MAKING SENSE OF JULY 22ND: OUTCOMES OF SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL REAPPRAISAL AND COPING PROCESSES FROM A MEANING-MAKING PERSPECTIVE. A RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND ITS EVALUATIONS.

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Summary

So far, the expanding research landscape on the terrorist attacks of July 22nd has ignored the crucial question that this project squarely addresses, namely how different groups of Norwegians have dealt with the traumatic events in terms of religious/spiritual and/or secular reappraisals and meaning-focused coping. The events shattered beliefs and values of many Norwegians and induced the exigency to make sense of the unfathomable mass killings. Commentators said: Norway will never be the same; it has changed forever. But in what way? From a psychology of religion perspective, our project makes a contribution to answering this question. We explore how Norwegians made sense of July 22nd during the years after the attacks. Major research questions are: How do Norwegians reappraise the meaning of the events? What role do subsequent events (e.g., Breivik's trial), media discourses, and religious/spiritual or anti-religious/atheist beliefs and values play in these reappraisals? Which religious/spiritual and secular meaning-making mechanisms are employed (if any)? Which of them proved successful in the recent past and which did not? Did the long-term meaning-making process lead to a change of (religious/spiritual) worldviews or to an adaptive consolidation of the (religious/spiritual) meaning systems? In theoretical terms, our project is informed by transactional stress theory, its application to religion and spirituality, salutogenesis, and by axioms of assumptive worlds and posttraumatic growth theory. To understand and assess the longterm meaning-making efforts, we make use of a mixed methods design. The qualitative approach comprises semi-structured interviews and focus groups with different sub-populations. The subsequent quantitative study comprises three phases: a) critical analysis and adjustment of existing measurement instruments, b) development and validation of self-constructed measuring scales, c) a national telephone survey and statistical analysis. The project will be completed by a follow-up interview study with participants selected on the basis of the survey.

keywords: Anders Behring Breivik | assumptive worlds | coping | meaning making | Norway | posttraumatic growth | religion | salutogenesis | spirituality | terrorism | transactional stress theory

n July 22, 2011 the 32-year-old Norwegian Anders Behring Breivik detonated a car parked in the government district of Oslo. The explosion killed eight people; several buildings were severely damaged. Thereafter Breivik drove from Oslo to the inland lake Tyrifjord located 30 kilometers northwest of the city. Disguised as a police officer, he entered the lake island of Utøya, where the annual camp of the social democratic youth organization Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking took place. Still in police uniform and bulletproof vest, Breivik called together the young people, ostensibly in order to inform them more accurately about the Oslo attack, from which they had heard through broadcast media. Then he opened fire without warning them. Over the course of about 75 minutes he killed 69 people. The victims were 14 to 51 years old, 32 of them under 18 years. Breivik was arrested on the day of the attack, and the next day he confessed his deeds comprehensively. As a motive for the attacks he admitted to trying to defend Norway against Islam, cultural Marxism and multiculturalism. On April 16, 2012 court proceedings opened against him; he was charged with terrorism and multiple premeditated murder. Contrary to the prosecution's request, on August 24, 2012 Breivik was declared sane by the Oslo District Court and was sentenced to 21 years in prison followed by preventive detention for the murder of 77 people.

The bombings in Oslo and the massacre on Utøya were significant events in recent Norwegian history and an important development in international terrorism. Norwegians had to cope with the fact that the attacks did not come from the outside, that there was no foreign group to blame, but that a white seemingly Christian Norwegian assiduously planned and executed the massacre. In addition, Norwegians had to come to terms with the fact that they are not immune to trouble and threats, but that there exists a 'dark side within' which cannot be ignored anymore. Accordingly, the research landscape is growing rapidly and the following comments reflect the situation in May 2013.

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BACKGROUND

In recourse to Kumar (2012, 233) and Naseem (2012, 274 ff.) one may speculate whether there are discursive presumptions leading researchers to not consider Breivik as a 'true' terrorist but as a psychopathic criminal offender because the Western notion of terrorism is intrinsically tied to Islam ever since 9/11 and it is hard to believe for Westerners that a (healthy) selfprofessed Christian European conducted a terroristic act. In point of fact, much early research did concentrate on the assessment of Breivik's personality from a forensic psychiatric or developmental perspective (e.g. Billing, 2012; Fahy, 2012; Fuchs, 2012; McCartney, 2012; Nau, 2012; Rasmussen, 2012; Rastier, 2012; Ravndal, 2012; Taylor, 2012; Wessely, 2012; Appelbaum, 2013; Melle, 2013; Parnas, 2013). The preoccupation with the perpetrator's mental capacity may be explained by the discussions of Breivik's criminal accountability and his trial in 2012. Other lines of research show that Breivik's atrocities are clearly classified as terrorism. If one defines 'terrorism' as "the intentional random murder of defenseless non-combatants, with the intent of instilling fear of mortal danger amidst a civilian population as a strategy designed to advance political ends' (Meisels, 2006, 465) and the 'lone wolf terrorist' as 'a person who acts on his or her own without orders from—or even connections to—an organisation' (Burton, 2008), Breivik perfectly fits within this framework. As a matter of fact, the events of July 22nd are analyzed as a prototypical example of lone wolf terrorism (e.g. Pantucci, 2011; Brynielsson et al., 2012; Ergenbright, 2012; Hartleb, 2012; Lockey, 2012; Michael, 2012; Spaaij, 2012; Simon, 2013).

Breivik's so-called 'manifesto' which does not only contain details about his planning of terrorist attacks but also displays his politico-religious worldview (informed by, among others, islamophobia, anti-Jihadism, Templarism, pro-Zionism, allusions to Christianity, Freemasonry or Norse Paganism) became another focal point of research (e. g. Asprem, 2011; Bangstad, 2012; Eide, 2012; Fekete, 2012; Green, 2012; Ivan, 2012; Kunst et al., 2012; Walton, 2012; Salomonson, 2013; Sandberg, 2013).

In addition to psychiatric, juridical and ideological issues, most early research on July 22nd concentrated on medical logistics (e. g. Gaarder et al., 2012; Akkök, 2012; Lockey, 2012), the emotional impact of the attacks (e.g. Thoresen et al., 2012; Wollebæk et al., 2012), and the immediate reactions (e.g. Christensen et al., 2012). Sundsøy et al. (2012) stressed the role mass communication and social networks played in people's proximate response to acute stress. The importance of social support in the wake of July 22nd is further underlined by the performance of mass rituals (Danbolt, 2012; Aagedal et al., 2013). For many people, this collective way of coping created a new 'sense of community' (Bonde, 2011, 6). Researchers partly associated with the KIFO Center for Church Research are currently analyzing the role religious institutions and rituals played in the response to the 22 July terrorism. However, the visibility of the church (both in terms of public space and discourse) and the impressiveness of the public rituals (e.g., the flower march) must not hide the fact that ritualization is only one of many forms of non-secular emotion-regulating strategies (Koenig et al., 1988) and that it is mostly used in the initial stages of the coping process.

So far, the expanding research landscape on the terrorist attacks of July 22nd has all but ignored the crucial question that this project squarely addresses, namely how different groups of Norwegians have dealt with the traumatic events in terms of religious/spiritual, non-religious/non-spiritual, anti-religious or atheist strategies of reappraisals of meaning and meaning-making coping in the long run. From the perspective of the psychology of religion, our project Making sense of July 22nd will address the following interrelated research questions:

- How do Norwegians reappraise the meaning of the events?
- What role do subsequent events (e.g., Breivik's trial), media discourses, and religious/spiritual beliefs and values play in these reappraisals?
- Which religious/spiritual and secular meaning-making mechanisms are employed (if any)?
- Which of them proved successful in the recent past and which did not?
- Did the long-term meaning-making process lead to a change of (religious/spiritual) worldviews or to an adaptive consolidation of the (religious/spiritual) meaning systems?

To conceptualize the dynamics and outcomes of long-term appraisal and coping processes, we revert to a number of complementary theories. The study is designed in accordance with the transactional model (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), though we do also consider the salutogenic model (Antonovsky, 1987) and current theoretical developments in stress theory. We take into account the 'emotive turn' in this area of research (e.g. Lazarus, 2006; Folkman, 2008) and utilize the framework outlined by (Park & Folkman, 1997) who emphasize the role of meaningmaking in long-term coping processes. Since we are especially interested in the relationships between religion, spirituality and stress caused by terrorism, we supplement this approach with insights from the psychology of religious coping (e.g. Koenig, 2006; Trevino, 2007). In this context, special attention is paid to the conceptual frameworks laid out by Gall et al. (2005) for they basically are adaptions of the Park-Folkman model to the field of religion, spirituality, coping, and health. In addition, we apply approaches focusing on the outcomes of this period of adaptation: Janoff-Bulman (1992) thought of this in terms of shattered assumptions and Tedeschi & Calhoun (2004) developed the concept of posttraumatic growth.

Drawing on Park & Folkman (1997), we conceptualize the mismatch between the beliefs and values held by many Norwegians and the atrocities of July 22nd as incongruity between 'global' and 'situational' meaning. Global meaning structures, on the one hand, constitute a relatively stable orientation system that comprises a person's beliefs about the world, about the self, and about the self in the world as well as her/his goals and sense of purpose. Situational meaning, on the other hand, is the result of a person's attempts to interpret stressors in terms of the global meaning system and to (un-)consciously reconcile a perceived incoherence. Thus, situational meaning is a dynamic process in changing contexts, a search for

meaning and disentanglement in times of stress. It can be described in terms of a recursive process of (re-)appraisals, meaning-making, and the valuation of the outcomes of these efforts.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Not only for reasons of research ethics, we do not investigate the psychological health of the survivors and/or persons closely related to the survivors or victims of July 22nd (for ongoing research on directly affected persons, see: http://www.etikkom.no/en/In-English/Coordinating-research-on-the-terrorist-attacks-227/ongoing/). Instead, our focus lies on long-term meaning-making mechanisms of the Norwegian population.¹ As it already became clear from the study's aim and scope, we will divide the population in different sub-samples: (a) self-identified religious (but not spiritual) people, (b) self-identified spiritual (but not religious) people, and (c) self-identified religious and spiritual people (for this typology see e. g. Huber, 2011).²

We are aware of the fact that our study follows a retrospective design and that the ex post assessment of appraisals and coping behaviors is afflicted with several methodological problems. However, there are at least two reasons why we are convinced of the practicability and reasonability of our research project: (a) The terrorist attacks of 22nd July 2011 were such a dramatic negative life event for most of the Norwegian citizens that it can be expected that most people do remember their cognitive/emotional reactions quite accurate; (b) Moreover, our main focus lies on the retrospective evaluations of the respondents and the effectiveness of a several years long coping process. We assume that the manner how people think,

feel and speak about July 22nd at the time of the study is indicative for their coping success and the adaptability of their (religious, spiritual, or secular) meaning systems. Thus, we do not only consider the retrospective design as a methodological obstacle but also as a chance.

Research on coping often does not take adequately into account the socio-political and religio-cultural contexts of the respondents (Heppner, 2008). This neglect can be attributed to an implied psychological reductionism, the preference of quantitative methodology, and the discursive marginalization of qualitative research within social psychology (Burman, 1996). This is one of the reasons for utilizing a mixed methods approach (Creswell et al., 2003). A further reason for methodological triangulation is that we are unassertive about the appropriateness of some of the existing measurement instruments we would like to employ in the quantitative part of the project. Thus, we will apply qualitative and quantitative research strategies by turns. The project is comprised of two qualitative pilot studies, the quantitative core study, and a qualitative follow-up study. The sub-projects build on each other and aim at answering the research questions spelled out above.

Qualitative pilot study

The qualitative pilot study consists of two sub-projects. In the first sub-project we make use of semi-structured in-depth interviews and in the second sub-project we utilize focus groups. The participants of both the interviews and the focus groups are sampled according to their (non-)religiousness (which will be assessed by a screening instrument) and secondly with regard to age, denomination, gender, and habitation. By this means, we will conduct individual interviews with persons of each sub-sample (religious/spiritual, just spiritual, non-religious/non-spiritual, anti-religious/anti-spiritual). The focus groups will be arranged according to the same principle, that is we will have a group of self-identified spiritual persons, a group of self-identified anti-religious/anti-spiritual persons etc. In addition, we plan to incorporate two additional focus groups in order to explore more deeply the meaning-making efforts of two sub-populations. Most of the participants who identify themselves as (somewhat) religious/spiritual will be members of the state church (over 70% of the Norwegians are part of the Church of Norway), however, one should not assume that these individuals are active adherents of the Evangelical Lutheran faith. Therefore, one additional focus group will consist of Norwegians who describe themselves as highly religious, active Christians. The second additional focus group will comprise of Norwegian Muslims who presently are the largest religious minority group in Norway.

The primary purpose of the pilot studies is to better understand the manifold ways of (re-)appraisal and meaning-making coping with domestic terrorism in the specific cultural, political and religious context of Norway. The guidelines for our interviews and focus groups will include questions like 'Did you change your general beliefs about Norwegian society and politics?', 'Do you explain the terrorist attacks as an aberration?', or 'Did you turn to spiritual/religious beliefs and practices to make sense of the catastrophe?'. A secondary

¹ We are aware of the fact that many people were traumatized by the events of July 22nd. The concentration on the general population, however, renders it rather unlikely that respondents will be re-traumatized by research. However, we are using a short posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) scale (Breslau et al., 1999) not only as a component of our psychological distress measure but also as a screening tool in order to assess a person's mental vulnerability at the beginning of our research protocol. The face-to-face interviews, focus groups or telephone interviews will be immediately interrupted if the interviewer has the impression that the informant feels unwell or shows PTSD symptoms. In such a case we instantly make contact with a crisis helpline and/or call in a cooperating psychologist.

² Since we do not use etic classifications but emic self-identifications to differentiate between the populations, we do not have to define the problematic concepts 'religion' and 'spirituality' at the outset. However, we do hold theory-based assumptions about how and why people classify themselves as either religious or spiritual or both. It is assumed that (a) the grade of institutionalization and (b) the grade of flexibility are commonly used as markers for religiosity and spirituality respectively – for example, the less institutionalized and the more flexible a person's belief system is, the more likely it is that this individual will classify herself/himself as spiritual.

purpose of the pilot studies is to gather material which helps to adjust already established items and measuring tools to the study's aim and topic and/or to develop new context-specific questionnaires. It may turn out, for example, that it might be useful to distinguish between religious and spiritual coping (Meisenhelder, 2002, 772) and, accordingly, to complement religious coping scales with new items covering less theocentric ways of coping which will contribute to the ongoing discussion about the operationalization of spirituality as a social-scientific category. The pilot studies will probably bring about deeper insights that may result in the revaluation of our theoretical model and the change of research instruments. However, the pilot studies do not only stand in the service of the quantitative study, but they will produce unique findings of independent value.

Quantitative core study

If the pilot study suggests that we have to construct one or more completely new instruments to assess some of our core variables, we might decide to precede the survey with a validation study with a convenience sample composed of Norwegian university students. However, we act on the assumption that we are able to compile a survey package largely on the basis of already well-established items and instruments. This would also add to the comparability of our findings.

Since we are interested in the Norwegian population, in the quantitative study we make use of a random national telephone survey. The sample size will be estimated on the basis of a power analysis (Cohen, 1977). With the help of the screening tool already used to assign the participants of the pilot studies to one of our sub-samples, we would like to gather data of self-identified religious/spiritual persons, (just) spiritual persons, anti-religious/anti-spiritual persons, and non-religious/non-spiritual persons. This sampling technique will give us the opportunity to test whether our general hypotheses will hold true in view of different sub-populations and to develop more specific and complex predictions regarding the coping behavior and the psychological and social functioning of the sub-groups.

In accord with the Park-Folkman model, we utilize instruments to measure (a) global meaning, (b) personality factors, and (c) situational meaning. The choice of appropriate tools depends, as already noted, on two factors: the review of existing scales in light of methodological as well as theoretical considerations and the results from the pilot studies. Therefore, our current theory-driven selection of instruments is not definite but subject of change during the research process. In the following we discuss some of the variables and scales that might be of significance (see figure 1). Within the limits of this proposal, it would take us too far to discuss all the methodological challenges associated with them.

Measuring global meaning Reappraisals and coping are dependent of the global meaning system that people use in order to orient themselves in the world and to make sense of the various inner and outer stimuli they are confronted with. Since global meaning is a multidimensional construct, we utilize different measures to operationalize it. Political beliefs and goals

are one important dimension of global meaning and they are assessed by the following scales: political orientation (we use a single-item explicit measure on a 7-point Likert scale which ranges from 1 [very left] to 7 [very right]), ethnic and religious prejudices (a largely self-developed instrument based on the qualitative data and relevant literature, and some items of our secular world assumptions questionnaire). The secular world assumptions scale rests upon the ideas of Kaler (2009). However, we will use 'world assumptions' as an umbrella term under which also items of other scales reside: questions of just world scales (Rubin, 1975; Lipkus, 1991) or of sociopolitical control scales (Paulhus, 1983; Zimmerman, 1991). In addition, Janoff-Bulman's concept is used as a theoretical springboard to develop a new measurement instrument: faithbased world assumptions. Presently we are thinking of using selected items from the views of suffering scale (Hale-Smith et al., 2012), the God image scales (Lawrence, 1997), and the religious schema scale (Streib & Constantin, 2010) to assess religious/spiritual beliefs and goals. However, the results of our qualitative pilot study will not only influence the choice of adequate items but also the choice of overall constructs. Like world assumptions, an individual's sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1987) is also conceptualized as a dispositional orientation and, thus, seems to be a suitable measure of the relatively stable global meaning system. This is further underlined by the fact that the three components of the sense of coherence construct correspond with crucial aspects of Park & Folkman's 1997, 118-119, concept of global meaning: comprehensibility relates to order, manageability relates to beliefs about the self in the world, and meaningfulness relates to purpose. To avoid misunderstandings, a cautionary note may be in order here: These scales are not used to measure changes in the global meaning system in the aftermath of July 22nd; they are rather used to assess the present beliefs and goals of a person that currently influence reappraisals of meaning and ongoing meaning-making.

Measuring personality factors Under the rubric of personality factors we subsume some very divergent concepts that influence the process of (re) appraisal and meaning-based coping. Within this broad category, we differentiate between secular and non-secular factors. Our theoretical model comprises three secular and two non-secular personality factors. Boundaries is a concept introduced by Antonovsky (1987, 182); it describes the ability to narrow the parts of the world that affect you. In our case, a person's boundaries are operationalized as relational proximity to one of the victims or to someone who knows a victim's family and geographical proximity to the places of disaster. The way people reappraise the terrorist attacks is not only influenced by personal involvement, but also by indirect – mass-mediated – forms of participation (Slone, 2000; Nacos, 2007). To put it more drastically: in most cases people do not respond to the terrorist attack or to subsequent occurrences (e.g., Breivik's trial), but to representations of these events. We use a self-developed measurement of media usage tailored to the Norwegian media landscape and cultural context in order to assess the role mass media (internet, television, newspapers) plays in the dynamic process of making situational meaning. In addition, we also have to think

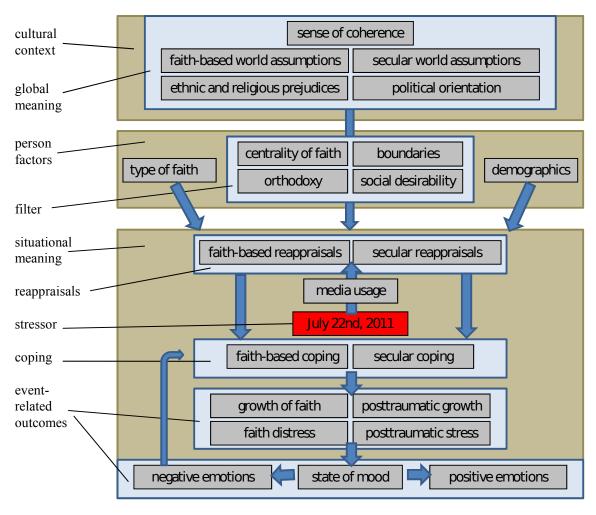


Fig. 1: Theoretical model of the meaning-making process.

about media usage as a crucial meaning-making coping mechanism and not only as a predictor. Moreover, we hypothesize that some measurements (e.g., political orientation, prejudices) and, in conjunction with them, the reappraisal of the events will be distorted by social desirability. Thus, a short form of the Marlowe-Crown social desirability scale (Ballard, 1992) is employed as a third secular personality factor.

Since we hypothesize that the way people reappraise the meaning of July $22^{\rm nd}$ as well as the way people search for meaning depends on type and salience of their faith, a multidimensional measurement instrument of a person's religion/spirituality is used. We operationalize the typology of Huber and Klein (2011) which was also used as a screening tool in the pilot study and we employ Huber's 2007 centrality scale.

Measuring situational meaning As already mentioned, the creation of situational meaning is a complex process that can be heuristically divided into three interdependent sub-processes: (re)appraisal, coping, and distress or adaptation. In each case, we use secular as well as non-secular variables. To measure secular reattributions and reappraisals of meaning, we, on the one hand, adjust general measures of stress appraisal (e.g. Peacock, 1990; Roseman et al., 1990) to our specific case. On the other hand, we use the findings of our qualitative study—in which we ask questions like 'Who was responsible for the catastrophe?', 'Why did the terrorist attacks happen?', or 'Did the events of July 22nd violate some of your (religious/spiritual) beliefs and values?' – to develop new context- and culturespecific items. With regard to faithbased reattributions and reappraisals of meaning we, too, make use of the results of our pilot study and choose on the basis of theoretical and methodological considerations appropriate items from already

established scales (e. g. Gorsuch, 1983; Spilka & Phillip Kirkpatrick, 1985; Smith, 1989; Grasmick, 1994; Bailey, 1998). Of special interest in this connection is the sacred loss and desecration scale (Pargament et al., 2005) which, in a way, can be considered as a measure of global meaning violations.

To measure different ways of coping, Folkman (1988); Endler (1990) have developed comprehensive multidimensional scales. However, these inventories need to be aligned with the study's methodological presuppositions and theoretical framework because they primarily assess the immediate responses to a specific stressful life event. Park (2005) used two subscales of the COPE (Carver et al., 1989) to measure meaningbased coping and van den Heuvel et al. (2009) recently provided one of the first instruments to assess meaningmaking. We adapt items from the above cited literature and develop new items from our qualitative interviews in order to construct a coping questionnaire specifically aimed at measuring secular meaning-making coping strategies in relation to July 22nd. To ascertain in which way and in what degree faith-based meaning-making coping played an important role in the handling of the terror-induced stress, we also select and adapt items from scales specifically developed to measure religious/spiritual problem-solving styles (e.g. Harrison et al., 2001; Fox et al., 1998; Miner, 1999; Pargament et al., 2000). Moreover, we do not only want to know which secular and non-secular coping strategies were/are used but also which of them proved subjectively successful or persistent over time. Thus, respondents are also asked to indicate which of the mechanisms they would classify as helpful.

It should be noted that biased recall cannot be completely avoided if one assesses coping behaviors retrospectively. The same applies to our measurement of the outcomes of people's attempts to accommodate their beliefs and goals with the catastrophe. Since our outcome assessment tools are measuring positive and negative changes, the respondents give answers based on a subjective comparison of their present condition with a hypothetical past condition. We consider the posttraumatic growth inventory (PTGI, Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) as a prototype for the construction of our event-related outcome scales. Like the PTGI, we persistently use a response format like: 'Indicate for each of the statements below the degree to which this change occurred in your life as a result of the terrorist attacks of July 22nd (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996, 458459). Besides our interviews, other scales, as the posttraumatic cognitions inventory (Foa et al., 1999) or the integration of stressful life experiences scale (Holland et al., 2010), for example, are used as sources for the reworking of the PTGI and the construction of an analogous posttraumatic distress inventory that is used as a measure for negative changes. In our posttraumatic stress scale we also incorporate items of a short screening scale for posttraumatic stress disorder (Breslau et al., 1999) and a terror distress scale (Cukor & Friedman, 2005) that we need to adjust only slightly to our purposes. Since posttraumatic growth and distress will be operationalized as secular outcomes, we can extract the fourth factor—spiritual change—from the PTGI and use it as a starting point for the development of a scale to assess growth of faith. These two items can be supplemented, for example, by questions of the

spiritual transformation scale (Cole et al., 2008). To construct the complementary scale, faith distress, a couple of inspiring ideas and instruments are available: Exline et al. (2000) developed a religious strain subscale, Pargament et al. (2003) identified red flags that indicate inadequate religious coping, and Krause (2003) explored the role of religious doubts. Since negative/positive emotions are closely associated with the various outcomes of appraisal and coping processes, we finally use the positive and negative affect schedule (Watson & Lee A. Tellegan, 1988) and items of a short form of the profile of mood states (Shacham, 1983) as a basis for measuring emotional outcomes. Moreover, we incorporate items of measures for hope (Snyder, 2000) and social optimism (Schweizer, 2001) as well as for anxiety (Spielberger et al., 1983) and depression (Beck et al., 1961). All scales will be used with the time instruction 'during the past year' because we assume that the meaning-making processes we are exploring largely took place in this space of time.

Oualitative follow-up study In order to better integrate the advantages of both methodologies and to establish a hermeneutic spiral (Nerlich, 2004), we will conduct a qualitative follow-up study. For this purpose we sample interviewees on the basis of the survey results.³ Two sub-groups will be formed: (a) persons who performed well on the instruments measuring psychological, religious/spiritual and emotional well-being; and (b) persons who, in contrast, stand out by reason of strikingly low outcome scores. With each participant we will carry out two interviews, a life history interview and a semistructured interview focusing of the interplay between global and situational meaning. In this way, we deepen our understanding of the long-term dynamics of socio-psychological adjustment to domestic terrorism by means of meaning-based coping. The leading research question for the first group will be framed in terms of salutogenesis: "Whence the strength?" (Antonovsky, 1979: 7) The second group can be analyzed in the context of the still common pathogenic system of thought (e.g., the search for risk factors) and will yield insights on possible prevention and intervention strategies.

³ In compliance with ethical guidelines formulated by UNESCO's MOST programme for international comparative social science research and the Helsinki declaration, all data will be treated confidentially. For example, the identities of participants will be concealed in all documents and we will use pseudonyms for the interviewed persons in all qualitative studies. We do not archive any information of the persons who participated in the survey, however, with one important exception: In order to conduct the follow-up study, we need to ask at least for contact information. Thus, each interviewee will be asked explicitly whether she/he is interested in optionally participating in a follow-up study and if so whether we are allowed to retain their telephone number in connection with their questionnaire. After the sampling process, of course, these data will be deleted. Over and above, we will make contact with the Norwegian Social Science Data Services and The National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway to have our project approved.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Research on coping with 9/11 suggests that 'a predominant religious coping pattern' was used and that 'almost half of Americans said their faith was stronger following the recent attacks' (Meisenhelder, 2002, 774). We presume, however, that we will find a more complex picture in the Norwegian case. Differences between coping with 9/11 and July 22nd can be ascribed to different types of terrorism (foreign vs. domestic, group vs. individual), different ideologies (e.g., anti-Americanism vs. anti-Islamism), different groups of targets (established vs./and youngsters), the survival of the Norwegian terrorist and his subsequent trial as well as differences in cultural and religious environments. Thus, our project aligns with the cultural psychology of religion (Belzen, 2010) and pays attention to studies that discuss cultural issues in conjunction with the aftermath of July 22nd (e.g. Goodwin, 2011; Andersson, 2012; Eriksen, 2012; Green, 2012; Rasmussen, 2012; Wiggen, 2012; Žižek, 2012; Frey, 2013; Mogensen, 2013). Ongoing research projects exploring the media coverage of July 22nd, public discourses surrounding the events, social negotiations of memories and values, and the impacts to society at large (like, e.g., NECORE) will also be instrumental in placing our project in a broader societal context. In contrast to NECORE, however, we focus on psychological mechanisms (reappraisal and meaning-making coping processes) underlying cultural formations and social change and work out the influence of and on the religious environments in Norway.

People generally tend to be optimistic about life and their own being in control of the life's course. As a basic principle, they trust in the benevolence of other people and believe in a just and fair world (Janoff-Bulman, 1989). If one takes a look at the World Value Survey, a cross-national survey of beliefs (Inglehart et al., 2004), these positive tendencies seemed to hold true for the Norwegians, too: If one considers the ranking in regard to interpersonal trust, for example, one finds Denmark, Sweden, and Norway among the first four of a total of 28 nations. Wollebæk et al. (2012) examined the shortterm effects of the July 22nd attacks and found confirmation for the so-called 'remobilization hypothesis', that is members of high-trust societies (such as Norway) tend to react with increased interpersonal and institutional trust and increased civic engagement to a stressor. For the converse hypothesis, the so-called 'end-of-innocence hypothesis' (lost trust and increased fear), this study provided no support. By contrast, Thoresen et al. (2012) found that the 'terrorist attacks seem to have had a significant effect on the Norwegian population, creating sadness and insecurity, at least in the short term.' The discrepancy between these studies' findings can partly be explained by the use of different measures: For example, people can be sad, but still trustful and a feeling of insecurity must not be the same as an experience of fear.

As a matter of fact, many questions remain unresolved. The mobilization of trust and other resources such as social support, for example, can be considered as an initial emotion-focused coping strategy that reduces fear and other unwanted feelings. However, we do not know yet how effective these (automatic) coping efforts are over the long term and how subsequent events and discourses influence reappraisals, coping

mechanisms, and outcomes. We assume that the type of coping that people use to deal with a catastrophic event over the long term is different from the type of coping that people use in the short term with respect to a specific stressful event. Over the long term, people are more likely to engage in meaning-based coping, which is different than problem- and emotion-focused coping.

Moreover, previous studies suggest that the severity of the stressful event and religious coping behavior are correlated (the more dreadful the event, the more religious support is needed) and that religious world assumptions remain relatively stable. The perplexing stability of the religious meaning system can be explained psychologically: Given that a person in a situation of severe stress has a strong need for an operative meaning-system, he/she cannot risk to have his/her faith in a just world (or a loving and righteous God, for example) shattered or even lost. In addition, '[t]he meaning system that is primarily steeped in religious faith is more stable than most because of its cultural transmission, community and divine assent, [...]' (Park et al., 2010, 489). Since spirituality, in contrast to traditional religiosity, is per definition more dynamic and can be modified by an individual more easily, it can be assumed that the findings of the empirical research on the reciprocal relationship between stress and religious meaning systems cannot be uncritically transferred to the more flexible and more vulnerable spiritual belief systems. Pargament et al. (2005, 59), for example, argue that the catastrophe of 9/11 'represented a violation of fundamental spiritual symbols and virtues, including the sacredness of the nation, the sanctity of life, and the sublime virtues of justice and compassion.' While some Norwegians made sense of July 22nd, others still struggle with the loss of their 'sacred canopy' (Berger, 1967).

In accord with our basic research questions (long-term meaning making coping) and in due consideration of our focus on religion/spirituality, we launch the following hypotheses:

- Remobilization hypothesis: Those people who have strong convictions (e.g., deeply religious persons or committed atheists) will reappraise the meaning of July 22nd more positively (e.g., God's higher plan or the deed of an ideologically misguided psychopath), will engage with more probability in subjectively adjuvant meaning-based coping (e.g., helping others for religious or ethical reasons), and will show more signs of posttraumatic growth as a result of ongoing meaning-making (e.g., the strengthening of faith or the fortification of trust).
- End-of-innocence hypothesis: Those people who are unassertive about their convictions (e.g., spiritual searchers or agnostics) and/or whose (religious/spiritual) assumptive worlds are not assured by societal plausibility structures will reappraise the meaning of July 22nd more negatively (e.g., losing something that once gave a sense of [spiritual] fulfilment), will engage with more probability in subjectively adverse meaning-based coping (e.g., fatalism), and will show more signs of posttraumatic stress as a result of not finding meaning (e.g., doubts about God's existence or depressive symptoms).

Our findings will have implications for public and individual health. Knowledge of the (religious, spiritual, and secular) meaning-making processes and the posttraumatic stress/growth of different groups of Norwegians is of great importance for health workers, politicians, psychologists, and ministers. In a global perspective, our project helps toward the understanding of the long-term psychological effects of domestic terrorism.

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

As indicated in footnote 1, our application did not receive funding. We are, however, of the opinion that our project idea might be of value for the research community and especially for young scholars who face the task of writing proposals. Therefore, we amalgamated not only the two applications to a new text version that fits the layout and standards of this journal, but also asked the Norwegian Research Council if it would be possible to publish extracts from the comments of the panel of experts on the second version of our proposal as an appendix. Thankfully, they agreed to do so. The following section is a verbatim reproduction of two parts ('Scientific merit', and 'Overall assessment of the referee/panel') of the document 'Assessment of grant application submitted to the Research Council of Norway' we received in April 2014. Although the assessment does not exactly relate to the text above, the points of critique are still applicable and insightful. At this juncture, we refrain from responding to this assessment and hope that young scholars will benefit from the insights into academic writing and reviewing processes.

Scientific merit

The proposed study addresses a very timely and important topic the evidence of psychological resilience and coping (or lack thereof) in the longer-term aftermath of the Breivik massacre – in relation to religious and secular post-traumatic meaning-making. The proposal contends that this crucial consideration has gone largely neglected in the relevant literature. The proposal is indeed quite meticulous, on its own terms, about laying out its principal questions, hypotheses, and objectives, and is sufficiently rigorous about its methods. The proposal is also thoroughly grounded in its specific literature. In these respects, the proposed study is very good. However, we were not persuaded that the larger conceptualization of this potentially important study was sufficiently critical and creative in its formulation of the research problem. There seems to be a fundamental presupposition in the presentation of the hypotheses that post-traumatic 'growth' and 'stress' are divergent and even mutually exclusive. This seems to be a rather conventional and uncritical set of assumptions that would potentially undermine the validity of the entire research enterprise. Simply put: why should enduring and unresolved post-traumatic stress be presumed to inhibit or preclude 'growth'? Why would evidence of stress and a crisis of meaning-making be presumptive evidence of a lack of "growth" or even of a kind of ill-health? What if certain predictable types of resilience (e.g. those grounded upon religious or ideological 'remobilization' or re-entrenchment) might instead be the indices of a lack of 'growth'? By considering these contrapuntal questions, it seems that the rather conventional (and possibly very conservative) normative assumptions that undergird this proposal are put into more stark relief. This set of basic concerns is also reinforced

by the uncritical contextualization of this research topic within a presumed 'age of terrorism'. The project is justified with the suggestion that understanding better how Norwegians re-evaluate meaning in this particular post-traumatic context with recourse to their religious, spiritual or secular beliefs and practices makes an effectively global contribution to addressing 'the challenges of an age of terrorism'. A rigorous and critical social science ought to be rather more circumspect if not frankly skeptical about such dominant discourses and highly politicized ideological constructions. By juxtaposing the experiences of (white, Christian) Norwegians with those of non-white, Muslim migrants4 (one of the proposal's greatest strengths), the proposed study could potentially reveal important ways that the very notion of 'terrorism' has been constructed, deployed, and manipulated politically; however, this prospect is undermined by the proposal's bland conflation of the Breivik massacre with a generic notion of "terrorism" as the presumed hallmark our current (global) historical era. The more incisive issue that this study might otherwise address is the way that the Breivik events actually compel a searching and critical re-assessment of the broader politics of Norwegian nationalism - 'national identity', 'national culture', 'national values' etc. In this context, individuals' post-traumatic struggles with meaning-making could be more powerfully correlated to wider socio-political processes of meaning-making (and ideological 'remobilization' or hegemonic recuperation). Such an approach might then be able to better articulate how the psychology of religion at stake in the study could be approached as an eminently social and political phenomenon.

Overall assessment

While we are enthusiastic about the importance and timeliness of this topic for research, we are not persuaded that the project as proposed satisfies all of the requirements necessary for delivering upon the potential of the research. The intellectual/ scholarly scope of the project seems too narrowly drawn, in ways that foreground one specific academic sub-discipline to the neglect of a considerably wider and vital range of research concerns and debates that could better bridge the research with its greater public audience. Furthermore, the organizing conceptual framework, embedded in the very hypotheses for the study, seems problematic and regrettably predictable. The hypotheses about religious and secular coping strategies are very Christian focused but the self-financed Somali project is intended to counter this bias. However, while this work package makes an essential contribution, this focus and its implications could be more fully integrated as defining features of the project as a whole.

APPENDIX 2: REVIEW OF THE ARTICLE

In line with the peer review policy of this journal, the preceding text (i. e., the proposal and the assessment by the Norwegian Research

⁴ The positive critique relates to a sub-project by Gaudencia Mutema ("Being Muslim and Somali in Post-22/7 Norway: Religion, Race and Trauma") which was integrated in the second version of the proposal. In the text at hand, however, we did not include a description of her well-designed study. This underscores the view of the reviewers who did point out quite rightly that her project was not incorporated well enough in the overall project design.

Council) was sent to two anonymous referees. (The review was single-blind since Florian Jeserich is an author of the article and an editor of the journal; he also invited the referees; Michael Stausberg did not know the identity of the referees.) Both referees independently recommended publication of the article. On a scale from 0 (= very poor) to 10 (= excellent) the referees evaluated the article as seven and eight respectively.

Referee #1 found that the authors could have paid more attention to 'alternative models and explanations'. This referee also alludes to potential personal reservations about 'concepts such as post-traumatic growth' and suggests that we might 'investigate the work of Furedi on The Changing Meaning of Disaster from 2007, to include a more cultural and sociological perspective to their [= our] heavily psychologically driven work'.

The referee also provided a kind of meta-review by sharing critical remarks on the assessment of the article by the Norwegian Research Council's panel of experts:

The official reviewers raised a number of concerns but the most significant of these in my mind is how to interpret the actions taken by individuals in response to the events. They suggested that what the authors took to be a good or positive response – such as a reaffirmation of faith – might be seen by some as a negative retrenchment. That may be true. It depends on your view as to the role of religion in society today. But the same criticism could be raised of almost all research. Interpreting the data is often driven by philosophical persuasion. Regardless, the data itself remains as a useful tool for others to reinterpret according to their different worldviews. Accordingly, I think it a shame the project was not funded on the basis of these views.

Referee #2 did not comment on the official assessment but offered several critical remarks and suggestions for further improvement: the inclusion of a greater range of disciplines and fields beyond the psychology of religion and, correspondingly, the referee suggested a number of further readings (see below). In addition, this referee called for more specific definitions of some key terms such as 'religion' and 'spirituality'. His overall assessment reads as follows:

This project is highly relevant and seems to rest on a wide theoretical basis. It is still in need of more explicit hermeneutics. The proposal indicates a project of huge dimensions with a great number of informants and a corresponding great amount of data obtained by many methods. A more precise description of the research team and a plan of dissemination would also help towards clarification of scope and focus.

The main critique of this report is of a methodological nature. The referee calls for 'more explicit hermeneutics'. In particular, the report finds a mismatch between theoretical constructs and self-identifications:

What is being researched is the self-identification of people, while the analysis and the hypotheses are based on theory-driven concepts belonging to the researchers. There is a leap from research on how people interpret (make meaning) of life and faith to categories of such meaning-making that calls for an explicit hermeneutical design, and the hypotheses seem much too closed and conventional to grasp the possible nuances in a qualitative study.

Similarly, the referee finds that figure 1 (above) 'may be too rigid in terms of distinguishing between growth and stress, negative and positive emotions, when this applies to subgroups categorised according to religious/spiritual/non-religious'. While it did not make sense for us to revise the article in light of this important criticism (since that would have undermined the inclusion of the assessment by the Norwegian Research Council's review panel), we agree that this comment points to a crucial methodological issue; minimally, in the design of the study the qualitative parts should have gained a greater importance beyond being 'pilot studies' for the quantitative 'core study'.

Last but not least, referee #2 suggested several additional readings:

Butler J, Habermas J, Taylor C, & West C (2011): *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*. New York, Columbia University Press. Clinton J (2008): *Resilience and recovery*. International Journal of Children's Spirituality, **13**(3): 213–222.

Crawford E, Wright MOD & Masten AS (2006): *Resilience and Spirituality in Youth*. In E. C. Roehlkepartain, P. E. King, L. Wagener & P. L. Benson (Eds.), The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence (pp. 355–370). Thousand Oaks / London / New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Davies DJ (2002): *Death, Ritual, and Belief.* London: Continuum. Davies, DJ (2011): *Emotion, Identity and Religion: Hope, Reciprocity, and Otherness.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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