structured family, showed overprotection, as well as lack of discipline and important limits vis-à-vis his behavior.⁹¹ This led to the break-up of the family. Following OSCAR's conversion into Islam, his bad behavior intensified, and his sister moved out of the family home. Both NADIA and OSCAR had in common inappropriate parental control, as well as lack of discipline and respect toward relevant authority figures. Parents in both cases were unable to reverse this situation which led them to justify and normalize their children's misconducts. The mother of NADIA often underestimated the seriousness of the offenses that led her to the juvenile center. The mother of OSCAR justified the minor's offenses arguing that they were a result of the traumatic loss of the child's father.⁹²

In comparison with other minors, THAMIR and CALEB experienced a different relationship with their parents because both respected them as their authority figures. However, "parental roles were not properly exercised".⁹³ The father of the twin brothers relied on his wife for the education of the minors, his main role in the family being that of supplying the basic economic needs. He wasn't very successful in this task. This led to a pattern that continued during the detention of the minors, the boys constantly blaming the staff of the center for tasks that felt under their own competence. In the case of NADIA it was her elder sisters and the social services in Ceuta who took up many of the unfulfilled parental tasks.⁹⁴

These four minors, NADIA, OSCAR, THAMIR and CALEB, also shared a poor schooling. The twin brothers didn't attend school, high absenteeism was the norm in OSCAR's schooling, and NADIA abandoned school at a very early stage. Such a poor socialization on the family and school level was also compounded by a lack of participation in other formative activities be they cultural or sports. This vacuum facilitated their attraction to radical groups that somehow filled their needs for belonging, group solidarity and identity. This is exemplified by the mother of OSCAR: "He spent a lot of time on his own. This solitude was a risk that we were not aware of".⁹⁵ One of the assessments at the juvenile center concluded: "right in his formative years, affected by the loss of his father, feeling discriminated against and poorly integrated in society, the juvenile started to attend a mosque, where, as he put it to his mother, he found well-being and peace that he hadn't experienced up until then".⁹⁶ His attendance to the mosque also enabled him to encounter ISIS sympathizers of relevance in his radicalization process and recruitment.

The family context of DAYFA differs from that of the others. She had a good relationship with her parents, being part of a structured family with proper education and

low levels of conflict. Her parents didn't justify or normalize the offenses committed by their daughter. Nonetheless, they did not exert a proper parental control over her social life, particularly with regards to the use of new technologies.⁹⁷ Hers is the only family environment with no relatives with criminal records. NADIA had three brothers sentenced to jail. Her sister's brother was also jailed for membership of a terrorist organization.⁹⁸ Two of the brothers of OSCAR also spent time in jail.⁹⁹ Two of the brothers of THAMIR and CALEB also spent time in prison, one of them serving a sentence for membership of a terrorist organization. After his release he traveled to Syria in 2014 where he died conducting jihad. Furthermore, his mother was detained on remand for her involvement in a network involved in dispatching recruits to Syria.¹⁰⁰ Revealingly, THAMIR and CALEB had little contact with their brother killed in Syria.¹⁰¹ However, his intense mythification by their mother in the aftermath of his death, depicting him as "a role model to follow", highly influenced the minors' behavior. They ended up praising and worshipping him.¹⁰²

Regarding the minors' relationship with peers, some patterns can be discerned. DAYFA refers to a female friend with whom she questioned some of the radical messages extolled by her boyfriend.¹⁰³ Whereas NADIA socialized with youngsters from different religions in an apparently normal way, this was not the case of OSCAR, THAMIR and CALEB. OSCAR acknowledged he was a loner who restricted his socialization to "conflictive mates" with whom he "didn't have a friendship", only sharing "conflictive behaviors such as the consumption of drugs and a lack of respect for teachers".¹⁰⁴ The twin brothers showed important deficits in their socialization with peers, one of them even acknowledging that he had never had a friend of his age and that he only socialized with his sibling.¹⁰⁵ Their parents had a negative influence on them following the return of the youngsters from Morocco in February 2015, where they had deepened their Islamic education. Both minors were banned from attending school and the football club they played in, where they were praised as very skillful,¹⁰⁶ ruining what some observers described as a promising future in football after a major club showed interest in them.¹⁰⁷ Staff at the juvenile center pointed out that THAMIR and CALEB only labeled as "friends" some of the elderly they met at the mosques in Morocco.¹⁰⁸

Social networks were of key relevance in the radicalization process of NADIA and DAYFA and in their recruitment activities. Both girls profusely used Facebook and WhatsApp as channels through which they extolled jihadism exchanging radical videos, photographs and other sensitive material.¹⁰⁹ The police investigation revealed NADIA's intense use of this material that "extolled jihadists in conflicts and the victory to come through the jihad which would give back the pride lost by the [Muslim] people, promising the paradise as a reward".¹¹⁰ DAYFA was the administrator of various WhatsApp and Facebook groups used for the recruitment of women. She acknowledged herself that she spent hours responding people interested in a radical interpretation of Islam,¹¹¹ and that she wasn't worried about "being denounced, sent to jail, or about this life, for what matters is to be kept loyal to Allah".¹¹² OSCAR's use of social networks was mainly geared toward his self-reinforcement of radical ideas rather than the indoctrination and recruitment of others. His radicalization was more a direct one through meetings at private locations as demonstrated by an undercover police agent.¹¹³ THAMIR

and CALEB also used social networks for the extolling of jihad, as evidenced by one of the messages they sent referring to their brother killed in Syria: “Yamir, we want to join you in Paradise”.¹¹⁴ Their mother had also made very profuse use of social networks to extoll terrorism and keep in contact with a terrorist network in Morocco.¹¹⁵

Role models and recruiters were extremely relevant in the radicalization process of the youngsters. NADIA and DAYFA were attracted by ISIS female combatants, as evidenced by the propaganda material intercepted by police, in which martyrdom was also extolled as the “path to follow”.¹¹⁶ As Katherine Brown has pointed out, some western women were lured to ISIS by the desire to espouse jihadis and take part in a romanticized new “good life built upon a particular idea of Islam and Sharia law”.¹¹⁷ This rationale was exploited by the female recruiters who recruited both girls and attempted to dispatch them to Syria and Iraq.¹¹⁸ As has been noted before, DAYFA’s boyfriend was also a key figure in her radicalization. As she acknowledged herself, she was initially against jihad, but he was very determined he wanted to die as a mujahideen and as a result she ended up understanding him.¹¹⁹ NADIA was highly influenced by her sister’s husband during the time she lived with them from the impressionable age of twelve. In 2015 this relative was sentenced to ten-year imprisonment for membership of a terrorist organization.¹²⁰ For the last couple of years before his detention he had been heavily involved in recruiting and indoctrination impacting deeply on the minor.

OSCAR was a keen follower of the speeches of a radical Egyptian sheikh,¹²¹ and was highly influenced by the leader of the terrorist cell who recruited him, a Spanish convert. He provided him with Al-Qaeda readings and introduced him to meetings where individuals were trying to be recruited to conduct terrorist attacks in Spain and abroad,¹²² thus deepening the minor’s radicalization.¹²³ THAMIR and CALEB idealized their brother killed in Syria whom they described as a “wise man” and a “superior being”, supporting the glorification of his “martyrdom” with references to the Quran.¹²⁴ In addition to her mother’s strong influence, a recruiter, Mohamed Mouadin, taught them “the truth about Islam and how to take up the steps that lead to jihad”.¹²⁵ Their mother provided ideological indoctrination but also logistical support to the recruiter who was preparing their journey to Syria when they were detained.¹²⁶ She forged a strong dependency bond with them as evidenced in the emotional attachment with her siblings during their stay at the youth detention center. The only time one of them cried was after a call from her mother.¹²⁷ During her phone calls from prison to her sons she blamed them for the situation they were in, she victimized herself, and alarmed them making them believe that something bad was going to happen to her. The minors were “broken” after her mother’s calls and showed a strong loyalty to her.¹²⁸

The Macro Level Factors in the Radicalization Process

A different set of factors can be distinguished when analyzing the political, economic, social and cultural variables that comprise the macro social level of the society in which individuals find themselves. The radicalization of individuals can be enabled by push factors that do not directly radicalize them but enhance their vulnerability to this process. Other factors at this macro level can directly contribute to the radicalization of individuals.¹²⁹ Some of those factors are: the perception by radical Muslims of Western

life style “as a cultural threat to the pure Islam”, ISIS successes that led to the establishment of the Caliphate increasing “levels of perceived group efficacy”, and appeals to the use of violence.¹³⁰ The radicalization process of the five minors revealed these and some other environmental factors, as will be analyzed.

The five minors came from urban areas with a high percentage of Muslim population susceptible to jihadist recruitment.¹³¹ Furthermore, during the period comprising the minors’ radicalization Ceuta, Tarrasa, Melilla, and Badalona had significantly low employment rates,¹³² high criminal rates,¹³³ and high school absenteeism rates.¹³⁴ The neighborhoods in Tarrasa and Badalona where the three boys lived have been described as a “breeding ground for radicalization” which combined “unemployment, poverty, a feeling of inferiority, and a radical message”.¹³⁵ Such an environment enabled “identity crisis, uprooting and a strong discontent with Western values”.¹³⁶ The context described can encourage Muslim young people to maintain an adversarial relationship with the host society and the state leading them to anti system behavior or to what has been termed as “apartism”.¹³⁷ As observed by Gest, this may prohibit young Muslims from “perceiving a congruence of interests with Spanish government and society and investing in it”.¹³⁸

These societal factors partially influenced the minors’ radicalization in contexts also described as “ghettoes” where ISIS offered youngsters the chance to exert “revenge against the West”, which was seen as “the root cause” of all their problems.¹³⁹ The response by some Muslim leaders in these communities reinforced those societal factors as driving forces in the radicalization process since they underestimated the radical pathway and the dangers that could be derived from it. By way of example, a representative of a Muslim association in one of the areas referred to, played down the behavior of the radicals in the following terms: “They are good people. They just come to pray like we do”.¹⁴⁰ Another Muslim representative regarded the radicalization of youngsters as “an isolated case” that creates “a social alarm”.¹⁴¹ These views contradict the analysis conducted by the Spanish security forces which regard those environments as a high radicalization risk.¹⁴² In addition to the areas where OSCAR, THAMIR and CALEB grew up, today Ceuta and Melilla, where NADIA and DAYFA lived, continue to be two of the environments with higher radicalization risks as confirmed by security analysts and academics.¹⁴³ These two cities geographically located in North Africa present numerous vulnerability factors that enabled the radicalization of the minors. As gateway between Europe and Africa, they suffer from intense migratory pressure, illicit trafficking of substances, goods and humans, as well as high unemployment, delinquency and birth rates.¹⁴⁴

Such societal environments didn’t facilitate thriving economic or educational conditions for the family networks of the minors. None of the parents had a permanent job and lived under conditions that the judiciary and the staff at the youth detention centers described as “precarious”, “worrying” and “serious”.¹⁴⁵ Under such conditions two of the families sought help through the social services in their area.¹⁴⁶ These factors, together with the origin of the families and their migratory processes, raised considerable difficulties for their adequate integration into Spanish society.¹⁴⁷ The important deficits closely related to their migratory processes and unsuccessful integration compounded the feeling of deprivation and injustice as well as their identity crisis.¹⁴⁸

The environments described also show the presence of other pre conditions at the macro level that favor the development of radicalization processes: the existence and spread of a radical Salafist jihadist ideology that provides a framework for the legitimization of violence; as well as the experience and knowledge of grievances related to real or perceived discrimination and to armed conflicts that are seen as source of suffering for the Muslim population. The five minors were surrounded by individuals placed in an ideal position to exert considerable pressure on vulnerable members of communities characterized by significant economic and societal deficits. Under those circumstances, Islamist radicalism played a key role in manipulating the feeling of social deprivation that in other contexts has also been considered as an important causal factor of radicalization and even of collective violence. The existence of terrorist cells that exploited such ideology in closed communities within marginalized environments like the ones described became a powerful element for the reinforcement of antagonistic identities. Such environments favored radicals who imposed themselves as leaders of the reference group, establishing a social order guided by their own interpretation of Sharia law.¹⁴⁹ Under those circumstances, the youths sought to defend what they saw as a “vilified identity” by embracing it further.¹⁵⁰

Furthermore, it must be remembered that ISIS “has a specific recruitment message in the form of a mandatory fight to recover the historic Islamic territory of «al-Andalus», through the reconquest of parts of Spain and Portugal, which formerly constituted the Emirate of Cordoba (756-929)”.¹⁵¹ The presence of terrorist and radical networks in the youngsters’ settings was a prominent feature of their macro-social environment. In a confidential cable dated 2007 and revealed by Wikileaks, the U.S. ambassador to Spain described Catalonia as a “magnet for terrorist recruiters” and “a prime base of operations for terrorist activity”.¹⁵² The U.S. diplomat also described the region as “a major Mediterranean center of radical Islamist activity”.¹⁵³ Academic analysis of terrorist activity in Spain demonstrate that Ceuta, Melilla and Catalonia were at the time of the radicalization of the minors, and continue to be today, the hotbeds of Islamist radicalization in the country.¹⁵⁴ In August 2017 a group of young Muslim radicals carried out a terrorist attack in Catalonia killing sixteen people and injuring over a hundred. A sizeable amount of the detentions of Islamist radicals have taken place in those regions and the majority of jihadists that have traveled to conflict areas abroad departed from Ceuta and Melilla.¹⁵⁵ Although the minors themselves did not travel to Syria, some of them were about to set upon such travel. Events in Syria and Palestine featured prominently in the discourse used by all of them to legitimize their radicalization. As one of them put it, “the U.S. is to blame for occupying land that is not theirs and for ending the lives of many Muslims”.¹⁵⁶

Conclusions

The three-dimensional framework applied to the study of the radicalization of the five minors who have been convicted in Spain of membership of a jihadist terrorist organization reflects the “three process variables” identified by Taylor and Horgan: setting events, personal factors, social/political/organizational context.¹⁵⁷ The analysis of the micro, meso and macro levels conducted through the assessment of a wide range of

primary sources allows for a better understanding of variables such as the social/political, family, economic, peers, life experiences, disaffection, personal response, changes in environment, and actual/marginal violence, which are of relevance to the juvenile's radicalization.¹⁵⁸ This multi-variable analysis confirms with empirical evidence that: i) the path toward radicalization is "multi-factorial" and "it cannot be predicted by one variable alone";¹⁵⁹ ii) the radicalization of these five young offenders share some similarities although they have significant differences too for it's a "context-dependent" process also influenced by other individual variables;¹⁶⁰ and iii) their radicalization was not a linear and uniform process, but a process which resembles a puzzle in which a set of pieces fit in different manners,¹⁶¹ so, even when certain general factors played a role in all cases their weight varied from individual to individual. These conclusions can be better appreciated when assessing the following combination of factors that have been of influence in the radicalization of the five youngsters convicted in Spain of membership of a jihadi terrorist organization.

Firstly, the five minors grew up in urban areas characterized by important socio-economic deficits. These areas showed high unemployment and insecurity rates. The economic shortcomings of these environments derived in high school absenteeism and low educational levels among most of the minors who radicalized into jihadism. Social services in the areas of reference were unable to efficiently respond to the needs of the minors under the circumstances described. By way of example, NADIA and her family didn't improve their capacities and resources to overcome the socio, economic and educational problems they were facing in an enclave like Ceuta. Similarly, the mother of OSCAR didn't find the required support to strengthen the family as a socialization entity capable of preventing the minor's radicalization after the loss of the parental figure at an early age. Such lack of support hindered the minor's integration into Spanish society following the family's immigration to Spain.

The family environment of the five minors show some common features and similar deficits. Some of them were unstructured families with serious problems vis-à-vis the respectful imposition of norms, the development of adequate parental role models, and the capacity to guarantee appropriate care in relation to the provision of relevant socio educational needs. Others were more structured family environments but still lacking the right supervision of the parental figures. All of them experienced key deficits such as lower incomes and low levels of education. It must be stressed that four of the five family environments had among their members individuals with criminal records, notably, siblings of the radicalized minors. These four minors experienced a serious lack of parental control, be it from the absence of the father in one of the cases, or because of the inadequate fulfillment of the father's role. At the same time, certain family figures such as a mother, a brother in law, a brother and a boyfriend, played a decisive role in the socialization into violence of the minors.¹⁶²

Secondly, although none of the five minors ended up in conflict zones such as Syria or Iraq, some of them did attempt to pursue a violent course of action in those areas. Furthermore, the situation in both conflicts, in addition to that in Palestine, were of relevance in their radicalization process, particularly among four of them. In their view the international context reinforced the legitimization of jihadist violence as a response to the role of the United States of America. The inspiration provided by the massive

flow of recruits to Syria and Iraq constituted another reinforcement and motivational factor within the radicalization process of these minors. What was seen by the youths as a sacrifice by those who traveled to and fought in Syria and Iraq, also provided encouragement and justification for their radicalization. All of them knew either directly or indirectly somebody who had been in those conflict areas.

Thirdly, the existence of a radical Salafist jihadist ideology in their immediate environment provided the right framework for the radicalization of the minors and the legitimization of violence which was a key element in it. We can define Islamist radicalism as an ideology which gives prominence to a strict and literalist adherence to Sharia law, as expounded by the traditional Islamic scholars. The existence of recruitment networks devoted to spreading such radical ideology facilitated the radicalization of youths who showed considerable vulnerabilities given their socio economic and educational deficits already outlined. The minors and their families were aware of these networks, evidencing proximity and opportunity to approach and join them as they did.

A radical Salafist jihadist ideology also provided a justification mechanism for the guilt transfer and the diffusion of responsibility that defined the rigid set of beliefs of the minors. Accordingly, a radical Salafist jihadist ideology channeled the experience and knowledge of grievances related to real or perceived discrimination and to armed conflicts as a source of immense suffering for the Muslim population. This ideology elicited what was depicted as a defensive response to such alleged aggression against Muslims throughout the world. Therefore, Islamist radicalism provided a homogenizing ideology that rendered its adherents vulnerable to the message of violent jihad that was so influential in the radicalization of the five minors. Revealingly, the three minors that were finally expelled from the country were part of two families of illegal immigrants with limited job opportunities and other deficits. Under those circumstances, the radical Salafist jihadist ideology contributed to the reinforcement of a narrative of grievances and injustices by the youths and the “self-fulfilling prophecy” about their course of action.¹⁶³

Fourthly, a profuse use of the Internet and social networks was decisive in the radicalization process of most of the minors analyzed. Internet and social networks functioned as an important means of self-radicalization that enabled access to propaganda, violent videos with terrorist attacks and executions, and radical speeches pronounced by individuals seen as role models for boys and girls at a young and impressionable age. They also functioned as an efficient means of approaching the terrorist group and socializing within the radical community, as well as a tool for proselytism and recruitment. The virtual interaction of the youngsters and the anonymity it entailed facilitated a more uninhibited behavior, as well as a closeness to a somehow distant and conflictive reality.¹⁶⁴ In line with other studies on the topic, males and females made a slightly different use of the Internet. As von Behr *et al* have pointed out, “it may be unacceptable for women to meet in person with extremists who are men or to join their groups” and “for them to express certain thoughts in public in the physical world”.¹⁶⁵ NADIA, who rarely left home without her mother, fantasized in her social networks with aiding “Allah’s mujahideen” and was lured by promises of marrying a “mujahideen” and “training to join the fight”.¹⁶⁶ DAYFA’s online contact with her recruiter was very relevant in her radicalization process,¹⁶⁷ developing an active “online sisterhood”¹⁶⁸ with

other members of the radical milieu. Therefore, Internet did provide the means for fulfilling the aims of ISIS propaganda as summarized by Winter: recruit new supporters, shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behaviors.¹⁶⁹

Fifthly, the search for and the reinforcement of a strong individual and collective identity constituted a relevant factor in the radicalization process of the five minors. Immature and vulnerable as they were for the reasons previously described, they felt attracted by a new collective identity provided by a radical Salafist ideology. They resorted to a type of religion exaggerated in its forms, dogmatic in its assertions, and belligerent in its practice and way forward. As Malthaner and Waldmann have put it, the radical milieu provides a supportive social environment,¹⁷⁰ and a decisive factor in the reinforcement of a collective identity, as evidenced in the five minors analyzed. Online identities, as defined by Pearson,¹⁷¹ were also of key relevance in the radicalization process of some of the minors. As one of the radicalized girls put it when explaining the strong influence of the radical ideology around ISIS, “the shared feeling with other girls made it stronger”,¹⁷² thus strengthening her own vulnerable identity.

Sixthly, three of the youngsters were expelled from the country after their stay at the youth center and further imprisonment. Although not the specific focus of this article, this outcome demonstrates the limitations of the institutional system put in place in Spain to deal with radicalized youngsters. Nonetheless, it can be noted that the intervention designed at the youth centers is hardly one aimed at the proper de-radicalization of the individuals. In the cases analyzed the intervention period was considerably limited thus seriously restricting the capacity of the professionals to take up an ambitious strategy for such an aim. This was so because the psychologists, social workers and educators in charge of the intervention program encountered youths with personality traits that had to be dealt with initially and before any proper de-radicalization program could be applied. As outlined by the staff at the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders, the intervention was hindered by personality features of the minors like the following ones: egocentrism; little empathy toward others and with a difficulty to put themselves in the position of others; vulnerability to the influence of others; harsh emotional features; disposition to submission; deficient communicative and socialization tools, as well as resources and skills for conflict resolution; distrustfulness; propensity to the manipulation of reality in order to transfer responsibility and guilt; impulsivity; and inclination to their own victimization. Accordingly, and given the extent of the radicalization of the minors, the professionals at the Agency prioritized a mainly psychological and educational approach which experience demonstrates would have required a more protracted and thorough intervention in order to enhance its efficacy. Despite its constraints the intervention program had a positive effect in the development of some of the youngsters. Therefore, the program applied to the radicalized young offenders seems to have been a necessary but insufficient requirement for proper de-radicalization.

We can also conclude that the case study presented in this article provides evidence that supports the findings of Allan *et al* vis-à-vis the main hypotheses on what causes violent extremism.¹⁷³ In line with some of those main hypotheses, our own findings demonstrate the following: terrorist groups can benefit from the Government's failure to provide certain basic services and from the failure of parents to exert the appropriate

parental control; there is a mixed relationship between education, employment and radicalization so that it can derive in drivers of extremism in certain individuals with frustrated aspirations and low literacy; low literacy and limited availability of information can lead to a dichotomic mindset by which extremism is seen as the only response, making some individuals more vulnerable to radical messages; experiences and perceptions of exclusion can bind together multiple sources of resentment and the proposal for a simple solution in the way of radicalization; identity formation can become maladaptive thus encouraging radicalization; religious identities can be exploited by extremist ideologues, with charismatic leaders instrumentalizing identity search and formation; women do not always play a moderating role but sometimes a decisive one in encouraging radicalization; events in Palestine and Iraq can contribute to the perception of a global attack on Islam that gives way to indignation, resentment and radicalization.

Finally, and as a result of the previous, we conclude that attempts to find a single theory on why people radicalize are bound to fail when approached with static or rigid models. As the evidence presented in this case study confirms, radicalization is diverse and multi-factorial. Not only is radicalization a set of heterogeneous processes. The diversity of the radicalization puzzle is also enhanced by the distinctiveness of each individual who makes decisions and is influenced by variables that determine variances in the pathways to be followed. As Schmid has argued, “we do know what has led *some* people to turn to extremism and terrorism”, “yet human beings are not atoms who all behave the same way in past, present and future”.¹⁷⁴ Consequently, the study of radicalization processes is likely to be more productive and informative if conducted in an integrative rather than rigidly linear fashion.

Notes

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3. Max Taylor and John Horgan, “A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18, no. 4 (2006): 585–601.
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 11. Fernando Reinares, Carola García-Calvo and Álvaro Vicente, *Yihadismo y yihadistas en España. Quince años después del 11 M* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, 2019), 21.
 12. This is the age period during which individuals are legally considered as “minors,” as established in Law 5/2000, of January 12th of the Penal Responsibility of Minors.
 13. Ángeles Escrivá and Leyre Iglesias, “Musa, Ousama y los otros 18 niños españoles que ‘matan’ por el Estado Islámico,” *Crónica, El Mundo*, 27/11/2016.
 14. Andros Lozano, “Los tres niños ‘yihadistas’ de Córdoba que soñaban con volar el instituto,” *El Español*, 28/10/2017.
 15. This was the case of two of the terrorists who were killed by the Catalan Autonomous Police Force in the town of Cambrils hours after the terrorist attack perpetrated in Barcelona on August 17th, 2017 when a van plowed into pedestrians at a packed boulevard in the center of the city. Five terrorists, wearing fake suicide belts and carrying large knives and an axe, drove their car into another pedestrian boulevard in the seaside resort of Cambrils. The car driven by the terrorists crashed into a vehicle of the Catalan police parked in the area.
 16. There are several cases of this type of conviction for youths who didn’t receive sentences that involved imprisonment or internment. See, for example, Spanish National Court, Central Juvenile Court, Sentencing 13/2015; and Manuel Altozano, “Menor, latinoamericano y yihadista: ‘Decapitar infieles es un acto de piedad’,” *El Confidencial*, 28/12/2015.
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 18. Article 2 of Law 3/2004 of December 10th setting up the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders in the Autonomous Government of Madrid.
 19. Personal interviews by the authors with staff at the Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Young Offenders, Madrid, 17/07/2019.
 20. Study Protocol of Remand Measures produced by the youth detention center, register number 2956, 12/08/2014; Final Report of Remand Measures, register number 2875, 05/06/2015; Central Juvenile Court number 1, Sentence. File 0000005/2014, Madrid, 24/04/2015.
 21. Study Protocol of Remand Measures produced by the youth detention center, register number 2225, 04/05/2015; Final Report of Remand Measures, register number 6891, 31/12/2015; Central Juvenile Court number 1, sentence number 14/15, 18/12/2015.
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 23. Study Protocol of Remand Measures produced by the youth detention center, register number 2088, 24/04/2015; Final Report of Remand Measures, register number 6837, 29/12/2015; Juvenile section of the Public Prosecutor’s Office of the National Court, File 2/2015,

- 29/10/2015; Central Juvenile Court number 1, File 0000002 / 2015, Cautionary measures 0000001/ 2015, 18/12/2015.
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 26. Schmid (2013), op.cit.; Javier Jordán, "Procesos de radicalización yihadista en España. Análisis sociopolítico en tres niveles," *Revista de Psicología Social* 24, no. 2 (2009): 197–216.
 27. Study Protocol of Remand Measures, register number 2956, 12/08/2014.
 28. Juvenile Court, File 5/2014, Preliminary Proceedings 7114, Madrid, 16/04/2015.
 29. Review and Assessment Report, register number 916, 25/02/2015.
 30. Final Report of Remand Measures, register number 2440, 14/05/2015.
 31. Interviews by the authors, 04/05/2016.
 32. Letter written by NADIA during her stay at the youth detention center.
 33. Declaration on October 14th, 2014, at the Juvenile Court, Preliminary Proceedings 7114, Reform File 5/14, p. 2.
 34. Juvenile Court number 1, Proceedings 9282, General Identification Number 28079 26 2 2014 0100015, Madrid, 28/01/2015, p. 2.
 35. Cadena SER Radio, "Así captan adeptos los terroristas de la yihad," broadcast on 29/04/2015.
 36. Interviews by the authors, 09/03/2016.
 37. Individualized intervention model, Reform File 5/2014, register number 2955, 12/08/2014.
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 39. Ibid.
 40. Individualized Model of Intervention, File 5/2014, register number 2224, 04/05/2015.
 41. Office of the Prosecutor, File 4/15, 10/04/2015, General Identification Number: 28079-26-2-2015-0100043, p. 5.
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 43. Office of the Prosecutor, File number 4/15, 10/04/2015, General Identification Number: 28079-26-2-2015-0100043, p. 7.
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 50. Interview by the authors with staff at the youth detention center, 09/03/2016.
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 52. Juvenile section of the Office of the Prosecutor at the Spanish National Court, Reform File number 4/15, Police Proceedings, 25/11/2015, p. 10.
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62. Personal interviews by the authors, 18/06/2015.
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148. In line with the findings of other studies, we do not claim that education, poverty and relative deprivation explain in its totality the radicalization process of the five minors that have been analyzed. Nonetheless, these factors did play a role in the radicalization process of the minors under study. See, for example, Milan Obaidi, Robin Bergh, Nazar Akrami,

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