Abstracts workshop “politicization & radicalization”

1) Abstract Jeffrey Ian Ross

**Title:** The Role of Prison in Terrorists’ Lives: An Examination of Autobiographies/Memoirs. (Revised: February 26, 2008)

Prison remains a defining moment for many individuals’ lives. Incarceration is often a time for reflection, bonding with fellow inmates, learning new skills and knowledge. Some convicts are radicalized while behind bars. In this respect they may meet others who have strong political agendas, or they are political activists before coming in and then become more determined. A prison sentence is also often the time for many terrorists (or soon to be terrorists) to write memoirs/autobiographies. This paper reviews the literature on prison memoirs, and then performs an intense analysis of autobiographies/memoirs written by twenty terrorists and analyses the impact of the prison experience had on these individuals.

2) Abstract Donatella della Porta & Manuela Caiani

Current research focuses on the radical right in Italy and Germany. We are analysing the radical right milieu, using discourse analysis of documents, protest event analysis on newspapers, and network analysis.

3) Abstract Catarina Kinnvall

**Title:** The Political Psychology of Radical Islam: young Muslims in European cities

This paper discusses Islam and young Muslim identity construction in five European societies: Britain, France, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden. Involved in all these settings are the constant struggles and negotiations that young Muslims experience. In many European cities the theme of being other continually echoes in the lives of young post-diasporic Muslims (second and subsequent generations), displacing and deferring their sense of coherence about self. Of interest here is to explore how different multicultural policies have impacted on the extent to which young Muslims turn to radical Islam or search for more moderate alternatives. In particular I focus on how religion discursively construct and is constructed by young Muslims who experience a sense of alienation and marginalization in regards to the majority community and how this always involves a gendered dimension.

4) Abstract Kathleen Blee

**Title:** Racist Radicalization in the U.S.

Radicalization of belief and radicalization of action operate differently for U.S. racist activists. For some, extreme racist beliefs precede and stimulate their commitment to racist agendas. Most racist activists, however, do not develop full racist worldviews until they participate for some time in racist actions and networks. This paper draws on extended life history interviews and casual conversations and observations of a sample of women and men rank-and-file members/participants in a variety of neo-
Nazi, white supremacist, Ku Klux Klan, and white power skinhead groups across the United States. I explore the paths through which these activists were radicalized into racist beliefs and racist actions, paying particular attention to the different dynamics of anti-Semitic and anti-black radicalization in modern U.S. racist movements.