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Title: What's So Radical About Jihadi Violence?

Abstract: This paper examines a definition of radicalisation as it relates specifically to the example of Abu Hamza al-Masri, the Egyptian born Muslim who assumed de facto control of London's Finsbury Park Mosque from 1997-2003. Abu Hamza used his prominence at the Finsbury Park Mosque to foster an environment which ideologically encouraged and tactically supported criminal and terrorist activity in the UK and beyond. In policy and media parlance, Abu Hamza has been described as being 'radical' and as 'radicalising' Muslims into participating in violent extremism. However, both media and states have used 'radical', 'radicalising' and 'radicalisation' to denote a number of unrelated, imprecise and often confusing forms of political behaviour and mobilisation. By examining what Abu Hamza said and did, this paper proposes a working definition of radicalisation, with specific reference to what the paper calls 'radical violent *takfiri* jihadism'. Ultimately it argues that radicalisation can be understood as representing the point where commitment to an elite defined rhetoric is transcended by an individual obligation to participate in direct action, the point where there is a rejection of ritual in favour of practice.