CASIS Hot Brief 0008-2021

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Great Replacement Theory

1. The Great Replacement Theory appears to be an ethno-nationalist, White Supremacist theory that iterates the threat posed to white populations by migrants, ethnic minorities, or any population that would disturb an otherwise homogenous white society (Davey and Ebner, 2019). While the theory espouses that white populations are being replaced by immigrants and minority groups, it is not solely about race (Counter Extremism Project, 2020; Davey and Ebner 2019; Ware, 2020). Instead, the theory extends to the ruination of white culture and ethnicity, and argues that the white population is being diluted by way of migration, miscegenation, or other racial mixing (Counter Extremism Project, 2020; Davey and Ebner 2019; Ware, 2020). This threat is iterated as the fear of reverse-colonization (Byman, 2021, para. 2). The Great Replacement Theory possibly finds traction among extreme-right white populations, particularly males, who fear they are losing their power amidst a multicultural and diverse society (UNSC, 2020). The solution of this threat to white populations as purported by the Great Replacement Theory appears to be forced deportation or "remigration" (Davey and Ebner, 2019, p. 4). The Great Replacement Theory is allegedly closely aligned with the Identitarian movement, an anti-immigrant movement that may be considered consonant with white supremacist groups in the United States (AIM, n.d.).

2. French writer Renaud Camus popularized this theory in 2011/2012 and presented the idea at the Annual Meeting on Remigration in Paris in 2014 (Counter Extremism Project, 2020; Davey and Ebner, 2019). Camus maintained that immigrants of non-white ethnicities were arguably "reverse-colonizing" the White European population (Counter Extremism Project, 2020, para. 1). Although the theory was born in the context of a threat to pan-European White populations, there is also potential for this to be applied in a North American context.

3. The Great Replacement Theory incorporates white-supremacy narratives that target any populations that might be considered as a threat to an otherwise homogenous White population, including but not limited to Jews, Blacks, Muslims, Hispanics, or LGBTQ+ (Byman, 2021). The theory also moves towards an anti-leftist and

anti-government rhetoric that debatably assigns blame to globalists who are working to destroy native European culture (White culture) (Byman, 2021; Davey and Ebner, 2019). Proponents of the theory possibly use dehumanizing memes, inaccurate science, and distorted statistical data that is damning of minority groups to explicate the pollution of white populations (Besley and Peters, 2020, p. 112; Davey and Ebner, 2019, p. 5; Ware, 2020, p. 5). The Great Replacement Theory uses crisis narratives to articulate the urgency of the threat towards the 'in-group' that arguably justifies violence towards the 'out-group' as the solution to ensure survival (Davey and Ebner, 2019, p.10; Counter Extremism Project, 2020). This action may be soft violence via ethnic cleansing in the form of re-migration or support more kinetic violence akin to genocide (Davey and Ebner, 2019, p.5).

Muslim and Jewish communities are one example of popular targets that are deemed "incompatible" with white majorities in Western countries (Davey and Ebner, 2019, p.7). For example, proponents of the Great Replacement Theory may assert that immigration is a scheme of the Global Zionist Occupied Government that aims to dilute and dismantle the white race (Ware, 2020, p. 5).

4. There appear to be many groups based in the United States that are anti-multicultural, who seek to reinstate a European-America (i.e. white America), and seem to have narratives similar to that of the Great Replacement Theory. Some of these groups include, R.A.M. (Rise Above Movement), the Traditionalist Youth Network, National Policy Institute, National Socialist Movement, Vanguard American, Atomwaffen Division, The Base, and Patriot Front (American Racists, 2015; AWD, n.d.; the Base, n.d.; Jones, Doxsee, & Harrington, 2020; Patriot Front, n.d.; R.A.M., n.d.; Vanguard America, n.d.).

There have been multiple instances of violence perpetrated by individuals that profess support for the Great Replacement Theory as well as groups whose ideology is derived from replacement narratives. Two of these notable attacks by individuals include Brenton Tarrant and the mosque attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019, and Patrick Crusius who attacked at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas in 2019 (Counter Extremism Project, 2020).

White supremacist, Identitarian groups like the American Identity Movement (previously Identity Evropa) and Generation Identity may utilize the Great Replacement Theory as a basis for their ideology and seek a homogenous white population (AIM, n.d.; Counter Extremism Project, n.d.; Davey and Ebner 2019, p.8). The Soldiers of Odin are another example that use this theory in their discourse to state that migrants are arguably posing a threat to western religion and culture (Aharoni and Feron, 2020, p. 98).

5. Support for the Great Replacement Theory is possibly rising steadily. Between April, 2012 and April 2019, there were approximately 1.5 million tweets referencing the theory, including what seems to demonstrate an uptick in references in the months leading up to the Christchurch attack (Davey and Ebner, 2019, p.5). Supporters of the Great Replacement Theory have the ability to infiltrate mainstream politics and thus the theory has gained traction in the Manosphere, counter-jihadist movements, and anti-Semitic movements (Davey and Ebner, 2019, pp. 16-25). Populist political leaders potentially bolster this theory by expressing that migrants are taking over (Bergmann, 2020, p. 225). White supremacist movements are growing and globalizing, and this theory could probably be used as the “ideological glue” that brings cohesiveness to transnational extreme right groups (By,am, 2021; Davey and Ebner, 2019, p.4).

CASIS Vancouver specializes in examining Violent Transnational Social Movements and the different ideologies that overlap an array of ideological segments. VTSM theory suggests that violent extremists are socially radicalized self-actualized individuals who arguably are radicalized through a societal normalization of extremist language and sentiments (Kelshall, 2021. Whereby self actualised actors want to impose legitimacy, dominance, authority, and supremacy over other identity groups using soft and kinetic violence as their main tools (Kelshall, 2021).

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