

Hebron University
College of Graduate Studies
English Department



The Language of Persuasion and Power in ISIS Political Discourse

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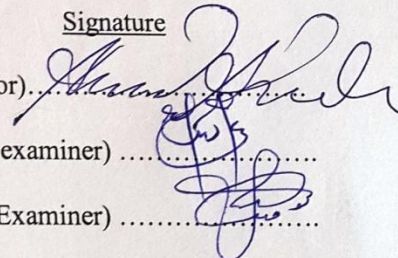
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(External examiner)
(Internal Examiner)



Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University. Wherever contributions of others are involved, an indication is clearly given, with due reference to the literature and acknowledgment of collaborative research and discussion. Most importantly, this study is accomplished under the supervision of Professor Ahmad Atawneh at Hebron University.

Signature: Maysa Qutteineh

In my capacity as a supervisor of the candidate's thesis, I certify that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: Prof. Ahmad Atawneh

Dedication

for dad, who told me to go the whole nine yards

for mom, who gave me all the emotional support needed

for my husband, who kept getting me back on track when the wheels fell off

and for my little baby boy, who made this mission an impossible one

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who have provided me with the possibility to make this study come to life. I am highly indebted to my parents for their understanding and help throughout the duration of my studies. Many thanks and appreciations also go to my husband whose encouragement has played a role in my success.

Yet, I am mainly indebted to my thesis advisor Prof. Ahmad Atawneh, not only for his continuous guidance and apt feedback but also for believing in me since the very first day I have stepped into Hebron University. In fact, this study would have never seen the light without his willingness to go the extra mile to improve my study. His strategy of never accepting things done by halves is definitely the best advice I have ever been taught.

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Abstract

Based on the recognition that the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has received from international media and the success of its propaganda in recruiting foreign fighters, the researcher has decided to study ISIS political discourse as represented in its official English-printed magazine, *Dabiq*. The researcher, then, builds up on the existing knowledge of the pragmatics of political discourse by addressing this trendy topic from a multi-disciplinary perspective that combines language, politics, and psychology. Basically, this research seeks to a) analyze the language of persuasion as implemented in thirty of *Dabiq* magazine articles and to b) explain the ideas that ISIS promotes through the use of this language. It also examines how ISIS activates persuasion strategies to practice power verbally. To achieve this purpose, the researcher has adopted Cialdini's and Shabo's principles of persuasion and propaganda. The third question which the study tries to answer is whether Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Culpeper's impoliteness strategies apply this language of persuasion and power. The study concludes that *Dabiq* uses all the investigated persuasion strategies to achieve four main goals: to create a positive self representation and negative other representation, to call for immigration to its territories, to religiously justify its punishment methods, and to recruit fighters. Most importantly, it proves that there is indeed a correlation between persuasion and politeness and another one between impoliteness and power. However, aside from the original aim of the study, it turned out that ISIS tends to de-contextualize religious texts to serve its own political agendas.

Abstract in Arabic

لغة القوة و الإقناع في الخطاب السياسي لتنظيم الدولة الإسلامية (داعش)

ملخص الدراسة

انطلاقاً من الاهتمام الذي أولته وسائل الإعلام العالمية بتنظيم الدولة الإسلامية (داعش) و نجاح إعلامه في تجنيد مقاتلين أجنب، ارتأت الباحثة ضرورة دراسة الخطاب السياسي لتنظيم الدولة الإسلامية كما عُرض في مجلته الرسمية دابق بالنسخة الانجليزية. و بذلك تضيف الباحثة إلى المعرفة السابقة ببرغماتية الخطاب السياسي عن طريق تناول هذا الموضوع الذي أصبح حديث الساعة من وجهة نظر متعددة التخصصات تتداخل فيها اللغة و السياسية و علم النفس. يسعى البحث بشكل أساسي إلى أ) تحليل لغة الإقناع المستخدمة في ثلاثين مقالة من مقالات مجلة دابق و ب) الكشف عن الأفكار التي يروجها تنظيم الدولة من خلال تضمين هذه اللغة في خطابها السياسي. كما و تهدف الدراسة إلى التمعن في الطريقة التي اتبعها تنظيم الدولة في تفعيل أساليب الإقناع لممارسة قوته لغويًا. و لتحقيق هذه الأهداف، تم الاعتماد على مبادئ الإقناع و التضليل الإعلامي كما بينها سيالديني و شابو. أما السؤال الثالث الذي يحاول البحث الإجابة عنه فهو عن الدور الذي تلعبه نظريتنا التأديب في الحديث لبراون و ليفنسون و الوقاحة اللغوية لكالبير في صياغة لغة الإقناع و القوة. و خلصت الرسالة إلى أن مجلة دابق تعتمد إلى استخدام أساليب الإقناع التي تم الإشارة إليها في قسم الأدبيات كافة لتحقيق أهداف أربعة أساسية ، ألا و هي : خلق صورة ايجابية لتمثيل تنظيم الدولة بحيث تكون مخالفة لصورة أعداءه السلبية، الدعوة إلى الهجرة إلى أراضي التنظيم، تقديم مبررات دينية لأساليب العقاب التي يستخدمها و تجنيد المقاتلين. إضافة لما تم ذكره آنفاً، أثبتت الدراسة وجود علاقة تربط بين الإقناع و التأديب و أخرى بين الفظاظة و القوة. و بعيداً عن هدف البحث الأساسي، اتضح أن تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية يعمل على إخراج النصوص الدينية من سياقها لخدمة مخططاته السياسية.

Definition of Key Terms

1. Pragmatics: It is the field of linguistics that goes beyond the structural view of language to study the invisible meaning of a speaker's utterance that is not being explicitly stated (Yule, 1996).

2. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA): It refers to the analysis of political discourse from a critical perspective, a perspective which focuses on the reproduction and contestation of political power through political discourse (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012).

3. Persuasion: It is a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behavior regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice (Perloff, 2003).

4. Power: It is the possession of control, authority, or influence over others (Van Dijk, 2001).

5. The Contrast Principle: It is one of the principles of persuasion that aims at convincing audience of an idea by showing a drastic contrast between the presented items (Cialdini, 2007).

6. The Reciprocity Principle: It is one of the principles of persuasion which stresses the fact that people's reactions are usually imitations of the original actions initiated by others towards them (Cialdini, 2007).

7. The Authority Principle: It is a persuasion technique that relies on quoting authoritative figures because of their professionalism and the trust people attribute to them (Cialdini, 2007).

8. The Consistency Principle: It is a persuasion technique that exploits people's appreciation for those who are committed to certain beliefs and continuously act according to them (Cialdini, 2007).

9. The Liking Principle: It is a persuasion technique that uses humor, familiarity, and

similarity aspects to convince audience of the speaker's ideas (Cialdini, 2007).

10. Glittering Generalities: It is one of the false-reasoning propaganda strategies that take advantage of appealing words with positive connotations but vague meaning (Shabo, 2008).

11. Name Calling: It is a false-reasoning propaganda strategy which is based on evoking negative connotations related to certain words so as to ridicule an opposing enemy or idea (Shabo, 2008).

12. False Dilemma: It is a false-reasoning propaganda technique which aims at providing audience with two suggested options so that they choose the one that is labeled good, even if both are actually bad (Shabo, 2008).

13. Bandwagon: It is a false-reasoning propaganda technique which is based on the idea that people look at the common behavior practiced by others in order to constitute their own decisions (Shabo, 2008).

14. Card Staking: It refers to a false-reasoning propaganda technique that downplays or omits conflicting perspectives (Shabo, 2008).

15. Face and Politeness Theory: It is a theory presented by Brown and Levinson which explains the several strategies one uses to mitigate his/her face threatening acts so as not to attack the face of the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

16. Impoliteness Theory: It is a theory present by Culpeper in response to Brown and Levinson's theory. His theory explains the numerous strategies a speaker uses to directly attack and offend the hearer's face (Culpeper, 1996).

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Whether we put it into Machiavelli's "the end justifies the means" or Smedley's "all is fair in love and war," the fact that politicians are ready to do whatever it takes to win their fight remains an ever-lasting truth, even if that includes convincing others to believe that a war which could jeopardize the life of a whole nation is simply justified, moral or even "great." In 2014, the name of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, hereafter ISIS, rose to prominence. Since then, and despite the international disapproval of its ideology, ISIS has been able to do both: a) recruit more young supporters and b) persuade them of the morality of its actions. It is suggested that ISIS' official magazine, *Dabiq*, plays a focal role in achieving these purposes¹. Therefore, it becomes essential to analyze this particular political discourse of ISIS in order to identify its persuasion techniques. To achieve that, the first part of this research presents certain theoretical background about the definition and historical development of persuasion, as well as Cialdini's (2007) and Shabo's (2008) persuasion principles. In addition, Brown and Levinson's politeness techniques (1987) and Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies are listed in an attempt to find correlations among persuasion, power and politeness. In other words, there is an attempt to decide a) if politeness and persuasion complement each other and b) if impoliteness and power go hand in hand. The second chapter, however, explains the methodology used for data collection and analysis. As for the third chapter, it deciphers the language used in *Dabiq* to identify its persuasion techniques and the reasons why it does so. Moreover, a look at the speeches of ISIS officials, which are part of the analyzed data, uncovers how persuasion

¹ <http://www.jpolrisk.com/countering-western-recruitment-of-isis-fighters/>

https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/Dabiq-report-12-17-15.pdf

requires the integration of politeness strategies into one's talk. It also shows that impoliteness can be seen as a sign of power. Conclusions are then drawn to prove that the hypotheses of the study are valid. Finally, even though this study is one of the first to study ISIS discourse from a pragmatic point of view, more research should be conducted to cover other kinds of ISIS propaganda and other stages in the International-ISIS war such as the Russian military intervention in Syria.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Critical discourse analysis is considered to be the umbrella under which various political topics are discussed (Van Dijk, 2001); so, whenever a new political topic rises to prominence, it becomes essential for analysts to critically identify its linguistic behavior. ISIS is not an exception. Since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011, worldwide media have spotted ISIS' notorious reputation as one of the most intimidating terrorist group that history has ever witnessed (Archick, Belkin, Blanchard, Hemud, & Mix, 2015). Its global strategy and multi-million dollar propaganda, which aims at recruiting foreign fighters and encouraging terror attacks in the Western World while still condensing its forces in Iraq and Syria, have marked it as the top priority of the US counter-terrorism plan (Institute for the Study of War, 2015). In fact, ISIS on-line media have caused "around 30,000 foreign fighters from 100 different countries [to travel to ISIS' territories]" (Gorka & Gorka, 2015, p.7). The several attacks against many European countries have also been proven to be inspired by ISIS propaganda (Archick, Belkin, Blanchard, Hemud, & Mix, 2015). In other words, the accumulating power of the Islamic State and the persuasive impact of its propaganda have already been acknowledged, but how this persuasion is achieved and how power is reflected in ISIS discourse are two of the many areas that have been left uninvestigated. Therefore, this critical discourse analysis study might provide audience with the sought answers.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study aims at detecting how and why ten of the most common persuasion strategies have been implemented into ISIS discourse. This goal has been accomplished by scrutinizing thirty articles selected from the first ten issues of ISIS' official English-printed magazine, *Dabiq*. From the researcher's perspective, these articles represent all the recurring ideas in *Dabiq* and show a wide variety of persuasion techniques; so, saturation is achieved. As for the analysis, Cialdini's (2007) principles of persuasion and Shabo's (2008) persuasion techniques have been specifically chosen because they complement each other. The former focuses on the psychological aspects underpinning persuasion, which can be analyzed by considering the overall pragmatic meaning of the text; while the latter presents direct war-time propaganda techniques, which can be spotted by looking at certain linguistic features in a text. Furthermore, the study investigates how Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies and Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness theory are used in the public speeches of ISIS leaders either a) to practice persuasion by mitigating the speaker's face threatening acts or b) to claim power by attacking the hearer's face needs.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Political discourse analysts, readers of *Dabiq* magazine, and teachers are the audience to whom this study attends. First of all, the current study extends the existing knowledge about persuasion by viewing it in a new political context, which has not been seriously researched, instead of studying it from a business-related perspective. In addition, the conducted research explains how the "self-proclaimed," rather than the universally acknowledged, power of the speaker affects the way he/she structures his/her talk, thus, the way hearers perceive him/her as well. Moreover, the distinctive combination of frameworks adopted to test the hypotheses of the study has two benefits: a) it looks at the overall pragmatic meaning of the text instead of its pure linguistic features and b) it stands

out as a new outline for other researches to build on for a more comprehensive understanding of political ideologies. Secondly, this study attempts to reveal the secrets of persuasion so as to place both the speaker and the reader on a level playing field. The secrets of persuasion are revealed, for readers should no longer be treated as passive receivers, rather active participants who have enough knowledge to keep their options open. Thirdly, teachers can rely on this study to prove to their students that context is important for determining the pragmatic meaning of a text.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The study aims at exploring the following goals:

1. To place persuasion in the context of political discourse analysis.
2. To critically analyze the numerous persuasion strategies applied in *Dabiq* and show the agendas they serve.
3. To explore the effect of the speaker's power on the way he/she carries out face threatening acts.
4. To explain how persuasion and power affect the speaker's decision to talk politely or impolitely.

1.6. Questions of the Study

1. Which of the ten investigated persuasion techniques appear in ISIS' magazine?
2. What are the ideas ISIS tries to convince readers with?
3. How do ISIS officials exploit politeness/ impoliteness strategies to express their power and to persuade the target audience of their agendas?

1.7. Limitations of the Study

1. The study investigates only a limited number of articles in comparison to the huge amount of data published by ISIS on the World Wide Web. However, keeping up with all the information uploaded about ISIS is by far an unreachable goal.

2. This study looks at ISIS discourse before and after the intervention of the US-led coalition. Still, it does not cover other stages of the war against ISIS, especially the Russian intervention. Such new contexts might lead to a change in the way ISIS addresses its enemies.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This section presents the branch of linguistics that governs the analysis of this study as well as a brief introduction about ISIS. After that, the definition of persuasion and its development throughout history are tackled to pave the way for an elaborated explanation about the methods used in the persuasion industry. In fact, two persuasion theories are presented: a) Cialdini's (2007) persuasion principles which explain the psychology of influence and b) Shabo's (2008) propaganda techniques that portray how persuasion was carried out in WWII. Finally, the study refers to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies to draw a relationship between power and persuasion.

2.2. Pragmatics

The talk about persuasion cannot be handled without reference to pragmatics, for both highlight the role of the speaker in the creation of the multiple layers of meaning a given context has. Therefore, the following paragraphs define "pragmatics" and introduce some of its main principles.

To appreciate pragmatics, one has to understand what it is, as well as what it is not. As a field of linguistics that goes beyond the structural view of language, pragmatics is considered to be "the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker" (Yule, 1996, p.3). Actually, it encompasses what Grice (1975) calls "implicature," i.e., the invisible meaning of a speaker's utterance that is not being explicitly stated. In pragmatics, it is the contextual elements (the setting, participants, movement, and shared knowledge) that determine what the speaker means by his utterances (Gee, 2011). This is simply what pragmatics is all about, but how does it differ from other related branches of linguistics? Linguists have

always contrasted it with syntax and semantics. On the one hand, syntax studies the organization of the linguistic forms in a sentence and pays no attention to meaning (Sowa, 1995). On the other hand, semantics focuses on the relationship between these linguistic forms and their literal meanings in a language or their actual reference in the real world, without taking the context or the intentions of the speaker into account. In other words, semantics works on the sentence level to investigate its truth conditions (Yule, 1996). This is the reason why the semantics of idiomatic expressions is totally different from their pragmatic meaning.

As for the main ideas discussed under the scope of pragmatics, they include -though not limited to- reference, inference, deixis, speech acts and politeness theory (Adamec, 2011). To demonstrate, the speaker chooses some kind of referring expressions that all language speakers agree on, such as proper nouns and pronouns, to create a connection between the signified and the signifier (Saussure, 1959). Still, people sometimes do not call the things they know by name. Instead, they use a descriptive phrase and wait for the receiver to "infer what referent [they] have in mind" (Yule, 1996, p.17). Also, deictic expressions are one of the means through which one can point to things in the outer world, expecting others to decode their meaning (Levinson, 2003). Without context, these personal, spatial and temporal indexicals cannot be decoded. Moreover, pragmatics is about Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) speech acts theory which states that utterances perform actions as in apologies, compliments, promises and requests. Finally, the different theories of politeness, such as Grice's (1975) four cooperative maxims and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, are essential for the interpretation of meaning in a given text, especially when power is involved.

So, why to discuss pragmatics here and now? In simple terms, pragmatics sheds light on the significance of the context and the speaker in determining the meaning of utterances.

Thus, if the persuasion strategies implied in ISIS discourse are to be examined in this study, some of the previously mentioned aspects of pragmatics will contribute to the overall analysis of the materials. Yet, in order to fully comprehend ISIS discourse, some elaboration on the context under which it operates and about ISIS itself is presented in the following sections respectively. After all, it is crucial to establish the ideology that governs the speaker's beliefs, attitudes, and behavior.

2.3. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)

Classified under the critical discourse analysis (CDA) umbrella, political discourse analysis, henceforth PDA, looks at the enactment of power in political texts and talks (Van Dijk, 2001). To unravel the hidden agendas of politicians, PDA "provide[s] answers to questions about the relationship between language, ...power, ...ideology and politics" (Rahimi & Riasati, 2011, p.107). PDA, then, refers to the "analysis of political discourse from a critical perspective, a perspective which focuses on the reproduction and contestation of political power through political discourse" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, p.17).

In order to identify political discourse (PD), one has to consider its contextual and textual properties. According to Van Dijk (1997a), the context of PD is distinguished by its participants, settings, ideologies, values, and functions. For instance, the participants of political discourse are both those who practice it and who receive it, including politicians, political institutions, political organizations, and the masses to which messages are addressed. Logically speaking, not everything uttered by a politician is political unless it is practiced in political domains, such as news media sources, campaigns, demonstrations and formal speeches. In addition, PD covers a variety of systems (democracy and dictatorship) and values (freedom and equality). Most importantly, the purposes of political discourse are mainly to govern a nation and persuade it of the righteousness of that governance.

As for the textual aspects of PD, Van Dijk (1997b) presents a framework that lists some. Referring to figurative language, he suggests that euphemism and irony can mitigate the offensiveness of some political views and actions whereas metaphors and similes transform abstract political ideas into vivid images etched in the minds of receivers so that they feel the urgency of acting in a certain way. Also, some syntactic structures like passives and nominalizations "hide or background agency" (p.129) by omitting or replacing the agent of the sentence and bringing the focus to actions instead. Other aspects such as generalizations and vagueness provide politicians with an escape out of accusations. Moreover, comparison-contrast arguments, which are also called conducive argumentations (Walton, 2011), enhance the polarization of "we" vs. "them". Briefly, political discourse analysis relies on a mixture of linguistic tools, out of which some work on the sentential level while others work on the discursive level, each activated right on time.

2.4. The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

To put the discourse of ISIS under a microscope, a look at the big picture within which it operates seems to be crucial; therefore, this section briefly introduces some information regarding ISIS' ideological beliefs, historical development, geographical expansion, online videos, and official magazine. To avoid bias, the following introduction is compiled from different ISIS and non-ISIS resources.

To begin with, ISIS claims that it is a Sunni jihadist group that aims at establishing an Islamic caliphate similar to that founded by Prophet Muhammad in the early days of Islam (Glantz, 2014; ISIS, 2014, June). In fact, it follows the Wahhabism doctrines, which reject any modern interpretations of Islam, as stated by Kirkpatrick (2014, September), a journalist for The New York Times. Furthermore, ISIS' view of Islam emphasizes that it is a "religion of sword rather than pacifism" (ISIS, 2014b, February, p.20). Consequently, 57

countries represented by the Islamic Organization Cooperation have "almost unanimously condemned and denounced ISIS not merely as un-Islamic but actively anti-Islamic" (Hasan, 2015, January, p.1).

Secondly, even though ISIS has been recently taken seriously by the international community, it is not a newborn political party. Back in 2003, it was founded by Abu Musab az-Zarqawi under the name of "Jama'at at-Tawhid wa al-Jihad", translated as "The Organization of Monotheism and Jihad" (Guidere, 2012, p.181). Yet as a reaction to the invasion of Iraq and the formation of the Iraqi Interim Governing Council in 2004, the group joined al-Qaeda and was renamed "Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn," which means "al-Qaeda Group of Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers" (Bunt, 2009, p.227). Two years later, al-Zarqawi died and his organization "created the Mujahidin Shura Council [as] an umbrella organization that five other small jihadist groups joined" (The National Counterterrorism Center, 2009, p.38) so as to announce the formation of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI).

Unsurprisingly, with the beginning of the Syrian civil war, al-Zarqawi's successor, Abu Bakir al-Baghdadi, saw potentials of a geographical expansion in Syria. By 2013, ISI forces had become the most powerful insurgent group on the Syrian land and claimed the merger of an-Nusra Front to its troops (ISIL, n.d.). However, this was rejected by an-Nusra Front, which then aligned with al-Qaeda against ISIS in an open-fire battle. Since then, ISIS has been called "Da'ish" as an abbreviation for the Arabic name "al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi al-Iraq wa Bilad ash-Sham." Nevertheless, ISIS considers "Da'ish" as a derogatory term and prefers to be named the "Islamic State," with a clear declaration of a worldwide caliphate (Withnall, 2014, June).

However, there are many scholars such as Chomsky and Galloway who talk about ISIS being directly or indirectly created by the West in general and the US in particular. For

Chomsky (Chomsky's Philosophy, 2015, August 22), the US created the background from which ISIS grew and developed because after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003; the complete destruction of Saddam Hussein's state; and the formation of a Shiite administration; Iraq exacerbated sectarian divisions from which Al-Qaeda and ISIS rose. Galloway (OxfordUnion, 2016, March 16) dates the origins of ISIS even back to the 1990s war against Taliban. At that time, the US welcomed the intervention of the extremists in the region, which are mostly Wahabbists and Salafists from Saudi Arabia, to come and fight against Taliban. Saudi Arabia was an ally of the US in the Middle East, therefore, was provided with money, materials, and political support to create this monster of Islamist fanaticism. In other words, what was once created by the US now backfires. Others go even further to assert that America is deliberately "using ISIS to a) to attack its enemies in the Middle East, b) to serve as a pretext for US military intervention abroad, and c) to foment a manufactured domestic threat, used to justify the unprecedented expansion of invasive domestic surveillance" (Chengu, 2014, November 14).

Thirdly, ISIS has several provinces under its control. Even though it has official branches in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Gulf, the main presence is centered in Iraq and Syria. On the Iraqi side, ISIS claims authority over major cities like Mosul, Sinjar, Anbar, Fallujah, Tikrit, Samurra, Salah Din, Kirkuk, and Ninawa. On the Syrian side, ISIS has control over Haska, Dir al-Zur, al-Raqqa, Eastern Aleppo, Idlib, and Tadmur (Institute for the Study of War, 2015).

Fourthly, the reason why ISIS has riveted the world's attention goes back to the types of punishment it practices against its enemies. These practices include the genocide of religious minorities, sexual slavery of non-Muslim women, beheading, and burning of apostates. For instance, ISIS targets all non-Sunni religious factions, such as Shia, Alawites, Druze, Christians and Yezidis. The most compelling evidence of this kind of

persecution is the 5000 Yezidis who were killed during ISIS battles in Iraq (York, 2015). As for sexual harassment and slavery, which ISIS prefers to call "saby" and "tasarri," they are directed towards non-Muslim women who are abducted in war times (Al-Muhajerah, 2015, May).

Most importantly, ISIS utilizes modern technology to document how its enemies get far more than a slap on the wrist when captured. Sometimes, a ransom is asked in exchange of the hostage, but on other occasions it is not. For example, the Japanese Haruna Yukawa and Kenji Goto Jogo have been beheaded after the refusal of their government to pay a huge ransom of 200 million dollars (ISIS, 2014a, February, p.3). Other videos that show the beheading of Iraqis, Kurds, Assyrians, and even Egyptian Copts are also available online. As for burning, two incidents have spread like wildfire on the internet: a) the burning of the Jordanian pilot Mu'ath Kasasbah (Ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyya Security Database, 2015, February) and the burning of four Shia spies (Al-Anbar, 2015, August). Yet, it should be noted that ISIS provides a logical justification for each of the previously mentioned actions, supported by Quranic verses taken out of context.

However, the multiple videos uploaded on the internet are not the only source of ISIS propaganda. Actually, since the 28th June, 2014 ISIS has been publishing an English-printed magazine, entitled *Dabiq*, to focus on certain Islamic religious issues and current political events. The name itself represents ISIS' belief in apocalypticism since it "is taken from the area named *Dabiq* in the northern countryside of Halab (Aleppo) in Sham. This place was mentioned in a hadith describing some of the events of the Malahim (what is sometimes referred to as Armageddon in English)" (ISIS, 2014, June, p.4).

Last but not least, this increasing power of ISIS has intimidated multiple countries in the Middle East and the world. As a result, the United States of America has initiated a coalition to fight ISIS troops. Fantz (2014, October), a reporter for the CNN, mentions the

involved nations and their roles. The regional allies of the U.S. are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Iraqi Kurdistan, and Bahrain while the western allies include the UK, Australia, France, Germany, Canada, and the Netherlands. The list could go on and on if one counts the countries that provide ammunition, humanitarian aid, and financial support.

Obviously, after this brief introduction about ISIS and its political context, the focus from now on is shifted towards "persuasion," its definition, development throughout history, psychological principles, and methods of analysis.

2.5. Persuasion Defined

Before explaining how persuasion works, it is better to understand what persuasion is and how it is related to propaganda. Starting with the definition of persuasion, it is a "a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behavior regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice" (Perloff, 2003, p.8). To explain, persuasion is considered symbolic for two main reasons. The first one is that "persuasion" is not magical, i.e., it does not happen in the blink of an eye; rather, it needs to be practiced systematically for a long period of time before the persuader reaps what he/she sows. The second reason is that the persuader uses the rich symbolism of a certain language in transmitting his/her thoughts. In fact, whenever a speaker wants to send a message, he/she starts encoding ideas and information in the form of a symbol. In most cases, language is that symbol system that people rely on because the intended receivers are familiar with it. Moreover, persuasion is an attempt, which may fail or succeed. Yet, whatever outcome the persuasive process achieves, it is still a conscious, deliberate action that the persuader has prepared for in advance. In addition, persuaders need a medium to transmit their messages, a medium that ranges from simple face-to-face conversations to the more complex mass media

sources. Finally, what makes persuasion different from coercion is the presence of "free choice", the ability of the hearer to accept or reject what the speaker presents.

Even though Perloff's (2003) definition is very comprehensive, it should be clear that persuasion does not always aim at changing the responses of an audience but at reinforcing the already existed responses and shaping new ones as well (Miller, 1980). The first purpose, "response change," is by far the most difficult to achieve since the speaker asks the hearer to abandon some values or attitudes which constitute his/her identity. For instance, it has been quite difficult to push some White Americans to accept Afro-Americans as equivalent human beings (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 1997). In contrast, "response reinforcing" requires the least effort from persuaders since speakers have to only remind their audience of what they already believe in. In between, there is "response shaping," i.e., to get audience to support or disapprove something for the first time (Miller, 1980). Regardless of which purpose persuaders seek to achieve, they must always study the needs of their audience.

As for "propaganda," many scholars have used it interchangeably with "persuasion" to mean the same thing, but some scholars insist on stressing the deceptive nature of the first term. On the one hand, Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) state that "propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (p.7). On the other hand, Partkanis and Aronson (1992) consider propaganda as the abuse of persuasion because it is based on lies, faulty reasoning and manipulation instead of logical reasoning.

Perloff (2003), however, lists two focal differences between "persuasion" and "propaganda." First of all, "propaganda is typically invoked to describe mass influence through mass media" whereas persuasion "occurs in ...interpersonal and organizational

contexts" (p.17). Secondly, propaganda refers to occasions in which some groups have total control over the transmission of information. Obviously, it is difficult to allocate a fine line to separate persuasion from propaganda. Therefore, and to avoid confusion, the two concepts will be used interchangeably in this study even though the analyzed texts are transmitted through mass media.

2.6. Persuasion throughout History

The history of persuasion goes back to the ancient times of Greece. For example, in the fifth century BC, Corax was the first founder of rhetoric, which sprang mainly from the practice of law (Hinks, 1940). Later on, the "sophists" of Athens made their living by teaching intellectuals how to use language to mesmerize audience, whether they actually knew or did not what they were preaching (Crome, 2005). To do that, sophists focused on oratory, argument, and the rational response on questions that deal with morality, religion, and politics. Socrates, as presented in Plato's dialogues, despised these sophists' fallacious reasoning and glorified the truth (O'Grady, 2008). Aristotle, however, was the first to create systematic strategies to analyze persuasion. His treatise, *Rhetoric*, consists of three books (Gross & Walzer, 2000). The first one introduces rhetoric in a general sense. The second book, which is the most popular, offers a clear distinction between logos, pathos and ethos. "Logos," deals with the logical and rational argumentation of a speech, which can be managed by proposing opinions that are consistent with the audience's beliefs. "Pathos," nevertheless, refers to the emotional appeals that evoke the pleasant and unpleasant feelings of the public. Last, but not least, "ethos" tackles the two notions of reliability and credibility of the speaker (Jarraya, 2013). The third book discusses the lexis and taxis of language to show how the elements of language are played on to create specific effects in the hearts and minds of the hearers (Graff, 2005).

Even though Rome did not contribute to the study of persuasion as Greece did, there were two main philosophers who left an immense impact on this domain: Cicero and Quintilian (Quintilian, n.d.). They emphasized different parts of the persuasion process. On the one hand, Cicero discussed all the five canons of rhetoric : inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria and pronuntiatio (Golden, 1969). Yet, his focus was mainly on the power of emotional appeals in directing audiences' actions, something he mastered as a lawyer inside the courtroom. His *De Oratore* has been a "serious effort by a responsible expert to put the fruit of his own experience on record for the benefit of future statesmen" (Hadas, 1951, p.117). Quintilian, on the other hand, developed recommendations, which operate beyond the linguistic aspects of communication, for the perfect orator in his twelve-volume book entitled *Institutio Oratoria* around AD 95 (Kennedy, 1969). Unfortunately, with the decline of the Roman Empire and the "growth of Christianity, Italian Renaissance, Black Death and European wars ... rhetoric became a less important feature of European society" (Perloff, 2003, p.40). As a result, research about it was neglected.

In the 20th century, research on persuasion was mainly conducted from a social scientific perspective and was intertwined with the attitude change program at Yale University (Allport, 1935). It all began with Carl Hovland when the US was engaged in the Second World War. He tried to study the effect of propaganda on troops' attitudes and morale, and with the help of his colleagues, he published *Communication and Persuasion* (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953) to emphasize the four components of persuasion: the source of the persuasive communication, the characteristics of the message, the characteristics of the recipient and the context (Lasswell, 1948). The following points briefly summarize the findings of this study:

1. The messenger has to be credible, trustworthy, likable and an expert.

2. The message is better presented according to the climax approach, in which the most striking evidence is left till the end (O'Keefe, 1999). In addition, a two-sided message is proven to attend to the more educated audience, leaving the one-sided message to the less educated people.
3. The recipients' motivation and ability to process evidence determine the degree of influence. This claim is supported by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).
4. Complex messages convert the attitudes of intelligent people, "but when a message [is] weak, people of lower intelligence [are] more likely to change their attitudes" (Deaux, Dane, & Wrightsman, 1993, p.185). To explain, laypeople can relate to simple, straightforward messages; they want to understand the main points in order to determine their attitudes. However, intelligent audiences look for logic, evidence, and coherence in the transmitted message; therefore, they need multi-layered arguments to get them involved.

Then, many psychological theories have been formed to understand the nature of persuasion. To begin with, Festinger presented his Cognitive Dissonance theory which asserts that any gap that breaks the harmony between human beings' beliefs and their behaviors creates discomfort. So, persuaders can offer an idea or a product that fills in this gap, thus, relieving their audience (Brinol & Petty, 2012, p.7). Another effective theory in the history of persuasion is the Social Judgment Theory proposed by Sherif and Hovland (1961). It is based on the idea that persuasion is the product of comparing one's attitude with the ideas advocated in the message. This framework suggests that persuasion happens only if the "message [one] sends is in the individual's latitude of non-commitment or at the edges of his/her latitude of acceptance" (Dainton & Z Kelley, 2015, p.109). Finally, the Narrative Paradigm, proposed by Walter Fisher (1987), considers narration or storytelling as the ultimate means of influence if it is both logical and coherent.

After World War II, the publications about the political views of war propaganda and the formation of public opinion have become ample; therefore, any effort to survey all writings about propaganda would be impossible, especially if one takes into consideration the overlap among disciplines when approaching this topic. Yet, here is a brief citation of the most popular books and articles.

The first to recall is George Orwell who has expressed his concerns about the corruption that the language of propaganda does to English. In "Propaganda and Demotic Speech" (1944) and "Politics and the English Language"(1946), he demonstrates how war discourse has been either overly simplified or excessively dressed up to the extent that metaphors have become dead, diction pretentious, and words meaningless. However, rather than criticizing propaganda, Jacques Ellul (1973) comes to explain it. His all-inclusive book, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, classifies the external and internal characteristics of propaganda, its various categories and how it has been implemented by Hitler and China. Similarly, Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) elaborate on the history of propaganda throughout ages from the time of Alexander the Great to the 1991 Gulf War in their book *Propaganda and Persuasion*. Unsurprisingly, the daring Noam Chomsky (2002) speaks about the US public relations industry, the fear it has planted into people's minds to keep them occupied, and the tons of lies it has promoted about the Vietnam War in *Media Control: the Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*.

As for the techniques of persuasion, rather than history, they are discussed in details in David Welch's (2013) and Richard Miller's (2010) works. On the one hand, Welch's *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion* draws a timeline for the development of persuasive strategies that have been used in WWI posters, as well as those implemented via the digital media of the Afghani conflicts. On the other hand, Miller's *Fighting Words: Persuasive*

Strategies for War and Politics investigates eighteen war speeches to explain how politicians' argumentative techniques lead to change.

Up to my knowledge, there is no abundant research on persuasion from a linguistic point of view. However, there is Halmari and Virtanen's (2005) *Persuasion Across Genres: A Linguistic Approach*, which consists of nine chapters, each dealing with a different genre of modern persuasion. Regarding the chapter about the political discourse of Bill Clinton and Ronald Regan, Halmari concludes that the strength of their lexical choices, rhetorical questions, and appeals to authority have been the main reason for their popularity. In addition, Peter Adamec (2011) has written a thesis about "Persuasion in Political Discourse" in which he dissects Barack Obama's speeches from a pragmatic point of view that is based on four tools, namely reference, inference, presupposition and entailment. He concludes that entailment has been the most prevailing persuasive tool in both Obama's domestic and foreign speeches. Furthermore, Karl Soring (1989) in his article "Some Remarks on Linguistic Strategies of Persuasion" explains some grammatical, lexical, and phonetic tricks to enhance the persuasive skills of a speaker. Finally, Magedah Shabo's (2008) *Techniques of Persuasion and Propaganda*, which is one of the frameworks adopted for the analysis of this study, explains in details a variety of the linguistic elements used in WWII posters.

To summarize, even though persuasion is as old as the hills, the main research about its techniques has been conducted after World War I. It has been approached by many scholars from various domains like political science, journalism, marketing, and mostly psychology (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012; Halmari & Virtanen, 2005). This necessarily means that if this thesis is to consider persuasion in political discourse from a linguistic point of view, some psychological principles have to be established first.

2.7. Cialdini's Principles of Persuasion: A Psychological Analysis

Scholars agree that the hacks of persuasion begin with psychology, for no change is induced without penetrating the other's meta-programs, attitudes, and beliefs (Hogan, 2004). Yet, people are different in the way they perceive the outer world. Some might be convinced if the persuader appeals to their fears; others prefer looking at the full side of the glass so as to decide their next step. For instance, some might obey God due to their fear of Hell or because of their love for Heaven. After all, "many fears and desires are two sides of the same coin" (Shabo, 2008, p.70), and "everything we do is either to gain pleasure or avoid pain" (Hogan, 2004, p.230). Regardless of which filter human beings wish to activate, propagandists are expected to adjust their techniques to tempt more than one kind of psychology. Accordingly, this section presents Robert Cialdini's (2007) five psychological principles of persuasion, which are specifically chosen due to the popularity of Cialdini's book, *Influence: the Psychology of Persuasion*.

2.7.1. The comparison-contrast principle.

The first weapon of influence is "contrast," which affects the way people consider things that are presented one after another. For example, if you ask a person to place one of his/her hands in a pail of cold water and the other in a pail of hot water, and then you ask him/her to place both in lukewarm water, what will happen? "Even though both hands are in the same bucket, the hand that has been in cold water feels as if it is now in hot water" (Cialdini, 2007, p.9) and vice versa. Such an experiment shows us how easily one's mind can be manipulated by drawing connections between things. Moreover, this principle shows how the good features of anything in life will look even better if compared to something of low quality. If the previous example is not good enough, consider the following one: "a man might balk at the idea of spending \$95 for a sweater, but if he has just bought a \$495 suit, a \$95 sweater does not seem excessive" (Cialdini, 2007, p.10).

Clearly, the more drastic the difference between the presented items or ideas is, the easier it is to plead one's case.

Now, what about the similarities between compared ideas or objects? Are they powerful tools of persuasion as well? Yes, they are, if portrayed well using figurative language. The intensity that metaphors and similes encompass can convey a message in an interesting yet simple way which cannot be stated otherwise (Graesser, Mio, & Millis, 1989). In fact, metaphorical language has been used to convince people of abstract scientific ideas like time and black holes (Boroditsky, Fuhrman, & McCormick, 2010). For instance, the black hole is compared to a vacuum cleaner because it has an event horizon, a region that nothing escapes from. So, if an object crosses this event horizon, it will hit the singularity and get sucked in (Greene, 2012, January). If such a metaphor had not been created, it would have been difficult to understand this scientific concept. In addition, these tools of analogy change the way people perceive an idea because they provide us with structures of thinking (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As evidence, "metaphors of hunting down animals or exterminating vermin were common in the rhetoric of both sides during World War II" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p.303) so as to influence the way people considered their enemies. Obviously, if enemies are perceived as animals, treating them as so will be acceptable.

In fact, the assumption that comparison can be persuasive is basically based on a research conducted by Dillard and Sopory (2002) in which they have confirmed the fact that metaphorical language can be more influencing than the literal one. Yet, the manner by which such an effect is accomplished is elaborated on in "previous research on metaphor and persuasion [which] has suggested that metaphorical language elicits an assimilation effect wherein positive metaphors elicit positive attitudes toward the communication topic and negative metaphors elicit negative evaluations" (Ottati, Rhoads,

& Graesser, 1999, p.1). This process of evaluation depends on the similarity between the two fundamental components of metaphor (Ottati & Renstorm, 2010): the topic, which is the object being described, and the vehicle, which is another object that the topic is being compared to. For example, Benjamin Franklin's famous metaphor *a good conscience is a continual Christmas* transmits a positive evaluation of the topic (good conscience) because the vehicle (Christmas) refers to happiness, celebration and spiritual awakening. However, Neil Tyson's *ignorance is a virus* possesses a negative evaluation of ignorance because virus is linked to infections that spread quickly. Topics and vehicles can be implicit as well, yet easily identified by the underlying "root metaphor" that is being activated, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

Still, not all metaphors are effective. Sopory and Dillard (2002) propose some characteristics of effective metaphors, such as extendedness and novelty. To explain, extended metaphors are associated with greater attitude change than non-extended ones. Also, novel metaphors that have not been overly used are more persuasive than clichés. Moreover, the intensity and vividness (Nisbett & Ross, 1980) of metaphorical language are more persuasive than the literal one because they provoke the emotions of the audience. Similes and analogies, albeit different in surface from metaphors, carry the same cognitive meaning.

2.7.2. The reciprocity principle.

Reciprocity is a "technique by which a proponent makes a respondent more likely to consider or accept his argument by making the respondent obliged to the proponent in advance of the argument" (Walton, 2007, p.24). Obviously, in all social communities, people like to return the favor and provide others with the same kind of actions they have provided them with. For example, when a salesperson provides a customer with samples to try and comes later to see if he/she likes the product, the customer will feel indebted to the

salesperson and "will purchase at least one of [his] products" (Hogan, 2004, p.44). Yet, "although the obligation to repay constitutes the essence of the reciprocity rule, it is the obligation to receive that makes the rule so easy to exploit" (Cialdini, 2007, p.33). Still, the principle works the other way round. When a person initiates mistreatment towards another, the latter will be even more convinced to reciprocate. What makes things even more complicated is the fact that the reciprocity principle doesn't abide by Newton's third law, which states that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Sometimes, the repaid favor or harm can be even greater than the one presented at first.

Linguistically speaking, reciprocity can be articulated through multiple ways. To name a few, reciprocal pronouns like *each other* and the more formal *one another* added at the end of a sentence suggest that A and B are acting as both "the agent and the patient" of a sentence (Haspelmath, 2007, p.2088). In fact, reciprocity itself is one of Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies that will be tackled later in this study so as to draw connections between persuasion and politeness. Likewise, certain constructions in English like *vice versa*, *verb + back*, and *too* can achieve a similar effect. One may add to that the predicates which have a natural tendency to express reciprocity with singular subjects and no markers. These include verbs (*meet, exchange,*) nouns (*friend, countryman,*) adjectives (*parallel, similar,*) and prepositions (*opposite, with*) (Konig, 2005). Most importantly, "reciprocity can be expressed through discourse, i.e. by a coordination of two propositions with inverted arguments [as in] John adores Mary and she adores him" (Koing, 2005, p. 7).

2.7.3. The commitment and consistency principle.

Consistency is a persuasive technique in which the arguer uses the previous commitment of the recipient or pulls him/her towards committing to an idea that will support the final conclusion which the arguer wants him/her to accept (Walton, 2007,

p.24). In general, when people make certain choices and act accordingly, their actions are seen as honest whereas those "whose beliefs, words, and deeds don't match may be seen as indecisive, confused, [and] two-faced" (Cialdini, 2007, p.45). For instance, when President George Bush suggested that a "military action could take place on January 15, 1991" to stop the "aggression against Kuwait" (Hogan, 2004, p.53), the nation was divided into pros and cons. Regardless of his opponents' perspective, he put his words into action next morning so as to act consistently with his commitment. Consequently, if a propagandist wants to persuade someone of something, he/she should make the receiver commit to a first belief from which he/she can take off. Simply put, if a person is loyal to the first belief, then he/she can be easily convinced to express loyalty to its final outcome. It is like simple mathematics: if A equals B and B equals C, then A necessarily equals C.

Repetition, cohesion and coherence are some of the linguistic tools that portray consistency in written language. The effective appearance of key words or structures several times in a text reinforces the message and creates resonance (Ellul, 1973). As for cohesion, there are multiple major types of linguistic devices that help writers connect their sentences across whole written texts. These include pronouns, determiners, quantifiers, substitution, ellipsis, lexical cohesion, and conjunctions (Gee, 2011). Coherence, on the other hand, refers to the logical connection readers perceive in a text. Semantically speaking, the text is said to be coherent if the topics flow and change smoothly to demonstrate consistency throughout a stretch of writing (Roen, 1996).

2.7.4. The authority principle.

The authority principle, which is also called "intertextuality" in discourse analysis (Gee, 2011), is related to two main notions, namely trust and professionalism (Cialdini, 2007). On the one hand, individuals trust authority because they have been told not to question it since early socialization (Milgram, 1974). One of the earliest incidents in which human

beings have followed this belief is Abraham's (also called Ibrahim) story in the Holy Quran. God asked him to sacrifice his son, and despite his sadness, he bounded his son to the alter until God substituted him with an animal sacrifice (Quran 37: 102-107). The correctness of the action was not judged by some earthly manners like love and sense but by the mere command of a higher authority. However, persuaders may not always be authoritative figures. In such cases, quoting what authorities say transfers their power and credibility to the speaker. Even better, the use of "language associated with authority figures...renders authority to that which the language describes, [e.g.] *fatherland, Mother Church and Uncle Sam*" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p.303).

On the other hand, people rely on authority because it is uttered by professionals who know more about the promoted subject than laypeople. Their credibility arises from the scientific knowledge and expertise people attribute to them. Even if the speaker does not provide us with actual evidence or data to prove his/her statements, our "belief that the communicator has special skills or know-how" seems to be enough (Perloff, 2003, p.160). Clearly, information from a recognized [professional] can provide us with a valuable shortcut for deciding how to act in a situation" (Cialdini, 2007, p.173).

2.7.5. The liking principle.

Liking, as a positive attitude, encourages people to say "yes" to the people they find irresistible. After all, if there is "something objectionable about the messenger, the message itself must be wrong" (Berger, Roloff, & Ewoldson, 2009, p.11) and vice versa. Yet, the question is: why do we prefer someone over another? Cialdini (2007) suggests many reasons for that behavior including similarity and familiarity.

First of all, persuaders realize that their messages will not gain support without activating their "plain folk" strategy in order to be seen as an "average citizen" (Shabo, 2008, p. 60). In their attempt to do so, speakers might bring some colloquial expressions

and pronunciation into play to sound more of a tough-guy figure or a middle-class citizen. Besides, the implementation of some inclusive personal deictics, such as *we* and *us*, into propagandists' utterances may "induce interpreters to conceptualize group identity" (Chilton, 2004, p.56). Also, *our* and *ours* might stand for "the coalescence of the voice of the person with the voice of the people" (Adegoju, 2005, p.140). Indeed, if a communicator points out that he/she and the audience are in the same boat, the ball will be in his/her court.

Secondly, familiarity, or what Shabo (2008) calls the "testimonials" technique, takes advantage of famous personas whom audience tend to trust, "even if that trust is based on mere recognition rather than true credibility" (p.62). To demonstrate, Michael Jordan, a known basketball player, was the main reason why Nike got so popular in the 1980s. It is his speed and superb athletic history that have made people rush to stores to get a pair of his sneakers (Perloff, 2003, p.19). Likewise, when familiar public figures adopt a certain ideology, his/her fans will be more than willing to follow their steps. In short, alluding to what other famous figures say aims at transferring the feelings, which audience has towards that person, to the cause he/she is endorsing (Gee, 2011).

In addition to familiarity and similarity, humor is another characteristic that likable people enjoy. Generally speaking, human beings are more likely to remember and want to be around the people who cheer [them] up and make [them] laugh. So, laughter can actually be used as a persuasive tool to question the opponent's credibility (Mulholland, 1994) or to, at least, express disapproval towards the enemy's opinions.

2.8. Shabo's Techniques of Persuasion: A Wartime Analysis

In the previous section, the psychology behind persuasion has been established. Yet, promoting ideas does not work in vacuum; rather, it needs a medium to go through to materialize, and here comes the role of language. Despite the fact that language alone is

not self-sufficient in the realm of propaganda, its role as the principal means of persuasion cannot be overlooked. This language of propaganda, which is encountered on daily basis, has been used for all kinds of purposes: the good, the benign, and the bad. Still, no discourse has convinced the public to get engaged into catastrophic actions as political discourse has. In fact, "political language...is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind" as George Orwell once said.

Shabo's (2008) *Techniques of Propaganda and Persuasion* explains how the political language has been utilized in World War II posters to advertise war-related ideas. Originally, the author provides eleven techniques. However, certain tactics are combined together and presented under the same subtitle for the sake of a smoother and briefer presentation of the topic.

2.8.1. Glittering generalities.

This technique refers to any of the "appealing but vague words that often appear in propaganda" (Shabo, 2008, p.30), especially those left without explaining their specific definitions. These might include *freedom, liberty, security, victory, prosperity, strength, civilization, choice, equality, change, choice, and democracy* (Shabo, 2008, p.32). The positive connotations attached to these lexical items are powerful enough to cause the audience a change of heart, for they influence the hearer's emotional feelings. Consider the following example from WWII posters:

1. *Adolf Hitler ist der siege*² (Shabo, 2008, p.31).
2. *Americans will always fight for liberty* (Shabo, 2008, p.32).

As a matter of fact, this strategy has been initially proposed by Aristotle under the name of "pathos." He believes that "once the pathos trigger is pulled, the addressee may feel an

² In English, it means "Adolf Hitler is victory."

urgent desire to achieve the goal or goals in question" (Poggi, 2005, p.314). So, if readers want to stay vigilant, they have to remember that all that glitters is not gold, and there is nothing golden about war.

2.8.2. Name calling.

Unlike "glittering generalities," "name calling" tends to evoke negative connotations related to certain words to ridicule an opposing enemy or idea (Shabo, 2008, p.40). Usually, individuals abide by their group norms; if these norms are defied, group members would go fierce (Norton et al., 2003) and start name calling the other party. This strategy can be applied both directly and indirectly. Starting with the more straight-forward technique, the speaker uses insulting words to express the inferiority of his opponents' actions, ideas, or even looks. Thus, he/she threatens the positive and negative face needs of the hearer. As for the indirect technique, the propagandist conveys his/her message but in a sarcastic, less confrontational manner. Here are some examples (Shabo, 2008, pp.47-48):

1. Direct: *Clearly, my opponent's anarchist suggestions will not help to solve the current crisis.*
2. Indirect: *Although we all have a great deal of respect for Senator Parker, I'm not certain we need to accept his views on marriage without careful scrutiny. After all, he is a confirmed bachelor.*

When a propagandist is courageous enough to pinpoint his/her enemy's bad side, more credibility and honesty would be attributed to him/her (McCroskey, 1997), which finally makes his talk more convincing.

2.8.3. False dilemma.

Also known as "the black and white thinking," false dilemma is used in political discourse to create an "either/or" relationship between the suggested options, in which the addressee feels as if there are only two options to choose from; therefore, he/she decides on

the one "that is labeled good" (Shabo, 2008, p.39). However, if the hearers are on the horns of a dilemma, they will certainly support the lesser of the two evils, which is a special case of false dilemma. This particular approach is usually summoned when the audience is unwilling to adopt the first option. So, "in order to make the choice more appealing, an even worse alternative is presented as being the only other option" (Shabo, 2008, p.41). As an illustration, read the following examples from World War I & II posters:

1. *When you ride alone, you ride with Hitler. Join a car-sharing club today* (Shabo, 2008, p.37).
2. *If you can't enlist, invest! Buy liberty bonds* (Shabo, 2008, p.40).

In the first example, the speaker implies that if you do not join a car-sharing club, then you are supporting Hitler, a crime that no American wants to be accused of. As a result, the public would choose not to ride alone. In the second example, both decisions require sacrifice; however, giving up one's money is by far more tolerable than sacrificing one's life. Consequently, the hearer will be encouraged to support his/her country's army financially.

2.8.4. Bandwagon.

Also known as "the herd instinct," the bandwagon strategy is utilized when people look at the common behavior practiced by others in order to constitute their own decisions (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p.301); it is just a sophisticated way of saying "when in Rome, do as the Romans do." The naming of this tactic goes back to the 1800s when politicians used wagons to grab the attention of the public. Sometimes, politicians "would end up joining causes they did not believe in, just to be part of a [popular wagon]" (Shabo, 2008, p.23). Similarly, if a propagandist is trying to persuade his/her audience of some kind of action, it would be effective to claim that everybody else is doing it. To achieve that, numbers, statistics, or even quantifiers (*all, every, and most*) can be implemented into one's

speech or writing. Obviously, "no one likes to be left out, therefore, jumps on the bandwagon" (Berger, Roloff, & Ewoldson, 2009) because fewer mistakes are made by "acting in accord with social evidence than contrary to it" (Cialdini, 2007, p.98). In spite of what others do, intelligent readers should pause and reflect whenever they find themselves on the side of the majority, as Mark Twain once suggested, because majority does not necessarily mean right.

2.8.5. Card staking.

Previously in the "name calling" strategy, it has been stated that people assume that a political party is honest and trustworthy if it has the courage to mention the perspectives of opposing political parties (O'keefe, 1999). Yet, what people do not realize is that the opposing perspectives are not explained to discuss both sides of the equation but to state well-argued reasons why the speaker's views are superior to those of others. Well, this is the essence of "card staking." When a propagandist presents a two-sided message, his/her preferred views are "made noticeable [while]... conflicting perspectives are unfairly downplayed" (Shabo, 2008, pp. 25-27).

Linguistically speaking, there are certain syntactic structures that help speakers bring focus onto particular pieces of information rather than others. To illustrate, the topic is the most important term in English simple sentences because it is the departure point from which the comment takes off (Gee, 2011). That is why Halliday (1967) considers whatever comes in the initial position of a sentence as its topic. Generally, it is the subject, but this is not always the case. For example, the topic of the passive voice is the object because the speaker wants to background the actor and foreground the non-actor (Foley & Van Valin, 1985) such as the first example bellow. In addition, the introductory phrases placed at initial position of a sentence, like the "as for" construction in English, stand in the topic position (Reinhart, 1982). On the contrary, *expletives* or *dummy subjects*, such as *it* and

there, never act as the topic of a sentence even if they come initially (Svenonius, 2001).

Rather, the topic is realized pragmatically as in the third example:

1. *The taxes have been raised by the government. (topic = subject)*
2. *As for the final chapter, you have to study it by your own. (topic = phrase)*
3. *There are some solutions for the problem. (topic = complement)*

In more complex and compound sentences, what the speaker chooses to include in the main clause is foregrounded whereas the backgrounded information is left for subordinate clauses. By doing so, the sender of the message "cannot be accused of dishonesty although he/she has not been exactly honest either" (Gee, 2011, pp.92-93).

2.9. Examples of Persuasive Techniques

The previously mentioned techniques of persuasion and propaganda have been used in nearly all aspects of life, especially in politics-related issues. The following paragraphs mention few popular examples of persuasive techniques practiced by real life authoritative figures and some fictional characters in Shakespearean literary works.

The first example comes from Greece when Greeks were fighting a losing battle against their Persian enemies led by King Xerxes in 480 B.C. In an attempt to turn the tables on Persians, the Athenian commander, Themistocles, suggested that Greeks need to start a decisive battle in the straits of Salamis Island. In order to bring Persian troops there, Themistocles sent fabricated messages to Xerxes, telling him that Greeks are using it as an escape. This propaganda made the Persian huge fleet struggle in the narrow straits of Salamis; therefore Greeks were no longer outnumbered, which in turn led to their victory (Strauss, 2004).

Another example dates back to World War I when the Allies "told the story of Germans boiling down corpses of their soldiers to be used for fats." This disinformation campaign was based on a deliberate mistranslation of the German word *kadaver*, which originally

meant the corpse of an animal rather than a human being. However, the "non-German-speaking audience did not know this" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 167); therefore, the Allies exploited this fact to persuade their nations of the brutality of their enemies and the righteousness of this Great War.

Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) also tell a story about the Gulf War. In 1991, the George Bush Administration claimed that Operation Desert Storm was initiated to help the 'democratic' Kuwait get rid of the Iraqi 'dictatorship'. Highlighting the contrast between the political ideologies of the two countries in Bush's statements was one of the persuasive strategies to justify the Gulf War. After all, the US alleged that its intervention aimed mainly at protecting poor Kuwaitis from the tyranny of the dictator Saddam Hussein. Furthermore, the U.S. backgrounded the fact that many Kuwaiti practices were not as democratic as the description suggests. Another persuasive method employed was related to the naming of the operation, which was changed from Desert *Shield* to *Storm*. This alteration made people perceive the U.S. military operation as "raging" forces that are capable of winning a war instead of being "protective" troops that have a passive role (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p.9).

Now, let's mention some persuasive speeches included in Shakespearian literature and briefly analyze them in relation to the topic of our thesis. In *Julius Caesar*, for example, funeral is the most compelling of all, for it applies Mark Antony's speech at Caesar's Aristotle's typology of persuasion. His ethos are highly persuasive since "there's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony" (Shakespeare, 2000, 3.2.118-119), not to mention the fact that his use of "sweet friends" (Shakespeare, 2000, 3.2.212) when addressing Romans makes him a more likable character. He also uses "common knowledge [which] listeners will accept and therefore begin to find common ground with the speaker"(Adamson et al., 2007, p.125). His pathos, on the other hand, reach a climax when describing Julius

wounds, especially those caused by his best friend Brutus. However, the most influencing persuasive tool is logos. Antony's ironic statement, "Brutus is an honorable man" (Shakespeare, 2000, 3.2.85), is the pivot around which his argumentation revolves (Carston & Uchida, 1998). The "honorable" Brutus has said that Caesar is ambitious, but Antony gives multiple logical examples proving the opposite to be true. As we know, if the message is wrong, then the messenger's credibility is questioned. These are just a few tactics utilized by Antony to turn the Romans against the conspirators.

Finally, the speech delivered by King Henry V to encourage his forces to conquer the city of Harfluer is full of persuasion. Similar to Mark Antony's speech, King Henry V uses his "plain folks" strategy to get closer to his soldiers whom he calls "dear friends" (Shakespeare, 1823, 3.1.38) and "good yeoman" (Shakespeare, 1823, 3.1.62). Furthermore, he activates the "commitment and consistency" principles to persuade them of the necessity of urging this battle. He knows that his troops are loyal to "Harry, England, and Saint George" (Shakespeare, 1823, 3.1.70); therefore, they should defend what they are committed to. Actually, they should act like their fathers who have "sheathed their swords for lack of argument" (Shakespeare, 1823, 3.1.58). Here, one may detect the "false dilemma" technique since Henry suggests that his troops either "summon up the blood" or they will dishonor their families.

2.10. Politeness and Impoliteness

While trying to convince audience of something, many face threatening acts might be enacted. Based on the speaker's intentions of softening or hardening these acts, he/she employs some politeness or impoliteness strategies to achieve his/her aim. In this study, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Culpeper's corresponding impoliteness theory are the frameworks used to spot how power and persuasion function in ISIS political discourse.

2.10.1. Brown and Levinson's politeness and face theory.

One of the earliest attempts to explain how politeness works among interlocutors is Brown and Levinson's (1987) *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*, in which they define the notion of *face* and present several politeness strategies deployed by interlocutors to mitigate face threatening acts, hereafter FTAs.

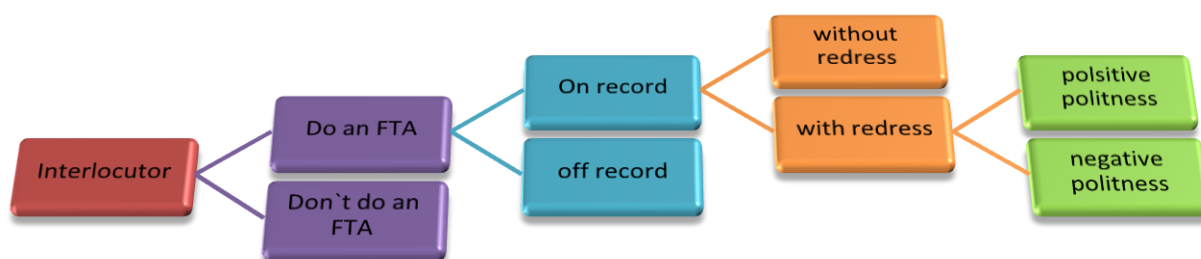
At the beginning of their book, Brown and Levinson (1987) discuss the notion of *face* as "something that is emotionally invested, and can be lost, maintained, or enhanced" (p.66). This *face* has both positive and negative needs which the interlocutor chooses to stress to different degrees based on the context. *Positive face* is related to human beings' desire to be liked and approved while *negative face* is more about one's wish to be free from imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.61).

Brown and Levinson declare that in order to weigh the seriousness of an FTA, three factors should be considered: a) the social distance (D) between the speaker and the hearer, b) the relative power (P) attained by both of them, and c) the ranking of imposition (R) in a given context, as shown in the following formula:

$$\text{FTA Weightiness} = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R$$

When doing an FTA, interlocutors use different strategies, which are summarized in the following figure, based on the context they are in and the content they wish to convey.

Figure 1: Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies (1987, p.69)



First of all, on record strategies are applied if the communicative purpose of the interaction is known to all participants. If an actor chooses to do an FTA directly, without minimizing the imposition, as in imperatives, then a bald on-record strategy is activated without redress or compensation. This kind of FTAs is done in any of the following situations (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.74):

1. The participants agree that the efficacy of the situation is more important than face demands: "*Watch out !*" (alerting someone before an accident happens)
2. The danger to H's face is minimal as in offers: "*Give me your heavy bags to carry*" (offering help)
3. The speaker is vastly superior in power: "*Pull over and give me your license*" (a police officer talking to a driver).

However, speakers mostly modify their sentences to perform "redressive" FTAs to indicate that there is no intention to damage the addressee's face. Consequently, they take one of the following routes:

1. Positive Politeness: It is implemented when the speaker (S) treats the hearer (H) as an insider whose in-group rights and interests are respected and valued. By doing so, the speaker minimizes the debt implications of FTAs by referring to the reciprocity principle (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.72). Actually, there are 15 positive politeness strategies discussed by Brown and Levinson.
2. Negative Politeness: It is to show that the speaker recognizes the hearer's negative face and "will not, or will only minimally, interfere with the addressee's freedom of action" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.70). This might be achieved using any of the 10 strategies presented by Brown and Levinson.
3. Off-record strategy: It is the most indirect way of saying things, which provides

speakers with an escape to claim that they haven't said something in the first place.

Finally, it should be noted that this study is mainly about persuasion and power, and not about politeness. Therefore, only some of Brown and Levinson's strategies, which are directly related to the topic of the thesis, will be used to analyze the data. These include the bald on record strategy, some positive politeness sub-strategies (such as *using in-group markers, assuming reciprocity, presupposing common ground*), and one off-record strategy (*rhetorical questions*).

2.10.2. Culpeper's impoliteness theory.

Arguing that Brown and Levinson's work does not fully account for all kinds of interactions, especially the conflictive ones, Culpeper (1996) presents a parallel classification of strategies with opposite orientation to face. After all, there are certain circumstances in which participants wish to deliberately attack the hearer's face. For example, in any context where there is power imbalance, the powerful party tends to be impolite, reducing the powerless' ability to retaliate. Moreover, inside the courtroom, direct confrontation is essential for the elicitation of truth (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); therefore, politeness is not sought.

Culpeper (1996) defines impoliteness as "the use of strategies that are designed to [cause]...social disruption" (p.350). These strategies are listed below as explained in Culpeper's (1996) article "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness":

1. Bald on-record impoliteness: the performance of FTAs in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized. It is important to distinguish this strategy from Brown and Levinson's bald on record. For Brown and Levinson, bald on record is a "politeness" strategy in fairly specific circumstances. For example, when face concerns are suspended in an emergency, when the threat to the hearer's face is very small..., or when the speaker is

much more powerful than the hearer.... In all these cases..., it is not the intention of the speaker to attack the face of the hearer.

2. Positive impoliteness: the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants.

3. Negative impoliteness: the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.

4. Sarcasm or mock politeness: the performance of FTAs with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations. [Culpeper's] understanding of sarcasm is close to Leech's (2004) conception of irony... [which states that] "if you must cause offence, at least do so in a way which doesn't overtly conflict with the PP [Politeness Principle], but allows the hearer to arrive at the offensive point of your remark indirectly, by way of an implicature"(p.82).

5. Withhold politeness: the absence of politeness work where it would be expected. (Culpeper, 1996, pp.356-357)

As for the sub strategies, Culpeper focuses on negative and positive impoliteness. He cites ten strategies for positive impoliteness and five for the negative one. However, the strategies mentioned bellow are the only ones which might be directly related to our study:

Figure 2: Culpeper's Impoliteness Sub-Strategies

Positive Impoliteness Strategies	Negative Impoliteness Strategies
1. Ignore the other: fail to acknowledge the other's presence.	1. Frighten: instill a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur.
2. Be disinterested, unconcerned, and unsympathetic.	2. Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect: personalize, use the pronouns 'I' and 'you'.
3. Use inappropriate identity markers: use	3. Condescend, scorn or ridicule: emphasize

titles when close relationship pertains or nicknames when a distant relationship pertains.	your relative power, be contemptuous, do not treat the other seriously, and belittle the other (e.g. use diminutive).
4. Call the other names	4. Put the other's indebtedness on record
5. Use obscure or secretive language: mystify the other within jargon or use a code known to others in group but not the target.	5. Invade the other's space: literally (e.g. position yourself closer to the other than the relationship permits) or metaphorically (e.g. ask for or speak about information which is too intimate).

2.11. Conclusion

This chapter has covered a variety of topics in the core of our study. It has first provided a brief summary of pragmatics and political discourse analysis, which are the major and minor linguistic branches that embrace the study. Then, ISIS has been introduced to give readers an idea about the ideology of the subject under discussion. Later on, the focus has moved on towards persuasion and propaganda, their historical development, and how they have been practiced by politicians at different stages of the human life. Most importantly, ten persuasion strategies have been precisely explained to act as an outline for the analysis section. They are extracted from Cialdini's (2007) *Influence: the Psychology of Persuasion* and Shabo's (2008) *Techniques of Propaganda and Persuasion*. Finally, illustrating Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies has been essential to investigate the role of power in shaping ISIS discourse and whether there is a relationship between persuasion and politeness/impoliteness. The following section, however, explains why exactly these frameworks have been used to analyze the texts and how texts have been collected in the first place.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This study is conducted in order to examine how ISIS language is structured to achieve two purposes: a) to persuade audience of its agendas and b) to practice power verbally. Yet, to carry out such an investigation, the research has utilized the descriptive analysis, which relies heavily on the researcher's interpretation of extended stretches of talk instead of statistics. The materials have been collected based on the research method of documentary analysis, in which data are extracted from existing documents with no need for questionnaires or interviews. These compiled materials have been analyzed based on four frameworks to make sure that the presented interpretations are highly plausible. So, the following paragraphs elaborate on the methods implemented to collect and analyze the data.

3.2. Data Collection

In order to have a clear idea about how the research data have been collected, the following presentation explains some information about the source and the size of the analyzed materials. To start with, *Dabiq* magazine has been chosen to be the only source from which the data are derived due to three reasons. First, it is published in English; therefore, nothing is lost in translation. Second, it gives a clear indication of ISIS ideology because it is considered to be ISIS' official magazine, as stated in the foreword of its first issue. So, analyzing ISIS discourse in light of its own stated ideology seems to be more reliable than studying it based on what anti-ISIS propaganda has to offer. Third, dealing with written materials, such as magazines and newspapers, might be the best way to examine mere language in isolation from other propaganda forms that rely basically on visual and auditory effects. As a result, thirty articles from the first ten issues of *Dabiq* are scrutinized. They cover a variety of topics, including the justification of ISIS brutal

execution methods, their call to migration and Jihad, and their under-estimation of the US-led coalition. It should be noted that it has been difficult to decide the sample size because there is no rule of thumb for that in discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Still, there are two main reasons why the researcher has decided not to analyze any more data. On the one hand, the research is mainly conducted for academic purposes; therefore, there are time restrictions that the researcher abides by. On the other hand, the researcher has found that the collection of new articles does not add new information to the issue under investigation. Such a concept is often referred to as "saturation" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). After reading all the articles of the first ten issues, excluding religious texts; avoiding repetition of ideas; drawing connections between the texts and the approaches used for analysis; the researcher has come to the conclusion that these thirty articles give a general idea about the language of persuasion and power in ISIS political discourse.

3.3. Data Analysis

Since the study is mainly qualitative, content coding has been the major data analysis method. To make sure that the presented interpretations are valid, the following steps have been adopted: a) reading the data several times, b) trying to find the main features that add a persuasive aspect to the chosen texts, c) sorting these features into themes, and d) deciding on the hierarchy according to which these persuasive strategies will be presented. Moreover, the context of each of the explored examples (including time, participants, and the shared knowledge between the sender and the receiver of the message) has been taken into consideration. Most importantly, ISIS' political ideology, religious beliefs, and historical background have been key elements in deciding the best plausible interpretation of the data.

The categorization of persuasion principles is based on two theoretical frameworks: Cialdini's (2007) persuasion principles and Shabo's (2008) techniques of persuasion and

propaganda. The former's principles cannot be realized from first sight; rather, they are related to the overall pragmatic meaning of the text. This is particularly important in the persuasion industry because the speaker does not directly state what he/she wishes the hearer to do. The latter's principles, however, are easily pinpointed by looking at certain lexical items and grammatical structures. Starting with the first framework, it has been inevitable to include Cialdini's approach in this study because psychology and persuasion are inherently intertwined. His distinguished career as a Professor of Psychology and Marketing, as well as the fact that his book has been listed on the New York Times Best Seller list, shows that he knows exactly how persuasion serves the interests of its users. To elaborate, he presents seven psychological principles of persuasion that can be utilized in every domain where manipulation is sought. Even though he mainly emphasizes how persuasion influences marketing, his principles can be easily exploited by politicians in their debates and speeches. Nevertheless, it should be noted that only five of Cialdini's seven strategies are chosen for the analysis of the study, and they are *contrast*, *reciprocity*, *consistency*, *authority*, and *liking*. As for his *social proof* strategy, it is a replica of Shabo's *bandwagon* technique; therefore, repetition has been avoided. In addition, the *scarcity* principle is not directly related to power talks; thus, it is excluded.

As for Shabo's approach, it covers a variety of persuasion tactics that were used in World War II. This makes their application into any other political context, as the one at hand, fairly reasonable. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that Shabo is an ESL instructor whose works are taught at distinguished universities across the US, including Harvard, which adds to the reliability of this study. Her eleven strategies are not all adopted in our investigation, for they are too many to be tackled at once. Yet, the techniques which correlate with each other are presented under one title; for example, *false dilemma* and the *lesser of the two evils* are both considered *false dilemma* because the latter is a special case

of the former. By following this plan, only five persuasion techniques are found to be essential for our analysis, namely *glittering generalities*, *name-calling*, *false dilemma*, *bandwagon*, and *card staking*. These tactics either depend on the connotative meanings of words or on the fallacious argumentation of propagandists.

Later on, it has been decided that the inclusion of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies is essential for a better interpretation of the data due to two main reasons. First of all, politeness and impoliteness are highly determined by power, which is a major factor in shaping the political discourse of any party. Second, appropriately activating politeness and impoliteness, of course based on the context, may probably help propagandists to achieve their purposes. On the one hand, the seriousness of Brown and Levinson's face threatening acts is determined by power (P), distance (D) and risk (R), three factors in the heart of political discourse analysis. So, noticing whether ISIS officials actually take these factors into consideration when addressing their supporters gives an idea about how professional they are. Furthermore, persuasion sometimes needs the establishment of certain politeness strategies so as to attend to the hearer's face wants.

Still, Brown and Levinson's theory, as its name suggests, deals only with politeness. Yet, failing to abide by their rules does not necessarily mean that one is being impolite. Therefore, it has been necessary to find a framework that parallels Brown and Levinson's approach with opposite orientation to face. Fortunately, Culpeper's model fulfills this need and accounts for the conflictive interactions that aim at deliberately attacking the hearer's face. After all, ISIS is in war with many factions, and impolite speech is expected to emerge when addressing enemies. Moreover, in certain occasions, being impolite towards the recipient helps in persuading other participants in the interaction to believe what the speaker says; this is similar to what happens in political debates, in which candidates

criticize each other so as to convince audience of the righteousness of the speaker's ideas and the falsehood of the other candidate's claims.

3.4. Conclusion

In brief, this section has explained in details the methods used for collecting and analyzing the data at hand. Clearly, *Dabiq* magazine has been found to be the best source to assemble the data from because it perfectly portrays the ideology of its sponsors, i.e., ISIS members. Also, the rationale behind choosing four frameworks to examine the documents has been explained. They are all activated to present a clear idea about the principles of persuasion, the verbal practice of power, and the correlations among persuasion, power, and politeness in ISIS discourse. Having clarified that out, one may smoothly move on to the practical side.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

In order to be able to hypnotize audience, media sources bring into play myriads of persuasive strategies that can endorse the ideologies and interests of their sponsoring companies and governments (Van Dijk, 2001). Assuming that ISIS' official magazine is not an exception, this section dissects the political discourse of the State as presented in the first ten issues of *Dabiq* magazine so as to uncover the methods used to delude audience. By doing so, the researcher is providing readers with the chance to stop, reflect, and learn not to fall into the trap of ISIS propaganda. To accomplish that, *Dabiq* articles are analyzed in light of Cialdini's and Shabo's principles of persuasion and propaganda, as well as Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Culpeper's impoliteness strategies.

4.2. Persuasion

This section is basically an attempt to answer the first question of the study, a goal achieved by looking at the various persuasion methods used by *Dabiq* producers to promote their agendas. Each of Cialdini's and Shabo's persuasion and propaganda techniques is examined to decide whether it has or hasn't been integrated into ISIS discourse and why. The following section also sheds light on certain linguistic elements that have helped in the creation of the overall pragmatic meaning of the text.

4.2.1. The comparison-contrast principle.

Cialdini's original principle focuses on the importance of highlighting the drastic contrast between the compared elements so as to suggest that one side is way better than the other, even if it is actually not. Still, highlighting the similarities may just achieve the same effect; therefore, the researcher has decided to tackle both topics under the same umbrella, for they are linguistically inseparable.

4.2.1.1. Compare.

In political discourse, metaphors are commonly used to describe the speaker, his ideologies, agendas, and opponents (Lakoff & Johnson, 2004; Mio, 1997), and this is exactly what ISIS does. Metaphorical language has been used to describe ISIS, its power, attacks, agendas, and even its enemies.

4.2.1.1.1. Comparison to achieve negative-other representation.

The first discussion of metaphorical language scrutinizes the use of animal imagery to negatively describe ISIS' opponents. First of all, the US is said to have withdrawn from Afghanistan "with its tail between its legs" (L. 1128). Even though the root metaphor is not explicitly stated, readers know that this idiomatic expression is derived from the image of a cowardly dog whose pride has been hurt. This is certainly not a complimentary remark, and the following examples do not exactly praise other anti-ISIS parties either. The foreigner tourists who have been killed in an ISIS attack on Bardo National Museum have been described as a "prey for the soldiers of the Islamic State" (L.705). The use of *prey* both dehumanizes the enemy to justify its killing and expresses its helplessness when being hunted by a predator. Similarly, the army of the Iraqi government is portrayed as "lick[ing] its wounds from the murderous thrashing it [has] received from the mujahidin³" (L.791). Once again, a metaphor of an animal coming out of defeat emerges in ISIS discourse to describe its foes. Even when *Dabiq* producers have decided to compare Obama to a lion, it was an offensive metaphor highlighting his "toothless roaring" (L.737). A roaring lion may sound tough, but sounding and being are not alike. Without teeth, lions wane and cannot do harm. All in all, the comparisons between ISIS' enemies as a topic and animals as a vehicle aim at creating an image of a powerless opponent that cannot keep up with the king of the jungle.

³ The plural form of "mujahid", one who is engaged in jihad, which is a holy war for the defense of Islam

Likewise, there has been one metaphor used six times in *Dabiq* to dehumanize the anti-ISIS Arab countries. However, the vehicle of the metaphor holds even more negative connotations this time because it does not refer to a living thing in the first place. The Iranian, Iraqi, and Jordanian governments are all considered "puppet[s]" (L. 156; 789; 535). Such an association suggests that these governments have no choice; they are toys being manipulated and controlled by other regimes.

4.2.1.1.2. Comparison to achieve positive-self representation.

As for ISIS self-proclaimed power, several novel metaphors and similes are summoned to create an illustration of a terrifying state with increasing power. Sometimes, ISIS' future plans about acquiring an aircraft are regarded as a "Western horror film" (L. 1185), and the metaphor is extended for the next half page to write a short "scenario" (L.1201) describing how a nuclear weapon can be transported from Pakistan to the heart of the US. Even though the events seem to be more suitable for an action movie, ISIS looks at it from an American perspective. If such a scenario materializes, the results would be horrific for the Obama government. However, if horror movies are not scary enough, ISIS always has something new up the sleeve. Therefore, the pledges of allegiance which ISIS receives from several factions and the possibility of becoming "an international insurgency" (L.400) are both considered "nightmare scenario[s] for the military and political leaders of the democratic world" (L.1117). Nightmares trigger our fears and feel more agonizing than horror movies for one simple reason, i.e., they seem so real. These fears, just like desires, are proved to motivate attitude and behavior change (Witte & Allen, 2000). So, if the US wishes to live a more peaceful life, ISIS suggests the US government stops its intrusion in the State's affairs. It should be noted, however, that such comparisons are considered bluffing because they do not abide by the felicity conditions of the speech acts of threatening, simply because as far as we know the speaker (ISIS) has been incapable of

carrying these exaggerated threats even after three years of the US engagement in the war against ISIS.

Similes and metaphors also present ISIS increasing power in a creative way. This power is "like a snowball that rolls down a mountain getting larger until you end up with an avalanche" (L.1154-1155). Such a simile is not only an indication of ISIS growing power but is also a sign of the speed with which that happens. When more and more factions pledge allegiance to the State, its power becomes destructive. Similarly, ISIS geographical expansion "from one border to another" is compared to "a wildfire that is burning out of control" (L.1225). The uncontrollable speed of fire, which is similar to that of the snowball in the previous discussion, harmonizes with the overall presentation of the State. It can be noticed that in the above mentioned comparisons, *Dabiq* refers to two natural powers that have clashing effects: *snow* that gets people frozen and *fire* that gets them burned. Still, both become unbearable at a certain stage.

The last metaphor to be clarified in this section is related to animal imagery. ISIS fighters are compared to "a pride [of lions] that is hungry and cunning enough ... to devour [a large] prey" (L.1139-1142). Unsurprisingly, in this one occasion in which ISIS is compared to an animal, it is the king of the jungle that has been chosen due to all the positive connotations related to its power, authority, and ferocity, not to mention the fact that being hungry makes it even more vicious. Moreover, *Dabiq* declares that a "single lion can kill an antelope but a pride that is hungry and cunning enough can, if they work closely together, take down an African elephant" (L. 1139-1140). Team work always gets better results, and ISIS continuously highlights the importance of unity. Clearly, it adopts the Arabic proverb saying, "Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable." In other words, despite the fact that ISIS attributes immense power to itself, the language used shows that its love for power is unquenchable yet.

To sum up, *Dabiq* figurative language perfectly builds up a positive-self representation and a negative-other representation, in which ISIS is the powerful in the face of all other powerless political parties. Metaphors and similes are drawn out to glorify ISIS, its soldiers, and its growing power while humiliating the enemies of the State through the use of negative animal imagery.

4.2.1.2. Contrast.

The contrast principle is heavily activated throughout ISIS discourse to boast about its application of the Islamic Shari'ah⁴ and to bare the illogical sayings and doings of its enemies.

4.2.1.2.1. Contrast between ISIS and other Islamic groups.

First of all, ISIS' ruling system, which radically differs from the approaches practiced by other Islamic groups, is meant to make it look as "the only state ruling by Allah's Shari'ah today" (L.1880). For example, ISIS lists some of its Islamic ruling methods and explains to the reader how other Arab countries mock these divine rules. "[Arab countries] refer to ...[ISIS'] collection of zakah⁵ and jizyah⁶ as 'taxes,' the enslavement of non-Muslim women as 'fornication,' the implementation of the hudud⁷ as 'foolishness,' and the manifestation of enmity towards the tawaghit and mushrikin as 'insanity' " (L.1310-1313). ISIS' Islamic terminology, such as *zakah*, *jizyah* and *hudud* pushes the reader to believe that its name reflects its ideology, unlike other Arab governments which prefer using legal language, like *taxes*. This distinction obviously triggers something in the minds of Muslim readers and encourages them to reassess their governments.

Similarly, comparing what ISIS fighters are ready to do with what is done by the

⁴ The code of law based on Quran and Hadith

⁵ The obligatory contribution of a certain portion of one's wealth in support of the poor or needy or for other charitable purposes, considered as one of the duties of Islamic religious practice.

⁶ A poll tax levied from those who did not accept Islam, but were willing to live under the protection of Islam

⁷ The portion of shari'a law concerning the trial and punishment of the most serious crimes, including adultery, theft, and murder. It prescribes penalties such as flagellation, amputation, and beheading.

fighters of other factions builds up on the image ISIS tries to create for itself, i.e., the image of a new caliphate. For instance, the fighters of the State "persist in their jihad"⁸, not concerning themselves with how they will subsequently be portrayed in the ... media" (L. 1898-1900). "The cowardly jihad claimants, in comparison, with their large numbers, heavy weaponry, and their claim of some regions of Sham⁹, are nonetheless afraid of implementing the Shari'ah lest they offend the people" (L. 1901-1903). Clearly, *Dabiq* makes a comparison between two parties abiding by different laws: ISIS abiding by Allah's law and other Arab countries following their own version of law which they legislated to suit their interests. Opening the eyes of readers to such a drastic contrast between ISIS and Arab countries suggests that readers may want to reconsider their commitments.

4.2.1.2.2. Contrast between the sayings and doings of anti-ISIS parties.

The cognitive dissonance of anti-ISIS parties becomes crystal clear when noticing that they hold different responses to the same kind of action. For instance, "while genocide is committed by the Maliki, Asadi, and Israeli forces against the Muslims via systematic massacres, chemical warfare, rape, and starvation by siege, Obama watches with euphoria. However, when his brothers in Yezidi¹⁰ Satanism and Peshmergan¹¹ Zionism are killed, he panics" (L.1542-1545). Choosing both the conjunction *while* and *however* draws attention to the divergent reactions of President Obama to the death of different religious groups. So, murdering Muslims becomes tolerable whereas killing Christian Yazidis and Zionist Jews is not, despite the fact that Muslims have gone through a much excruciating death experience as elaborated on in the statement. It should be noted that even though passivization is used to describe the killing of both groups, the doer of the action or the

⁸ A Muslim holy war or spiritual struggle for the propagation or defense of Islam

⁹ A region on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea north of the Arabian Peninsula and south of Turkey, usually including the area of Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria.

¹⁰ A member of a Kurdish-speaking group who practice Yezidism and live predominantly in Iraq, Syria, and southeast Turkey.

¹¹ A member of a Kurdish militia.

subject of the underlying active sentence is mentioned only in the case of Muslims genocide after the preposition *by*. However, the killers of Yezidis and PKK soldiers are not explicitly stated because it would not be intelligent from *Dabiq* producers to insert ISIS name in this argument. Moreover, anti-ISIS powers are portrayed as playing on words to justify their wrongdoings, while criticizing the same act if carried out by the State. To illustrate, "if a mujahid kills a single man with a knife, it is the barbaric killing of the 'innocent.' However, if Americans kill thousands of Muslim families all over the world by pressing missile fire buttons, it is merely collateral damage" (L.185-187). In reference to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the US activates its broadly defined concept of *collateral damage*; yet, such a primitive act like knife killing is reported to be an act of terrorism. How could that be possible? Readers can clearly notice the lack of logos in the US speech.

Still, ISIS does not only focus on this gap between sayings and doings in the US speech but also refers to the contrast between what al-Qaeda preaches and practices. *Dabiq* writes, "[It is] permissible for al-Qaeda – according to Dhawahiri's¹² feeble guidelines – to bomb a Houthi¹³ rally in a public square, but forbidden for the Islamic State to bomb a Houthi gathering in a Houthi temple" (L.723-725). Once again, the use of the conjunction *but*, as well as antonymous adjectives like *permissible* and *forbidden*, shows the contradiction between what anti-ISIS parties do and say. After all, people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. If Al-Qaeda targets Houthis, then why to criticize ISIS? On the whole, the persuasive strategy under discussion has been professionally integrated into ISIS discourse to bare the illogical actions and reactions of its enemies, thus, giving readers the opportunity to change their perspectives and loyalties.

As one may realize, the contrast principle is also employed throughout *Dabiq* articles by skillful, trained authors who know when to stress differences to achieve the best

¹² Former leader of Al-Qaeda

¹³ A Yemini political party led by Shia Muslims

rhetoric. ISIS peculiar jargon highlights its Islamic philosophy while the language of other Arab countries reflects their attachment to man-made laws. Most importantly, the language of major anti-ISIS parties suggests their lack of the Aristotelian typology: logos, ethos, and pathos. For those purposes, readers might be persuaded of the righteousness of ISIS' political ideas.

4.2.2. The reciprocity principle.

Reciprocity has been heavily employed in ISIS discourse to justify its attacks against and mistreatment of the State's enemies because such operations are the natural response to the atrocities these enemies have initiated.

4.2.2.1. Reciprocity justifies the killing of the Copts.

To start with its religious enemy, ISIS cites reciprocity to explain the reason why its fighters have targeted the Catholic Churches in Baghdad and the Copts in Tripoli. In 2010, the Islamic State of Iraq initiated an operation against "the Baghdad church [which was] executed in revenge for Kamilia Shehata, Wafa Constantine, and other [Muslim] sisters who were tortured and murdered by the Coptic Church of Egypt" (L.632-634). So, the justifying phrase "in revenge for" is meant to show the reader that what ISIS does is not an action but a reaction to the mistreatment practiced against it. At first glance, readers may wonder why ISIS has attacked Christians in Bagdad if the initial harm was caused by the Copts of Egypt. Yet, the State is always ready to answer. In 2010, "the Islamic State was distant from Egypt and so could not target the Coptic crusaders there" (L. 639-640), but its ideology maintains that "the different kuffar¹⁴ still have allegiance to each other in the face of Islam" (L. 644). Consequently, directing attacks towards the Iraqi Christians, who according to the reciprocal pronoun *each other* became accomplices in the crime (Haspelmath, 2007), has been considered legal. Was that satisfying for the State? No. In

¹⁴ Plural of kafir, one who does not believe in the oneness of God, prophethood, and Shari'ah

2015, ISIS managed "to easily capture the Coptic crusaders – the followers of the dead Shenouda¹⁵–" (L.677-678) in Tunisia. It seems that ISIS considers this series of actions and reactions as part of a religious conflict between Muslims and Christians wherever they reside. In fact, it does not hesitate to inform audience that Shenouda is "directly responsible for every single Christian killed anywhere in the world when the Islamic State [seeks] its just revenge" (L.650-652). In light of what has been said, ISIS murders only mirror the wrongdoings of its rivals.

Before audience fall into this trap, they should search for the missing piece of the puzzle which can falsify such an argument. ISIS alleges that Allah legitimizes reciprocation in His Holy Quran when saying, "and if you punish [an enemy], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed"¹⁶ (Quran 16: 126). Let's assume that this verse is interpreted and translated correctly, which is not the case as explained under the *authority principle* section. The question is then: why doesn't the Islamic State follow Allah's rules? After all, killing "more than one hundred crusaders" (L.654) in Baghdad operation and "21" (L.631) in Tripoli is not an equivalent to the few female Muslims who have been imprisoned and tortured to death by the Coptic Church. We are not trying to legitimize killing by any means here, for every life matters. Rather, it is more of an attempt to show the inconsistency of the State's ideology that abides by religious rules only if they match its interests.

4.2.2.2. Reciprocity validates attacks on Western and Easter countries.

Likewise, the State validates all attacks against any of the countries intervening in its business, including Eastern and Western countries. To illustrate, a "temple [in Kuwait has been] rocked by an explosion ...in revenge for Ahlus-Sunnah¹⁷ and in defense of the

¹⁵Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria

¹⁶ The verse is translated by ISIS (L. 565-566)

¹⁷ Sunni Islam is a denomination of Islam

Khilafah¹⁸, which the government of Kuwait is waging war against as part of the crusader coalition" (L.1854-1857). So, ISIS' *revenge* and *defense* are expected to cover for its illegal actions. Also, the Jordanian pilot has been burnt alive "as retribution for his crimes against Islam and the Muslims, including his active involvement in crusader airstrikes" (L.531-532). Once again, a synonym of *revenge*, in this case *retribution*, is integrated into *Dabiq* discourse to hint at the reciprocity principle.

Still, there are other Eastern non-Arab countries which have also got a slap on the rest from ISIS even though they are not directly engaged in the war against it. For instance, the beheading of two Japanese hostages, Haruna Yukawa and Kenji Goto Jogo, is ISIS' way of telling Japan you reap what you sow. The "Islamic State demanded 200 million dollars from the Japanese government [to release the two hostages], the same sum initially committed to the crusaders and their apostate allies by the Japanese Prime Minister" (L. 498-500). The parenthetical expression inserted between two commas at the end of the previous sentence describes the ransom which has been demanded in exchange for the hostages. It emphasizes the fact that the ordered ransom and the donated money for the coalition are of the *same* amount, which stands as a sign of reciprocation. Apparently, the shocking wrongdoings committed by ISIS members are suggested to be twisted replicas of the violence that has been practiced against them at an earlier stage.

More examples are found in the statements through which ISIS addresses the West. For example, the hatchet assault against "four policemen in Queens," New York (L.356) serves as "a damning indictment of America's continued policy of foreign intervention" (L. 363-364). Even though aggression should never be vindicated, ISIS' defense here is mind-swaying because if one considers the kind of damage the US has caused to Iraqis since 2003, and let's take the Abu Ghraib Scandal as a demonstration, then ISIS has been

¹⁸ The Arabic equivalent of Caliphate

merciful towards the US. In a similar manner, other operations in Canada and Australia have been carried out under the excuse of self-defense. Also, James Foley's demise is basically "a result of the US airstrikes in Iraq" (L.147), as well as a "number of related events that the Obama administration and western media [have] tried to ignore" (L.172-173). Whenever ISIS justifies its attacks against the West, one message seems to be recurrent: "the Islamic State [is] not initiat[ing] a war against you [European countries] as [the] governments and media try to make you believe. It is you who [have] started the transgression against us" (L. 1497-1499). As one may notice, every action done by ISIS comes as *an indictment of, a result of, a revenge for, or a retribution for* some other kind of action initiated by its enemies.

4.2.2.3. Reciprocity expresses ISIS relationship with Allah and Muslims.

Most importantly, reciprocity has been minimally used so as to emphasize the position of the Islamic State as "the only state ruling by Allah's Shari'ah today" (L.1880). Therefore, ISIS quotes Allah saying, "Allah will bring forth ... a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, mighty against the disbelievers"¹⁹ (Quran 5:54). The coordination of the two propositions with inverted arguments depicts the special bond ISIS claims to have with Allah, especially in light of the following hadith: "The people of Sham are Allah's whip on Earth. He takes retribution through them from whomever He wills and however He wills" (L.1247-1248). There is no doubt that ISIS seeks to convince its Muslim audience of the holiness of its mission, a mission that receives power from the Almighty. Yet, the State's relationship with Allah is not the only one highlighted in *Dabiq* magazine, for its relationship with Muslims is also as important. "[Muslims] depend on [ISIS] and it depends on [them]" (L.1747). Expressing this kind of reliance on each other gives the impression that neither the State nor Muslims

¹⁹ The verse is translated by ISIS (L.672-674)

can survive without one another.

Basically, the reciprocity principle has helped ISIS portray its attacks as a self-defense strategy which "the International Law would simply regard as a counter-war against an illegal war" (Van den hole, 2003, p.72).

4.2.3. The authority principle.

Halmari and Virtanen (2005) assert that "resorting to authorities" in political speeches can "justify [one's] points of view" (p.118). So, it is not surprising to find out that *Dabiq* magazine quotes several authoritative figures and uses intertextuality, including both its pros and cons, for its own advantage, i.e., to convince readers of the importance of joining ISIS ranks, the righteousness of its actions, the deceitfulness of the State's enemies, and the power it enjoys.

4.2.3.1. Religious authorities require immigration to ISIS' lands.

First, ISIS refers to the Holy Quran and hadith so as to persuade Muslims that immigration to its lands and pledging allegiance to the State's Imam are in the core of Islam. For example, Prophet Muhammad states that "[t]he best people on earth will be those who keep to the land of [Abraham's] hijrah²⁰" (L.1470). Scholars mostly agree that the land of Abraham's²¹ hijrah is Sham (As-Sabuni, 1997, p.457), also called the Levant area where ISIS geographical existence is currently centered. On another occasion, Allah's Messenger advises one of the companions to "[g]o to Sham, for it is the best of Allah's lands" (L.1513-1514). As one may notice, the superlative adjectival form "the best" is activated to describe the superiority of the Levant and its people in the previously mentioned hadith. So, ISIS suggests that Muslims around the world should follow Prophet Abraham's steps and abide by Prophet Muhammad's words to gain this religiously-acquired supremacy. The other action which *Dabiq* pushes its audience to do is to pledge allegiance

²⁰ Hijrah is the Arabic equivalent of migration, and Abraham or Ibrahim decided to migrate after his people tried to burn him alive because of his preaching.

²¹ Also called Ibrahim in the Holy Quran

to the Islamic State and obey its Imam. When asked about the evil at the end of the time and how to overcome it, Prophet Muhammad replies, "Stick to the jama'ah"²² of the Muslims and their imam"²³ (L. 1762-1763). Moreover, "whoever pledges allegiance to an imam, giving him his hand in sincerity, should obey him as much as he is able to" (L.1416-1417). Prophet Muhammad's orders and advice, expressed by the imperative verb *stick* and the modal verb *should* respectively, are certainly valued by Muslims, who may fall victims of this persuasive technique.

4.2.3.2. Religious authorities justify killing.

Second, the explanation that ISIS relies on to rationalize its punishment methods depends mainly on their own interpretation of certain religious quotes. To illustrate, *Dabiq* producers add the following two verses from Holy Quran to their articles in an attempt to validate the burning of the Jordanian pilot: "So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you"²⁴ (Quran 2:194), and "if you punish[an enemy], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed"²⁵ (Quran 16:126)²⁶. Clearly, ISIS exploits this reciprocity principle legislated by Allah to justify the unexpected punishment carried out against the Jordanian pilot. According to ISIS, the pilot has been involved in the "crusader bombing campaign" which has caused many Muslims to be "burned alive and buried under mountains of debris" (L.559). Thus, burning him becomes a taste of his own medicine, for it is "a just form of retaliation for his involvement in the crusader... airstrikes" (L.559). In addition, ISIS lists a series of five stories about Prophet Muhammad companions practicing this kind of punishment against apostates. Simply put, Allah has provided Muslims with a constitution, and ISIS portrays itself as a religious organization that works by the book, no more, no less.

²² The group of Muslims who follow Allah's Shari'ah

²³ Leader

²⁴ The verse is translated by ISIS (L.575-576)

²⁵ The verse is translated by ISIS (L.565-566)

²⁶ Translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

ISIS' argument in the previous paragraph seems to be persuasive indeed, right? Still, before you make up your mind, consider the following information. The previous discussion is ISIS' story, but here is the untold part of it. If readers go back to the different explication books that clarify Quranic verses, they will find that ISIS takes texts out of contexts. For instance, the quotation from The Cow Chapter does not mean to assault people in the same way they have assaulted you but "to fight them because they have fought you" (As-Sabuni, 1997, p.127). In addition, the verse is a "commentary from Allah on what has happened with Prophet Muhammad when he has gone to do Umrah²⁷ during the prohibited months, the months in which Muslims are supposed not to fight" (At-Tabari, 1994, pp.520-522). Yet, on that occasion, Allah has allowed Prophet Muhammad to fight back whoever that has fought him. So, the verse actual translation is "If anyone transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him" (Quran 1:194) as translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1987). What does all this mean? Well, it suggests that ISIS translation and interpretation of Quranic verses are pragmatically invalid for the new context in which they are used.

If the previous refutation of ISIS' story is not convincing enough, let's look at the other verse from The Bee Chapter. To avoid repetition, at-Tabari and as-Sabuni introduce the same interpretation as the one presented above. However, there is another evidence here of how ISIS manipulates Holy texts to suit its agendas. In fact, ISIS decides to ignore the remaining part of the verse in their discourse because if they had included it, their argument would have been vulnerable. In the same verse, Allah continues, "But if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient" (Quran 16:126). Obviously, Allah "asks His people to abandon punishment and let Him deal with His creation" (As-Sabuni, 1997, p.149). Moreover, the reason why Allah has included this

²⁷ Unlike Hajj, umrah is a pilgrimage to Mecca that can be undertaken at any time of the year

verse in His Holy book is to address Muslims after the Battle of Uhud²⁸, in which Kuffar mutilated the bodies of Muslim fighters. As a result, Muslims' comrades promised to do their enemies more harm than the one practiced against them. In return, "Allah first ordered Muslims not to overdo punishment and then suggested not to punish at all" (At-Tabari, 1994, p.570). Briefly, it is not intended to transform this study into a religious one, but the idea is that readers should pay attention to whatever religious proof provided by ISIS members to justify their actions, for they are masters when it comes to manipulation.

In this regard, it should be noted that ISIS relies heavily on religious intertextuality to support its argumentations. The name of Allah is used two hundred thirty-six times throughout the chosen articles, which is practically the most frequent content word in the State's discourse. The Quranic verses appear fifty-two times to verify ISIS claims. As for Prophet Muhammad, his name, as well as other alternative names such as *The Prophet*, *Allah's Messenger*, and *Rasullulah*, is cited twenty-two times. Up to twenty different hadiths are also included to achieve the same goal.

4.2.3.3. American authorities show lack of unity.

The third reason why ISIS discourse implements the authority principle is to make the reader question the credibility of the US government. As evidence, *Dabiq* incorporates some quotes from Obama's media talks and criticizes them using comments made by major US political experts. In other words, ISIS delivers its meta-message without having to explicitly utter it. To illustrate, there is a comparison between the way President Obama describes ISIS and the way it is portrayed by other US experts. On the one hand, Obama thinks that ISIS embodies a "terrorist organization, pure and simple" (L.738). He does not elaborate or allow audience to see the whole picture, as if to under-estimate ISIS. On the other hand, his own Former Defense Secretary, Chuck Hagel finds it "so well-organized,

²⁸ The Battle of Uhud was the second battle between Meccans and Muslims . It was initiated by a force led by Abu Sufyan to retaliate against the Muslims for the Battle of Badr.

so well-trained, so well-funded, so strategic, so brutal, so completely ruthless [... and] an incredibly powerful new threat" (L.746-750). In other words, Hagel gives weight to ISIS by adding the intensifier *so* before every single adjective he uses to describe it. The same effect is created by using the adverb *incredibly* to tell the reader the degree to which ISIS is considered powerful. This divergence of opinions within the US government indicates lack of consistency. Of course, a house divided against itself cannot stand; thus, ISIS implicitly suggests that the US should not be trusted. Logically speaking, if one assumes that the Islamic State is a terrorist group only, as Obama alleges, then why couldn't the US-led coalition defeat it until now despite the very fact that the US needed only three and a half years to defeat the Axis in WWII.

ISIS brings forward more quotes to criticize the US foreign policy. To begin with, when Obama says that the US "strategy of taking out terrorists...is one that [they] have successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years" (L.1170-1171), *Dabiq* immediately responds using the Washington Post's comment, i.e., "Somalia is a failed state and Yemen is hardly a healthy one; both remain incubators of dangerous terrorism" (L.1179-1180). By substituting the lexical item "successful" in Obama's statement with its antonym "failed" in the Washington Post article to describe the situation in Somalia and Yemen, the latter explicitly refutes the former's claims. In addition, ISIS brings the issue of Shiites to the table so as to prove the dishonesty of the American government. The US has always considered Iran as a threatening power due to the allegations about its nuclear weaponry. Likewise, the Sunni Islamic State considers Shiites, such as Iran, Iraqi government, and Hezbollah, as enemies (L.157-158). Therefore, if both ISIS and the US have a common enemy, then the US logic necessitates the cancelation of the Western intrusion against ISIS because any deterioration in the Islamic State power means the revival of its Shiite rivals. Even the Former US Secretary of State and US National Security Advisor, Henry

Kissinger, shares ISIS this point of view. He stresses that "in all the crises roiling the world, the U.S. shouldn't lose focus on Iran" (L.243-244). The previously mentioned examples represent the way ISIS perceives the US; yet, it is supported by acknowledged figures from the US itself. In brief, the authority strategy is activated in ISIS discourse to show the lack of unity the US government suffers from, which in turn questions their ethos.

4.2.3.4. American authorities recognize ISIS power.

Finally, ISIS alludes to several US political authorities to persuade the reader of its own internationally-recognized power. For instance, the Former CIA intelligence officer, Gary Bernsten, says that "ISIS has billions of dollars. They have a network of communications... They are truly the most successful Sunni terrorist group in history" (L. 1162-1164). The use of the adjectival superlative form, *the most successful*, is a clear declaration of ISIS power. Similarly, Former Lieutenant, Colonel Bill Cowan, informs Fox News that "ISIS will ...[take] more towns, more territory, [and] consolidate more gains" (L.777). In this case, the tripled use of the comparative form *more* clearly shows the increasing expansion of ISIS geographical existence. Actually, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, confesses that "there's no military-only solution to ISIL. And ... there's no airpower alone solution either in Iraq or Syria" (L. 754-756). Negating the previous two sentences suggests that ISIS military power is not underestimated by international powers. All these quotes come straight from the horses' mouth to convince audience of the political, economic, and military power that the Islamic State enjoys. After all, ISIS "is a physical, if extralegal, reality on the ground" (L. 1357-1358).

To conclude, the authority principle or intertextuality, which depends on quoting professional and authoritative people, has been successfully integrated into ISIS discourse. When addressing Muslim readers, Allah and His Messenger have been referred to.

However, when appealing to the logic of other readers, the statements of certain expert US officials have been quoted.

4.2.4. The consistency principle.

Though it is difficult to spot this persuasive strategy due to its holistic spirit, certain ideas have been stressed out and continuously referred to in *Dabiq* articles. In fact, the overall consistent rhetoric of ISIS plants the seeds of several conclusions: ISIS religious superiority over other Islamic movements, the necessity of performing hijrah to its land, its unfading power, and the misguidance of the enemy's media.

4.2.4.1. Consistent reference to ISIS' religious ideology.

First of all, based on its Quran-and-Sunnah²⁹ codified law, ISIS believes itself to be the best, if not the only, Islamic state in the modern era. For instance, the tenth issue of *Dabiq* magazine entitled *The Law of Allah and the Laws of Men* spots a striking contrast between ISIS ruling ideology and that of other Islamic organizations, parties, and brigades. On the one hand, the article bearing the same title as the cover's points out that "there is no place on the face of the Earth where the Shari'ah of Allah is implemented and the rule is entirely for Allah except for the lands of the Islamic State" (L.1234-1235). Such a powerful assertion needs evidence so as to be taken seriously by the reader, and ISIS knows that its actions speak louder than words. Eventually, it "enforce[s] prayer, collect[s] zakah, ...execute[s] the hudud, judge[s] in their courts by what Allah revealed, return[s] the rights of the oppressed, [fights] the kuffar and apostates, and enforce[s] the jizyah upon Ahlul-Kitab³⁰" (L.1278-1281). On the other hand, the Shari'ah committees dubbed by the Sahwah Coalition "give an illusion of Shari'ah while they are in reality committees afflicted with fitnah" (L.1293-1294). Similarly, other "cowardly jihad claimants... [are] afraid of implementing the Shari'ah lest they offend the people" (L. 1901-1903). Similar arguments

²⁹ The verbally transmitted record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions of prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about his companions.

³⁰ Christians and Jews

about ISIS implementing Shari'ah have been repeated throughout the data twenty-six times, and they have always included ISIS Islamic jargon and a long list of clues confirming ISIS claims. It should also be noted that the contrast and consistency principles have been working side by side to accomplish this mission.

In addition, ISIS execution methods are religiously justified as previously explained under the authority and reciprocity principles. However, one example will receive a closer look here, i.e., the burning of the Jordanian pilot. Some "palace 'scholars' and ...ignorant defeatists" have condemned ISIS as un-Islamic based on one of Prophet Muhammad' statements: "None should punish with fire except Allah" (L.570). However, ISIS' response has definitely assembled a case against these scholars. Rather than defying a hadith by another one, ISIS prefers relying on a verse from the Holy Quran, the first source of Islamic law, in which Allah says, "So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you"³¹ (Quran 2:194). According to ISIS' understanding, burning the pilot is just an application of Allah's law of retribution. If that is not convincing enough, *Dabiq* refers to Prophet Muhammad gouging the eyes of Urani³² men as a retribution for their atrocious killing of Muslim shepherds (L.577). Furthermore, the article starts listing numerous similar incidents in which the Prophet's companions, such as Abu Bakir and Khalid Ibn al-Walid, used fire for punishment throughout the Wars of Apostasy³³. Then comes the concluding sentence: "Thus, the Islamic State [is] not only follow[ing] the footsteps of Allah's Messenger ... but also emulat[ing] the example of his righteous Sahabah³⁴" (L.623-625). As a result, Muslim readers may deem ISIS a true

³¹ The verse is translated by ISIS (L.575)

³² When this tribe came to Medina ill, Prophet Muhammad asked them to go to the Muslim Shepherds to get some food and medicine. After getting their health back, the Urani tribe killed all the shepherds and drove away their camels. So, it is said in Sahih Bukhari that Prophet Muhammad gouged their eyes as a retribution.

³³ A war launched by Abu Bakir as-Siddiq against those Muslims who rebelled against Islam after the death of prophet Muhammad

³⁴ A term used to describe those who met prophet Muhammad, believed in his message, and died as Muslims. These include his companions, disciples, and family members.

Islamic State. If so, then they will be ready to accept ISIS' final proposition, i.e., to immigrate to its land.

4.2.4.2. Consistent call to immigrate to ISIS' territories.

Second, this call to immigrate to ISIS' lands has been one of the most recurring themes in ISIS discourse. Actually, in the third issue of *Dabiq* magazine, which is entitled "A Call to Hijrah³⁵," al-Baghdadi requests Muslims to come to the State "because hijrah to the land of Islam is obligatory" (L. 1326). This "obligation" to support the Caliphate is stressed out fourteen times throughout ISIS discourse. It is tackled in six of the chosen articles; however, it should be noted that there are many other articles which discuss the same issue but are not included in our data. Furthermore, Muslims should not consider immigration to the lands of Islam as part of the Islamic history, for "[h]ijrah will not cease to exist ... until the sun rises from the West" (L.995-996), Prophet Muhammad asserts. Actually, there is another hadith in which it is declared that "[t]he best people on earth will be those who keep to the land of Ibrahim hijrah [which is Sham according to some scholars]. Then there will remain on the Earth the worst of its people" (L. 1470-1471). The superlative form of the adjective "good" clearly gives ISIS the chance to brag about its superiority; as a result, it emerges seven times in the same context under the title of "Hijrah to Sham is from the Millah³⁶ of Ibrahim" (L. 1464). Such reports are summoned to give the State some kind of a religious legitimacy so as to be able to pull the reader towards believing that without residing in its territories, one does not act as a committed Muslim.

4.2.4.3. Consistent refusal of being under-estimated.

Third, the refusal of being called a "mere organization" is accentuated in the State's discourse, and the claim is refuted by providing numerous examples to prove the total opposite. Basically, "a mere 'organization'... [cannot] lay siege to cities or have their own

³⁵ Immigration

³⁶ Religion but this exact word is only used to describe prophets

police force" (L.768-769). "[A] mere 'organization' [is not expected] to have tanks and artillery pieces, an army of soldiers... and their own spy drones" (L. 770-771). Definitely, "a mere 'organization' ... [does not] have a mint with plans to produce [its] own currency, primary schools for the young, and a functioning court system" (L.772-773). What a professional rhetoric! The repetitive inclusion of "organization", which is an underestimating labeling of ISIS, and its placement within scare quotes every single time stand as a sign of sarcasm. To be categorized as an "organization" certainly does not live up to ISIS' expectations, for it runs after a more powerful accreditation. Yet, one should question whether ISIS doesn't appreciate being called an "organization" or doesn't value the adjective describing this organization, i.e., "mere." After all, Bernsten has called it "the most successful Sunni terrorist group" (L.1164); McCain has described it as "the most extreme, Islamic organization" (L.1450-1451); it has referred to itself as "the most explosive Islamic group" (L.1122). Unlike President Obama's "mere organization" classification, none of the previous comments has caused ISIS irritation. Apparently, superlatives are welcomed because they show that the thing being described has the "greatest degree of a particular quality" (Superlative, n.d.). To sum up, ISIS insistence on not being underestimated is a clear indication of the power it attributes to itself.

4.2.4.4. Inconsistent anti-ISIS propaganda.

Finally, the deceitfulness of the enemy's propaganda has been also put under the microscope in an attempt to persuade audience to trust ISIS media only. The selection and elimination methods adopted by anti-ISIS media are highly stressed out in the State's discourse. For instance, the embarrassing defeat of Safawis after the liberation of Biji³⁷ "[has been] largely overlooked by the international media, which [have chosen] instead to

³⁷ A city in Iraq

focus on bloated tales of Peshmerga murtaddin³⁸ 'advancing' on Sinjar" (L. 451-452). So, the anti-ISIS media strategy of controlling the flow of information in their countries by emphasizing news about their winnings and ignoring reports about their defeats makes sure that the public is kept in the shadow. Otherwise, fear might dominate and defeat might become inevitable. Another example to support ISIS' perspective comes as an attack against President Obama. He "[has] ordered a number of online social networks to shut down all Islamic State media accounts" so as to "prevent knowledge of [James Foley's issue] from reaching his citizenry" (L.197-198). Again, Western media puts wool over the eyes of their nations whereas ISIS tries to convince these nations that it "[has] not initiate[d] a war against [them], as [their] governments and media try to make [them] believe" (L.1497-1499). Basically, ISIS knows the importance of media channels in circulating information and the effect they have on people's attitudes. Therefore, ISIS portrays itself as a player putting all of his/her cards on the table. In contrast, anti-ISIS players are represented as if they are using all tricks available to make sure they are not exposed. This battle of who speaks the truth definitely encourages readers to either change their political loyalties or, at least, obtain a more neutral position.

All in all, the repetitive mentioning of certain ideas, as discussed under this section and others as well, aims mainly at tarnishing the image of ISIS' rivals while polishing that of its own as the honest, powerful Islamic State. Yet, it should be taken into consideration that dealing with this principle has been the most challenging because it cooperates with many other persuasive principles to achieve the sought outcome. As a result, reading this section in isolation does not provide an overall picture of how it operates.

4.2.5. The liking principle.

Despite its minimal application in ISIS discourse, the liking principle takes advantage

³⁸ The plural of "murtad," a person who rejects in deed or words his/her former religion if he/she was originally a Muslim.

of two characteristics, namely humor and similarity (Whipple & Calvert, 2008; Cialdini, 2007) to clarify the US nonsense talk and ISIS care for Muslims.

4.2.5.1. Using humor to mock the US.

First of all, unlike the rigidity and seriousness which dominate ISIS discourse, humor finally pops out to mock some of President Obama's statements. For instance, when Obama claims that the US strategy in "taking out terrorists" has been "successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years, "the authors of *Dabiq* magazine sarcastically comment, "Would you like those words served with relish or pickle, president?" (L.1176). The previous humorous punch-line cannot be understood unless explained in light of a common idiomatic expression in English, i.e., "eat one's word." By comparing Obama's talk to food which can be served with different kinds of appetizers, the author suggests that Mr. President should eat his words and take back his statement. Such a derisive expression is the result of the author's belief that Obama is neither sincere nor logical in his announcements, for those are still "dangerous incubators of dangerous terrorism" as asserted by "the Washington Post" (L.1179-1180). So, ISIS suggests that if Obama has "cited US policy in Yemen and Somalia as a successful illustration of what's in store for Iraq and Syria" (L.1177-1178), then his analogy is a meaningless, disposable one because these countries cannot be compared to ISIS. After all, "Somalia is a failed state and Yemen is hardly a healthy one"(L.1179). Noticeably, humor has been employed here to express the speaker's disapproval of his opponent's perspectives, which in return convinces the reader to reconsider the President's line of reasoning and weigh it against the newly presented argument.

In addition, when discussing the US foreign policy of dealing with ISIS, *Dabiq* producers create the following cynical dialogue between a robot (the US government) and its master (the voice of reason), in which the robot is stuck on a loop, making the same

mistake over and over again regardless of his master's instructions:

Master to robot: You have to find a different way of addressing the danger the mujahidin pose to the west. "Cannot... compute..." Military action doesn't work, what about negotiations? "Must... obey... programming..." Everything you've done since 9/11 has put us in more danger, not less. *Zzzzz... syntax... error.* (L.418-422)

The choice of modal verbs used by the master and his robot indicates an important point to reflect on. Even though both *have to* and *must* imply obligation, the semi-modal verb *have to* is often used for what an authoritative figure has said it is necessary to do, but *must* entails a personal opinion about what is necessary to do. So, the US personal opinions obviously contradict with those of the voice of the reason because the latter thinks about considering another tactic of dealing with the Islamic State. Overall, humor is used here to kill two birds with one stone. It adds to the aesthetics of the article and persuades the reader of the US failure to learn from its mistakes due to its force-only programmed policy.

Since the previous texts do not resemble ISIS' writing style, more analysis has been done to explain why humor appears in this one article entitled "The Perfect Storm" (L.1107). It turned out that it is written by John Cantlie, a British Journalist who was captivated by ISIS in Syria in November 2012. Cantlie's coworkers describe him as a good-humored man who gets the job done in difficult conditions. That is evident, but what is not is whether he has been forced to lie and write things he does not believe in or he just can't-lie, pun intended. Either way, his sense of humor is a persuasive tool that has been exploited by ISIS to question their opponents' credibility (Mulholland, 1994).

4.2.5.2. Using similarity to unify Muslims.

Second, similarity, which is expressed through the utilization of family-related terms and the inclusive personal deixis "our," points out that ISIS wishes Muslims to support each other wherever they live. Although the Islamic State desires to be seen as a

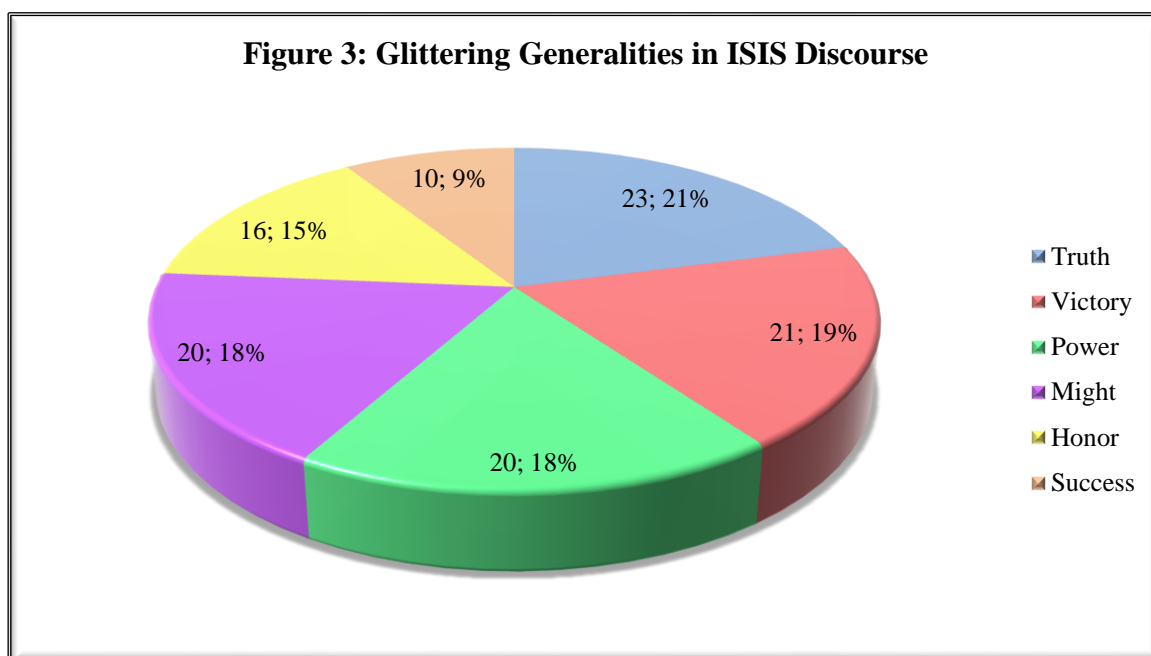
threatening power, there is a part of it, as tiny as it may be, that wants to be seen as a caring state for its Muslim citizens. As a result, ISIS never hesitates to call its Muslim readers *brothers, sisters, and sons*, as if the State is just a big family embracing its members. On one occasion, al-Adnani invites all Muslims and "brothers in creed" (L.1869) to rally around the Islamic State in its fight against the crusaders. On another, he wonders how Muslims can "enjoy life and sleep while not aiding [their] brothers" (L. 1680). Clearly, such family relationship terms are expected to lessen the distance between the sender of the message and its receiver. Furthermore, the personal deictic expression *our* has been inserted seven times into *Dabiq* articles to give readers a sense of group identity that unifies them with the speaker. For example, al-Adnani asserts, "Muslim Kurds ... are our people and brothers whenever they may be" (L.1689-1690). ISIS also writes, "The transgression against our sons in Palestine" (L.465) is not accepted, and the release of "our Muslim brothers and sisters" (L. 134) from Israeli jails is one of the State's aims. Obviously, ISIS argues that it is not only concerned with its own citizens, rather, all Muslims in other countries as well. All in all, these deictic expressions are meant to stress out the similarities, instead of differences, between ISIS and the audience, creating a good atmosphere to communicate its ideas by focusing on religion as a unifying umbrella.

To conclude, liking is not a major feature of ISIS talk, but the very few times in which this persuasive strategy has been activated are influencing indeed. The few stinging humorous comments and inclusive deixis implemented in ISIS discourse lessen the formality of the talk between the State and its audience. This good side of the State, which differs from what anti-ISIS propaganda promotes, is a clever method to create more flexible readers.

4.2.6. Glittering generalities.

People's fears and desires can be a key element in deciding their future attitudes and

behaviors, but glittering generalities appeal to the latter by drawing attention to the positive connotations attached to certain lexical items (Perloff, 2003; Shabo, 2008). In the case of the Islamic State, propagandists have packed their articles with a variety of glittering generalities in an attempt to portray the Islamic State as an unblemished one. By doing so, some readers may eventually be encouraged to adopt ISIS' line of thinking. The following chart shows the absolute and relative frequencies of the most recurring glittering generalities in *Dabiq* magazine, with a total sum of 110 occurrences. Other glittering generalities which are mentioned once or twice in the data are overlooked.



4.2.6.1. Truth.

As shown above, *truth* has been mentioned the most in ISIS discourse, reaching up to 23 times. This may signify ISIS' wish to be portrayed as a reliable source of information, for truth contributes to the establishment of a speaker's ethos. Yet, what are the truth-conditions that ISIS depends on to evaluate a statement as being true or not? On the one hand, when Western media sources indicate that the successive attacks on Australia, Canada, and the US are carried out by "disturbed loners" (L.371), ISIS asserts that "the truth runs far deeper than that" (L.372) since these attackers are neither disturbed nor

loners according to ISIS' point of view. Rather, they are organized Islamic Jihadists who have responded to the call of ISIS leader "on Muslims around the world to rise up in arms" (L.381). On the other hand, when the Former CIA Chief of "the Bin Laden Issue Station," Michael Scheuer, advises President Obama to watch the battles in the Middle East from sidelines, his speech is described as "a truth that should be reflected over" (L.286). Similarly, the description of Islamic Jihadists' tactics as "eerily sophisticated" is considered an "educated comment and closer to the truth" (L.428). It becomes clear at this stage that ISIS judges any statement to be true if it only fits its agenda.

Moreover, the repetitive use of *truth* as an indication of ISIS' Islamic teachings has been successfully carried out. To illustrate, after a lengthy speech in which ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi, explains the importance of pledging allegiance to the State, he maintains that ISIS "is upon the clear truth and supported by Allah, the Mighty, the Strong" (L.1747-1748). He gives a similar talk in front of ISIS soldiers to assure them that they "are upon the truth" (L.1102). He also advises Mursi, the former Egyptian President, to "hold on to the truth"(L.1826-1827) and "declare the truth [Allah's] law obligates upon [him]" (L.1830). If one takes into consideration the fact that Islam is "the religion of truth"³⁹(Quran 9:33), then ISIS seems to be quite religious because truth has been emphasized in its discourse. However, the question one needs to ask in order to avoid being manipulated is: Is the truth that Allah describes in his Holy Book similar to that which ISIS seeks? After all, truth is an elusive term, and *Dabiq* producers make sure to keep it that way.

4.2.6.2. Victory.

Moving on to *victory*, it is employed 21 times in *Dabiq* chosen articles to convey one basic message, i.e., ISIS guarantees the protection of its citizens. As evidence, one of the very first articles published in *Dabiq* magazine informs the readers that "[t]riumph looms

³⁹ Author's translation

on the horizon" and that "the signs of victory have appeared" (L. 20). Even more surprisingly, the Islamic State alleges that it is "Allah [who] has blessed it with ...victory" (L.1394), without actually providing readers with any logical explanation why it believes itself to be Allah's chosen state. At first glance, this glittering generality seems to be successfully integrated into ISIS discourse because it addresses a wide range of readers whose meta-programs are directed toward rewards (Hogan, 2004), but ISIS spokesperson, al-Adnani, makes a grave mistake when defining *victory*. He says, "Being killed – according to [the State and its soldiers'] account – is a victory" (L.1619-1620). Logically speaking, being killed is not that appealing; so, *victory* can no longer be considered tempting enough to mesmerize audience.

In contrast, every *victory* achieved by other anti-ISIS parties is underrated in an attempt to suggest that it is not the kind of triumph audience should look for in comparison to that achieved by ISIS. For instance, if ISIS logic considers Israel as a historical enemy, then any victory against it should be welcomed, regardless of who achieves it or why. Yet, this is not the case as evident in the way ISIS describes Hezbollah's *victory* against Israel as a "so-called" (L.231) one. "So-called victory"! Who called it so? And why isn't ISIS' victory called so as well? Clearly, the adjective defining *victory* is meant to devoid this glittering generality from any constructive associations attached to it. Also, ISIS puts sarcasm into play to create the same effect. *Dabiq* declares that the Safawi's "much-vaunted victory" (L.443) over Biji has been crashed only one month later by ISIS fighters who reclaimed power over the territory. In brief, *victory* is appreciated if it is an achievement of the State and mocked if it is accomplished by its enemies.

4.2.6.3. Power and might.

Power and *might* come third, each observed 20 times in ISIS discourse to persuade the reader of its ability to take care of its own citizens. In fact, ISIS promises Muslims of "a

new era ...of might and dignity" (L.1) and emphasizes that "Muslims live in the territory of the Islamic State with might and honor" (L.1091). Furthermore, the numerous attacks that have been initiated against Western countries prove the "power [ISIS has] over men... on the other side of the world" (L.384-385). Despite the recognition of ISIS as "an incredibly powerful new threat" (L. 749-750) by some US politicians, it further looks for the fusion of several Islamic movements under the black flag to become "a force of immense power" (L.1154). Obviously, ISIS wants an exaggerated form of power that is incredible and immense to attract readers to come to its lands.

However, *power* means different things to different people (Standler, 2005); therefore, ISIS explains one aspect of this vague lexical item, i.e., its religious origins. *Dabiq* producers announce that the attacks of their Muslim fighters demonstrate two major teachings of Islam, namely, "the immense power that jihad wields over those who chose to embark upon its path" (L.378-379) and the "power of sincerity... granted by Allah to the slaves He has chosen" (L.905-906). In other words, this ambiguous lexical item has been highlighted by ISIS to mean "the true power [which] relies in the creed of tawhid⁴⁰ " and not that "in weaponry and technology" (L.253). In the view of what has been said, *power* has not been professionally dealt with as a glittering generality in ISIS discourse because glittering generalities should be left open-ended; otherwise, they lose their glamour. Thus, the kind of power ISIS elaborates on may act as a persuasive tool if it targets Muslim readers only who already believe in jihad and tawhid.

4.2.6.4. Honor and success.

Finally, *honor* and *success* are also summoned to a) draw a fascinating picture of the life audience could enjoy if they become members of the Islamic State and b) to brag about its achievements. To explain, ISIS says that *honor* will accompany Muslims, whether alive

⁴⁰ Believing in the oneness of God.

or dead. In the earthly life, Muslims "will walk everywhere as [masters], having honor, being revered, with [their] head[s] raised high and [their] dignity preserved" (L.4-5), and if they return to Allah as "shuhada"⁴¹(martyrs), [it would be] an incomparable honor which they ... desire" (L.539). Nevertheless, the talk about Shahada⁴² (martyrdom) might be encouraging for Muslims only, who already know about Allah's Heaven; otherwise, why would any human being wish to die?

A more persuasive use of this glittering generality alludes to how the enemies of the State perceive it as one that "enjoys success ... [and] attracts more to its fold, thereby causing expansion and breeding more success" (L.335-336). It seems that ISIS portrays itself as a materialization of Plato's imagined Utopia.

To summarize, the emphasis put on certain lexical items in ISIS propaganda plays a key role in the construction of its positive image as a State that deserves to be joined, for it is supported by Allah and supports its citizens. However, some of the previously discussed terms have been elaborated on by ISIS officials, causing these glittering generalities to occasionally lose their general meaning. This clearly marks ISIS' lack of professionalism in dealing with some propaganda strategies.

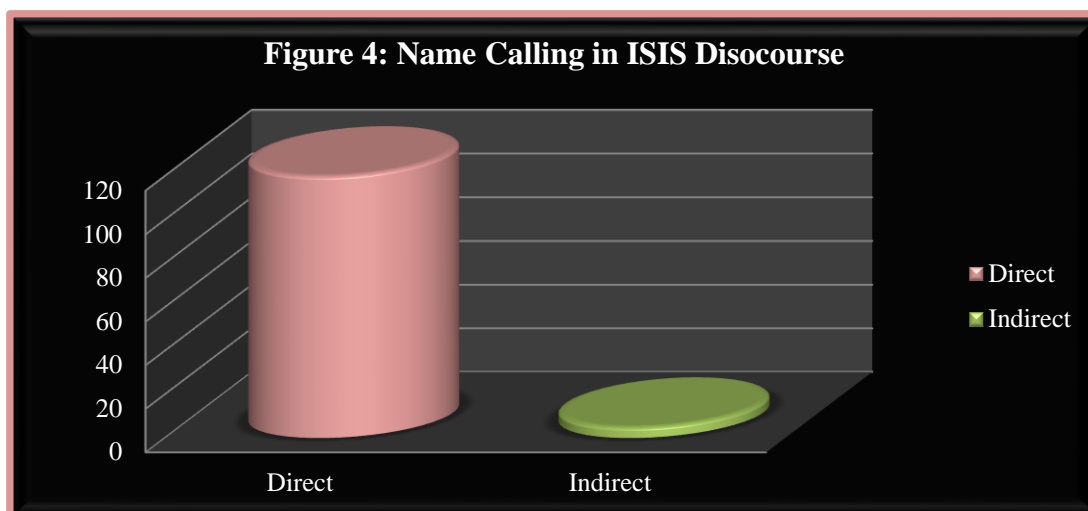
4.2.7. Name calling.

This technique of propaganda, with its direct and indirect subdivisions (Shabo, 2008), aims at establishing the inferiority of the opponent by "using negative words and bad names to create fear and dislike for people, ideas, or institutions" (iCivics, 2012, p.1) that the speaker disagrees with. Since ISIS is in conflict almost with everyone else, it is expected that it will exploit this technique to insult and underestimate the State's rivals; yet, the unexpected part is related to the degree to which ISIS does that directly, as shown in

⁴¹ The plural of "shadeed", one who is killed for the sake of Allah, defending his religion, country, or beliefs

⁴² Dying for God's sake while defending His religion.

the following figure:



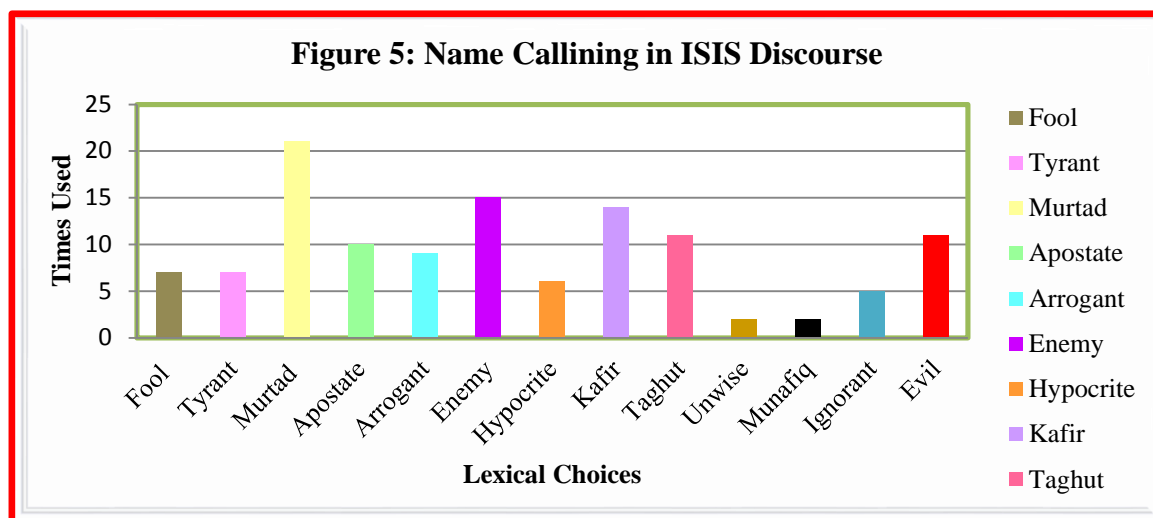
4.2.7.1. Indirect name calling.

Starting with the indirect method, it is mainly integrated into ISIS discourse to mock the Western definition of *peace*. Actually, the few incidents of indirect name calling in ISIS discourse are placed within scare quotes, which are "quotation marks used to express... skepticism or derision concerning the use of the enclosed word or phrase" (Scare Quotes, n.d.). To explain, when commenting on Japan's \$200 million aid to the US-led coalition, ISIS ironically remarks that "a 'pacifist' country [Japan] is led by a 'peace' prizewinner [Obama] in a war doomed to fail" (L.489-490). The appearance of antonyms (peace vs. war) in the same sentence raises doubts about whether these countries deserve the titles they have been given or not, especially in light of the dissonance between their words and deeds. To put it another way, ISIS questions one of the major characteristics that build the ethos of its enemies. These suspicions are based on one core question: why are pacifist countries engaged in war? Apparently, one cannot deny that such a simple argument is very persuasive, for it is ironic to find a "Nobel Peace Prize winner" (L.489&1168) leading the world to the total opposite.

4.2.7.2. Direct name calling.

As for the lexical choices that have contributed to the implementation of the direct

name calling strategy in ISIS discourse, they are demonstrated in the coming chart:



The lexical items are divided into three sets for a more profound analysis: a) words that have negative religious connotations, b) words that mock the mental abilities of ISIS' foes, and c) words that criticize their behavior.

4.2.7.2.1. Name calls that carry negative religious connotations.

First of all, there has been an emphasis on using adjectives like murtad⁴³, apostate, and kafir⁴⁴ to describe ISIS' enemies. These lexical items are part of the Islamic jargon that ISIS seeks to promote. "Murtad" and its English equivalent, "apostate," appear 31 times in the chosen excerpts to describe some political parties. These include the "PKK/Peshmerga murtaddin in both Iraq and Sham" (L.101), "the Houthi murtaddin in the city of Sanaa," (707) and the US "apostate allies"(L.883). To clarify things out, the mentioned allies are actually the Arab nations involved in the war waged against ISIS, as suggested by the cover of the ninth issue of *Dabiq* magazine from which this final quote is extracted. Also, the Jordanian pilot is represented as "murtad" (L.527) and Erdogan as an "apostate" (L.74). Believing that it is vastly superior in power, ISIS baldly threatens the positive face needs of its enemies. Thus, this set of name calls, which ISIS' enemies receive, is meant to

⁴³ The singular form of murtaddin: people who forsake in deed or word their former religion if they are originally Muslims.

⁴⁴ One who does not believe in the oneness of Allah, prophethood, and Shari'ah

accomplish three main effects: a) to practice power, b) evoke negative emotional feelings towards its opponents, and c) present a pretext to declare war against them under the banner of Islam

Similarly, Christians, whether foreigners or not, are all called "kuffar" (nonbelievers) 14 times in the chosen articles. For example, when reporting the assault on multinational foreigners at Bardo National Museum in Tunisia, *Dabiq* says that ISIS fighters have "poured terror on the kuffar inside, killing more than 20 of them and injuring a dozen others" (L.700-701). Likewise, the murdered Egyptian and Iraqi Copts are referred to as "kuffar" (L.641), although other Christians within ISIS' territory are called "Ahlul-Kitab" (L.1281). Probably, the Islamic State tries to validate its attacks against the Copts by informing Muslim readers that its actions are simply the State's duty as an "Islamic" organization rather than an act of terrorism, as the West propagates.

Yet, vigilant readers should raise a focal question: what is ISIS' definition of *murtad* and *kafir*? The Academy of the Arabic Language (2004), which is one of the most popular Arabic dictionaries, defines *murtad* as a person who abandons his/her religion (p.338); however, the groups ISIS name calls have never declared their desertion of Islam or conversion to another religion. Furthermore, *kafir* is a term used to describe a person who does not believe in the oneness of God (The Academy of the Arabic Language, 2004, p.791), but Christians are called "Ahlu al-Kitab" in the Holy Quran. Still, the most unexpected and unexplained claim ISIS presents is that "by fighting the Islamic State, you fall into kufr whether you realize it or not" (L. 1239-1240), as if ISIS is Islam itself. At this point, one may realize that the State's argument is not consistently logical.

4.2.7.2.2. Name calls that mock the mental abilities of ISIS' enemies.

The second set of name calls, which appears 14 times in ISIS discourse, mocks the judgmental capabilities and sense of the State's enemies. It includes certain lexical choices

such as *fool*, *ignorant*, and *unwise*. As evidence, Obama's refusal to release Muslims from American prisons in exchange of James Foley is looked at as an action of an "arrogant, foolish, and defeated ... government [that has] turned away from ... [its] citizen with apathy" (L.136-137). Likewise, the \$200 million aid that Japan Prime Minister, Abe Shinzo, has offered to the US government highlights the "foolishness" (L.518) and the "infamously unwise announcement [Japan has made] against the Islamic State" (L.524), an announcement similar to that carried out by his predecessor, "the unwise Prime Minister Juichiro Koizumi," (L.477) who has provided "logistical support for the Western crusaders against Afghanistan" (L.478). In addition, the Sawafis⁴⁵ have "succeeded in deluding their ignorant supporters into believing that they ... [have driven] out the mujahidin [from Biji]" (L. 448-449) even though they actually have not. All in all, whether it is the US, Japan, or Safawis that ISIS insults publically, the aim is to persuade audience that the actions of these opposing parties are not the result of profound thinking, rather the lack of logic, experience, and wisdom. Still, attacking the other party verbally may be looked at as a defense strategy. It is similar to what children do when asked about the wrong they have done; they always tend to project their wrongdoings onto someone else. The question is then: does ISIS project its hidden characteristics onto its enemies?

4.2.7.2.3. Name calls that question the behavior of ISIS' enemies.

The last set of adjectives, which includes "tyrant, taghut, hypocrite, and arrogant," questions the credibility of those whom these adjectives describe and gives a justification for waging war against them. To begin with, ISIS despises "the most vile tyrants in the Middle East" (L.432), especially the "tyrannical rule" (L.787) of Bashar al-'Asad and "Maliki's Shia tyranny"(L.278). Unsurprisingly, the Arabic equivalent of tyrant is utilized to describe King Abdullah as "the taghut⁴⁶ of Jordan" (L.533) and Shenouda as "the taghut

⁴⁵A derogatory term used to refer to Shi'a Muslims, specifically Iranian ones.

⁴⁶Tyrant

of the Copts" (L.649). Both words stress the cruelty and injustice practiced by rulers over their nations (Tyrrant, n.d.; The Academy of Arabic Language, 2004, p.558). This cruelty seems to be a good excuse for targeting them from ISIS' perspective. Obviously, one cannot but notice that Arab political and religious figures are the only ones meant to be characterized as dictators. This is not random; actually, such a presentation suggests that the State, as a major power in the Middle East, can become an alternative for these regimes at a later stage of the argumentation.

The list of insults goes on and on to portray the other negatively in all possible manners. Arab countries have been accused of hypocrisy, and non-Arab powers are suggested to be acting arrogantly. To demonstrate, in response to adh-Dhawahiri's, the current leader of al-Qaeda, statement against ISIS' attacks on Houthi temples in Sanaa and Sa'dah⁴⁷, ISIS states, "When one contrasts this blessed operation with al-Qaeda's attack on a Houthi rally in Tahrir Square in Sanaa last fall, the blatant hypocrisy becomes evident." Clearly, ISIS exposes adh-Dhawahiri's inconsistent opinion to the reader since he rationalizes the bombing of "a Houthi rally in a public square, but forbid[s] for the Islamic State to bomb a Houthi gathering in a Houthi temple" (L. 724-725). In general, hypocrites or two-faced people are not considered a credible source of information (Cialdini, 2007); therefore, their statements are not taken seriously. This is exactly what ISIS seeks to achieve, i.e., to refute the accusations pressed against it from al-Qaeda leaders. Even though ISIS was once called al-Qaeda Group of Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers (Bunt, 2009), it now has the power to criticize their originators simply because their opinions no longer match those of ISIS.

Moreover, ISIS wants to "humiliate the arrogance of [the] Japanese government" (L.501-502) and is surprised to find that "[t]he arrogant US government [has] paid no attention to the offer nor to the threats" (L.149) of the Islamic State. Usually, arrogant

⁴⁷ Yemini cities

individuals tend to adopt "an insulting way of thinking or behaving that comes from believing that [they] are better, smarter, or more important than other people" (Arrogant, n.d.). So, ISIS does not seem to accept the ego-centrism of powerful Western governments whose "own arrogance and inability to learn the lessons of the past" (L.332) have put them in critical positions. In order to teach them a lesson, some British and American prisoners are kept "in the cells of the Islamic State, only after their governments arrogantly [have] refused to release [ISIS] imprisoned brothers" (L. 142-143). In other words, the mistakes that some governments make due to their arrogance cost their nations a lot, thus, should not be supported. Briefly, such characteristics that ISIS uses to refer to its enemies with all the negative denotations and connotations they hold are the exact opposite of what a ruler should look like. Yet, by labeling others and disrespecting them verbally, it seems that ISIS itself acts arrogantly. What an irony!

To summarize, regardless of which offensive word ISIS selects to insult its rivals, the recurring aims are always the same. First, name calling creates a "negative-other presentation" (Van Dijk, 1997a), which indirectly indicates that the speaker has what it takes to fill in the gaps that its opponent cannot. Second, it advises the reader to reconsider the ethos of certain public figures. Third, these accusations cause direct damage to their opponents' positive face needs, which might be a sign of ISIS self-proclaimed power because there is no other reason that explains the impoliteness practiced in ISIS discourse, as will be proven in the politeness section.

4.2.8. False dilemma.

Even though false dilemma has not been majorly incorporated into ISIS discourse, there are few occasions in which it has. These target two groups of audience: Muslims and the US. Muslims are asked to support ISIS whereas the US is advised to agree to a truce with

the State. Both aims are presented by providing audience with a less likable opinion next to the one ISIS wishes its audience to perform.

4.2.8.1. *Either a supporter or an uncommitted Muslim.*

To start with, *Dabiq* mentions the negative effects of not pledging allegiance to the State, obeying its leader, and immigrating to its lands. For example, ISIS quotes Omar Bin al-Khatib saying, "There is no Islam except with jama'ah [Muslim group], and no jama'ah except with imarah (leadership), and no imarah except with ta'ah (obedience)" (L.1440-1442). ISIS clearly creates the following equation: Muslims + leadership + obedience = Islam. If a person misses any of the three elements, he/she cannot be considered a true Muslim. So, if Muslims do not stick to the larger group of Muslims, then they cannot be considered true Muslims. The same rhetoric is used to discuss the significance of obeying the State's leader. Linguistically speaking, the no- A-except- with-B structure expresses the exclusion of B after the negative generalizations made before A. Repeating the same structure three times in a row emphasizes the three pillars of Islam, as ISIS suggests. Consequently, either Muslims abide by these three elements or they will not be following true Islam. The second option is definitely the less tempting option because not following Islam, for Muslims, has extremely negative consequences. However, vigilant Muslims know that being or not being a Muslim is something to be decided by Allah only.

In a similar manner, al-Baghdadi states that "either one performs hijrah to the wilayat (states) of the Khilafah or...he must attack the crusaders, their allies, the Rafidah⁴⁸, the tawaghit, and their apostate forces" (L. 1023-1025). The *either-or* conjunctive structure suggests that Muslims face two uninviting options here: to immigrate to ISIS lands or to put their lives at jeopardy by attacking ISIS's cons. Of course, the first option seems to be the lesser of the two evils. Apparently, ISIS seeks support, but the false dilemma strategy is

⁴⁸ An Islamic term which refers in a derogatory way to those who, in the opinion of the person using the term, reject legitimate Islamic authority and leadership

not professionally tailed into its discourse, for there is no striking difference between the two presented options to encourage the reader to take an action. Not to mention the very fact that the tone with which ISIS orders Muslims to do certain things and to avoid others is not inviting by any means. People, after all, do not like to be pushed into something.

4.2.8.2. Either a truce or a war.

Nevertheless, false dilemma does a good job promoting a truce between the US and ISIS. *Dabiq* writes, "Either one side emerges victorious while the other is vanquished, or some kind of truce is reached" (L.857-858). The *either-or* structure appears once again so as to inform the addressee that the US and its allies have two options to choose from: to enter a war against the State or to declare a truce. In war, both sides lose regardless of who conquers whom because both sacrifice the lives of their nations, burden their national economy, and most importantly, abandon their sense of humanity. Yet, reaching a political treaty, as a temporal solution, gives them the chance to weigh their losses and gains in order to decide on the right course. Clearly, reaching a truce seems to be far more sensible than pursuing a war that has been going on for awhile right now. In fact, ISIS states that "at some point the only option left will be an offer of a truce" (L.813) because other attempts to conquer ISIS militarily, financially, and media wise have all gone in vain. The placement of the adjective *only* right before *option* eliminates one of the false dilemma two alternatives, as if it is a must for the US and the West to adopt that one and only option. By the same token, ISIS declares that "Iran will never be a bigger problem than ISIS unless the West enters into a truce with the Islamic State" (L. 255-256). The use of the conjunction *unless* to link the main and the subordinate clauses means that if the West ignores a truce with ISIS, it will become their biggest problem in the Middle East, one that is even bigger than the ever-lasting disagreement with Iran. Simply put, this persuasive strategy has been wisely used to convince the US and its allies of the necessity of reaching a truce.

4.2.8.3. *Either here or there.*

The third example shows how ISIS exposes the false dilemma statements used by its opponents, ironically using the same strategy. After the 9/11 attacks, President George Bush has initiated a war-on-terror campaign, which has been justified by the "if we don't fight them there we'll have to fight them here reasoning" (L.365-366). This influential announcement activates a type-one-conditional tense, which originally explains actions that are likely to happen. So, Bush's interpretation is based on the possibility that if the US does not move its forces to the terrorists' lands, terrorists will come to fight the US on its own land. It should be noted that the spatial deictic expressions *here* and *there* refer to the inevitability of fighting terrorists wherever they are. Still, doing the dirty work outside the US territories was considered the better option back in 2001. In ISIS' case, however, this reasoning is "shown to have completely failed" (L.366) because the US is both leading a coalition against ISIS on ISIS' territorial claims and receiving strikes on its own lands. In other words, fighting is going on both sides: here and there. Therefore, ISIS proves that Bush's reasoning has expired. To establish a better argument, ISIS refers to Michael Scheuer's statement. The Former CIA Chief of the Bin Laden Issue Station says, "We are on the way to a world war that the United States will have to fight at home and abroad if the foreign-policy status quo is retained" (L.399-401). That is to say that if the US does not stop sticking its nose into other countries' political affairs, a world war will be just around the corner. The latter choice is certainly nobody's favorite. Unsurprisingly, ISIS does not declare that explicitly, rather, finds someone else to send its message, someone American who attacks America using the same persuasive strategy it has used to defend itself. Pretty Clever!

In conclusion, the correlative conjunction *either-or* and type one conditional have linguistically helped ISIS practice false dilemma to achieve three main purposes: a) to

persuade Muslims to come to the State, b) to tell the US that a truce is possible at this stage but not in the future, and c) to turn the table on Bush's war-on-terror logic.

4.2.9. Bandwagon.

Even though it is probably the least persuasive technique implemented in ISIS discourse, the bandwagon strategy has been wisely used to promote ISIS quick geographical expansion. In order to convince readers of joining its ranks, ISIS suggests that everyone is pledging allegiance to it and fighting for its sake all around the globe. As evidence, *Dabiq* states that "huge swathes of Pakistan, Nigeria, Libya, Yemen, and the Sinai Peninsula are all now united under the black flag of tawhid" (L.1124-1126). "All of them [have] announced uniformly ...[that they wish to hold firmly to the rope of Allah]"⁴⁹ (Quran 3:103). Similar assertions about the huge territories under the State's control are replicated seven times throughout the chosen data to indicate "the support of the masses" (L. 1345). Clearly, the use of the adjective *huge*, the quantifier *all*, and the plural noun *masses* is meant to show that the number of fighters recruited by ISIS is growing fast and furious. However, ISIS expansion in Asia and Africa does not seem to satisfy its thirst for power. Rather, it is becoming a global phenomenon that infiltrates many Western countries and brags about its "foreign fighters travel[ing] everywhere, from Europe, to the United States, to Australia" (L.842) for the sake of standing with the Islamic State against their countries of origin. Clearly, the indefinite pronoun *everywhere* aims at showing readers that ISIS is actually remaining and expanding, as its motto suggests. In its attempt to sound even more credible, ISIS quotes its enemies to confirm the previously stated allegations. For instance, the former CIA intelligence officer, Gary Bernsten, is referred to saying, "ISIS has been brilliant at selling itself to the hundreds of millions of people out there looking for a message" (L. 1166-1167). So, when ISIS stresses the fact that such great

⁴⁹ The verse is translated by ISIS (L. 1776-1778).

numbers of people back it up, readers will be more encouraged to jump on the bandwagon; otherwise, they will be left alone.

Yet, in order not to fall into the trap of this persuasive technique, one must always remember two points. First, throughout its general talk about its followers, ISIS has not provided the reader with any actual numerical evidence for the accumulating masses that it claims to have attracted. To be fair, it has done so only once when stating that "[a]ccording to Western media, the Islamic State now boasts over 35,000 fighters" (L.389-390). Obviously, 35,000 means nothing to the overall population of the planet. Second, majority does not necessarily reflect righteous actions.

4.2.10. Card stacking.

Based on the analysis in the previous sections, one can conclude that ISIS leaves no room for any negative-self representation to appear in its propaganda. After all, the reputation of "the one and only Islamic state" must not be tarnished. It is even noticed that none of ISIS' opposing perspectives are given priority unless they are in favor of the State. As a result, *Dabiq* magazine is mainly based on card stacking propaganda because it either doesn't cite the other side of the issue or downplays it. Since it is impossible to track every single piece of information provided in *Dabiq* magazine, only few examples will be discussed below. These include some weak or de-contextualized hadiths that aim at manipulating readers to see Islam through ISIS' eyes as explained beneath.

First of all, ISIS' continuous talk about the obligatory nature of their call to hijrah turns a blind eye to other hadiths that refute its allegations (L.27, 1012, 1017, 1020, 1027, 1326, 1464, & 1508). Basically, the State's main defense counts on one of Prophet Muhammad's reports in which he states that "[h]ijrah will not cease to exist until repentance ceases to be accepted, and repentance will not cease to be accepted until the sun rises from the West" (L.995-996). Yet, there are other hadiths kept under wraps which seem to challenge the

previously mentioned evidence. For example, Prophet Muhammad himself says, "There is no hijrah after the Conquest of Mecca, but there is jihad and good intentions. If you are called to jihad, you should immediately respond" (Al-Bukhari, 2002, p.689). To reconcile these seemingly conflicting texts, scholars have talked about the importance of circumstances in determining whether migration is or is not obligatory. The former hadith necessitates Muslims to migrate for fear of inability to perform religious practices or fear of getting one's self and family harmed as in the case of the first migration to Abyssinia. At the early stages of Islam, Muslims were extremely tortured by the tribes of Mecca, so Prophet Muhammad asked them to seek refuge to Abyssinia⁵⁰, whose monarch was known for his justice and tolerance (Ibn Ishaq, 2004). It should be noticed that Muslims did not immigrate to any Islamic country because there was none; rather, they chose a place where they can live peacefully. The second hadith, however, refers to the famous hijrah to Medina. It was obligatory when Muslims could not practice their religion in Mecca. Yet, after the Conquest of Mecca, migration was no longer necessary. In both cases, the Islamic law concerning migration was determined by one major factor, i.e., the ability to practice one's religion. Hence, the compulsion to migrate cannot be generalized as ISIS claims. Consequently, readers should be quite vigilant when reading *Dabiq* magazine because it is an excellent example of a systematic propaganda that reflects the perspectives of ISIS and stretches the truth to suit its agendas.

Furthermore, in an attempt to validate the burning of the Jordanian pilot, *Dabiq* mentions several incidents about Prophet Muhammad's companions burning people. Yet, there are really important pieces of information that *Dabiq* has decided not to point out. To clarify things out, Prophet Muhammad himself, as narrated by Abu Hurairah, has asked his companions to burn two people, but he has quickly changed his mind and said, "I [have]

⁵⁰ Today's Ethiopia

commanded you to burn So and so, and So and so. But verily no one punishes with fire except Allah. So if you find them, execute them" (Al-Bukhari, 2002, p.729). Accordingly, one of the two sources of the Islamic law prohibits burning, but why does *Dabiq* only recite half of the hadith and does not even elaborate on it? In fact, the hadith is mentioned only so as to be refuted in the next couple pages. Still, the State's refutation is misleading as explained later on. The story about Abu Bakir as-Siddiq, one of the four rightly-guided Caliphs, burning al-Fuja'ah (L.599-605) is not soundly narrated. After studying all the narrations about this incident, Isma'il Rudwan (2005) concludes that all have weak chains due to the main reporter of the incident, 'Ulwan Bin Dawood, who is discarded in hadith. Likewise, the story of Khalid Bin al-Waleed burning apostates is told by Saif Bin 'Amr, whose reports are considered weak by the majority of the Islamic scholars (Al-Maqrizi, 1994). Put briefly, the different incidents that ISIS focuses on are either weak or de-contextualized, and without digging deeper Muslims will probably believe the ideas ISIS sells.

4.2.11. Conclusion.

The prolonged analysis of ISIS' texts answers the first two questions of the study and reveals that each persuasive strategy conveys several pragmatic meanings with the help of specific linguistic elements.

Questions: 1. Which of the ten investigated persuasion techniques appear in ISIS' magazine?

2. What are the ideas ISIS tries to convince readers with?

Answer: First of all, the *comparison* principle takes advantage of figurative language to compare the State's escalating power to a rolling snowball and a marching wildfire while attributing animalistic features to the enemies of the State. Pragmatically speaking, ISIS indirectly suggests that it has a) the ability to stand up for any defying power and b) the

legitimacy to kill any opposing nation. The **contrast** strategy, however, draws attention to the difference between the Islamic jargon adopted by ISIS (such as *zakah* and *jizyah*) and the constitutional terminology (like *taxes* and *crimes*) of other Arab countries ruled by Muslims. Antonyms and conjunctions have also stressed the lack of harmony between the stated beliefs of ISIS' enemies and their actual doings on the ground, which definitely questions their credibility and logical sense. Second, the **reciprocity** technique depends on revenge-related phrases (such as in retribution for and an indictment of) to express ISIS' attacks against opposing countries as a retaliatory reaction rather than an initiative action. The coordination of two propositions with inverted arguments has also explained the strong relationship ISIS claims to have with Allah and the one it seeks to have with all Muslims. In other words, *Dabiq* validates killing as a self-defense tactic and presents itself as the chosen Islamic State which can defend all Muslims under its umbrella. Third, the **authority** principle relies mainly on the religious and political intertextuality in ISIS discourse. On the one hand, Quran and Sunnah are quoted to rationalize the wrongdoings of the State. On the other hand, the statements of several US political figures, which are packed with intensifiers and superlative adjectives, are summoned to highlight the State's superior status as the best Sunni, political organization history has ever witnessed. Moreover, this persuasive strategy exposes the lack of unity among the US officials, for some under-estimate ISIS, while other over-estimate it.

Fourth, the repetition of certain ideas, like the obligation to perform hijrah and the supremacy of ISIS, is the pivot around which the **consistency** strategy revolves. However, this technique cannot be studied in isolation from the previously mentioned principles. Fifth, the **liking** technique, which is probably the least implemented in the State's discourse, includes some sarcastic punch-lines that mock President Obama's "senseless" argumentation and his inability to learn from the mistakes of his predecessors. Thus, *Dabiq*

indirectly questions whether President Obama has what it takes to fill his position. In addition, the endearing inclusive pronoun, *our*, and some family-associated terms have been minimally integrated into ISIS discourse in an attempt to lessen the distance and formality between the State and Muslim readers. Sixth, the positive connotations attributed to certain ambiguous lexical items (like *truth*, *victory*, and *power*) are the essence of ***glittering generalities***. By keeping most, but not all, of these glittering generalities undefined, ISIS appeals to the desires and emotions of its audience, calling them all to enjoy the gains and victories of the State. Seventh, both direct and indirect ***name calling*** tactics have been used to scold ISIS' rivals and to raise doubts about their logic and credibility. Nevertheless, the foul language which is used to address Arab countries holds negative religious connotations, which in turn implicitly gives ISIS the right to attack them under the banner of Islam.

Eighth, without the correlative conjunction *either...or* and the subordinating conjunction *unless*, the persuasive strategy of ***false dilemma*** couldn't have materialized. Even though it is not the most professionally used technique in *Dabiq*, its employment to turn the table against Bush's "if we don't fight them there, we'll fight them here" reasoning is brilliant. ISIS argues that the current situation shows that the US is both fighting on its land and abroad; therefore, if a truce is not reached, a new world war might be the less tempting option. Ninth, the geographical expansion of the State is mainly expressed through the use of the ***bandwagon*** strategy. Some generic terms (like *everyone* and *everywhere*) and certain quantifiers (such as *most* and *all*) have indicated that huge numbers of Muslims from all over the world are pledging allegiance to the State, thus, adding to its power. Finally, ***card stacking***, or as Shabo (2008) calls it "the sin of omission" (p.27), has mainly manipulated religious quotes to serve ISIS' purposes; these include encouraging Muslims to immigrate to the State and convincing them of the

morality of killing enemies in all possible manners. All in all, the different techniques of persuasion and propaganda glorify ISIS' image while criticizing that of its enemies. The State's talk plays on the Aristotelian typology of logos, ethos, and pathos to persuade audience of four main ideas: a) the religious and political power of the State, b) the importance of supporting it by all available means, c) the righteousness of murder and war, and d) the lack of logic, credibility, and unity of the enemies of the State.

4.3. Politeness in ISIS Discourse

In this section, the different speeches of ISIS leaders, which are mentioned in *Dabiq* magazine, are dissected to figure out which politeness strategies they rely on. In addition, the connections among politeness, power, and persuasion will be drawn out.

4.3.1. Introduction.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is crucial for understanding the language of persuasion and power in ISIS political discourse due to two main reasons. First, the final stage of persuasion "should be handled tactfully so as to redress the face-threatening act" (Zheng, 2015, p.1471); otherwise, hearers will not be encouraged to buy what the speaker sells. Second, power is one of the three major factors that help speakers to find out the weightiness of their FTAs, hence, decide whether to adopt or disregard politeness strategies. In the following sections, certain excerpts from *Dabiq* magazine, which are simply transcribed speeches given by ISIS officials, are examined to find out which of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies are used, who are the addressed audiences, and why such choices have been made. Yet, it should be noted that not all strategies are examined, rather the ones which are directly related to the topic of our study about persuasion and power.

4.3.2. Bald on-record politeness.

If the speaker's (S) priority is directed towards achieving maximally efficient

communication rather than satisfying the hearer's (H) face needs, then the non-redressive bald on-record strategy will inevitably pop out in one's interactions. In ISIS case, this strategy emerges when addressing the Islamic State citizens and soldiers, especially after considering the minimal danger attributed to their face and the power difference between S and H.

4.3.2.1. Minimal danger attributed to H's face.

The first reason why ISIS discourse relies on the bald on-record politeness is related to one of Brown and Levinson's FTAs weighing factors, i.e. the risk of imposition (R). Giving the hearer some sympathetic advice or warning minimizes R's weight. As a result, it does not necessitate the speaker to redress his FTAs, for there are other demands in his/her communication that override face concerns (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.98). Let's consider the following example:

Example (1)

Be patient and firm, and be cautious, for the enemies of Allah are mobilizing, thundering, increasing, and threatening the people of Mosul. We believe that their mobilization will be for ar-Raqqah and Halab before Mosul. So be cautious. (L.1097-1100)

This part from al-Baghdadi's speech comes after elaborating on the Rafidah's⁵¹ cruelty in slaughtering Sunnis due to some religious differences between the two parties. As a result, al-Baghdadi articulates his concern about ISIS citizens by a) advising them not to lose patience and b) warning them about the possible attacks against ISIS cities in Syria before those in Iraq. He also wishes them to "be firm" and to watch their backs "cautious[ly]" in the coming period. While doing so, ISIS leader has got directly to the

³³. A derogatory term used by Sunni Muslims to refer to Shia because they do not believe in Omar, Abu Bakr, and Uthman as the successors of Prophet Muhammad. The word literally means "rejectors."

point, been truthful to his nation, and spoken as clearly as possible. In other words, al-Baghdadi has followed Grice's conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner to express sympathy towards his people, even if baldly, because he is more worried about saving their lives than saving their face. Is al-Baghdadi a caring leader? Or is it just a means to deceive his followers into believing that he does? Either way, al-Baghdadi acts as expected because without the respect of the few followers he has, ISIS will be in a critical position.

4.3.2.2. Power difference between S and H.

The second case in which ISIS officials have decided to activate this non-redressive strategy is "where S's want to satisfy H's face is minimal... because S is powerful and does not fear retaliation or non-cooperation from H" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.97).

Example (2)

We also announce the acceptance of bay'at⁵² given by the groups and individuals in all of those mentioned wilayat [states] and others. We ask every individual amongst them to join the closest wilayah [state] to him, and to hear and obey the wali [governor] appointed by us for it. (L.1785-1788)

Several factions in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Indonesia, Nigeria and elsewhere have decided to pledge allegiance to the State; hence, they have actually vowed to become its servants. This procedure is similar to the enlistment oath taken by armed forces in most of the world's countries, by which soldiers swear to follow orders and be faithful to their countries. ISIS leader is aware of the fact that he has the upper hand in this communication, thus, puts his FTAs baldly on-record. He commands these newcomers to "hear" and "obey" their assigned governor. They in turn are not expected to argue because

⁵² An Islamic system according to which certain certain people are elected to lead Muslims

each participant knows his position in this kind of interactions where power and social distance stand as determining factors of how each of S and H should speak.

To conclude, risk, distance, and power have helped al-Baghdadi to decide how to structure his talk. On the one hand, ISIS power has materialized discursively by choosing the most direct way of doing FTAs, especially when addressing hearers of a lower military status. On the other hand, advising and warning ISIS citizens have lowered the risk of al-Baghdadi's FTAs. Obviously, the bald on-record talk has been appropriately integrated into ISIS discourse.

4.3.3. Positive politeness.

Appealing to H's want to be thought of as desirable might be a key element in persuading him/her of something for S's interest (Ervin-Tripp, Guo, & Lambert, 1990). *Dabiq* magazine exploits this correlation between politeness and persuasion to send several messages to the Islamic world. To achieve such a goal, ISIS has incorporated three main positive politeness sub-strategies: using in-group identity markers, presupposing common ground, and assuming reciprocity with H.

4.3.3.1. Use in-group identity markers.

By claiming in-group solidarity with audience, "S may evoke all the shared associations and attitudes that he/[she] and H have toward [certain objects or ideas]" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 111). This professed similarity between H and S can be taken as a departure point to convince H of the appropriateness of S's request. For example, *Dabiq* magazine and ISIS leaders use in-group address forms, jargon, and deictic expressions to soften their FTAs carried against Muslim audience; therefore, their requests become more polite and in turn more persuasive.

Example (3)

O brothers in creed... O people of *wala'* and *bara'*⁵³... O patrons of the Islamic State... O you who have given *bay'ah* to the Khalifah (Caliph) Ibrahim everywhere... O you who have loved the Islamic State... O you who support the Khilafah... Your state is facing a new campaign by the crusaders... O *muwahhid*, we call you up to defend the Islamic State. (L.1869-1876)

When speaking to the State's supporters living in countries involved in the coalition waging war against ISIS, al-Adnani (ISIS spokesperson) repeatedly uses the in-group address form "brothers" and packs his talk with Islamic terminology (such as *wala'*, *bara'*, *bay'ah*, and *muwahhid*), which can be understood by Muslim audience only. All this seems to be a successful attempt to lessen the distance between himself and the addressee; therefore, the weightiness of his coming FTAs is also lowered. To illustrate, when ISIS leader presents his final request, i.e., to "defend the Islamic State", it does not seem to be power-backed; rather, it is what members of the same group do to each other. After all, they are all in the same boat, facing the same enemy and clinging to the same values and wants. At least, this is what al-Adnani believes in or pretends to believe in.

Example (4)

Soon, by Allah's permission, a day will come when the Muslim will walk everywhere ...being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to harm him will be cut off. So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. (L.3-7)

At the end of his speech about the glory that ISIS will bring to the Islamic world, al-Adnani adds the inclusive personal deictic expression "we" to invite H to share him this

⁵³ It is an Islamic term which means supporting anything that pleases Allah and fighting anything against his teaching. Its literal translation is "loyalty and disavowal."

promising future. Once again, he does not speak from a position of power but from a rank equal to that of his audience, which in turn lessens the risk of imposition and the overall weightiness of his FTA. As a result, asking Muslims to "remove the garments of dishonor and shake of the dust of humiliation and disgrace" (L.17-18) should not be perceived as an impolite gesture by hearers, since they have already been considered insiders and informed about the advantages of being so. Rather, al-Adnani encourages supporters to move one step further so as for the Islamic world to retain its reputation as a strong nation.

4.3.3.2. Presuppose common ground.

Stalnaker's (1974) common ground theory of presupposition asserts that for interlocutors to interpret the speaker's utterances correctly, they need to have shared knowledge with him/her, which may rise from sharing the same community or building on preceding conversations with him/her. When S alludes to these presuppositions, he/she is actually highlighting the similarity between the speaker and the hearer, which eventually adds to S's likable characteristics that might be involved in carrying out a successful persuasive conversation (Cialdini, 2007). In addition, assuming that S is aware of H's wants, values and attitudes stands as a sign of keeping up with H's news and paying attention to his/her life. Al-Adnani uses this technique once to send a message to the former Egyptian president, Muhammad Morsi. The message, however, is too long to add here; therefore, it is cut down. For better insight, see (Appendix A, L.1892-1923).

Example (5)

I ask Allah to relieve you of your suffering, guide your heart, and rectify for you your religion and worldly affair... So I say, you dealt with the secularists...with the crusaders...with the Americans...with the Israelis...with Mubarak's army...and with the floggers from the Interior Ministry ...So what was the result? Today you are in a great tribulation...So do not be slack in supporting the religion and raising the rule of

the Shari'ah. Remember the stance of the Imam of Ahlus-Sunnah, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (rahimahullah) when he refused to turn back from the truth, so Allah kept the Ummah firm by him thereafter. And if you continue on in what you are currently upon, then Allah knows best how you will end up. (L.1812-1841)

Even though al-Adnani wants to rebuke Morsi for his cooperation with numerous countries and political parties that have participated in the killing of innocent Muslims over the years, he still does not perform his FTAs baldly so as not to upset Morsi's followers. Instead, al-Adnani employs several positive politeness strategies to give his talk an impression of advising rather than ordering. At the beginning of the message, Morsi is respectfully called by his academic title (*Dr.*), unlike the way ISIS addresses foreigner presidents. Then, S shows sympathy towards H, asking Allah to "relieve [him] of [his] suffering" and "rectify... [his] religion." This necessarily presents two main presuppositions: Morsi is actually suffering and he is not acting as a confirmed Muslim leader. To explain, this message was sent in February, 2015, in the same month when the Egyptian court decided to deliver a verdict about Morsi's trial on April 21. So, al-Adanani makes sure that Morsi knows that he is aware of the latter's hardship. Yet at the same time, he makes clear that Morsi's failure to act as a Muslim leader is the only reason behind this hardship. Being the leader of the Freedom and Justice Party, as well as having another political affiliation towards the Muslim Brotherhood, requires Morsi to hold on to certain religious beliefs, something that he fails to accomplish when deciding to work with the enemy. So, if things had gone the other way round, Morsi wouldn't have ended up being imprisoned.

So, after showing deference, expressing sympathy, and establishing common ground with Morsi, al-Adnani invites Morsi to go back on track, "supporting [his] religion" and "raising the rule of Shari'ah." ISIS leader also refers to an incident about Imam Ahmad Ibn

Hanbal,⁵⁴ in which he has hold into the truth in the face of Abbasid caliphs, assuming that Morsi's knowledge of Islam can help him relate. This allusion, however, is not about what Imam Ahmad has done but about what Morsi should do. Then comes the second threat which is identified linguistically by the use of *if conditional type zero*. Al-Adnani tells Morsi that if he continues the same way he is, "Allah knows best how [he] will end up." Morsi and al-Adnani's Allah is allegedly the same. So, instead of informing Morsi about the awful outcome of his wrongdoings, the former relies on their shared knowledge of Allah's punishment methods. All in all, al-Adnani's message to Morsi heavily praises the latter's face just before threatening it.

4.3.3.3. *Assume reciprocity.*

"S may convey his cooperation with H by indicating that he believes reciprocity to be prevailing between H and himself, that they are somewhat locked into a state of mutual helping" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 125). As a result, S may tell H that "if you do X for me, I will do Y for you." This politeness strategy is directly correlated to the reciprocity principle which has been discussed earlier in the study.

Example (6)

So guarantee for us two matters, and we will guarantee you – by Allah's permission – constant victory and consolidation. First, do not oppress anyone nor be content with oppression by being silent about it and not raising the matter to those in authority.

Second, do not become conceited or arrogant. This is what we fear from you and fear for you. (L.1601-1605)

When addressing the soldiers of the State to congratulate them for their success in the battle field, al-Adnani asks them to keep the State updated about the oppression happening

⁵⁴ Imam Bin Hanbal was known for his opposition to the Abbasside Caliph, Al-Ma'mun, who created an era of religious persecution according to which religious scholars were punished or killed if they opposed the Caliph's doctrine of the created nature of the Quran.

within its borders and to avoid arrogance in order for him to guarantee them victory and consolidation. If one cannot maintain these two conditions, ISIS will deal with him/her differently. This cooperative principle is also stated in other parts of *Dabiq* magazine, as explained in the following statement. "You depend on [the Islamic State] and it depends on you" (L. 1747). Briefly, by doing good to H and expecting him/her to reciprocate, ISIS does not actually violate politeness principles.

Simply put, positive politeness strategies have appeared in ISIS discourse to communicate with Muslim hearers only. In- group identity markers and the reciprocity principle have intended to persuade ISIS soldiers and supporters to work for the benefit of their state. As for the presupposition of common ground, it has softened al-Adnani's FTAs when asking the former Egyptian president, Muhammad Morsi, to act in accordance with the Islamic teachings and values by facing the unjust new rulers of the country in his upcoming trial.

4.3.4. Off-record politeness.

By going off-record, which is classified as the most redressive politeness strategy, speakers enjoy many benefits; for example, "[they] can get the credit for being tactful, non-coercive..., and [they] can avoid responsibility for the potentially face-damaging interpretation" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.71). Consequently, it is unsurprising to figure out that ISIS heavily employs this technique to ask Muslims to perform certain actions in support of the Islamic State using only one sub-strategy, i.e., rhetorical questions. It should be noted, however, that some scholars might consider the following examples as a demonstration of negative politeness strategies. Still, since al-Baghdadi's speech has the format of a monologue, which does not allow the audience to interrupt the speaker verbally, all the questions in his talk are considered rhetorical ones. Accordingly, they are analyzed as part of the off-record politeness techniques.

4.3.4.1. *Rhetorical questions.*

Even though rhetorical questions have the form of a question, "they neither seek information nor elicit an answer" (Rohde, 2006, p.134). Therefore, they enact as an indirect way of saying something with one extra advantage, i.e., the ability to pretend not to have said it in the first place. As a result, ISIS leader makes sure to insert a variety of rhetorical questions into his speeches to "invite assent [and]... provide a persuasive conclusion to [his] argument" (Spurgin, 1994, p.303). Since ISIS is encouraging non-decisive Muslims to immigrate to its lands and fight for its sake, phrasing such a threatening act in a question form is the safest way to lower its weight. Otherwise, the absence of power difference and the distance between H and S would have caused al-Baghdadi's FTAs to sound impolite.

Example (7)

O Muslims everywhere, has the time not come for you to realize the truth of the conflict and that it is between kufr and iman?...Has the time not come O Ahlus-Sunnah for you to know that you alone are the targets? This war is only against you and against your religion. Has the time not come for you to return to your religion and your jihad and thereby bring back your glory, honor, rights, and leadership? Has the time not come for you to know that there is no might nor honor nor safety nor rights for you except in the shade of the Khilafah? (L.1074-1081)

Convincing Muslims to emigrate from their countries is not an easy mission to accomplish; therefore, *Dabiq* depends on a variety of persuasive strategies to get that job done. Building a polite argument which appeals to the logos and pathos of the audience might just be what audiences are looking for if they are already attracted to the idea. To illustrate, al-Baghdadi's argument is based on the idea that the current conflict in Syria is not against ISIS itself as much as it is a fight against Islam in general, a truth that can be

reflected on in light of the wide spread of Islamophobic beliefs in the West. Assuming that this war is between Muslims and non-Muslims, ISIS leader suggests that each party ought to assemble its forces. Muslims, after all, should not stand still while others are targeting them. In addition, being engaged in this war under the black flag, al-Baghdadi claims, is the only way for Muslims to restore their stolen dignity, honor, and leadership. Such glittering generalities are meant to stimulate yearning for a bygone Islamic civilization that was once able to hold power over huge areas in the world. All the previously analyzed ideas are not communicated directly; rather, indirect rhetorical questions that "enhance the ethos, [manipulate] the flow of discourse and... [decrease] the distance between the rhetor and the audience" (Halmari & Virtanen. 2005, p.117) are brought into play. Any answer other than "yes, the time has come for Muslims to realize what is going on the ground, and yes the time has come to support ISIS" is overlooked by al-Baghdadi because his questions are not about eliciting answers as much as about stirring feelings and ideas in H's heart and mind.

Example (8)

O you who believe in wala' and bara'... Will you leave the disbeliever to sleep safely at home while the Muslim women and children shiver with fear of the roars of the crusader airplanes above their heads day and night? How can you enjoy life and sleep while not aiding your brothers, not casting fear into the hearts of the cross worshippers, and not responding to their strikes with multitudes more? So O muwahhid wherever you may be, hinder those who want to harm your brothers and state as much as you can. The best thing you can do is to strive to your best and kill any disbeliever, whether he be French, American, or from any of their allies. (L.1674-1684)

Even though readers might get bored of being introduced to the same idea over and over again, ISIS seems not to. Once again, al-Baghdadi struggles to promote the necessity for

Muslims to attack the enemies of "their" Islamic State. However, before striking the reader with the final command in the last three lines, which is to hinder and kill the enemies of the State, al-Baghdadi surprises his audience with some rhetorical questions: questions about H's willingness to leave his/her brothers and sisters in creed being tortured by "crusaders" and questions about being able to turn a blind eye to Muslims while still having a clean conscience. It is obvious, based on the context preceding this paragraph, that al-Baghdadi's questions have a requesting function. In fact, this paragraph comes at the end of al-Baghdadi's talk in which he directly and inappropriately commands Muslims to kill the citizens of any country involved in the war against ISIS. So, to correct his Freudian slip, al-Baghdadi ends up his speech politely, asking rhetorical questions that aim at provoking the emotions of the hearers and readers towards a group of people who shares them the same religion.

To summarize, ISIS officials seem to be doing well implementing the most indirect, hence, most polite way of communicating their FTAs. Clearly, the Islamic State is in a desperate need for all the support it can get so as to be able to stand against the coalition. After all, requesting help in any other way would have sounded rude, an impression that ISIS does not wish to leave on the Islamic world at the current time.

4.3.5. Conclusion.

On the whole, Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies are chosen to persuade Muslim hearers and readers of certain ideas in favor of ISIS. First of all, the bald on-record politeness, which is the least polite technique, is used in restricted situations to a) advise ISIS citizens to watch their backs and to b) give commands to its soldiers. Second, positive politeness is activated to please ISIS supporters by assuming reciprocity and using in-group identity markers. Al-Adnani's message to Morsi, however, depends mostly on the presupposition of common ground (since both are leaders of Islamic parties) to convince

the latter of the necessity of defying unjust rulers. Third, the off-record politeness strategy, which comes at the top of politeness hierarchy, is used the most in ISIS discourse. In fact, it exploits rhetorical questions to test the moral judgment of Muslim hearers when seeing their brothers in creed being slaughtered by crusaders. It should be noted that no negative politeness strategies are detected in *Dabiq* magazine.

4.4. Impoliteness in ISIS Discourse

Unlike the previous section, this one aims at investigating the impoliteness strategies that have been practiced by ISIS officials to understand the connections among impoliteness, power, and persuasion.

4.4.1. Introduction.

As noticed above, politeness strategies come to light in ISIS discourse only if the talk is directed towards Muslims, whether they are supporters of ISIS or not. After all, acting tactfully might prepare the hearers to accept the ideas ISIS sells. However, does being tactful towards the enemy change the course of the goings on the ground? Logically speaking, ISIS has been regarded a terrorist group by some 60 nations, including incredibly powerful countries like the US, Russia, and the UK. This necessarily means that ignoring ISIS is never going to be one of the options on the table, for doing so will cause these governments the loss of their credibility and their reputation as peacemakers. In other words, nothing could have prevented the coalition countries from getting involved into a war against ISIS, and the latter knows that too. So, acting politely seems aimless when addressing the enemy; thus, the officials of the Islamic State have decided that being impolite is the best way to resist the power of the other and attempt to gain it for themselves (Bousfield & Locher, 2008). It is a defense strategy.

After proving that ISIS impoliteness is crucial for claiming power over its rivals, an impoliteness framework seems necessary for interpreting the following examples. For this

purpose, Culpeper's (1996) theory has been chosen because it perfectly parallels Brown and Levinson's theory, with one distinction, i.e., its goal is to attack H's face rather than to save it. Some positive and negative impoliteness strategies are detected, and the targeted hearers have turned out to be the countries backing up the coalition invasion. Yet, there is a special emphasis on sending impolite messages to the US nation and president for starting this whole plan up.

4.4.2. Positive impoliteness.

Pragmatically speaking, positive impoliteness is achieved when S intentionally causes the perlocutionary effect of offence for H's positive face, causing certain negative emotional responses to arise (Culpeper, 2011). The most relevant context to practice this kind of impoliteness is constructed when S wishes to be perceived as a powerful counterpart of H, even if he/she is actually not, a situation similar to that of ISIS when addressing countries of internationally recognized power. In an attempt to self-proclaim power, *Dabiq* magazine frequently name calls its enemies. Even worse, ISIS completely ignores the presence of several parties.

4.4.2.1. Call the other names.

Using derogatory terms to negatively represent the other encourages audience to reject the person being criticized (Culpeper, 1996; Cialdini, 2007). Hence, ISIS continuously insults its enemies to question their credibility and overall political performance as elected leaders whom are supposed to put the interests of their nations at the top of their priorities. In fact, this strategy has already been thoroughly analyzed previously in this study. So, in order to avoid repetition, this section is tackled briefly here and the provided examples are not mentioned earlier.

Example (9)

You claimed to have withdrawn from Iraq – O Obama – four years ago. We said to you

then that you were liars, that you had not withdrawn, and that if you had withdrawn that you would return, even if after some time, you would return. (L.1640-1642)

Dabiq magazine continuously accuses President Obama of dishonesty and inconsistency (See the consistency principle). In the above mentioned example, al-Adnani uses the personalized negative assertion "you [are] liars" to insult the previous and current presidents of the US for claiming to have withdrawn from Iraq in December, 2011 just to return back there three years later, backed up with more proxies to cause more damage than ever before. Even though al-Adnani is less powerful than Obama, the distance between the two is huge and so is the risk of making the enemy's blood boil, the former still insists on doing his FTA directly. Similarly, on another occasion when the US and its allies announce that their intervention is due to their wish to defend Muslims, al-Adnani's responds: "Indeed, they lie!" (L.1039). In fact, President Obama is not the only figure whose face is attacked by ISIS; his predecessor George W Bush and the whole American government are also offended as they are described as *foolish*, *arrogant*, and *unwise*.

4.4.2.2. Ignore, snub the other.

Failing to acknowledge the other's presence indicates that he/she is not worthy of being taken into consideration (Culpeper, 1996). As a result, H's positive want to be accepted by others is impolitely dismissed. In ISIS discourse, one expects the Syrian regime and Iraqi political parties to be scolded baldly. Yet surprisingly enough, this is not the case; the data of this study, which cover a lot of topics that ISIS has focused on throughout its first ten issues, avoid any direct mentioning of Arab countries. Consequently, providing examples will not support the fact that ISIS applies this strategy, but the lack of examples will. If we talk numbers, readers will be shocked. Qatar and Bahrain are never mentioned in ISIS discourse while the UAE and Saudi Arabia are each mentioned once. Also, al-'Asad's name appears eight times whereas al-Maliki's appears five times. All these numbers seem

negligible in comparison to the 103 times in which the US has been referred to as America, American, US, and USA. In fact, Obama's name alone emerges 31 times. These simple frequency counts definitely resemble ISIS' under-estimation of Arab countries involved in the attack against its territories.

Generally speaking, Arab countries are absent in ISIS discourse, and even if there were the slightest chance of ISIS mentioning them, it would be for the sake of disrespecting any positive image these countries have of themselves as in the following example:

Example (10)

O Muslims, the taghut [tyrant]rulers who rule your lands ... are the allies of the Jews and Crusaders. Rather, they are their slaves, servants, and guard dogs, and nothing else... The Arabian Peninsula's rulers have been exposed and disgraced and have lost their supposed 'legitimacy.' (L.1041-1050)

In the above-mentioned example, al-Baghdadi does not call Arabian Peninsula's countries by name, for they are all different sides for the same coin; all are enemies of the State. Also, it should be noted here that the other positive impoliteness strategy (name calling) is applied when the Gulf countries are compared to *slaves, servants, and dogs* whose job is to protect their masters. The metaphor implies that such governments have no free will to take their own decisions in isolation from the US. However, if that is not considered rude enough, then being accused of tyranny and lack of legitimacy is even more offending.

In brief, two positive impoliteness strategies appear in ISIS discourse, each targeting a different audience. Western countries, especially the US, are verbally affronted while the presence of Arab countries is majorly overlooked. The second method is even more offensive than the first one because recognizing the negative aspects of the other at least means that S is paying attention to his/her actions. Nevertheless, failing to notice the

attendance of someone in the first place is a clear sign of him/her being invisible, silent, and useless. This kind of talk suits ISIS political agenda which aims at establishing an Islamic state in the whole world rather than in the Middle East area.

4.4.3. Negative impoliteness.

Attacking H's negative face needs can be accomplished by violating any of the equity rights that guard H's right not to be "unduly imposed upon" or "unfairly ordered about" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p.16). So, negative impoliteness is the best way for ISIS to claim power over its enemies, and there are two techniques displayed in ISIS discourse to achieve that purpose: frightening and ridiculing the other.

4.4.3.1. *Frighten the other.*

To convince H of a certain idea, S "must decide which side to present, calculating whether fears or desire will be a better manipulative tool in a given context" (Shabo, 2008, p. 77). In war language, arousing fear seems to be the plausible choice because it causes disturbance to H's life and interests, which in turn may motivate behavior changes on H's side (Atawneh, 2009). Such an effect can be stimulated throughout the use of the speech acts of threatening. As expected, ISIS applies this strategy to convince the US and its allies that calling a halt to their incursion is a must.

Example (11)

O Americans, and O Europeans... you will pay a great price. You will pay the price when your economies collapse. You will pay the price when your sons are sent to wage war against us, and they return to you as disabled amputees, or inside coffins, or mentally ill. You will pay the price as you are afraid of travelling to any land. Rather you will pay the price as you walk on your streets, turning right and left, fearing the Muslims. You will not feel secure even in your bedrooms. You will pay the price when this crusade of yours collapses, and thereafter we will strike you in your homeland, and

you will never be able to harm anyone afterwards. You will pay the price, and we have prepared for you what will pain you. (L.1647-1656)

One month after "September 10, 2014, [the time when] President Obama announced the formation of a global coalition to degrade and ultimately defeat the Islamic State" (Congressional Research Service, 2016, p.1), ISIS published its fourth issue of *Dabiq* magazine to warn the US and its allies about the possible consequences of their intervention. To begin with, it can be noticed that the intimidating expression "you will pay the price" is repeated seven times to emphasize ISIS's point of view. To elaborate, al-Adnani threatens that if the coalition countries start the transgression against the Islamic State, their economy will collapse (for their contributions and donations will cost them a fortune), their soldiers will be either killed or seriously injured (for ISIS fighters are well trained and equipped), their right of movement will be restricted (for ISIS will be waiting for them on every corner inside and outside their own countries), and eventually their coalition will collapse (for its losses will be far greater than gains).

Moreover, this long list of threats relies solely on the modal verb of certainty *will* to suggest that ISIS's predictions obtain the highest degree of logical probability (Murcia & Freeman, 1999), as if they are based on actual data rather than random guesses. Most importantly, even though it seems illogical for ISIS to powerfully state threats against 60 nations, knowing that this war is unavoidable clears things up. This war has been initiated as a counter-terrorism campaign by countries that claim to be the guardians of international peace; so, acting politely when communicating with the coalition has not been expected to stop the campaign. Therefore, ISIS officials have obviously decided that being impolite may at least help them save their face.

Example (12)

Send arms and equipment to your agents and dogs. Prepare them with the most modern

equipment. Send them very much, for it will end up as war booty in our hands by Allah's permission. You will spend it, then it will be a source of regret for you, then you will be defeated. (1631-1634)

In the same speech from which example 11 is extracted, al-Adnani inserts another set of threats accompanied with the imperative form of the verb. Asking the enemy to send arms and prepare its allies with modern equipment is not exactly for the benefit of the speaker, since such actions may allow the other to emerge victorious in the coming war. However, imperatives have different functions based on the context they appear in, and in this case, threatening is the most plausible interpretation of the meaning. To elaborate, ISIS claims that regardless of what action the coalition countries decide to take, the result will not be in their favor. Their armor will end up being in ISIS's hands, and the coalition countries will get a taste of their own medicine. Showing confidence and pretending to be ready to face the enemy may affect the way H perceives S, which in turn may encourage H to retreat. Furthermore, the final two explicit threats (*you will be defeated* and *it will be a source of regret for you*) encapsulate the message ISIS wishes the coalition to understand.

4.4.3.2. Scorn, ridicule the other.

Not treating the other seriously suggests disrespect for the other's personality and ideas. It indicates that the hearer is not worthy of paying attention to or taking his words into consideration. Since ISIS tries to disrespect President Obama in all possible manners, it implements this technique as well. However, it is used only once and explained earlier in the study.

Example (13)

Would you like those words served with relish or pickle, president? (L.1176)

This remark comes as a comment on President Obama's statement in which he states that his strategy of taking out terrorists has been successfully pursued in several countries, and it will continue to be so in Syria. So, *Dabiq* makes sure to ridicule Obama's statement because the countries he mentions (Somalia and Yemen) do not enjoy the power ISIS does; as a result, the comparison he makes is looked at as nonsense talk that no one will buy. That is why his words are compared to non-tempting food that no one will be willing to taste without some appealing appetizers or side dishes.

All in all, using threats is the major negative impoliteness strategy noticed in ISIS discourse. Those threats have linguistically materialized through the use of imperatives and the modal verb *will*, and they are all felicitous because S is willing and capable of carrying out the threat, and H does not want that threat to take place. In fact, ISIS has carried out its threats and attacks against several American and European countries involved in the coalition soon after the US-led intervention in Syria and Iraq. As for the second technique, which is making fun of the other, it appears only once or twice in *Dabiq* magazine to achieve one goal, i.e., to attack President Obama's negative face.

4.4.4. Violation of politeness/impoliteness principles.

Throughout their speeches, ISIS officials has constructed their talk as expected, using polite language to persuade Muslims of the necessity of assisting ISIS and impolite language to insult enemies and convince them that ISIS has enough power to stand up in their face. However, there are several examples in which ISIS officials give direct commands to non-decisive Muslims, requesting them to defend the Islamic State. At first glance, these examples could be considered an illustration of the bald on-record impoliteness. Yet, Culpeper (2005) insists that having the intention to attack the face of the hearer is one of the prerequisites for the manifestation of this strategy. As a result, the researcher has decided to explain these instances separately because the speaker could not

have possibly intended to damage the hearer's face (since S needs H's help); still, his talk has been directly uttered with no redressiveness.

Example (14)

So O muwahhid, do not let this battle pass you by wherever you may be. You must strike the soldiers, patrons, and troops of the tawaghit. Strike their police, security, and intelligence members, as well as their treacherous agents. Destroy their beds. Embitter their lives for them and busy them with themselves... Do not ask for anyone's advice and do not seek anyone's verdict. Kill the disbeliever whether he is civilian or military, for they have the same ruling. (L.1665-1673)

This talk has been given by the State's spokesman in October, 2014, short time before the US-led intervention in Syria. Such engagement of the World's most powerful country as well as other major Western countries (like the UK, France, Canada, Australia, and Germany) in a fight against ISIS will definitely make the latter's mission to expand in Syria and Iraq an extremely difficult one, if not impossible. For al-Adnani, such a critical period cannot be overcome unless all Muslims unify themselves under the black flag of ISIS. Yet, to convince those non-decisive Muslims to put their lives at stake for the sake of the Islamic State, for the already decisive ones do not need to be persuaded, al-Adnani should have been more polite, actually the most polite, in his speech. Still, he decides not to. In fact, he prefers to give commands and does not hesitate to use the imperative form of the verb (as in *strike, destroy, kill, do not let, do not ask, and do not seek*) and the modal verb of obligation *must* to provide Muslims with a long list of do's and don'ts. Hearers usually do not tolerate a speech with such a powerful tone unless uttered by an extremely powerful speaker. In Islam, this talk is expected to be articulated by Allah, and Muslims gladly accept it.

The question now is why does ISIS official talk resemble Allah's discourse? And why would any Muslim abide by al-Baghdadi's orders? In short, ISIS' ideology is based on the belief that it is "the only state ruling by Allah's Shari'ah today" (L.1880); its leader is called Amirul-Mu'minin, which is the popular Arabic title of Muslim rulers. He has even changed his name into "Ibrahim", which is the name of one of the arch-prophets⁵⁵ and the father of prophets. So, the only plausible explanation for al-Baghdadi's impolite commands is that he perceives himself to have an immense power over Muslims everywhere, power that has been transmitted to him by Allah. Obviously, in the previously explained context, ISIS leader is not interested in mitigating his FTAs as much as he is concerned about the urgency of taking an action in support of the State. After all, Muslims should do their duties towards their state because targeting ISIS is just the first step in eradicating "every Muslim everywhere" (L.1004), like a domino effect.

On the whole, ISIS leaders believe that the Islamic ideology upon which their state is build gives them the right and power to require Sunni Muslims everywhere to abide by ISIS laws. Is that convincing? No, it is not. Does it show power? Yes, it does. Obviously, ISIS puts an emphasis on the idea that it is powerful maybe because deep inside it knows that it is not. So, to defy such a feeling, it acts in an aggressive way to claim that it does not lack power.

4.4.5. Conclusion.

The previous two sections about politeness and impoliteness answer the third question of the study, which is:

Question: How do ISIS officials exploit politeness/ impoliteness strategies to express their power and to persuade the target audience of their agendas?

⁵⁵ A reference to the five prophets, Noah, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, and Muhammad, who were all sent with religious and divine books

Answer: On the one hand, it turned out that politeness and persuasion work hand in hand because tactfulness is one of the vital factors required for the success of persuasion. Yet, this politeness targets Muslim hearers only including ISIS soldiers, citizens, supporters, and leaders of religious organizations in the region. First of all, the least polite strategy, which is the bald on-record, is employed when addressing ISIS soldiers and citizens because the main aim is to give orders to these already committed groups, orders that show what a caring state ISIS is. Nevertheless, the supporters that do not live within ISIS territorial claims are treated with more respect; thus, the positive politeness strategy of referring to in-group language and markers becomes dominant when addressing them. Most importantly, when addressing Muslims in general including uncommitted ones, the most polite strategy (*off record*) is implemented to question their moral judgment. In other words, the more risk ISIS feels, the more polite it acts.

On the other hand, the study proves that there is a correlation between impoliteness and power. Impoliteness in ISIS speeches mainly targets the enemies of the Islamic State, including the Western and the Arab worlds. For example, positive impoliteness is continuously practiced against the US president, calling him names and disrespectfully describing his illogical and non-ethical attitudes. Moreover, Arab countries are completely ignored in ISIS discourse, as if indicating that this war going on the Syrian lands is not regional. Moving on to negative impoliteness, frightening the enemy is the most prevailing technique used by ISIS to scare its enemies, and President Obama definitely has the lion's share of ISIS' mockery. Briefly, it seems that ISIS relies on impoliteness for two main reasons: a) it realizes that politeness will not change the status quo and b) it uses impoliteness as a defense strategy when it feels less powerful than its enemies.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

After fiercely getting engaged into the Syrian Civil War, ISIS has managed to stay in the spotlight for over four years now, defying national and international powers as never before. Even though ISIS' success in becoming famous or infamous has taken advantage of several factors, such as its military power and the already unstable political situation in the region, the role of ISIS language cannot be overlooked, especially in light of the unbelievably mesmerizing propaganda it leads. Therefore, scrutinizing ISIS political texts, which are extracted from its official *Dabiq* magazine, has been mainly decided on as the topic of this study. After all, hearing the news straight from ISIS' mouth gives a clear idea about its ideology.

Analyzing the persuasion strategies applied in the State's discourse and the strategies used to practice its self-proclaimed power answers the questions of the study and proves that the hypotheses are valid. First of all, it is assumed that ISIS will use most of the examined persuasion techniques because it has been able to attract supporters and receive international recognition. The results show that ISIS indeed uses all the persuasion principles and techniques under investigation, but there is still an emphasis on "the authority," "reciprocity," "contrast," and "glittering generalities" because they are directly related to the Aristotelian typology of logos, ethos, and pathos. The authority and contrast principles add logic to ISIS arguments and question the ethos of its opponents. However, the reciprocity principle and glittering generalities get audience more emotionally involved. All the ten persuasion strategies have been implemented to achieve four main purposes: to promote the religious and political power of the State, to call for the unity of the Muslim community, to justify ISIS' unjustifiable actions under the banner of Islam, and to leave a question mark over the US' ability to make decisions in favor of their citizens.

Yet, what this study misses is an interpretation of ISIS discourse after the Russian incursion and whether it has affected the way ISIS addresses its supporters and enemies. Therefore, more research on this topic is advised to be conducted.

Second, it has been proven that there is a correlation between persuasion and politeness, as well as between power and impoliteness. On the one hand, persuasion requires more politeness on the part of the speaker to address his/her audience. Some evidence is found in the speeches of ISIS officials who tactfully ask Muslims to believe the ideas they sell. Nevertheless, there are certain occasions in which ISIS has been supposed to tactfully deliver its message but failed to do so. Rather, ISIS officials have tended to give their audience orders. To interpret such an unexpected behavior, ISIS ideology has been taken into consideration. ISIS believes in the supremacy of Islam and aims at establishing an Islamic caliphate similar to that of Prophet Muhammad, whose words are considered as part of the Islamic constitution. Thus, he is obeyed by Muslims with no questioning. Similarly, ISIS officials might believe that they are the new prophets and caliphs to rule the Islamic World; as a result, commands and orders have become part of their governance.

On the other hand, impoliteness has been found to be a more suitable strategy to claim power over the enemies of the Islamic State in an attempt to convince them to stop their advancement in ISIS territories and to cease fire. Even though Brown and Levinson have predicted that politeness depends on the power of the participants, Culpeper's impoliteness theory has suggested a better interpretation for our case. According to Brown and Levinson, ISIS is expected to speak more politely to the world's most powerful countries. However, it has turned out that this supposition is invalid because in conflictive times, as Culpeper proposes, politeness is not expected to change the goings on the ground. In fact, ISIS has already been recognized as a terrorist group that should be vanquished. So, avoiding a war with ISIS could have questioned the integrity of the US war-on-terror,

which is something that the US cannot risk to lose. Obviously, power and persuasion are intertwined in political discourse because persuasion is mainly activated to create an image of a powerful country which is perfectly ready to fight tooth and nail.

Aside from the original purpose of the research, the researcher has also figured out that ISIS tends to de-contextualize the Quranic verses so as to suit its agendas and legitimize murder. It also does not pay attention to the soundness of the reporters of the hadiths included in their magazine, even though it is a focal point that Muslim scholars rely on to determine whether a hadith should be adopted. In fact, ISIS has decided to imitate the worst incidents in the Islamic history, forgetting the true soul of Islam which is based on tolerance, good-manners, and human-life appreciation.

Most importantly, it should be noted that the importance of this study lies in the fact that it dissects ISIS language so as to help political analysts find ways to counter such talk and to open the eyes of the readers to the manipulation process practiced by the Islamic State. Even though the study does not directly address pedagogy, it helps teachers explain to their students the importance of the context in deciding the intended meaning of the speaker, especially in light of the fact that real-life language works on the discursive, rather than the sentential, level.

To conclude, the study makes us realize that war is a battle to decide who over-powers who. Despite the fact that military power is the determining factor in most cases, history has witnessed numerous occasions in which it has not. Propaganda, which convinces audience of the exaggerated power of its sponsors, has proven that appearances can be really deceiving.

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Appendix A: Dabiq Magazine Articles

1. A new era has arrived of might and dignity for the Muslims

Issue 1, Page 8-9

Amirul-Mu'minin said: "Soon, by Allah's permission, a day will come when the Muslim will walk everywhere as a master, having honor, being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to harm him will be cut off. So let the world know that we are living today in a new era.

Whoever was heedless must now be alert. Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and possess heavy boots. They have a statement to make that will cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism, and boots that will trample the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy, and uncover its deviant nature."

Shaykh Abu Muhammad al-'Adnani said: "The time has come for those generations that were drowning in oceans of disgrace, being nursed on the milk of humiliation, and being ruled by the vilest of all people, after their long slumber in the darkness of neglect – the time has come for them to rise. The time has come for the Ummah of Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to wake up from its sleep, remove the garments of dishonor, and shake off the dust of humiliation and disgrace, for the era of lamenting and moaning has gone, and the dawn of honor has emerged anew. The sun of jihad has risen. The glad tidings of good are shining. Triumph looms on the horizon. The signs of victory have appeared.

2. A call to all Muslims

Issue 1, Page 11

Amirul-Mu'minin said: "We make a special call to the scholars, fuqaha' (experts in Islamic jurisprudence), and callers, especially the judges, as well as people with military, administrative, and service expertise, and medical doctors and engineers of all different

Appendix A: Dabiq Magazine Articles

26 specializations and fields. We call them and remind them to fear Allah, for their emigration is
27 wajib ‘ayni (an individual obligation), so that they can answer the dire need of the Muslims
28 for them. People are ignorant of their religion and they thirst for those who can teach them
29 and help them understand it. So fear Allah, O slaves of Allah.”

3. It’s either the Islamic State or the flood

Issue 2, Page 5

32 Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all creation.

33 From amongst the polluted ideologies that have afflicted people the entire world over
34 throughout the course of the tyranny carried out by the forces of kufr, is the notion that the
35 people can choose whether to follow the truth or to embark upon falsehood. This ideology
36 teaches that no one has the right, regardless of whom he may be, to impose any creed or set of
37 morals on anyone else even if that creed or set of morals is the truth revealed by Allah. They
38 went to the extent of attributing this “methodology of free choice” to the religion of Allah
39 ta’ālā, and to the call of the prophets, peace be upon them.

40 The proponents of this ideology have portrayed the prophets of Allah incorrectly, making
41 them out to be more akin to preachers and guides who have no authority over the masses at all
42 or, at best, like political guides or opposition party leaders with a message that opposes their
43 peoples’ principles. These same people further portray the prophets as having only one tool at
44 their disposal for changing the beliefs of their people and era. This tool is what is referred to
45 today as a “peaceful means of change.” It entails displaying their methodology to the people
46 and leaving them to choose for themselves, without any sort of pressure or force used against
47 them, even if the other methodologies in question stand in complete contradiction to the
48 methodology of the prophets and also oppose those “diplomats” who are pleased with giving
49 the people a choice!

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50 Then, when a group within the Ummah woke up and rejected this twisted methodology of
51 giving people the choice between absolute truth and complete falsehood, the members of this
52 group were stained by this polluted ideology, except for those whom Allah had mercy upon.
53 This group believed that the people had a choice between right and wrong, but within the
54 confines of the “truth”! In other words, they sufficed with removing blatant kufr from the
55 field of choice and with letting different types of bid’ah and nifāq remain as valid options –
56 bid’ah and nifāq whose true nature many Muslims can’t distinguish. They even believed
57 some of the bid’ah and nifāq in question to be directly from the Sunnah, and anything apart
58 from that to be extremism and excessiveness in the religion. These new proponents of choice
59 had forgotten that many of the Ummah who held onto the name Islam had left through their
60 deeds much of Islam’s attributes.

61 Therefore, giving the people choice was no longer a possibility in this new state of
62 affairs. Rather, the guiding principle became that every time choice is allowed it will result in
63 misguidance, either in the present or in the future.

64 **4. The fight against the PKK**

65 Issue 2, Pages 12-13

66 Comprising territory that spans from eastern Turkey, through northeastern Syria and
67 northern Iraq, all the way to northwestern Iran, the area commonly referred to as Kurdistan is
68 a region that is mostly home to a Sunni Kurdish population.

69 In the 1970s, a group of students led by Abdullah Ocalan founded a communist political
70 organization called the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, with the goal of establishing an
71 independent **marxist** state. Thirty years ago, the PKK began an armed conflict against Turkey
72 in an effort to advance their goals. The conflict continued on and off with occasional
73 ceasefires until 2013, when the PKK announced the end of hostilities after lengthy
74 negotiations between the apostates Erdogan and Ocalan.

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75 Approximately ten years ago in neighboring Shām, the marxist Kurds in the north founded
76 a political opposition party called the PYD (Democratic Union Party), which shares the kufri
77 ideology of Ocalan and is seen as being a Syrian front for the PKK. During the course of the
78 jihad in Shām, the PYD's armed wing, the YPG, became increasingly involved in clashes
79 with the mujahidīn as they attempted to control a number of towns and cities in the north with
80 significant Kurdish populations.

81 The Islamic State did not hesitate to wage war against the communist murtaddīn of the
82 PKK/ YPG, while simultaneously continuing their fight against the nusayrī regime and the
83 sahwāt . There are presently a number of fronts in the Islamic State being defended against
84 the Kurdish communists in both Iraq and Shām. The month of Ramadān saw numerous
85 operations taking place against the PKK and their Iraqī counterparts, the Peshmerga. The
86 following is an account of some of the operations carried out by the mujahidīn.

87 On the 3rd of Ramadān, the soldiers of the Islamic State made preparations to strike the
88 PKK in the village of Zūr Maghār, near Jarāblus. The dead pkk soldiers assault began in the
89 morning and included a group of inghimāsiyyīn plunging into the enemy ranks with support
90 from the mortar team, a tank, a BMP, a 23 millimeter gun, and some doshkas. The mujahidīn
91 killed many PKK soldiers, with around 20 of their corpses being removed from the battlefield.
92 They then advanced to a position on high ground called “the home of Ahmad Munīr,” which
93 overlooks the town of Jarāblus.

94 Numerous weapons were captured as ghanīmah including assault rifles, PKC machine
95 guns, RPG launchers and rounds, a sniper rifle and a night vision scope. During the course of
96 the battle there was one shahīd and a number of light injuries. This battle was just one of a
97 number of successful advances made against the PKK on numerous fronts including the
98 capture of the village of Kindār and a number of other villages adjacent to it on the
99 western front of Tal Abyad on the 11th of Ramadān with the advance continuing towards Ayn

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100 Al-'Arab. This was in addition to a number of operations against the PKK within their main
101 strongholds including istishhādi operations carried out against the PKK/Peshmerga murtaddīn
102 in both Iraq and Shām, as well as a number of PKK vehicles blown up by the Islamic State's
103 undercover cells in Wilāyat Al-Barakah, all leading to many of their apostate soldiers being
104 killed.

5. Foley's blood is on Obama's hands

Issue 3, Pages 37-38

107 It was a cooling balm for the believers' hearts to witness the execution of the American
108 James Wright Foley as a retribution for the recent American aggression against the Muslims
109 of Iraq.

110 At the same time, anger and hatred spewed from the mouths of the disbelievers and the
111 hypocrites alike, whose media outlets wasted no time and immediately exerted themselves
112 day and night in an attempt to mislead the American public and the rest of the world away
113 from the real cause for James Foley's execution. So who was James Foley? And who bears
114 the ultimate responsibility for his death?

115 James Wright Foley was an American who spent a large part of his career travelling
116 exclusively to war zones embedded with the American military at war with Muslims. He had
117 entered Afghanistan and Iraq numerous times from 2008 to 2010, during the ongoing
118 crusades. TG Taylor and Mathew Gregory were two of his military overseers as he covered
119 the US military in Afghanistan.

120 His work entailed documenting the wars through the crusaders' eyes, reporting all that
121 which serves their foreign policy and agenda whilst withholding any news that could expose
122 their evils. In the archive of photographs he had personally taken, there were images
123 glorifying the American crusaders in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the Iraqi Sahwah. There

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124 were also photos showing the capture of many poor Afghani and Iraqi Muslims at the hands
125 of the crusaders. Alas for James, this archive was with him at the time of his arrest.

126 James traveled to Syria, taking many security precautions due to his prior knowledge and
127 experience as an American “journalist.” He knew that Americans were not welcome in
128 Muslim lands because of their government’s shameless and lengthy record of aggression
129 against Muslims. Nevertheless, he entered Syria carrying along with him items used for
130 espionage, which were also found on his possession at the time of his capture.

131 As for who is ultimately responsible for his execution, then the Obama administration
132 was aware of James’s detention as early as November 2013. In a message sent thereafter, the
133 simple solution for his release was clearly stated to the Americans. All that Obama had to do
134 was release our Muslim brothers and sisters from their prisons.

135 From this point up until James’s execution, there were many attempts by the Islamic State
136 to reach a solution concerning the fate of James Wright Foley, but the arrogant, foolish, and
137 defeated US government turned away from their citizen with apathy.

138 During this long 9-month period, as the American government was dragging its feet,
139 reluctant to take the necessary steps to save James’s life, negotiations were made by the
140 governments of a number of European prisoners, which resulted in the release of a dozen of
141 their prisoners, after the demands of the Islamic State were met. That left a number of British
142 and American prisoners remaining in the cells of the Islamic State, only after their
143 governments arrogantly refused to release our imprisoned brothers and our sister, Dr. Aafia
144 Siddiqui.

145 To paraphrase James, the Obama administration ultimately hit the last nail in James’s
146 coffin and killed him by bombing Iraq. A message was sent two days before James’s
147 execution, warning of his demise as a result of the US airstrikes in Iraq. The solution was
148 easy... Stop the airstrikes!

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173 administration and western media tried to ignore when discussing the strikes and the
174 consequential execution of James Foley.

175 1) The US had already interfered in Iraq by supporting Maliki's military, the Peshmerga, and
176 the new sahwah councils, with information, advisors, and weapons, prior to the recent air
177 campaign. There have been regular aerial reconnaissance missions in al-Anbār and Nīnawā.

178 2) The US had interfered in Shām by supporting groups allied to it and to "Saudi Arabia"
179 against the Islamic State. These same groups now beg the US for further support and aid,
180 which, by Allah's grace, will end up as ghanīmah for the Islamic State.

181 3) The US had killed women, children, and the elderly, during its direct occupation of Iraq
182 prior to its withdrawal. There are countless accounts of American soldiers executing families
183 and raping women under the sanctity of the US military and Blackwater. Muslim families
184 were killed under the broad definition of "collateral damage," which the US grants itself alone
185 the right to apply. Therefore, if a mujāhid kills a single man with a knife, it is the barbaric
186 killing of the "innocent." However, if Americans kill thousands of Muslim families all over
187 the world by pressing missile fire buttons, it is merely "collateral damage"...

188 4) The US was informed of James Foley's status as a prisoner held by the Islamic State. There
189 were demands made prior to the US strikes, for the release of Muslim prisoners held by the
190 US in exchange for Foley's release, but they were arrogantly ignored.

191 5) The US attempted a rescue mission in Wilāyat ar-Raqqah, which failed when some of the
192 members of the mission were injured and possibly killed, so they carried their fallen away
193 with disaster.

194 6) After the official US airstrikes began in Iraq, the Islamic State sent a message warning it
195 would execute James Foley as a result of the airstrikes. This threat was received with typical
196 American indifference.

197 7) Upon receiving the threat and prior to the execution, Obama scurried to prevent knowledge

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198 of the affair from reaching his citizenry. His administration immediately ordered a number of
 199 online social networks to shut down all Islamic State media accounts, including accounts of
 200 Islamic State supporters.

201 8) In his speech on “August 20, 2014,” Obama completely avoided mention of Steven Sotloff,
 202 again showing his “people” that the number one interest of the American government is the
 203 sanctity of Israel and its allies, which include the Zionist Peshmerga forces. These are more
 204 important than the lives of his citizenry.

205 And with Allah’s permission, Obama will continue to follow in the footsteps of his
 206 predecessor, Bush, only to become the worst heir for the worst testator, and ultimately bring
 207 about the complete collapse of the modern American empire.

208 7. The crusade serving Iran and Russia

209 Issue 4, Pages 38-40

210 The odd alliance of Persia and Russia – two powers who for centuries were at war with
 211 the West – is an actuality one cannot deny. Regarding some battles of their ancient conflict,
 212 Allah ta’ālā revealed, {The Romans have been defeated in the nearest land. But they, after
 213 their defeat, will overcome [their enemy] within three to nine years. To Allah belongs the
 214 command before and after. And that day the believers will rejoice in the victory of Allah. He
 215 gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful. [It is] the
 216 promise of Allah. Allah does not fail in His promise, but most of the people do not know }
 217 [Ar-Rūm: 2-6].

218 And after centuries of Western conflict with Persia and Russia, we find that two Western
 219 leaders – Bush and Obama – are determined to do everything possible to strengthen Persian
 220 and Russian influence in the Middle East.

221 Regarding Bush’s blunders, Shaykh Abū Hamzah al-Muhājir said, “I want to remind the
 222 **fool** who is obeyed by his people (Bush) that he was able in a very short period to revive the

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223 glory of the ancient Persian Empire. Thus, he became more ominous for his country than
224 Gorbachev was for his Union (the USSR). Bush enabled the spreading of Persian (Iranian)
225 influence over Afghanistan after it had been a tough obstacle for the Persians. He seconded
226 with Iraq and opened up its treasures for them while they had not dreamt of drinking a sip of
227 its water. And now they suck up its oil, loot its treasures, and enslave its men. Third, he
228 panicked its rāfidī nusayrī tyrant – through an embargo upon Syria – into opening his country
229 up to hundreds rather thousands of the Persians to nationalize themselves there and become
230 supporters for the agent of the anti-Christ Nasrullāt who is called ‘Nasr Allah’ and who just
231 emerged from a so-called victory against the pinnacle of the Roman military machine (the
232 Israeli military). And thus, the ancient Persian empire completed and expanded from
233 Mawarannahr (Transoxiana) to Iran then through Iraq – the location of al-Mada’in (the
234 imperial capital of Persia) – ending in Shām (Syria/ Lebanon/Palestine). So do you think that
235 the Magian Persians will ever be able to repay this fool – Bush – who revived their ancient
236 glory for them without them shooting a single bullet or sacrificing a single soldier? And do
237 you think that the reasonable of the Romans will realize that they have become slaves for the
238 Persians and have become mercenary fighters who fight for them without pay” [Inil Hukmu
239 Illā Lillāh].

240 A number of Americans and Westerners have spoken about their ancient Iranian enemy
241 and its allies – possibly the common enemy referred to by the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa
242 sallam). The Jewish crusader, former US Secretary of State and US National Security
243 Advisor, Henry Kissinger, has said that, “in all the crises roiling the world, the U.S. shouldn’t
244 lose focus on Iran,” as paraphrased by Scott Simon of NPR.

245 Henry Kissinger also said, “There [has] come into being a kind of a Shia-belt from
246 Tehran through Baghdad to Beirut. And this gives Iran the opportunity to reconstruct the
247 ancient Persian Empire, this time under a Shia label. From a geo-strategic point of view, I

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248 consider Iran a bigger problem than ISIS. ISIS is a group of adventurers with a very
249 aggressive ideology. But they have to conquer more and more territory before they can
250 become a geo-strategic, permanent reality. I think a conflict with ISIS – important as it is – is
251 more manageable than a confrontation with Iran” [NPR Interview].

252 Again, his underestimation of the Islamic State is due to a materialist analysis believing
253 that power is in weaponry and technology, forgetting that true power relies in the creed of
254 tawhīd, which liberates one from any fear save the fear of his Lord and grants him the support
255 of his Lord. Therefore, Iran will never be “a bigger problem than ISIS” unless the West enters
256 into a truce with the Islamic State involving the halt of all attacks against the Muslims.

257 Former CIA Chief of “the Bin Laden Issue Station,” Michael Scheuer, said, “For now,
258 however, the beginning of wisdom is to look at what is going on in Iraq and Syria and see it
259 clearly. In both places all of those folks that multiple US administrations have identified as
260 enemies of America are killing each other. In Syria, the Assad regime, Iran, and Lebanese
261 Hizballah are killing Sunni mujahedin from all over the world, as well as their local allies and
262 supporters. In turn, the Sunni Islamists in Syria are killing Assad’s troops, Iranian
263 Revolutionary Guards, and Hizballah fighters. This is a perfect circumstance for the United
264 States, all our enemies are killing each other and it is not costing us a cent or a life.”

265 “Over in Iraq, we see much the same marvelous phenomena occurring. Multinational Sunni
266 mujahedin and Saddam’s former military personnel are fighting and killing Maliki’s
267 dictatorial regime, its Shia military forces, and their Iranian military supporters. And, as in
268 Syria, Maliki and his gang are killing our Sunni Islamist enemies. In Iraq there also is the
269 potential for a delightful bonus coming to fruition. If the United States stays out of the affair,
270 the renewed war in Iraq may trigger a widespread Shia-vs-Sunni civil war in which our
271 Muslim enemies – as they are defined by our bipartisan political elite – may begin to kill each

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272 other for a prolonged period and at unprecedented levels, and, again, at no cost to us in lives
273 or dollars.”

274 “So let us take both a deep breath and Lt. Col. Peters advice and sit back and watch what is
275 going on in Syria and Iraq with equanimity and absolutely from the sidelines. Cheer for
276 neither side, answer no one’s call for help – especially not one from the near-frantic Neocons
277 who now know they sank their beloved Israel with the 2003 invasion of Iraq – and pray that
278 Obama does not cooperate with Iran to restore Maliki’s Shia tyranny and thereby earn the
279 eternal enmity of all of the Sunni world.”

280 He also said, “What to do now? First, stay out of Iraq completely and utterly. To re-
281 intervene would cost more American money and lives, and it would drive-up oil prices even
282 faster. It also would amount not only to the United States again intervening in an oil-rich
283 Muslim country, but intervening in a Sunni-Shia religious war on the side of the Shia, who are
284 fiercely hated by the overwhelmingly Sunni Islamic world.”

285 Although his words contain hope for the further killing of Muslims at the hands of the
286 rāfidah as the US watches with glee, he expresses a truth that should be reflected over and that
287 is, why does America bother itself in a war between two of its enemies and side with one of
288 them in a manner that only serves its enemy’s interests in the region and no one else’s?

289 Obama now strengthens the Iraqi regime, which is undeniably backed by Iranian
290 intelligence, military, and finances. Iranian Shia militias currently fight to “defend” Baghdad.
291 The Iraqi regime and its Iranian founder have been one of the biggest allies of the Asad
292 regime in Syria. They have sent fighters to the Abul-Fadl al-‘Abbās battalion. The Asad air
293 force has stopped all airstrikes against the Islamic State in a number of Shāmī wilāyat,
294 probably because it is cheaper for them to benefit from the US airstrikes on their behalf,
295 especially since the Asad regime is collapsing financially and isn’t very good at hitting targets
296 accurately. At the same time, it has managed to “hide” chemical weapons from the West and

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297 use them without a deterrent. Hezbollah has sent guerillas to fight against Muslims in Iraq and
 298 Syria. The Houthis of Yemen – allies of Iran – have overrun Sanaa.

299 Most significantly, Russia – Iran’s biggest ally as well as an ally of China – has entered
 300 Ukraine, which is supposedly claimed by the West. Russia continues to arm the Asad regime
 301 against the Muslims of Shām. They have boasted of their nuclear capabilities once again. And
 302 yet Obama insists upon strengthening “the Persian Crescent” and Russian influence in the
 303 region. It seems American leaders are blinded by their love of the Jewish state into doing
 304 things that only damage supposed Western interests.

8. The fight for Wilayat Alanbar

Issue 4, Page 10

307 As the focus of the international media lay squarely on ‘Ayn al-Islām, ignoring the
 308 massacres carried out by the Safawī army and militias and their American backers against the
 309 Sunni population in Iraq, the mujāhidīn were at work seeing through the Islamic State’s
 310 strategy for the liberation of Wilāyat Al-Anbār.

311 This defiant region had long been a stronghold of the mujāhidīn in their fight against the
 312 US invasion more than a decade ago, continually terrorizing US forces and their allies during
 313 the course of their war in Iraq. Indeed, cities such as Fallūjah are the very reason that it was
 314 long considered political suicide for Obama to put “boots on the ground.” Thus, it would only
 315 be natural to assume that as the Islamic State continued to expand, it would place a strong
 316 focus on cleansing its bastion of Safawī forces and Sahwāh militias, thereby consolidating its
 317 hold on the very region that gave it birth only a few years before.

318 The fierce fighting in areas such as ‘Āmiriyyat al-Fallūjah, along with the assault and
 319 capture of strategic points and key military installations such as the Albū ‘Īthah Regiment and
 320 the continued assassination of Safawī commanders and Sahwah leaders, all served to frustrate
 321 enemy attempts to slow down the Islamic State’s consolidation of the region.

322 **9. If Cantile were the US president today**

323 Issue 5, Pages 36-39

324 If ever there were a shining, 24-carat example of good reasons not to reverse your own
325 promises and declare another war in the Middle East, then we are witnessing it right now.
326 \$424 million dollars' worth of airstrikes over Iraq and Syria have resulted in little more than
327 the continued expansion and consolidation of the Islamic State in both countries, while the
328 black flag of tawhīd now flutters on the skylines of Libya, Yemen, Sinai, and elsewhere, as
329 the growth of the Islamic State gathers pace abroad.

330 It is absolutely the last thing Team Obama and his allies would have wanted after
331 drumming up their coalition and heading off to war to make their countries safer places, or,
332 lost as they are in their own arrogance and inability to learn the lessons of the past, even have
333 expected.

334 Much to the dread of western political leaders, the Islamic State is now truly moving with
335 great momentum. As an entity enjoys success, it attracts more to its fold, thereby causing
336 expansion and breeding more success until it achieves some sort of critical mass, the point at
337 which it becomes self-perpetuating, self-sustaining. And for the moment, the talk about the
338 Islamic State is not even of its continued expansion in the Arab nations of the Middle East,
339 but its reach into the homelands and living rooms of ordinary people living thousands of miles
340 away in western cities and suburbs. The Islamic State has now become a global player.

341 It was Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-‘Adnānī’s call to action for Muslims wherever they
342 were to rise up and fight the enemies of the Islamic State that brought almost instant reaction
343 from around the world.

344 “Do not let this battle pass you by wherever you may be,” commanded the Shaykh.
345 “You must strike the soldiers, patrons, and troops of the tawāghīt. Strike their police, security,
346 and intelligence members. If you can kill a disbelieving American or European – especially

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347 the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from
348 the disbelievers waging war against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in
349 any manner or way however it may be.”

350 And so it began. Just days later, chaos erupted around the world. In Australia, Numan
351 Haider stabbed two counterterrorism police officers. In Canada, a soldier was shot and killed
352 in front of the war memorial in Ottawa by 32 year-old Michael Zehaf-Bibeau on October
353 22nd, who then entered Canada’s parliamentary building looking for other targets before
354 himself being shot and killed by police. In the same week another two soldiers were run over
355 in a hit-and-run in Quebec by Martin Couture-Rouleau and in New York, Zale Thompson
356 attacked four policemen in Queens with a hatchet, the moment of his **savage** attack caught on
357 CCTV cameras and beamed into people’s homes all across America.

358 All these attacks were the direct result of the Shaykh’s call to action, and they highlight
359 what a deadly tinderbox is fizzing just beneath the surface of every western country, waiting
360 to explode into violent action at any moment given the right conditions. Suddenly the
361 mujāhidīn of the Islamic State weren’t some esoteric concept fighting in a land nobody knew
362 or cared about, they were on the doorstep of millions of people living in some of the biggest,
363 most modern cities in the western world. The attacks served as a damning indictment of
364 America’s continued policy of foreign intervention. Everything the United States and its allies
365 had been fighting for in the “war on terror,” the old “if we don’t fight them there we’ll have to
366 fight them here” reasoning, was in one week shown to have completely failed. “Trained and
367 battle-hardened, these fighters could try to return to their home countries and carry out deadly
368 attacks,” warned Obama in his speech to the nation on 10th September. But what he hadn’t
369 counted on was his own citizens picking up weapons and attacking his police officers without
370 any training or battle experience whatsoever. Sections of the media were quick to single out

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371 the attackers as “disturbed loners,” individuals just looking for an excuse to commit violent
372 crime in their hometowns. But the truth runs far deeper than this.

373 It is one thing for an individual to think about attacking or killing another man. It happens
374 every day and such thoughts are neither uncommon nor even that alarming. But to actually
375 step up and do it at the behest of a man they had never met, never seen, fighting in a country
376 several thousand miles away who did not even speak their language, shows an undeniable
377 strength in the power of jihād. Regardless of their social standing, regardless of who these
378 men were that committed these acts or how long they had been Muslim, it demonstrates the
379 immense power that jihād wields over those who chose to embark upon its path.

380 The significance of these attacks and others is enormous and cannot be underestimated. By
381 calling on Muslims around the world to rise up in arms, the Shaykh launched attacks in
382 Canada, America, and Australia (three of the countries mentioned in his speech) with nothing
383 more than words and a shared belief in the act of worship that is jihād. A general in a
384 conventional army couldn't possibly hope to have such power over men he'd never met on
385 the other side of the world, ordering them to attack and possibly be killed, even if he offered
386 them money! The NYPD officers in New York were fortunate they were attacked with a
387 hatchet and not a gun, otherwise the outcome could have been even more serious.

388 And the numbers of Muslims taking up arms in the name of jihād under the banner of the
389 Islamic State are growing, and they're growing fast. According to Western media, the Islamic
390 State now boasts over 35,000 fighters. Its grasp has now spread across northern Africa into
391 Libya and Algeria, across to Yemen and up to the Arabian Peninsula where the Shiites and
392 regimes are now being attacked by mujāhidīn loyal to the Islamic State. If it's such isolated
393 numbers, why is Jordan shaking in its boots and why does Turkey shiver upon hearing
394 mention of the Islamic State? And if the numbers are so insignificant, why are attacks now

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395 occurring on the mainland of continental North America by jihādī fighters who have never
396 left their home countries, who don't speak a word of Arabic?

397 I've quoted him far too often in the past but hope he will forgive me if I reach into the box
398 of Michael Scheuer quotes once again. In a text published on the 2nd of September he
399 commented, "We are far past facing terrorists. Rather, we are in the midst of fighting an
400 international insurgency, and we are on the way to a world war that the United States will
401 have to fight at home and abroad if the foreign-policy status quo is retained."

402 Boom – there it is, just as Michael predicted. Spurred on by continual American
403 intervention, the sphere of influence of the Islamic State has expanded to such a degree that
404 they can now order attacks on US soil by complete strangers via word alone. An international
405 insurgency. It's the nightmare scenario for the governments, one they've spent trillions trying
406 to avoid but, ironically, fuelled instead with their constant meddling in the affairs of the
407 Muslim world.

408 From my own experience here, our governments are too aloof, prideful, and conventional
409 in their way of thinking to have any idea how to proceed in the face of such a global threat.
410 They will simply continue to do what they've been doing for the last two decades which has
411 gradually been making the situation worse and worse. The intervention in Iraq today (such as
412 it is) is little different to the one before except with more window-dressing and, at some point
413 in the future, proxy boots on the ground instead of American ones because, to the people back
414 in the USA, it doesn't matter how many of their allies die. And until they get their act together
415 the Peshmerga can bear the brunt of the dying with the odd resupply from the air and some
416 Special Forces help on the ground.

417 The governments are like a robot that is stuck on a loop, continually performing the wrong
418 sequence despite repeated instructions by its master to the contrary. Master to robot: You
419 have to find a different way of addressing the danger the mujāhidīn pose to the west.

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420 “Cannot... compute...” Military action doesn’t work, what about negotiations? “Must...
 421 obey... programming...” Everything you’ve done since 9/11 has put us in more danger, not
 422 less. “Zzzzz... syntax... error...”

423 Of course, Robo-Obama doesn’t listen to voices of reason and thus programs himself with
 424 the same corrupted old data, making the same mistakes over and over again. James Comey
 425 described the Islamic State mujāhidīn as “savages” in September (a classic example of
 426 prideful and conventionalist thinking that will progress absolutely nothing) while Nick Paton-
 427 Walsh described their tactics in CNN as “eerily sophisticated,” which is a much more
 428 educated comment and closer to the truth, except Nick’s just a journalist while James Comey
 429 is director of the FBI.

430 If I were the president of the US today – and let it be said, I am very glad I am not – I’d be
 431 aghast at the mess that was blowing up in my face. Sucked into a war I claimed was over,
 432 making allies with the most vile tyrants in the Middle East, committing my country and
 433 presidency into a cauldron of conflict while my own people rise up against me in response to
 434 the Islamic State’s call, already halfway to the magic one billion dollars spent and the enemy
 435 appear to be leapfrogging from strength to strength. And not just that, they’re actually
 436 expanding their influence and territory into other countries I’d already built military bases in
 437 and committed billions of dollars into to stop them doing just that.

438 In the face of such a train wreck, I’d have to say that 18 holes around Martha’s Vineyard
 439 was a far more sensible alternative. And in light of current events, probably more constructive
 440 as well.

441 **10. The liberation of Biji**

442 Issue 6, Page 32

443 Only a month after a much-vaunted “victory” in Bījī against the mujāhidīn, the Safawī
 444 forces found themselves being chased out of the very town that they falsely claimed to have

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445 completely liberated. The “complete liberation” a month ago was, in reality, just another
 446 instance in **a pattern of lies attempting to conceal the incompetence of the crusader-**
 447 **backed murtaddīn.**

448 They had managed some minor gains within the town and succeeded in deluding their
 449 ignorant supporters into believing that they had actually driven out the mujāhidīn. So it’s not
 450 surprising that their embarrassing defeat last week, as the Islamic State liberated the town in
 451 its entirety, was largely overlooked by the international media, which chose instead to focus
 452 on bloated tales of Peshmerga murtaddīn “advancing” on Sinjār... advancing to Jahannam.

453 The town of Bijī, located north of Baghdad on the Tigris River, holds strategic value due
 454 to its neighboring oil refinery. The forces of kufr have repeatedly attempted to take complete
 455 control of the town and push back the Islamic State but have continuously failed despite being
 456 backed by American airstrikes.

457 Immediately after the liberation of the town, there were reports and pictures of alleged
 458 Safawī reinforcements being sent to the area. So as the soldiers of the Khilāfah celebrate and
 459 give thanks to Allah, they anticipate more battles, more victories, more ghanā’im, and more
 460 opportunities – bi idhnillāh – to take revenge for Ahlus-Sunnah from the filthy Safawīs and
 461 their allies.

462 11. Foreword

463 Issue 7, Page 3

464 “What is Japan’s concern with us? Who has drawn Japan into this difficult, powerful, and
 465 fierce war... into this transgression against our sons in Palestine? Japan cannot endure
 466 entering into a war against us. Therefore, it should reconsider its stance. What is the concern
 467 of Australia in the far south with us and with the condition of the defenseless people of
 468 Afghanistan and Palestine? What is Germany’s concern in this war except kufr and crusade?
 469 It is yet another crusade just like the former crusades led by Richard the Lionheart,

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470 Barbarossa of Germany, and Louis of France. Likewise today, when Bush raised the cross, the
 471 crusader countries immediately scrambled. What is the Arab countries' concern with this
 472 crusade? Why have they entered into it nakedly and openly in broad daylight? Because they
 473 are pleased with the rule of the cross" [October 2001 Interview].

474 Shaykh Usāmah Ibn Lādin (rahimahullāh) said the above words 13 years ago when
 475 numerous nations rushed to join the crusader coalition mobilized to invade Afghanistan.
 476 Japan joined the crusade despite its non-Christian paganism, its "pacifist" constitution, and its
 477 great distance from Afghanistan. The unwise Prime Minister at the time – Junichiro Koizumi
 478 – committed to providing logistical support for the Western crusaders. What kind of interests
 479 did he expect to achieve for Japan in joining a crusade against Muslims? Thereafter, Japan –
 480 again under the leadership of Koizumi – joined the crusaders in Iraq by dispatching its "Self-
 481 Defense" Forces to support them there. Then when the mujāhidīn under the leadership of
 482 Shaykh Abū Mus'ab az- Zaraqāwī (rahimahullāh) captured the Japanese crusader Shosei Koda
 483 and threatened to execute him unless Japanese forces withdrew from Iraq, Koizumi and his
 484 government arrogantly stated that Japan would not concede to the demands of "terrorists."
 485 Accordingly, Koda was decapitated like those before him from amongst the prisoners
 486 belonging to the crusader coalition including Nick Berg and Kenneth Bigley.

487 Almost a decade later, "pacifist" Japan has once again defied wisdom by entering into
 488 another crusader coalition against the Muslims, but this time under the leadership of the
 489 "Nobel Peace Prize" winner Obama. And so a "pacifist" country is led by a "peace"
 490 prizewinner in a war doomed to fail. What interests did Abe Shinzo expect to achieve for
 491 Japan by publicly committing more than 200 million dollars to be explicitly used in the war
 492 against the Islamic State, as if the Khilāfah were not a dangerous entity to anger? What kind
 493 of hubris blinded him to make his thoughtless announcement from a podium erected by the
 494 tāghūt Sisi who wages war against the soldiers of the Khilāfah in Wilāyat Saynā'? What begot

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495 him into “forgetting” that the Islamic State had two Japanese prisoners inside its jails awaiting
496 the blunders of Japanese leadership?

497 It was nothing save the plan of Allah from which the pagans felt secure. And so
498 immediately the Islamic State demanded 200 million dollars from the Japanese government,
499 the same sum initially committed to the crusaders and their apostate allies by the Japanese
500 Prime Minister. The Khilāfah was not in need of the money and knew fully that the Japanese
501 would never provide the sum, but it had decided – by this demand – to humiliate the
502 arrogance of this Japanese government... a government in a line of governments enslaved by
503 the West since the Second World War.

504 After the passing of the first deadline, the Japanese prisoner Haruna Yukawa was
505 executed while Japanese representatives rushed to the murtadd Jordanian regime. The Islamic
506 State immediately requested for the release and transfer of Sājidah ar-Rīshāwī – a mujāhidah
507 who was imprisoned by the Jordanian tāghūt for almost 10 years – to the lands of the
508 Khilāfah in exchange for Kenji Goto Jogo. The Jordanian regime recklessly complicated the
509 process for the Japanese by attempting to include their pilot in the exchange deal, but the
510 Khilāfah explicitly refused such during the negotiations with the representative of the
511 Jordanian tāghūt – ‘Āsim Tāhir al-Barqāwī (AKA Abū Muhammad al-Maḡdisīl) – as there
512 were other plans for the murtadd pilot. In the end, both al-Barqāwī’s murtadd client and the
513 Japanese prisoner were executed due to the negligence of both regimes in heeding the
514 warnings of the Islamic State. The relatives of Kenji Goto Jogo and the murtadd pilot have no
515 one to blame but the political leaders of their lands who strive to appease and serve the
516 American crusaders.

517 Prior to Abe Shinzo’s thoughtless pledge of support for this crusade, Japan was not on the
518 list of priorities to be targeted by the Islamic State, but through Abe Shinzo’s foolishness, all

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519 Japanese citizens and interests – wherever they may be found – are now a target for the
520 soldiers and patrons of the Khilāfah everywhere.

521 Japan is now in a complicated predicament. How can it escape this threat? Can Abe Shinzo
522 take the step to save his people whom he recklessly exposed to the wrath of the Khilāfah? Can
523 he bravely announce the halting of his support for the war against the Khilāfah after making
524 his infamously unwise announcement against the Islamic State? That is very doubtful. So let
525 his citizens know that the sword of the Khilāfah has been unsheathed against the pagans of
526 Japan by Allah’s might and power.

527 **12. The Burning of the Murtad Pilot**

528 Issue 7, Page 5-8

529 This week, the Islamic State released a video depicting the execution of the Jordanian
530 crusader pilot, Mu’ādh Sāfi Yūsuf al-Kasāsibah. As displayed in the video, the Islamic State
531 had resolved to burn him alive as retribution for his crimes against Islam and the Muslims,
532 including his active involvement in crusader airstrikes against Muslim lands.

533 When the news of the video broke out, the tāghūt of Jordan who at the time was in
534 Washington to meet with his masters at the White House – as is the habit of the crusader
535 puppets – cut short his trip, returned home early, and promptly ordered the execution of the
536 mujāhidah, Sājidah ar-Rīshāwī and the mujāhid, Ziyād al- Karbūlī, both of whom had been
537 imprisoned for nearly a decade by the murtaddīn of Jordan. The Islamic State had done
538 everything it could to secure the release of both Sājidah and Ziyād, but Allah decreed that
539 they would return to Him as shuhadā’, an incomparable honor which they had both desired,
540 eagerly pursued, and supplicated their Lord for. We consider them so, and Allah is their
541 judge. In executing the mujāhidīn, Jordan is merely hastening the inevitable destruction of its
542 tāghūt regime. Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “Whoever harms an ally
543 of Mine, then I have declared war against him” [Sahīh al- Bukhārī].

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544 While the execution of Sājidah and Ziyād became the focus of international headlines, the
 545 focus for many ignorant hizbiyyīn became the manner in which the pilot was executed.
 546 Amongst them was the Jordanian Abū Sayyāf Muhammad ash- Shalabī, who stated, “The
 547 manner in which he was executed and the subsequent production of a video displaying his
 548 execution is a matter that opposes the teachings of the pure religion. Jihād was legislated to
 549 make the people enter the religion, not to make them turn away from the religion or to distort
 550 its image.”

551 This type of rhetoric is typical of hizbiyyīn – even those masquerading as supporters of the
 552 mujāhidīn – who continue to live under the authority of the murtadd puppets, and of defeatist
 553 Muslims who reside in the lands of kufr under the authority of the crusaders themselves, with
 554 no intention of making hijrah
 555 to those lands in which the word of Allah is the highest. Such people have had their religion
 556 diluted and, not surprisingly, are always amongst the first to speak out in any case where the
 557 mujāhidīn display their harshness towards the crusaders, attempting to disguise their criticism
 558 towards the mujāhidīn as concern for the image of Islam. In burning the crusader pilot alive
 559 and burying him under a pile of debris, the Islamic State carried out a just form of retaliation
 560 for his involvement in the crusader bombing campaign which continues to result in the killing
 561 of countless Muslims who, as a result of these airstrikes, are burned alive and buried under
 562 mountains of debris. This is not to even mention those Muslims – men, women, and children
 563 – who survive the airstrikes and are left injured and disabled, and in many cases suffering
 564 from severe burns that cause them pain and anguish every minute of every day.

565 {AND IF YOU PUNISH [AN ENEMY], PUNISH WITH AN EQUIVALENT OF
 566 THAT WITH WHICH YOU WERE HARMED} [An-Nahl: 126]. This āyāh sufficiently
 567 demonstrates the shar’ī validity of burning someone alive in a case of qisās (retribution). The
 568 confusion perpetuated by the hizbiyyīn, the palace “scholars,” and the ignorant defeatists, is

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569 with regards to the authentic statement of Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam),
 570 “None should punish with fire except Allah” [Sahīh al-Bukhārī].

571 As a result of their dishonesty in conveying the truth, the deviants concealed the fact that
 572 there is a famous exception to this ruling made in the case of qisās and maslahah
 573 (overwhelming benefit), and that in addition to the aforementioned āyah from Sūrat An-Nahl,
 574 the fuqahā’ used as evidence for these exceptions the following āyah from Sūrat Al-Baqarah.
 575 {So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted
 576 you}[Al-Baqarah: 194].

577 They further used as evidence the hadīth of the Uranī men whose eyes were gouged out by
 578 the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) with heated iron [Al-Bukhārī and Muslim].

579 Furthermore, the scholars highlighted the fact that the Sahābah (radiyallāhu ‘anhum)
 580 punished people with fire in a number of incidents that took place throughout the course of
 581 the history of the rightly-guided Khulafā’. Here we will mention some of these incidents.

582 The first example: In his letter to the murtaddīn of the Arabian Peninsula during the riddah
 583 wars, Abū Bakr as-Siddīq (radiyallāhu ‘anh) threatened to burn them alive if they did not
 584 repent from their riddah. In it he states, “I have sent to you so and so [Khālid Ibn al-Walīd]
 585 with an army of the Muhājirīn, the Ansār, and their good followers, and I’ve ordered him to
 586 not fight anyone or kill anyone until he calls him to the call of Allah. Whoever answers him,
 587 accepts the truth, halts his evil, and does good, my envoy will accept this from him and will
 588 aid him in it. If he refuses, I’ve ordered him to wage war against them over such, to not spare
 589 anyone he is able to kill, to burn them alive with fire, to kill them in a severe manner using all
 590 means, to enslave their women and children, and to not accept from any one of them anything
 591 but Islam” [Tārīkh at-Tabarī; Al- Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah].

592 The second example: Likewise during his khilāfah, Abū Bakr (radiyallāhu ‘anh) gathered
 593 a number of his advisors from amongst the Sahābah and consulted them about the case of a

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594 man found guilty of committing sodomy. The one who had the most severe position was ‘Alī
 595 (radiyallāhu ‘anh) who said, “This is a sin that no nation had committed before except for one
 596 nation, and you know how Allah dealt with them. I view that we should burn him alive.” So
 597 the Sahābah agreed with his position, and Abū Bakr wrote to Khālīd ordering him to burn the
 598 man alive [Al-Bayhaqī].

599 The third example: In another incident that occurred during the riddah wars, a man named
 600 al-Fujā’ah came to Abū Bakr as-Siddīq (radiyallāhu ‘anh) claiming to be Muslim, and asked
 601 Abū Bakr to prepare an army for him to lead in fighting the murtaddīn. Abū Bakr did so, and
 602 the man wound up killing and robbing anyone he came across, including Muslims. When this
 603 reached Abū Bakr, he sent an army to detain him. He was detained and brought back, and
 604 Abū Bakr ordered that he be taken to the area of al-Baqī’ and burned alive [Al- Bidāyah wan-
 605 Nihāyah].

606 The fourth example: During the riddah wars, when Khālīd Ibn al-Walīd defeated Tulayhah
 607 al- Asadī in the battle of Buzākhah, Abū Bakr wrote to him ordering him to not be lenient and
 608 to make an example out of anyone he captured from amongst the kuffār who had killed
 609 Muslims. So Khālīd remained in Buzākhah for a month hunting down the murtaddīn and
 610 taking revenge for the Muslims who had been killed. Some of the murtaddīn he would burn
 611 alive, others he would stone to death, and others he would throw off the tops of mountains
 612 [Al- Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah].

613 The fifth example: Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī reported that the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa
 614 sallam) sent both him and Mu’ādh Ibn Jabal (radiyallāhu ‘anhumā) to Yemen, and instructed
 615 them to teach the people the Qur’ān. Mu’ādh came one day to visit Abū Mūsā and found with
 616 him a man who was chained up, so he said, “O, my brother, were we sent to punish the people
 617 or were we sent to teach them and order them with what would benefit them?” So Abū Mūsā
 618 said, “He embraced Islam and then disbelieved.” So Mu’ādh said, “By He who sent

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619 Muhammad with the truth, I will not leave until I burn him with fire.” So Abū Mūsā said,
 620 “We still have some unfinished business with him.” So Mu’ādh said, “By Allah, I will never
 621 leave!” So some firewood was brought and a fire was lit, and he threw him in [Al-Mu’jam al-
 622 Kabīr – at-Tabarānī].

623 Thus, the Islamic State not only followed the footsteps of Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu
 624 ‘alayhi wa sallam) in his harshness towards the disbelievers, but also emulated the example of
 625 his righteous Sahābah (radiyallāhu ‘anhum) by punishing with fire in retaliation, and for the
 626 purpose of terrorizing the murtaddīn and making examples out of them.

627 We ask Allah to take revenge for the Muslims and the mujāhidīn, and rain fire and
 628 destruction upon the kuffār and murtaddīn wherever they are.

629 **13. Revenge for Muslimat persecuted by the Coptic crusaders of Egypt**

630 Issue 7, Pages 30-32

631 This month, the soldiers of the Khilāfah in Wilāyat Tarābulus captured 21 Coptic
 632 crusaders, almost five years after the blessed operation against the Baghdad church executed
 633 in revenge for Kamilia Shehata, Wafa Constantine, and other sisters who were tortured and
 634 murdered by the Coptic Church of Egypt. The operation was planned by Hudhayfah al-
 635 Battāwī (rahimahullāh), wālī of Wilāyat Baghdad at the time, alongside the senior military
 636 commander, Abū Ibrāhīm az- Zaydī (rahimahullāh), both of whom played a crucial role –
 637 through their passion and zealousness – in preserving the morale of the Islamic State
 638 mujāhidīn after the martyrdom of Abū ‘Umar al-Baghdādī and Abū Hamzah al-Muhājir
 639 (rahimahumallāh). At the time, the Islamic State was distant from Egypt and so could not
 640 easily target the Coptic crusaders there, but its leadership knew that despite the worldly and
 641 sectarian animosity of the kuffār – as groups and individuals – towards each other, {Their
 642 adversity among themselves is severe. You think they are together, but their hearts are
 643 diverse. That is because they are a people who do not reason} [Al-Hashr: 14], the different

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644 kuffār still have allegiance to each other in the face of Islam, {And those who disbelieved are
 645 allies of one another. If you do not do so, there will be fitnah on earth and great corruption}
 646 [Al-Anfāl: 73]. {O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies.
 647 They are allies of one another} [Al-Mā'idah: 51].

648 Therefore, the Islamic State leadership decided to target the Catholic Christians of Baghdad
 649 so as to teach the tāghūt of the Copts – Shenouda – that the price of Muslim blood is costly
 650 and so accordingly, if his church persecuted any Muslimah in Egypt, he would be directly
 651 responsible for every single Christian killed anywhere in the world when the Islamic State
 652 sought its just revenge... And the deaths did not begin until after the crusaders had expressed
 653 their arrogance and refusal to execute the righteous demands of the mujāhidīn.

654 So more than one hundred crusaders were killed and injured by just five brave
 655 istishhādiyyīn from the Islamic State. And the different Christian churches had no one to truly
 656 blame but Shenouda for the deaths of their brethren in kufr...

657 And instead of congratulating the Islamic State on this blessed operation in Iraq executed
 658 in revenge for the persecuted sisters, the hizbī 'Azzām al-Amrīkī began to spew forth in some
 659 of his letters what his heart contained of rancor, by defending the Catholics of Europe in the
 660 face of the actions of the mujāhidīn! He then strove to act on his personal rancor towards the
 661 Islamic State as soon as he became a top leader of al-Qā'idah after the martyrdom of Shaykh
 662 Usāmah Ibn Lādin (rahimahullāh).

663 'Azzām al-Amrīkī's strange attitude towards the Christians was similarly expressed by
 664 Ayman adh-Dhawāhirī when he said, "I want to restate our position towards the Coptic
 665 Christians. We do not want to get into a war with them because we are busy in the battle
 666 against the greatest enemy of the Ummah [America] and because they are our partners in this
 667 nation, partners whom we wish to live with in peace and stability" [Risālat al-Amal wal-Bishr
 668 – Part 8]. So while the Islamic State targeted the Catholics in revenge for the sisters

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669 imprisoned by the Copts, ‘Azzām al-Amrīkī’s commander was wooing the war-waging Copts
 670 themselves with feeble words, forgetting, {Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those
 671 with him are harsh against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves} [Al-Fath: 29], and
 672 {O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion – Allah will
 673 bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble
 674 toward the believers, mighty against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do
 675 not fear the blame of a critic} [Al-Mā’idah: 54].

676 And so, five years after the blessed operation in Iraq, Allah (ta’ālā) granted the Islamic
 677 State expansion to Libya, Sinai, and elsewhere, allowing it to easily capture the Coptic
 678 crusaders – the followers of the dead Shenouda and the supporters of the tāghūt Sisi – as the
 679 Salaf said, “The reward for a good deed is another good deed.” And thus, the Islamic State
 680 strikes terror directly in the hearts of the Copts after striking terror in the hearts of their
 681 Catholic allies before, while the jihād claimants and hizbiyyīn sit back and deliberate – in vain
 682 – on what they can do to prevent the further expansion of the Khilāfah.

683 Finally, it is important for Muslims everywhere to know that there is no doubt in the great
 684 reward to be found on Judgment Day for those who spill the blood of these Coptic crusaders
 685 wherever they may be found.

686 **14. Soldiers of terror**

687 Issue 8, Pages 17-19

688 This month, the soldiers of the Khilāfah sent a forceful message to the camp of kufr and
 689 riddah, striking and terrorizing them in multiple lands, and with no visas, borders, and
 690 passports to stand in the way. Strikes were carried out in Yemen and Tunisia by men whose
 691 allegiance lies, not with a false citizenship, but with Allah, His Messenger, and the believers.
 692 They readily sacrificed themselves for the cause of Allah in their own lands, bringing

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693 massacre to the disbelievers and murtaddīn, not differentiating between them on grounds of
694 nationalism.

695 In the city of Tunis, two soldiers of the Islamic State carried out an assault on kāfir tourists
696 in the Bardo National Museum. The two mujāhidīn, Abū Zakariyyā at-Tūnusī and Abū Anas
697 at-Tūnusī, were sent on their mission after having trained with their brothers in Libya and
698 having declared their bay'ah to the Khalīfah (hafīdhahullāh). They returned to Tunisia,
699 bravely advanced towards the security quarter in Tunis, entered the museum – located across
700 from the Tunisian parliament – and poured terror on the kuffār inside, killing more than 20 of
701 them and injuring a dozen others. They then faced off against the local murtadd security
702 forces with their AK assault rifles, hand grenades, and explosive belts, and were killed fī
703 sabīllillāh. The operation succeeded in bringing anguish to a number of the nations involved in
704 the crusader coalition (Italy, France, Britain, Japan, Poland, Australia, Spain, and Belgium),
705 after some of their own citizens became prey for the soldiers of the Islamic State.

706 Just two days later in Wilāyat Sanaa, four soldiers of the Islamic State carried out
707 coordinated istishhādī attacks against the Houthi murtaddīn in the city of Sanaa. They
708 infiltrated two temples where the Houthis had gathered and detonated their explosives,
709 leading to a massacre that killed over a hundred, including the top Rāfidī cleric Murtadā al-
710 Mahatwarī and a number of Houthi leaders, and also injured hundreds more. At around the
711 same time, a fifth mujāhid carried out an operation in Sa'dah, targeting a Houthi government
712 building and detonating his explosives. Only days after the operations, the Americans
713 announced that they had pulled the last of their special forces out of Yemen. These operations
714 brought back memories of the blessed attacks ordered by Shaykh Abū Mus'ab az-Zarqāwī
715 (rahimahullāh), targeting the Iraqi Rāfidah and killing their cleric Muhammad Bāqir al-
716 Hakīm.

717 On the heels of this blessed operation in Sanaa and Sa'dah, the Yemenī branch of al-

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718 Qā'idah came out and exposed its two-faced nature by denouncing the attack and reaffirming
 719 their adherence to Dhawāhiri's guidelines, as if to imply that the Islamic State's operation was
 720 carried out against Sunnis in a public place of gathering not specific to the Houthis, when in
 721 reality the opposite was true. When one contrasts this blessed operation with al-Qā'idah's
 722 attack on a Houthi rally in Tahrir Square in Sanaa last fall, the blatant hypocrisy becomes
 723 evident: Is it permissible for Al-Qa'idah – according to Dhawāhiri's feeble guidelines – to
 724 bomb a Houthi rally in a public square, but forbidden for the Islamic State to bomb a Houthi
 725 gathering in a Houthi temple? Or is this distinction based on blind partisanship?

726 May Allah accept all those mujāhidīn who fight, massacre, and terrorize the kuffār while
 727 not differentiating between them under the influence of irjā' or on the grounds of nationalism.

728 **15. Paradigm Shift**

729 Issue 8, Pages 64-67

730 After all the gnashing of teeth in September, there appears now a grudging acceptance by
 731 many Western politicians that the Islamic State is different to anything they've seen before.
 732 Their response, by necessity, has to be different too.

733 Firstly, a caveat. There is always a danger that I am well behind the curve in terms of recent
 734 developments and that some of the things I observe from news reports provided are outdated
 735 from the outset. But has anyone noticed a crucially telling shift in the way some American
 736 leaders and their allies are discussing the affairs of the Islamic State recently?

737 From the toothless roaring of Obama's address to the nation on 10th September, in which
 738 he declared that the Islamic State "is a terrorist organization, pure and simple," it would seem
 739 that some of his closest advisors, many figures in the rest of the NATO world and the media
 740 in general are not convinced by such a simplistic description, although "terrorism" is
 741 undoubtedly one of the tactics, amongst many, adeptly employed and advanced by the Islamic
 742 State in its jihād.

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743 Obama’s own former defense secretary Chuck Hagel described the situation as “one of the
744 most challenging periods in history for American leadership.”

745 In an interview with CBS, Hagel went on to say, “We’ve never seen an organization like
746 ISIL that is so well-organized, so well-trained, so well-funded, so strategic, so brutal, so
747 completely ruthless. We’ve never seen anything quite like that in one institution. Then they
748 blend in ideology ... and social media. The sophistication of their social media program is
749 something that we’ve never seen before. You blend all of that together, that is an incredibly
750 powerful new threat.”

751 For the former defense secretary to be using such relatively complimentary language when
752 discussing an adversary is a clear sign that Washington isn’t so sure they’re up against a mere
753 “organization” at all. And Hagel is not alone in his use of respectful parlance. General Martin
754 Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, confessed on television that “firstly, there’s
755 no military-only solution to ISIL. And secondly, there’s no airpower alone solution either in
756 Iraq or Syria.”

757 There’s no point including quotations from the world’s journalists because so many of
758 them wax lyrical about the gains and exploits of the Islamic State – we’d be here all day
759 paraphrasing other peoples’ words.

760 But such admissions were impossible to even imagine back in the days when American
761 leaders were busy laying the groundwork for this very environment today. Back then, it was
762 all about crushing the unruly “terrorists” in Iraq and Afghanistan with “shock and awe” and
763 the might of the American war machine. But today the men in charge are being forced to
764 concede that maybe, just perhaps, they were a little too quick off the mark to dismiss the
765 Islamic State as merely “a terrorist organization, pure and simple.” And that’s just three
766 months into their campaign.

767 I am certainly no expert on such matters and my views are those of a layman, but

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768 generally one doesn't expect a mere "organization" (similar to mark antony) to lay siege to
769 cities or have their own police force.

770 You certainly don't expect a mere "organization" to have tanks and artillery pieces, an
771 army of soldiers tens of thousands strong, and their own spy drones. And one certainly
772 doesn't expect a mere "organization" to have a mint with plans to produce their own currency,
773 primary schools for the young, and a functioning court system.

774 These, surely, are all hallmarks of (whisper it if you dare) a country. Ah, the C-word. It's
775 being used sporadically by the media, slowly at first but its use is gathering pace. Could the
776 Islamic State, the Caliphate that was only announced in June, really be a country?

777 "ISIS will have taken more towns, more territory, consolidated more gains and really
778 become, unfortunately, the kind of country we don't want to see over there," declared retired
779 Lieutenant Colonel Bill Cowan on Fox News in October 2014.

780 As uncomfortable as it may be for many in the West, there's little reason why the State
781 shouldn't be considered a country. Countries can be born in days, in hours during a coup, or
782 in minutes at the signing of a paper, they have been for centuries.

783 So there's no reason this one shouldn't have been born the way it was. And if it's not the
784 Islamic State's country, then just whose is it?

785 Certainly, it no longer belongs to Bashar al-Asad, holed up in Damascus as his soldiers
786 recuperate after four years of massacring the Muslims of Syria. There was never any
787 legitimacy to his tyrannical rule and what control he had has long passed and can never
788 return.

789 Does it then belong to the newly instated and incompetent puppet Iraqi government,
790 tucked away in Baghdad while its army licks its wounds from the murderous thrashing it
791 received from the mujāhidīn back in the summer? Clearly not. And it definitely doesn't
792 belong to the Free Syrian Army, who had years to do something decisive or cohesive but

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793 chose instead to smoke Gauloises cigarettes, drink tea, and complain that nothing could be
794 done without NATO jets flying overhead. Well they are now, and they've still achieved zero.

795 No indeed. If anyone has an actual claim to the lands stretching across Iraq and Syria (or
796 any of the other regions the Islamic State has reached), has the motivation to run them, and
797 the military to defend them, then it's hard to argue against the leaders and soldiers of the
798 Islamic State.

799 Although the West might never admit such a thing, there are Western politicians who are
800 beginning to realize this fact and thus, little by little, we're seeing a changing of vernacular, a
801 paradigm shift in how those leaders talk about the State, because if it is a country – whether
802 recognized by anyone or not (and the Islamic State doesn't care either way) – then that
803 changes things, dramatically.

804 You can't just conveniently write it off as merely "a terrorist organization," because it
805 doesn't wash with the public. You can't drop a few bombs on it and hope it goes away,
806 because it won't. And you can't expect a feckless collection of poorly trained and even more
807 ground troops to do a job you don't want to touch, because they will fail.

808 At some stage, you're going to have to face the Islamic State as a country, and even
809 consider a truce. If there's no military only solution to the Islamic State, and that's already on
810 the record as being the case, then after you've tried getting the other Sahwah tribes to turn
811 against it and finished mucking around trying to find ways to cut their funding or shut down
812 their media message (which has already cost the US well in excess of \$1.3 billion and
813 completely failed) at some point the only option left will be an offer of a truce.

814 And that's going to take some swallowing of pride. But with the black flag of the Caliphate
815 now seen on the skylines of Africa, Arabia, and Asia, a complete departure in how the West
816 addresses this State is needed.

817 What's the alternative, launch airstrikes in half-a dozen countries at once? They'll have to

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818 destroy half the region if that's the case. I was in Kobani in October last year and more than
819 170 US airstrikes – “the heaviest barrage since the air campaign began” according to CBS
820 correspondent Holly Williams – had merely finished what Islamic State artillery had begun
821 and reduced large portions of the city to rubble. In the end, it was over 600 sorties, and now
822 there is nothing left of the place.

823 Incidentally, there was a heavy airstrike some time ago in the dead of night and I promise
824 that you don't sit there thinking, “Hurray, it's the United States Air Force.” As the doors
825 shake on their hinges and the walls bulge momentarily inward from the shockwaves, you
826 become incandescent with fury. For 20 minutes afterwards there are the sounds of babies
827 crying in fear, mothers trying to soothe their children, and sirens as casualties are taken to
828 hospital. It's a side to “precision” bombing that you never see back in the West.

829 Is a truce even realistic? Right now, it's too early. The scene is just being set for a big
830 operation against the Islamic State to be executed by Iranian militias (AKA the Iraqi army)
831 backed by the US. But when that fails because Shiite militiamen are afraid of being burnt
832 alive, when special forces operations skyrocket in an effort to make up for what the Iraqi army
833 cannot achieve, and when the mujāhidīn start beheading Western troops, then every option is
834 going to be on the table, and fast. A truce will be one of those options.

835 **THE ONLY QUESTION IS, HOW MANY MORE WESTERNERS WILL DIE**
836 **BETWEEN THEN AND NOW?**

837 The way things are going at the moment, the answer is many. France, Belgium, Denmark,
838 Australia, and Canada, have all been the targets of mujāhidīn attacks over the last three
839 months alone, and as more Islamic fighters from different groups in different countries pledge
840 allegiance to the Islamic State, such attacks will surely only become more numerous and
841 better-executed.

842 “Foreign fighters travelled everywhere, from Europe, to the United States, to Australia, to

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843 other parts of the Muslim world, converging on Syria,” said Obama on an interview aired on
844 60 Minutes. “And so this became ground zero for jihadists around the world. And this is one
845 of the challenges that we’re going to have generally. Where you’ve got states that are failing
846 or in the midst of civil war, these kinds of organizations thrive.”

847 However long it takes for those options to be placed on the table, the language change in
848 the West is undeniably there. Just eight months into their campaign and already some of the
849 most senior political figures in the US are admitting the Islamic State is unlike any opponent
850 they have faced before and that a military solution by itself is impossible. That speaks
851 volumes by itself.

852 Finally, I may have an overly-simplistic way of looking at things that perhaps does not
853 reflect the immense complexities of modern warfare and nation-building. Any truce between
854 the West and the Islamic State would ultimately have to address the end of support for Arab
855 and non- Arab tyrannical puppets in the Muslim world as well as an end of support for Israel.
856 That’s just for openers, but the impossible can and does happen.

857 War is entirely predictable in that it can only lead to one of two outcomes. Either one side
858 emerges victorious while the other is vanquished, or some kind of truce is reached. It is the
859 only way wars end, and America and its allies will never win this war. They know it and
860 everyone else knows it as well. At some stage the only option that can prevail for America
861 and the West is the sensible one.

15. And Allah is the best of plotters

862 Issue 9, Pages 50-57

864 Power belongs to Allah entirely. {And [yet], among the people are those who take other
865 than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who
866 believe are stronger in love for Allah. And if only they who have committed injustice would

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867 consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that power belongs to
868 Allah entirely and that Allah **is severe in punishment** } [Al-Baqarah: 165].

869 Honor belongs to Allah entirely. {Give tidings to the hypocrites that there is for them a
870 painful punishment – those who take disbelievers as allies instead of the believers. Do they
871 seek with them honor [through might]? But indeed, honor belongs to Allah entirely} [An-
872 Nisā': 138-139]. {And let not their speech grieve you. Indeed, honor [due to might] belongs
873 to Allah entirely. He is the Hearing, the Knowing} [Yūnus: 65]. {Whoever desires honor
874 [through might] – then to Allah belongs all honor. To Him ascends good speech, and
875 righteous work raises it. But they who plot evil deeds will have a severe punishment, and the
876 plotting of those – it will perish} [Fātir: 10].

877 And plotting belongs to Allah entirely. {And those before them had plotted. But to Allah
878 belongs plotting entirely. He knows what every soul earns, and the disbelievers will know for
879 whom is the final abode} [Ar-Ra'd: 42].

880 No one can escape His power. No one can attain honor except through Him. And no plot
881 can ever truly succeed except His.

882 These are realities that the crusaders have not realized. And so they use their power to
883 tyrannize the weak and oppressed Muslims. Their Jewish, hypocritical, and apostate allies
884 attempt to attain honor and might through the crusaders. And they plot against Islam while
885 having the doubts of Jāhiliyyah, thinking that Allah will not grant victory to His religion.

886 But the matter of victory belongs completely to Allah. {Say, “Indeed, the matter belongs
887 completely to Allah”} [Āl ‘Imrān: 154]. {And to Allah belong the unseen [aspects] of the
888 heavens and the earth and to Him will be returned the matter completely, so worship Him and
889 rely upon Him. And your Lord is not unaware of that which you do} [Hūd: 123].

890 And He legislated that the religion is for Him completely and decreed it would be so. {And
891 fight them until there is no fitnah and [until] the religion is completely for Allah. And if they

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892 cease – then indeed, Allah is Seeing of what they do} [Al-Anfāl: 39]. {It is He who has sent
893 His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religions, even if
894 the mushrikīn despise such} [At-Tawbah: 33]. {And sufficient is Allah as a witness} [Al-
895 Fath: 28].

896 But due to the deviance and arrogance of the enemies of Allah, they plot against His
897 religion and His allies. Their plots almost cause the mountains to collapse out of shock that
898 the kuffār dare to oppose the Lord of the heavens and the earth. {And they had plotted their
899 plot, but with Allah is their plot [recorded], even if their plot had been [sufficient] to do away
900 with the mountains} [Ibrāhīm: 46].

901 And yet their plot is inherently weak, as it is part of the weak plot of Shaytān. {Those who
902 believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of tāghūt. So
903 fight against the allies of Shaytān. Indeed, the plot of Shaytān has ever been weak} [An-Nisā:
904 76].

905 And this weakness is due to the power of sincerity – the core of tawhīd – granted by Allah
906 to the slaves He has chosen, as the accursed Shaytān himself testified. {[Iblīs] said, “My Lord,
907 because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them on
908 earth, and I will mislead them all except, among them, Your sincere servants.” [Allah] said,
909 “This is a path [of return] to Me [that is] straight. Indeed, My servants – no authority will you
910 have over them, except those who follow you of the deviators”}[Al-Hijr: 39-42].

911 And despite their weakness and the weakness of their master, Shaytān, they plotted for his
912 sake. And so they became the object of the firm plot of the best and swiftest of plotters,
913 without them realizing it. {And they plotted, but Allah plotted. And Allah is the best of
914 plotters} [Āl ‘Imrān: 54]. {Then did they feel secure from the plot of Allah? But no one feels
915 secure from the plot of Allah except those people in loss} [Al-A’rāf: 99]. {And when We give
916 the people a taste of mercy after adversity has touched them, at once they plot against Our

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917 verses. Say, “Allah is swifter in plot.” Indeed, Our messengers record that which you plot}
 918 [Yūnus: 21]. {And I will give them time. Indeed, my plot is firm} [Al-A’rāf: 183]. {Or do
 919 they intend a plot? But those who disbelieve – they are the object of a plot} [At-Tūr: 42].

920 And Allah weakened their plots and led them to failure, misguidance, and severe error.
 921 {Rather, their [own] plot has been made attractive to those who disbelieve, and they have
 922 been averted from the way. And whomever Allah leaves astray – there will be for him no
 923 guide} [Ar-Ra’d: 33]. {But they who plot evil deeds will have a severe punishment, and the
 924 plotting of those – it will perish} [Fātir: 10]. {And Allah does not guide the plot of betrayers}
 925 [Yūsuf: 52]. {But the plot of the disbelievers is not except in error} [Ghāfir: 25].

926 And the outcome of their plots is the exact opposite of what they desire. They only plotted
 927 against themselves, their worldly life, and their hereafter, bringing about their debasement and
 928 self-destruction. {And they plotted a plot, and We plotted a plot, while they perceived not.
 929 Then look how was the outcome of their plot – that We destroyed them and their people, all.
 930 So those are their houses, desolate because of the wrong they had done. Indeed in that is a
 931 sign for people whoknow. And We saved those who believed and used to fear Allah} [An-
 932 Naml: 50-53]. {And thus We have placed within every city the greatest of its criminals to
 933 conspire therein. But they conspire not except against themselves, and they perceive [it] not}
 934 [Al-An’ām: 123]. {There will afflict those who committed crimes debasement before Allah
 935 and severe punishment for what they used to conspire} [Al-An’ām: 124]. {Those before them
 936 had already plotted, but Allah came at their building from the foundations, so the roof fell
 937 upon them from above them, and the punishment came to them from where they did not
 938 perceive} [An-Nahl: 26]. {Then, do those who have plotted evil deeds feel secure that Allah
 939 will not cause the earth to swallow them or that the punishment will not come upon them
 940 from where they do not perceive?} [An-Nahl: 45]. {But the evil plot does not encompass
 941 except its own people. Then do they await except the way of the former peoples? But you will

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942 never find in the way of Allah any change, and you will never find in the way of Allah any
943 alteration} [Fātir: 43].

944 So a Muslim should not grieve when hearing about the weak plots of the kuffār. Rather, he
945 should be patient and certain of the kuffār’s imminent destruction. His strongest weapon is his
946 tawhīd and what it entails of relying upon Allah alone, fearing Him alone, supplicating Him
947 alone, and declaring his barā’ah from the mushrikīn. {And if you are patient and fear Allah,
948 their plot will not harm you at all. Indeed, Allah is encompassing of what they do} [Āl
949 ‘Imrān: 120]. {And be patient, and your patience is not but through Allah. And do not grieve
950 over them and do not be in distress over what they plot} [An-Nahl: 127]. {Say, “Call your
951 ‘partners’ and then conspire against me and give me no respite. Indeed, my protector is Allah,
952 who has sent down the Book; and He is an ally to the righteous. And those you call upon
953 besides Him are unable to help you, nor can they help themselves”} [Al-A’rāf: 195-197]. {He
954 said, “Indeed, I call Allah to witness, and witness [yourselves] that I am free from whatever
955 you ascribe to Him of partners. So plot against me all together; then do not give me respite.
956 Indeed, I have relied upon Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature but that He
957 holds its forelock. Indeed, my Lord is on a path [that is] straight”} [Hūd: 54-56].

958 These lessons should always be on the Muslim’s mind as the crusaders and apostates plan
959 and execute their newest plots. He should remind himself and others with these lessons so that
960 he does not degrade himself before their weak plots nor succumb to the shirkī belief in
961 extreme conspiracy theories.

962

16. An address from the khalīfah: On the last plot of the apostates

964

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965 On 25 Rajab 1436, the Khalīfah (hafīdhahullāh) addressed the Ummah in a speech titled
966 “March Forth Whether Light or Heavy” in which he briefly mentioned the background of a

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967 new plot against Islam in the making. He first warned against the attitude that led many of the
 968 militant factions into apostatizing and allying with the kuffār, and that is their willingness to
 969 compromise and hope for permanent peace with the crusaders. He said, “O Muslims!
 970 Whoever thinks that it is within his capacity to conciliate with the Jews, Christians, and other
 971 kuffār, and for them to conciliate with him, such that he coexists with them and they coexist
 972 with him while he is upon his religion and upon tawhīd, then he has belied the explicit
 973 statement of his Lord (‘azza wa jall), who says, ... {And they will continue to fight you until
 974 they turn you back from your religion if they are able} [Al-Baqarah: 217] ... So this is the
 975 condition of the kuffār in dealing with the Muslims until the establishment of the Hour. {And
 976 you will never find in the way of Allah any alteration} [Fātir: 43].”

977 He also said, “O Muslims, Islam was never for a day the religion of peace. Islam is the
 978 religion of war. Your Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) was dispatched with the sword as
 979 a mercy to the creation. He was ordered with war until Allah is worshipped alone. He
 980 (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said to the mushrikīn of his people, ‘I came to you with
 981 slaughter’ [Reported by Imām Ahmad from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr]. He fought both the Arabs
 982 and non-Arabs in all their various colors. He himself left to fight and took part in dozens of
 983 battles. He never for a day grew tired of war ... His companions after him and their followers
 984 carried on similarly. They did not soften nor abandon war, until they possessed the Earth,
 985 conquered the East and the West, the nations submitted to them, and the lands yielded to
 986 them, by the edge of the sword. And similarly, this will remain the condition of those who
 987 follow them until the Day of Recompense. Our Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) has
 988 informed us of the Malāhim near the end of time. He gave us good tidings and promised us
 989 that we would be victorious in these battles. He is the truthful and trustworthy, sallallāhu
 990 ‘alayhi wa sallam. And here we are today seeing the signs of those Malāhim and we feel the
 991 winds of victory within them.”

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992 He explained that the Muslims would not cease to fight parties of the kuffār until ‘Īsā
 993 (‘alayhissalām) descends and leads the Muslim armies. He said, “Indeed, fighting the kuffār,
 994 hijrah, and jihād will remain until the establishment of the Hour. Allah’s Messenger
 995 (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, ‘Hijrah will not cease to exist until repentance ceases to be
 996 accepted, and repentance will not cease to be accepted until the sun rises from the West’
 997 [Reported by Abū Dāwūd from Mu’āwiyah] ... He (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) also said,
 998 ‘There will not cease to exist a group from my nation fighting upon the truth, manifest until
 999 the Day of Judgment. Then, Īsā, son of Maryam, will descend, and their leader will say,
 1000 ‘Come and lead us in prayer.’ So he will say, ‘No. You are leaders over one another as an
 1001 honor from Allah for this nation’ [Reported by Muslim from Jābir].”

1002 He described the imminent extinction of the gray zone by saying, “And if the Crusaders
 1003 today claim to avoid the Muslim public and to confine themselves to targeting the armed
 1004 amongst them, then soon you will see them targeting every Muslim everywhere. And if the
 1005 Crusaders today have begun to trouble the Muslims who continue to live in the lands of the
 1006 cross by monitoring them, arresting them, and questioning them, then soon they will begin to
 1007 displace them and take them away either dead, imprisoned, or homeless. They will not leave
 1008 anyone amongst them except one who apostatizes from his religion and follows theirs. And
 1009 you will remember what I now say to you, and I entrust my affair to Allah. O Muslims, the
 1010 Jews, the Christians, and the rest of the kuffār will not approve of you nor abandon waging
 1011 war against you until you follow their religion and apostatize from yours.”

1012 He then expounded on the obligation upon the Muslims during these wars before the Hour.
 1013 He said, “O Muslims! Do not think the war that we are waging is the Islamic State’s war
 1014 alone. Rather, it is the Muslims’ war altogether. It is the war of every Muslim in every place,
 1015 and the Islamic State is merely the spearhead in this war. It is but the war of the people of
 1016 faith against the people of kufr, so march forth to your war O Muslims. March forth

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1017 everywhere, for it is an obligation upon every Muslim who is accountable before Allah ...

1018 There is no excuse for any Muslim who is capable of performing hijrah to the Islamic State,
1019 or capable of carrying a weapon where he is, for Allah (tabāraka wa ta'ālā) has commanded
1020 him with hijrah and jihād, and has made fighting obligatory upon him. And we call upon
1021 every Muslim in every place to perform hijrah to the Islamic State or fight in his land
1022 wherever that may be.”

1023 This is the order of the Khalīfah (hafīdhahullāh). Either ones performs hijrah to the wilāyāt
1024 of the Khilāfah or, if he is unable to do so, he must attack the crusaders, their allies, the
1025 Rāfidah, the tawāghīt, and their apostate forces, wherever he might be with any means
1026 available to him, and he should not hesitate in doing so, nor consult any supposed “scholar”
1027 on this obligation. He should attack after declaring his bay'ah to the Khilāfah, so as not to die
1028 a death of Jāhiliyyah. And he will find an excellent example in the shuhadā' of the Islamic
1029 State including Numan Haider and Man Haron Monis (Australia), Michael Zehaf Bibeau and
1030 Martin Couture-Rouleau (Canada), Zale Thompson, Elton Simpson, and Nadir Soofi
1031 (America), Amedy Coulibaly (France), Omar Abdel Hamid el-Hussein (Denmark), and
1032 Sofiane Amghar and Khalid Ben Larbi (Belgium).

1033 He then warned against the propaganda of the crusaders by saying, “America and its allies
1034 from amongst the Jews, Crusaders, Rāfidah, secularists, atheists, and apostates claim that their
1035 coalition and war is to aid the weak and oppressed, help the poor, relieve the afflicted, liberate
1036 the enslaved, defend the innocent and peaceful, and prevent the shedding of their blood. They
1037 also claim to be in the camp of truth, good, and justice, waging war against falsehood, evil,
1038 and oppression, alongside the Muslims! Rather, they claim to defend Islam and the Muslims!
1039 Indeed, they lie.”

1040 He then warned against the tāghūt rulers who tyrannize the Muslim lands with manmade
1041 laws and prostrate to the Crusaders. He said, “O Muslims, the tāghūt rulers who rule your

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1042 lands ... are the allies of the Jews and Crusaders. Rather, they are their slaves, servants, and
1043 guard dogs, and nothing else. The armies that they prepare and arm and which the Jews and
1044 Crusaders train are only to crush you, weaken you, enslave you to the Jews and Crusaders,
1045 turn you away from your religion and the path of Allah, plunder the goods of your lands, and
1046 rob you of your wealth. This reality has become as obvious as the sun in the middle of the
1047 day.”

1048 He then expounded in detail on the apathy of the tāghūt rulers towards the Muslims and
1049 followed by saying, “The Arabian Peninsula’s rulers have been exposed and disgraced and
1050 have lost their supposed ‘legitimacy.’ Their treachery has become clear even to the laymen of
1051 the Muslims. And the reality of these rulers thereby became apparent. Therefore, their masters
1052 from amongst the Jews and Crusaders had no more use for them. And so their masters began
1053 to replace them with the Safawī Rāfidah and the Kurdish atheists. When Āl Salūl realized
1054 their masters’ abandonment of them, their disposal of them like tattered shoes, and their
1055 replacement of them, they launched their supposed war against the Rāfidah of Yemen. And it
1056 is not a storm of resolve, rather it is the kick of a dying person, by Allah’s permission, as he
1057 struggles during his last breaths.”

1058 He then said, “Today they claim to defend Ahlus-Sunnah in Yemen against the Rāfidah!
1059 Rather, they have lied, failed, and lost. Their war is nothing but an attempt to prove
1060 themselves once again to their masters from amongst the Jews and Crusaders. It is nothing but
1061 a desperate attempt to turn the Muslims away from the Islamic State whose voice is high
1062 everywhere and whose reality has become clear to all the Muslims and therefore the Muslims
1063 began to gradually rally around it. Their storm is nothing but a storm of delusion after the fire
1064 of the Rāfidah scorched their thrones and after the Rāfidah’s march reached the people of the
1065 Arabian Peninsula, a matter that will lead thereafter to the Muslim public in the Arabian
1066 Peninsula rallying around the Islamic State since it defends them against the Rāfidah. This is

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1067 what frightens Āl Salūl and the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula and makes their thrones
 1068 tremble. This is the secret of their supposed ‘storm,’ which, by Allah’s permission, will be
 1069 their imminent end, for Āl Salūl and the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula are not people of war
 1070 nor do they have the patience for it. Rather, they are people of luxury and extravagance,
 1071 people of intoxication, prostitution, dances, and feasts. They have become accustomed to the
 1072 defense of the Jews and Crusaders for them and their hearts have drunk humiliation, disgrace,
 1073 and subservience.”

1074 He also called the Muslims to recognize the reality of this war. “O Muslims everywhere,
 1075 has the time not come for you to realize the truth of the conflict and that it is between kufr and
 1076 īmān? See on which front the rulers of your lands stand and to which camp they belong. Has
 1077 the time not come O Ahlus-Sunnah for you to know that you alone are the targets? This war is
 1078 only against you and against your religion. Has the time not come for you to return to your
 1079 religion and your jihād and thereby bring back your glory, honor, rights, and leadership? Has
 1080 the time not come for you to know that there is no might nor honor nor safety nor rights for
 1081 you except in the shade of the Khilāfah?”

1082 He also demonstrated how the Rāfidah deal with their apostate “Sunni” allies once they no
 1083 longer have use for them. He said, “O Ahlus-Sunnah in Iraq ... seek shelter – after Allah –
 1084 with the Islamic State. What do you wait for after the truth has become clearer than the day
 1085 and after the spiteful Rāfidah exposed their reality? Here they are today slaughtering everyone
 1086 considered from Ahlus- Sunnah in Baghdad and elsewhere. No one was saved from them,
 1087 even their allies, supporters, aids, tails, and dogs from the apostates who had once belonged to
 1088 Ahlus-Sunnah, those in the Sahwah, army, police, and elsewhere, those whom the evil
 1089 scholars confused into fleeing the implementation of Allah’s law in the territory of the Islamic
 1090 State. So they became homeless, humiliated, fearful, and worrisome of the Rāfidah’s cruelty,
 1091 whereas the Muslims live in the territory of the Islamic State with might and honor, secure by

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1092 Allah’s bounty alone, with a life of comfort, going about the affairs of their business,
 1093 livelihood, and trade, enjoying the grace of living under the rule of their Lord’s law, and all
 1094 praise and grace is Allah’s. Therefore, O Muslims, seek shelter – after Allah – with the
 1095 Islamic State.”

1096 He also warned of the possible attempt of the kuffār to strike against the Islamic State
 1097 wilāyāt in Shām before those in Iraq. “Be patient and firm, and be cautious, for the enemies
 1098 of Allah are mobilizing, thundering, increasing, and threatening the people of Mosul. We
 1099 believe that their mobilization will be for ar-Raqqah and Halab before Mosul. So be
 1100 cautious.”

1101 Finally, he explained the growing weakness of the modern crusaders. “O soldiers of the
 1102 Islamic State, be firm, for you are upon the truth. Seek help through patience, for victory
 1103 comes with patience and triumph is for those who are patient. Be patient, because the
 1104 Crusaders are bleeding to death, the Rāfidah are faltering, and the Jews are horrified and in
 1105 dread. Your enemies have become weaker than they were yesterday – by Allah’s grace – and
 1106 are growing weaker and weaker, and all praise be to Allah.”

1107 **17. The Perfect Storm**

1108 Issue 9, Pages 44-47

1109 What started as an explosive movement in Iraq has now suddenly turned into a global
 1110 phenomenon that the West and the democratic world as a whole is ill-equipped to deal with.

1111 *“This is a core principle of my presidency: if you threaten America, you will find no safe
 1112 haven.” Obama, September 2014*

1113 *“As they carve out an area of safe haven, this will be a launching point for attacks on
 1114 America, the West, and attacks globally.” RAND Corporation, March 2015*

1115 The pledges of allegiance that are now being announced on a seemingly monthly basis
 1116 from Islamic groups around the world to the Islamic State are exactly what every mujāhid

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1117 prayed for and a nightmare scenario for the military and political leaders of the democratic
1118 world. The incredible growth of the Caliphate and the fact that it is a living, breathing entity
1119 with thousands of square miles of territory has given Muslims around the Middle East, Asia,
1120 and Africa the belief and confidence to take up arms, pledge their loyalty, and launch
1121 operations with a unity and strength of purpose that has simply not been seen before.

1122 What started as the most explosive Islamic “group” in the modern world has rapidly
1123 evolved into the most explosive Islamic movement the modern world has ever seen.

1124 Nothing on this scale has happened this big or this quick before. Huge swathes of Pakistan,
1125 Nigeria, Libya, Yemen, and the Sinai Peninsula are all now united under the black flag of
1126 tawhīd, gelled together as one by the Islamic State. Mujāhidīn of Afghan provinces that were
1127 the scenes of fierce fighting for over a decade costing America trillions of dollars are now,
1128 less than six months after America “withdrew” with its tail between its legs, loyal to the
1129 Caliphate.

1130 The mujāhidīn of West Africa control much of Nigeria and their attacks are intensifying,
1131 pushing back an exhausted and smashed national army that is now is in a virtual state of
1132 collapse. They declared allegiance to the Caliphate in March, and they are the same group,
1133 remember, that Obama claimed just last year was being successfully pushed back by
1134 American intervention policy. Indeed, he claimed that the same model (cutting
1135 finances, recruitment tools, and the will to fight) that worked so “well” in the degradation of
1136 the mujāhidīn there before their pledge of allegiance, would work just as well on the Islamic
1137 State.

1138 Some things just don’t work out as planned. The energy behind this movement is
1139 fearsome. A single lion can kill an antelope but a pride that is hungry and cunning enough
1140 can, if they work closely together, take down an African elephant. As groups of mujāhidīn

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1141 from around the world join forces, so the strength behind the Islamic State puts them in a
1142 position to devour much larger prey.

1143 The West and its allies have, once again, been caught completely by surprise as they now
1144 find themselves fighting not just one enemy in Iraq and Shām, but now an international army
1145 of mujāhidīn numbering hundreds of thousands in different countries, whole continents apart.
1146 It's taken the coalition the best part of a year to put together a campaign against the Islamic
1147 State that is only now seeing a Shia mob supported by coalition aircraft make moves against
1148 Tikrit, but that's old news before it's even begun. Why focus on Tikrit when the Middle East,
1149 Africa, and Asia are now on fire?

1150 And this movement shows no sign of abating. Indeed, this quickening, this coming
1151 together of Islamic groups sharing the same focus and purity of belief is only intensifying.
1152 And the more groups that join, the stronger the movement becomes.

1153 As the groups evolve from splintered cells each waging their own wars to a single, unified
1154 body, it becomes a force of immense power, like a snowball that rolls down a mountain
1155 getting larger until you end up with an avalanche. The more outfits work together, so they can
1156 use each other's skills and strengths to fill in the gaps until there are very few weak points.

1157 "Say one group is very good at bomb making and the other group is very good at
1158 propaganda," says Jonah Blank from the US "think-tank" RAND Corporation. "If you put the
1159 right bomb in the right place for the right propaganda effect, that can be far more important
1160 than either of these things on their own."

1161 "This isn't just propaganda," said Gary Bernsten, a former CIA intelligence officer on an
1162 interview with Fox News on 9th March. "ISIS has billions of dollars. They have a network of
1163 communications for reaching out to these groups. And it shows you how deadly and effective
1164 ISIS is. They are truly the most successful Sunni terrorist group in history because they've
1165 carved out a space for a nation state, and these other groups recognize that. It shows Obama's

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1166 statement that ‘this isn’t Islam’ is a false narrative. ISIS has been brilliant at selling itself to
1167 the hundreds of millions of people out there looking for a message.”

1168 And what of Obama of late? In all honesty, I haven’t seen what the Nobel Peace
1169 prizewinner has been commenting on recently, but he can’t be having much fun. “This
1170 strategy of taking out terrorists who threaten us, while supporting partners on the front lines,
1171 is one that we have successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years,” he said last
1172 September. I do not have any information on the current situation within Somalia, but Yemen
1173 is exploding, the Islamic State is already taking advantage of the chaos there, and it is clear
1174 nothing has been “successfully pursued.” The American embassy has been closed for more
1175 than three months now, out of fear “terrorists” might attack it, as the country descends into
1176 further chaos. Would you like those words served with relish or pickle, president?

1177 “[Obama] cited US policy in Yemen and Somalia as a successful illustration of what’s in
1178 store for Iraq and Syria – a one-two punch of US air power with local ground forces. But
1179 Somalia is a failed state and Yemen is hardly a healthy one; both remain incubators of
1180 dangerous terrorism,” wrote the Washington Post in reply to the president’s statement. And
1181 that was eight months ago before large portions of the Muslim world took up arms.

1182 And as the Islamic State seizes weapons from the American and Iranian backed proxies
1183 whom its mujāhidīn massacre, it gets hold of tanks, rocket launchers, missile systems, and
1184 anti-aircraft systems. Acquiring aircraft would be the logical next step. It’s the plot of a
1185 political Western horror film.

1186 What’s happening now is a pooling of skills and experience that poses the greatest danger
1187 the West has seen in modern times. When you have that amount of battle-hardened mujāhidīn
1188 all cooperating and exchanging information for the first time under one flag, the potential for
1189 operations on a previously unseen level rises exponentially.

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1190 Let me throw a hypothetical operation onto the table. The Islamic State has billions of
1191 dollars in the bank, so they call on their wilāyah in Pakistan to purchase a nuclear device
1192 through weapons dealers with links to corrupt officials in the region. The weapon is then
1193 transported overland until it makes it to Libya, where the mujāhidīn move it south to Nigeria.
1194 Drug shipments from Columbia bound for Europe pass through West Africa, so moving other
1195 types of contraband from East to West is just as possible. The nuke and accompanying
1196 mujāhidīn arrive on the shorelines of South America and are transported through the porous
1197 borders of Central America before arriving in Mexico and up to the border with the United
1198 States. From there it's just a quick hop through a smuggling tunnel and hey presto; they're
1199 mingling with another 12 million "illegal" aliens in America with a nuclear bomb in the trunk
1200 of their car.

1201 Perhaps such a scenario is far-fetched but it's the sum of all fears for Western intelligence
1202 agencies and it's infinitely more possible today than it was just one year ago. And if not a
1203 nuke, what about a few thousand tons of ammonium nitrate explosive? That's easy enough to
1204 make. The Islamic State make no secret of the fact they have every intention of attacking
1205 America on its home soil and they're not going to mince about with two mujāhidīn taking
1206 down a dozen casualties if it originates from the Caliphate. They'll be looking to do
1207 something big, something that would make any past operation look like a squirrel shoot, and
1208 the more groups that pledge allegiance the more possible it becomes to pull off something
1209 truly epic.

1210 Remember, all of this has happened in less than a year. How more dangerous will be the
1211 lines of communication and supply a year on from today? If the West completely failed to
1212 spot the emergence of the Islamic State and then the allies who so quickly pledged allegiance
1213 to it from around the world, what else of massive significance are they going to miss next?

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1214 Let me finish with a quick example of the sheer motivation of the Muslim fighters the West
 1215 now finds itself up against. The other day I had the opportunity to meet one charismatic
 1216 fighter from an Arab country. Educated and intelligent, he told me with disgust that some of
 1217 his blood brothers are serving soldiers in an Arab regime army. “I talk to them once every few
 1218 months on the telephone,” he said. “They are my blood brothers, so I speak to them and
 1219 advise them in hope that they might change. If they refuse, then inshā’allāh I will get the
 1220 chance to kill them all on the battlefield. They fight for a tāghūt regime that loves America
 1221 while I fight for Allah. Who is the stronger one?”

1222 It was an awe-inspiring and humbling example of how the West can never win this war.
 1223 Perhaps once there was a chance that an attack inside the West or on Western borders by the
 1224 Islamic State could be averted through negotiations, but no longer. As the territory of the
 1225 Islamic State crosses from one border to another like a wildfire that is burning out of control,
 1226 it’ll be only a matter of time before the Islamic State reaches the Western world.

1227 **18. The law of Allah and the laws of men**

1228 Issue 10, Pages 50-52

1229 The Mujāhid Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-‘Adnānī ash-Shāmī – may Allah protect him
 1230 and make him a thorn in the throats of the apostates, munāfiqīn, and “theorists” – said, “We
 1231 likewise renew our call to the soldiers of the factions in Shām and Libya. We call on them to
 1232 think long before embarking to fight the Islamic State, which rules by that which Allah
 1233 revealed. Remember, O you afflicted by fitnah, before embarking to fight the Islamic State,
 1234 that there is no place on the face of the Earth where the Sharī’ah of Allah is implemented and
 1235 the rule is entirely for Allah except for the lands of the Islamic State. Remember that if you
 1236 were able to capture one hand span, one village, or one city from it, the law of Allah in that
 1237 area would be replaced with the laws of men. Then ask yourself, ‘What is the ruling on
 1238 someone who replaces or is a cause for the replacement of the law of Allah with the law of

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1239 man?’ Yes, you become a kāfir because of that. So beware, for by fighting the Islamic State
 1240 you fall into kufr whether you realize it or not” [O Our People Respond to the Caller of
 1241 Allah].

1242 Did the Islamic State innovate a new nullifier of Islam as alleged by the contemporary evil
 1243 scholars whose hearts Allah has wiped out and with whom the Ummah is being afflicted in
 1244 this era?

1245 The Messenger of Allah said, “Indeed Allah has guaranteed me to take care of Shām and its
 1246 people” [Sahīh: Reported by Imām Ahmad from Ibn Hawālah]. Khuraym Ibn Fātik al-Asadī
 1247 said, “The people of Shām are Allah’s whip on Earth. He takes retribution through them from
 1248 whomever He wills and however He wills. Their munāfiqīn are forbidden from overpowering
 1249 their believers. Their hypocrites won’t die except due to anxiety, fury, or sorrow” [Al-
 1250 Mundhirī said in “At- Targhīb wat-Tarhīb,” “At-Tabarī narrated it marfū’ and Ahmad
 1251 mawqūf and the latter is perhaps more correct. Its narrators are trustworthy”].

1252 It is Allah’s blessing upon Shām and its people that the Islamic State entered the blessed
 1253 land of Shām and caused the plot of the Syrian National Coalition and its councils to fail. It
 1254 conquered some of the towns and villages in Shām, like al-Bāb, I’zāz, ad-Dānā, and others
 1255 which used to be ruled by the Nusayrī regime and then by the resistant parties like the Free
 1256 Syrian Army and its allies who resisted the Sharī’ah and its rulings. Thus, the Islamic State
 1257 ruled those towns and villages with what Allah had sent down on His Messenger established
 1258 in them the hudūd, commanded the good, forbade the evil, and judged between the people by
 1259 the Sharī’ah.

1260 Therefore, the groups of apostates, hypocrites, innovators, corruption spreaders, rebels,
 1261 and partisans – having diverse hearts but allied to one another – thought, evaluated, plotted,
 1262 collaborated amongst each other, and all of them participated in the concocted treachery... A

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1263 few supposedly “neutral” groups remained outside of this coalition, like a confused lamb,
1264 neither with this side nor the other, and Allah’s help is sought.

1265 In the beginning, the wicked Sahwah Coalition in Shām consisted of “Jaysh al-Mujāhidīn,”
1266 the “Islamic Front,” “Jabhat Thuwār Sūriyā,” the Free Syrian Army, and the Jawlānī front.

1267 After that, Allah blessed Shām and its people by repelling and reversing the Sahwah
1268 Coalition’s plot and by granting the Islamic State authority in the blessed land of Shām and
1269 strengthening its religion – the religion of the cheerful warrior – in ar-Raqqah, al-Barakah, al-
1270 Khayr, Halab, Hims, and elsewhere. Then the conquests expanded in the east, thus ‘Irāq was
1271 liberated in Mosul, al-Anbar, al-Fallūjah, Salāhuddīn, Karkūk and elsewhere. And its soldiers
1272 continue to hope for Allah’s further support and the conquest of Constantinople and Rome.

1273 The Islamic State did not conquer a city or village after this malicious plot except that it
1274 ruled it by the Sharī’ah of Allah. When the parties of deviance in ar-Raqqah consisting of
1275 “Ahrār ash-Shām” and the Jawlānī front (or what is now known now as “Liwā’ Thuwwār ar-
1276 Raqqa”) plotted against the muhājirīn and ansār in it and acted treacherously against them, the
1277 muwahhid mujāhidīn expelled them from it, humiliated. Then they spread the authority of the
1278 Sharī’ah over the complete wilāyah. They enforced prayer, collected zakah, and founded the
1279 Hisbah to command good and forbid evil. They executed the hudūd, judged in their courts by
1280 what Allah revealed, returned the rights of the oppressed, fought the kuffār and apostates, and
1281 enforced the jizyah upon Ahlul- Kitāb. Thus, ar-Raqqah witnessed what it had not witnessed
1282 before from the rulings of the Sharī’ah. Likewise was the case of the other cities and villages
1283 of the Islamic State, may Allah increase its glory and humiliate its enemies.

1284 Yes, no doubt that the Islamic State conquered some of the areas, which used to be ruled
1285 by other than what Allah revealed, areas which were ruled by the laws of the kāfir Baath
1286 Party, then by the laws of the factions and by their corrupt doubts and false claims. Then these
1287 areas were subjected to the authority of the Sharī’ah and the enemy confirmed so even before

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1288 the friend. The Islamic State was even accused of “rushing” the enforcement of the Sharī’ah
 1289 laws, “burning the stages,” “disregarding the benefits and harms,” and “not caring about
 1290 gradual implementation.”

1291 There is also no doubt the lands ruled by the Sahwah Coalition now are
 1292 not ruled by what Allah revealed and the “best” of these lands is where there are committees
 1293 that they’ve dubbed “sharī’ah committees” to give an illusion of Sharī’ah while they are in
 1294 reality committees afflicted with fitnah and which do not rule by the Sharī’ah except for a few
 1295 laws codified by their laws, like the “Unified Arabic Law,” which is called to by some of the
 1296 factions, or laws which do not irritate the coalition partners nor the “common people,” as is
 1297 the case with the committees that do not establish the had upon the individual apostates such
 1298 as those who mock Allah or His Messenger or those who abandon prayer. They do not
 1299 establish the hadbb’ī hadd with ta’zīr (a censure for sins that do not have a specified hadd).
 1300 Their authority is almost limited to affairs of reconciliation between the people and even in
 1301 this domain the strong have the upper hand over the weak.

1302 Every party has its suspicions and claims. Some of them say that the establishment of the
 1303 Sharī’ah incites the enemy against the people of Shām and they fear to be afflicted by
 1304 adversities. Others say the greater good dictates not to establish Sharī’ah and that the harm in
 1305 its establishment is greater than the benefit in establishing it! Yet others falsely call to
 1306 ignorant politics under the pretext of “siyāsah shar’iyyah.” And from them are those who’ve
 1307 tied the establishment of the Sharī’ah to the agreement of the party’s leader or the
 1308 consultation with and satisfaction of the local people regarding the one who will establish the
 1309 Sharī’ah. Some of them are those who reject the Sharī’ah or most of it like the secularists,
 1310 modernists, and the Ikhwān. Amongst them are those who belittle it. They refer to the
 1311 collection of zakāh and jizyah as “taxes,” the enslavement of mushrik women and taking them
 1312 as concubines as “fornication,” the implementation of the hudūd as “foolishness,” the

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1313 manifestation of enmity towards the tawāghīt and mushrikīn as “insanity,” and the execution
 1314 of the hadd upon the apostate as a “crime.” Some of them say that the “liberated areas” are dār
 1315 harb and that it is not allowed to establish the Sharī’ah there until war has ended.
 1316 Accordingly, they have testified against themselves and spared us the need to clarify their
 1317 status.

1318 **19. A Call to Hijrah**

1319 Issue 1, Page 11

1320 Amirul-Mu’minin said: “Therefore, rush O Muslims to your state. Yes, it is your state.
 1321 Rush, because Syria is not for the Syrians, and Iraq is not for the Iraqis. The earth is Allah’s.
 1322 {Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants.
 1323 And the [best] outcome is for the righteous}[Al-A’raf: 128]. The State is a state for all
 1324 Muslims. The land is for the Muslims, all the Muslims. O Muslims everywhere, whoever is
 1325 capable of performing hijrah (emigration) to the Islamic State, then let him do so, because
 1326 hijrah to the land of Islam is obligatory.”

1327 **20. Regime Targets Ar-Raqqah**

1328 Issue 1, Pages 42-43

1329 The regime continued its aggression against the city of Ar-Raqqah, carrying out an
 1330 airstrike on Wednesday, the 27th of Sha’ban, which targeted the market and resulted in 30
 1331 shuhada’ and 36 wounded including women and children. On the morning of Monday, the
 1332 25th of Sha’ban, the Nusayri regime carried out an airstrike in Ar-Raqqah, resulting in five
 1333 shuhada’ and multiple wounded, all of them civilian casualties. A second airstrike on the
 1334 same day targeted the industrial district causing extensive damage to civilian property. Later
 1335 in the evening, the mujahidin of the Islamic State launched mortars into the regime’s Division
 1336 17 army base. The mortars made direct hits against the base. The following morning, two

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1337 violent explosions rocked the Division 17 army base after being targeted once more by the
1338 Islamic State.

1339 **21. News**

1340 Issue 1, Pages 46-47

1341 Wilayat Kirkuk - Sha'ban 24 : The mujahidin have completely liberated the district of
1342 Hawija, less than 50km south of the city of Kirkuk.

1343 Wilayat Al-Anbar: As the campaign of Asadullah Al-Bilawi pushes forward, the
1344 mujahidin of the Islamic State continue to liberate more and more territory, consolidate their
1345 gains and win the support of the masses. The past two weeks saw the successful liberation of
1346 a number of regions including Al-Qaim, 'Anah, Rutbah, and Rawah. May Allah continue to
1347 grant victory to Amirul-Mu'minin Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi and the lions of the
1348 Islamic State.

1349 **22. The Islamic State in the Words of the Enemy**

1350 Issue 1, Pages 23-33

1351 Douglas A. Ollivant, former Director for Iraq at the US National Security Council, and
1352 Brian Fishman former Director of Research for the Combating Terrorism Center at West
1353 Point – two American crusaders – wrote an article titled “The Reality of the Islamic State in
1354 Iraq and Syria” a short time before the Islamic State’s liberation of Mosul as well as other
1355 important cities and towns in Iraq. Here are excerpts from the article: “Out of the crucible of
1356 the Syrian civil war and the discontent in Iraq’s Sunni regions, something new is emerging.
1357 The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is no longer a state in name only. It is a physical, if
1358 extralegal, reality on the ground. Unacknowledged by the world community, ISIS has carved
1359 a de facto state in the borderlands of Syria and Iraq. Stretching in a long ellipse roughly from
1360 al-Raqqah in Syria to Fallujah in Iraq (with many other noncontiguous “islands” of control in
1361 both Iraq and Syria), this former Al Qaeda affiliate holds territory, provides limited services,

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1362 dispenses a form of justice (loosely defined), most definitely has an army, and flies its own
1363 flag.” “Finally, this new reality presents a challenge that rises above a mere counter-terrorism
1364 problem. ISIS no longer exists in small cells that can be neutralized by missiles or small
1365 groups of commandos. It is now a real, if nascent and unrecognized, state actor—more akin in
1366 organization and power to the Taliban of the late 1990s than Al Qaeda. The group does not
1367 have safe haven within a state. It is a de facto state that is a safe haven.

23. The Islamic State Is a True Imamah

Issue 1, Pages 27-30

1370 The Islamic State is the entity that most emulates the millah of Ibrahim with regards to
1371 imamah in the areas where it exists. It has carried out the command of Allah – as much as it
1372 can – in the best possible manner. It established the religion in the areas where it exists and
1373 continues to pursue this effort vigorously. All this, after Allah had granted the imam of The
1374 Islamic State the blessing of performing hijrah and fighting jihad in His cause, on top of
1375 already having been characterized by his noble lineage, sound intellect, and a prestigious level
1376 of knowledge and religious practice. As such, it is not fitting for anyone, whoever he may be,
1377 to seek to demolish the building that the sincere men of the Ummah made so much effort to
1378 construct and strengthen over the course of many years. Furthermore, no one – regardless of
1379 his virtues – even dreams of convincing the lowest ranking, sincere soldier of The Islamic
1380 State to abandon this mission for the sake of some ambiguous initiatives or for the sake of
1381 nothing at all. It is not even the right of Amirul-Mu’minin himself to order that The Islamic
1382 State be nullified and for the situation to return to what it previously was.

1383 Allah (‘azza wa jall) states in the Qur’an after granting imamah to Ibrahim
1384 (‘alayhissalam), {And who would turn away from the religion of Ibrahim except one who
1385 makes a fool of himself. Truly, We chose him in this world, and indeed in the Hereafter he
1386 will be among the righteous.} [Al-Baqarah: 130] So we can see from the context of these

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1387 verses that imamah is from the millah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam), and that whoever turns
1388 away from it is turning away from something that’s a part of this great millah. The millah is
1389 the path that is followed in its entirety, and the path that Allah chose for Ibrahim (‘alayhis-
1390 salam) and his progeny thereafter is the path of imamah – both religious and political – as
1391 much as they’re able to do. And upon every scholar who calls to, or writes about, the
1392 obligation to follow the millah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam), is to not detest the imamah of The
1393 Islamic State today, and to not seek to undermine it or destroy it. And upon them is to
1394 understand that The Islamic State – on account of what Allah has blessed it with of victory,
1395 consolidation and establishing the religion – is regarded as an unquestionable imamah. As
1396 such, anyone who rebels against its authority inside its territory is considered a renegade, and
1397 it is permissible to fight him after establishing the hujjah against him (i.e. clarifying his error
1398 to him with proof).

1399 This is the position that The Islamic State adheres to in spite of facing many tribulations
1400 as a result, which keep getting fiercer and fiercer. ‘Abdur-Rahman Ibn ‘Abd Rabbil-Ka’bah
1401 narrated, saying, “I entered the masjid and there was ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Al-’As sitting
1402 in the shade of the Ka’bah with people gathered around him, so I came to them and sat before
1403 him. Then he said, ‘We were on a journey with the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa
1404 sallam), and we stopped at a place. Some of us were setting up our tents, others were
1405 competing in shooting arrows, and others were grazing their animals, when an announcer of
1406 the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) called us to gather for prayer. We
1407 gathered around the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) and he said, ‘Indeed,
1408 no messenger has come before except that it was his duty to guide his people to what he knew
1409 to be good for them, and warn them against what he knew to be bad for them. The wellness of
1410 this Ummah of yours is in its beginning. In its end, it will be afflicted with tribulations and
1411 with things that you disapprove. There will be tribulations, each one eclipsing the one before

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1412 it in severity. There will be tribulations [so severe] that the believer will say, ‘This will be
 1413 what destroys me.’ Then it will end, and another tribulation will follow, and the believer will
 1414 say, ‘This is the one [that will actually destroy me]. This is it.’ Whoever wishes to be saved
 1415 from the fire and enter paradise should die believing in Allah and the Last Day, and should
 1416 treat people the way he wishes to be treated. Whoever pledges allegiance to an imam, giving
 1417 him his hand in sincerity, should obey him as much as he is able to. And if another man
 1418 comes forward disputing his legitimacy, then strike that other man’s neck.” [Recorded by
 1419 Muslim]

1420 This hadith was difficult on those who heard it from amongst the salaf (pious
 1421 predecessors), specifically the part having to do with the issue of imamah and the ruling on
 1422 the one who rebels against the leaders of the Muslims. The reporter of the hadith says, “So I
 1423 came close to him and said, ‘I beseech you in the name of Allah, did you hear this from the
 1424 Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)?’ So he extended his hand to his ears and
 1425 his heart, and said, ‘My ears heard it and my heart fully grasped it.’ So I said to him, ‘Your
 1426 cousin Mu’awiyah is ordering us to consume one another’s wealth unjustly and to kill one
 1427 another, whereas Allah says, {Oh you who have believed, do not consume one another’s
 1428 wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves
 1429 [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.} So he was quiet for some time. Then
 1430 he said, ‘Obey him concerning what is obedience to Allah, and disobey him in matters
 1431 involving disobedience to Allah.’” [Recorded by Muslim]

1432 Therefore, we will continue to obey the imam as long as he orders us to obey Ar-Rahman
 1433 (the Most Merciful). But if he orders us to disobey Allah, then we won’t obey those orders.
 1434 Likewise, we will strike the neck of anyone – whoever he may be – that attempts to usurp his
 1435 leadership, and we will remain patient in the face of such tribulation with the help of Allah
 1436 Al- Hakim (the Most Wise) and Al-Mannan (the Most Gracious). So let those inclined to such

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1437 [sin], leave us to our affairs, for we will remain upon our pledge of allegiance, neither
 1438 revoking it nor requesting to be released from it. May peace be upon Muhammad, the warner
 1439 and bringer of glad tidings, and upon all of his family and companions.

1440 Umar ibn al-Khattab (Radiyallahu ‘anh) said, “There is no Islam except with jama’ah,
 1441 and no jama’ah except with imarah (leadership), and no imarah except with ta’ah
 1442 (obedience).” [Sunan ad-darimi]

24. In the Words of the Enemy

Issue 2, Pages 31-32

1445 On “12 June 2014,” the crusader John McCain came to the senate floor to rant irritably
 1446 about the victories the Islamic State was achieving in Iraq. He forgot that he himself
 1447 participated in the invasion of Iraq that led to the blessed events unfolding today by Allah’s
 1448 bounty and justice. McCain had this to say:

1449 "I come to the floor this morning with great sorrow and great concern and even deep alarm
 1450 about the events that are transpiring rapidly in Iraq. ISIS the most extreme, Islamist
 1451 organization - radical terrorist organization- now controls at least 1/3 of Iraqi territory
 1452 and is rapidly gaining more. The areas of Fallujah, Mosul, Tikrit, they are on the outsides of
 1453 Samarra... with these victories ISIS controls a swath of territory that stretches from the
 1454 Syrian-Turkish frontier in the north, down the Euphrates river, all the way down to the Iraqi
 1455 city of Fallujah just forty miles west of Baghdad. And of course hourly they are experiencing
 1456 greater gains while the Iraqi military and police seem to be dissolving before our very eyes.
 1457 ISIS social media published pictures of their fighters demolishing the sand berm, which
 1458 hitherto marked the border between Syria and Iraq - an interesting symbolic gesture. They
 1459 also released... ISIS released footage of large numbers of weapons and armored military
 1460 vehicles being received by members in Eastern Syria, confirming fears that the looted
 1461 weapons would fuel the insurgency on both sides – both Syria and Iraq. Sources in the Syrian

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1462 city of Hasakah confirmed that large numbers of trucks – conveys of trucks – arrived late on
 1463 Tuesday and were met by senior ISIS figure Omar al-Checheni.

1464 **25. Hijrah to Sham is from the Millah of Ibrahim**

1465 Issue 3, Pages 10- 11

1466 The hijrah of the strangers to Shām was in adherence to the path of Ibrāhīm (sallallāhu
 1467 ‘alayhi wa sallam) who established for them the tradition of declaring enmity and hatred
 1468 towards the mushrikīn and their tawāghīt. Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (radiyallāhu ‘anhumā) said
 1469 that Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “There will be hijrah after hijrah.
 1470 The best people on earth will be those who keep to the land of Ibrāhīm’s hijrah. Then there
 1471 will remain on the earth the worst of its people. Their lands will cast them out, Allah will hate
 1472 them, and the fire will gather them together with the apes and swine” [hasan – reported by
 1473 Imām Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Hākim]. The Prophet’s statement, “And on the earth
 1474 will remain the worst of the people [to the end of the hadīth]” refers to the period after “Allah
 1475 sends the pleasant breeze and it causes every person who has so much as the weight of a
 1476 mustard seed of faith in his heart to pass away.

1477 Then there will remain only those who have no good in them whatsoever” [Sahīh Muslim].
 1478 In another narration, “So it [the breeze] grasps them under their armpits, taking the soul of
 1479 every believer and every Muslim. And there will remain the worst of the people, having
 1480 intercourse as donkeys do [in front of other people as they watch]. So it is upon them that the
 1481 Hour will be established” [Sahīh Muslim]. And in another narration, “Allah will send a cold
 1482 breeze from the direction of Shām, so no one will remain on the face of the earth with so
 1483 much as the weight of a mustard seed of goodness or faith in his heart except that it takes him.

1484 Even if one of you were to enter into the center of a mountain, the breeze would enter into
 1485 it, until it takes him. Then there will remain the worst of the people, who have the agility of
 1486 birds (in their haste to commit evil and satisfy their lusts) and the wits of vicious, predatory

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1487 animals (in their hostility and oppression of one another). They do not know any good, nor do
 1488 they denounce any evil” [Sahīh Muslim]. This pleasant breeze takes the souls of the believers
 1489 everywhere on the earth: al-Hijāz, Iraq, Yemen, Shām, and so on. It will be sent forth a
 1490 number of years after the demise of the Dajjāl and the passing away of the Masīh ‘Īsā
 1491 (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam). Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullāh) said, “Islam in
 1492 the end of times will be more manifest in Shām. [...] So the best of the people on the earth in
 1493 the end of times will be those who keep to the land of Ibrāhīm’s hijrah, which is Shām”
 1494 [Majmū’ul-Fatāwā].

1495 Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullāh) also said, “So he informed that the best of the people on
 1496 the earth are those who keep to the land of Ibrāhīm’s hijrah, in contrast to those who pass
 1497 through it or leave it. O Europeans, the Islamic State did not initiate a war against you, as
 1498 your governments and media try to make you believe. It is you who started the transgression
 1499 against us, and thus you deserve blame and you will pay a great price. You will pay the price
 1500 when your economies collapse. You will pay the price when your sons are sent to wage war
 1501 against us, and they return to you as disabled amputees, or inside coffins, or mentally ill. You
 1502 will pay the price as you are afraid of travelling to any land. Rather you will pay the price as
 1503 you walk on your streets, turning right and left, fearing the Muslims. You will not feel secure
 1504 even in your bedrooms. You will pay the price when this crusade of yours collapses, and
 1505 thereafter we will strike in your homeland, and you will never be able to harm anyone
 1506 afterwards. You will pay the price, is made to wherever the Messenger is and left an impact.
 1507 And the land of Ibrāhīm’s hijrah, has been made for us equal to the land of our Prophet’s
 1508 hijrah, because hijrah to Madīnah was discontinued after the conquest of Makkah”
 1509 [Majmū’ul- Fatāwā].

1510 Abdullāh Ibn Hawālah (radiyallāhu ‘anh) said that Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi
 1511 wa sallam) said, “Matters will run their course until you become mobilized armies: an army in

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1512 Shām, and an army in Yemen, and an army in Iraq.” Ibn Hawālah said, “Choose for me
 1513 [which army to join] if I reach that time.” He said, “Go to Shām, for it is the best of Allah’s
 1514 lands, and He draws His best slaves to it. And if you do not, then go to your Yemen and drink
 1515 from your wells. For Allah has guaranteed me that He will look after Shām and its people.”
 1516 [sahīh – reported by Imām Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, al-Hākim].

1517 So those who left their tribes – the best of Allah’s slaves – rallied together with an imām
 1518 and a jamā’ah upon the path of Ibrāhīm. They gathered together in the land of malāhim
 1519 shortly before the occurrence of al-Malhamah al-Kubrā, announced their enmity and hatred
 1520 for the cross worshippers, the apostates, their crosses, their borders, and their ballotboxes,
 1521 and pledged allegiance to the Khilāfah, promising to die defending it. Then, they were
 1522 opposed and forsaken by “the wise ones,” the “theorizers,” and “the elders,” who labeled
 1523 them as being khawārij, harūriyyah (a branch of the khawārij), hashāshīn (a heretical ismā’īlī
 1524 sect), the grandsons of Ibn Muljim (the khārijī who killed ‘Alī Ibn Abī Tālib), and the dogs of
 1525 Hellfire!

1526 So if the muhājirīn of the Islamic State in their thousands are the dogs of Hellfire, then
 1527 who are the ones referred to in the hadīth as being “those who break off from their tribes” and
 1528 “the best of Allah’s slaves”? Apart from them, there are no other muhājirīn left in Shām,
 1529 except for a small number whose hearts yearn for the Islamic State and for giving bay’ah to
 1530 the Imām. Then there will remain outside of the Islamic State only he who is obstructed from
 1531 it by mountainous waves of envy and arrogance, so that he drowns in the methodologies of
 1532 the hypocrites, the rumormongers, and the weak-hearted, and he aids the sahwāt of apostasy,
 1533 following rukhas (concessions) on his path to heresy. We ask Allah for forgiveness and well-
 1534 being in this life and in the hereafter.

1535 **26. In the Words of the Enemy**

1536 Issue 3, Pages 35-36

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1537 On 7 August 2014, the crusader, apostate Barack Obama announced to the world the
1538 continuation of the American crusade against Islam and the Muslims of Iraq, only to prove
1539 to his followers that there is no difference between his partisan politics and that of his
1540 predecessor – Bush – apart from cosmetic, superficial touches. His decisions also expose the
1541 hypocritical politics of America that only serve the interests of their Jewish ally, Israel, and
1542 their own capitalist gluttony. So while genocide is committed by the Maliki, Asadi, and Israeli
1543 forces against the Muslims via systematic massacres, chemical warfare, rape, and starvation
1544 by siege, Obama watches with euphoria. However, when his brothers in Yazidi Satanism and
1545 Peshmergan Zionism are killed, he panics. Obama had this to say:

1546 "Today I authorized two operations in Iraq – targeted airstrikes to protect our American
1547 personnel, and a humanitarian effort to help save thousands of Iraqi civilians who are trapped
1548 on a mountain without food and water, and facing almost certain death. Let me explain the
1549 actions we are taking and why. First, I said in June, as the terrorist group ISIL began an
1550 advance across Iraq, that the United States would be prepared to take targeted military action
1551 in Iraq if and when we determined that the situation required it. In recent days, these terrorists
1552 have continued to move across Iraq and have neared the city of Irbil, where American
1553 diplomats and civilians serve at our consulate and American military personnel advise Iraqi
1554 forces. To stop the advance on Irbil, I've directed our military to take targeted strikes against
1555 ISIL terrorist convoys should they move toward the city. We intend to stay vigilant and take
1556 action if these terrorist forces threaten our personnel or facilities anywhere in Iraq, including
1557 our consulate in Irbil and our embassy in Baghdad. We're also providing urgent assistance to
1558 Iraqi government and Kurdish forces so they can more effectively wage the fight against ISIL.

1559 Second, at the request of the Iraqi government, we've begun operations to help save Iraqi
1560 civilians stranded on the mountain. As ISIL has marched across Iraq it has waged a ruthless
1561 campaign against innocent Iraqis. And these terrorists have been especially barbaric towards

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1562 religious minorities, including Christians and Yazidis, a small and ancient religious sect.
 1563 Countless Iraqis have been displaced and chilling reports describe ISIL militants rounding
 1564 up families, conducting mass executions, and enslaving Yazidi women. In recent days, Yazidi
 1565 women, men, and children from the area of Sinjar have fled for their lives. And thousands,
 1566 perhaps tens of thousands, are now hiding high up in the mountain with little but the clothes
 1567 on their backs. They're without food. They're without water. People are starving and
 1568 children are dying of thirst. Meanwhile, ISIL forces below have called for the systematic
 1569 destruction of the entire Yazidi people below which would constitute genocide.

1570 **27. Indeed Your Lord is ever Watchful:**

1571 **By the Official Spokesman for the Islamic State**

1572 Issue 4, Pages 6-9

1573 A short time before the formal expansion of the American crusade into Shām, the official
 1574 spokesman of the Islamic State – Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-‘Adnānī ash-Shāmī
 1575 (hafidhahullāh) – gave a momentous speech inspiring the Muslims, terrifying the crusaders,
 1576 and reminding all with Allah’s promise. Alhamdulillah, a number of matters unfolded almost
 1577 immediately after the speech in obedience to the leaders of the Islamic State, including the
 1578 capture of crusaders in Muslim lands and their subsequent execution, the killing of crusaders
 1579 in their homelands, and the conquering of new areas in Iraq and Shām despite the crusader
 1580 airstrikes. At the same time, the Arab tawāghīt, the sahwāt, the quasi- jihadists, and mock
 1581 mujāhidīn exposed their duplicity and hypocrisy once again for no sincere Muslim to be left
 1582 in the dark with doubt. And all praise is due to Allah the Lord of the worlds. What follows are
 1583 some of the most important excerpts from his speech.

1584 “O soldiers of the Islamic State, what a great thing you have achieved by Allah! Your
 1585 reward is upon Him. By Allah, He has healed the chests of the believers through the killing of
 1586 the nusayriyyah and rāfidah at your hands. He has filled the hearts of the disbelievers and

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1587 hypocrites with rage through you. What a great thing you have achieved by Allah! Who are
 1588 you? Who are you O soldiers of the Islamic State? From where have you come? What is your
 1589 secret? Why is it that the hearts of the East and West are dislocated by their fear of you? Why
 1590 is it that the chest muscles of America and its allies shiver out of fear of you? Where are your
 1591 warplanes? Where are your battleships? Where are your missiles? Where are your weapons of
 1592 mass destruction? Why is it that the world has united against you? Why have the nations of
 1593 disbelief entrenched together against you?”

1594 “So know that – by Allah – we fear not the swarms of planes, nor ballistic missiles, nor
 1595 drones, nor satellites, nor battleships, nor weapons of mass destruction. How could we fear
 1596 them, while Allah the Exalted has said, {If Allah should aid you, no one can overcome you;
 1597 but if He should forsake you, who is there that can aid you after Him? And upon Allah let the
 1598 believers rely} [Āli ‘Imrān: 160]. How could we fear them, while Allah the Exalted has said,
 1599 {So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers }
 1600 [Āli ‘Imrān: 139].” “Therefore Allah will give you victory. Indeed, Allah will give you
 1601 victory. By Allah, Allah will give you victory. So guarantee for us two matters, and we will
 1602 guarantee you – by Allah’s permission - constant victory and consolidation. First, do not
 1603 oppress anyone nor be content with oppression by being silent about it and not raising
 1604 the matter to those in authority. Second, do not become conceited or arrogant. This is what we
 1605 fear from you and fear for you.”

1606 “Thereafter know that a trial, sifting, and selection, are necessary between one period and
 1607 another, for some people have entered your ranks who are not of you and are only claimants.
 1608 And thus some disorder has occurred. So it has become necessary for a trial to come, expel
 1609 the filth, and purify the ranks. We ask Allah for forgiveness and wellness. Also, pride and
 1610 conceit has entered some of our souls, and thus some of us transgressed and oppressed others.
 1611 So it is necessary for the sins to be expelled, so that you may return to your Lord. Allah has

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1612 loved the mujāhidīn, and so there is no choice but for Him to take some martyrs. We ask
1613 Allah to make us of them, not from the disgraced nor those afflicted [in their religion].”

1614 “O America, O allies of America, and O crusaders, know that the matter is more dangerous
1615 than you have imagined and greater than you have envisioned. We have **warned** you that
1616 today we are in a new era, an era where the State, its soldiers, and its sons are leaders not
1617 slaves. They are a people who through the ages have not known defeat. The outcome of their
1618 battles is concluded before they begin. They have not prepared for a battle since the time of
1619 Noah except with absolute conviction of victory. Being killed – according to their account – is
1620 a victory. This is where the secret lies. You fight a people who can never be defeated.”

1621 “And so we promise you by Allah’s permission that this campaign will be your final
1622 campaign. It will be broken and defeated, just as all your previous campaigns were broken
1623 and defeated, except that this time we will raid you thereafter, and you will never raid us.

1624 We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission
1625 of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His
1626 promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and
1627 they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market.”

1628 “So mobilize your forces, O crusaders. Mobilize your forces, roar with thunder, threaten
1629 whom you want, plot, arm your troops, prepare yourselves, strike, kill, and destroy us. This
1630 will not avail you. You will be defeated. This will not avail you, for our Lord, the Mighty, the
1631 Prevailing, has promised us with our victory and your defeat. Send arms and equipment to
1632 your agents and dogs. Prepare them with the most modern equipment. Send them very much,
1633 for it will end up as war booty in our hands by Allah’s permission. You will spend it, then it
1634 will be a source of regret for you, then you will be defeated. Look at your armored vehicles,
1635 machinery, weaponry, and equipment. It is in our hands. Allah granted it to us. We fight you
1636 with it. So die in your rage. {Indeed, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to avert [people]

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1637 from the way of Allah. So they will spend it; then it will be for them a [source of] regret; then
 1638 they will be overcome. And those who have disbelieved – unto Hell they will be gathered }
 1639 [Al-Anfāl: 36].”

1640 “You claimed to have withdrawn from Iraq – O Obama – four years ago. We said to you
 1641 then that you were liars, that you had not withdrawn, and that if you had withdrawn that you
 1642 would return, even if after some time, you would return. Here you are; you have not
 1643 withdrawn. Rather you hid some of your forces behind your proxies and withdrew the
 1644 rest. Your forces will return greater in number than they were before. You will return and
 1645 your proxies will not avail you. And if you are not able to return, then we will come to your
 1646 homeland by Allah’s permission.”

1647 “O Americans, and O Europeans, the Islamic State did not initiate a war against you, as
 1648 your governments and media try to make you believe. It is you who started the transgression
 1649 against us, and thus you deserve blame and you will pay a great price. You will pay the price
 1650 when your economies collapse. You will pay the price when your sons are sent to wage war
 1651 against us, and they return to you as disabled amputees, or inside coffins, or mentally ill. You
 1652 will pay the price as you are afraid of travelling to any land. Rather you will pay the price as
 1653 you walk on your streets, turning right and left, fearing the Muslims. You will not feel secure
 1654 even in your bedrooms. You will pay the price when this crusade of yours collapses, and
 1655 thereafter we will strike you in your homeland, and you will never be able to harm anyone
 1656 afterwards. You will pay the price, and we have prepared for you what will pain you.”

1657 “Dear Muslims, America hasn’t come with its crusade in order to save the Muslims, nor
 1658 does it spend its wealth in spite of the collapse of its economy and burden itself in order to
 1659 arm and train the sahwah councils in Shām and Iraq out of compassion and fear for the
 1660 mujahidin from the “cruelty of the khawārij,” and out of support for them as they allege. {I
 1661 wish my people could know!} [Yāsīn: 26]. Do the crusaders rush to the support of the

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1662 mujahidin fighting on the path of Allah, and rush to rescue and save them from the khawārij?
 1663 “Live long enough and you’ll see strange things!” Woe to my people! When will they
 1664 remember?”

1665 “So O muwahhid, do not let this battle pass you by wherever you may be. You must strike
 1666 the soldiers, patrons, and troops of the tawāghīt. Strike their police, security, and intelligence
 1667 members, as well as their treacherous agents. Destroy their beds. Embitter their lives for them
 1668 and busy them with themselves. If you can kill a disbelieving American or European –
 1669 especially the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other
 1670 disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that
 1671 entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any
 1672 manner or way however it may be. Do not ask for anyone’s advice and do not seek anyone’s
 1673 verdict. Kill the disbeliever whether he is civilian or military, for they have the same ruling.”

1674 “So O muwahhid... O you who believes in walā’ and barā’... will you leave the
 1675 American, the Frenchman, or any of their allies to walk safely upon the earth while the armies
 1676 of the crusaders strike the lands of the Muslims not differentiating between a civilian and
 1677 fighter? They have killed nine Muslim women three days ago by striking a bus transporting
 1678 them from Shām to Iraq. Will you leave the disbeliever to sleep safely at home while the
 1679 Muslim women and children shiver with fear of the roars of the crusader airplanes above their
 1680 heads day and night? How can you enjoy life and sleep while not aiding your brothers, not
 1681 casting fear into the hearts of the cross worshippers, and not responding to their strikes with
 1682 multitudes more? So O muwahhid wherever you may be, hinder those who want to harm your
 1683 brothers and state as much as you can. The best thing you can do is to strive to your best and
 1684 kill any disbeliever, whether he be French, American, or from any of their allies.”

1685 “Finally, we do not want to forget to direct a message towards our Muslim people and
 1686 brothers from the Kurds in Iraq, Shām, and elsewhere. Our war with Kurds is a religious war.

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1687 It is not a nationalistic war – we seek the refuge of Allah. We do not fight Kurds because they
 1688 are Kurds. Rather we fight the disbelievers amongst them, the allies of the crusaders and jews
 1689 in their war against the Muslims. As for the Muslim Kurds, then they are our people and
 1690 brothers wherever they may be. We spill our blood to save their blood. The Muslim Kurds in
 1691 the ranks of the Islamic State are many. They are the toughest of fighters against the
 1692 disbelievers amongst their people.”

28. Remaining and Expanding

Issue 5, Pages 22-25

1695 On the 17th of Muharram 1436, the world heard announcements from the mujāhidīn of
 1696 the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen, Sinai, Libya, and Algeria, pronouncing their bay’āt to the
 1697 Khalīfah of the Muslims, Abū Bakr al-Husaynī al-Baghdādī (hafīdhahullāh). All of them
 1698 announced uniformly:

1699 “Allah – the Exalted – said, {And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not
 1700 become divided} [Āl ‘Imrān: 103]. And Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam)
 1701 said, “Whoever dies while not having a pledge of allegiance, dies a death of jāhiliyyah”
 1702 [Sahīh Muslim on the authority of ‘Imrān]. Therefore, in obedience to the order of Allah
 1703 (‘azza wa jall) and in obedience to His Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), ordering
 1704 not to divide and to stick to the jamā’ah, we declare the bay’ah to the Khalīfah Ibrāhīm
 1705 Ibn ‘Awwād Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qurashī al-Husaynī, pledging to selflessly hear and obey, in times
 1706 of hardship and ease, and in times of delight and dislike. We pledge not to dispute the matter
 1707 of those in authority except if we see obvious kufr concerning which we have proof from
 1708 Allah. We call the Muslims everywhere to give bay’ah to the Khalīfah and support him, in
 1709 obedience to Allah and actualization of the unheeded obligation of the era.”

1710 They then each gave their own piece of advice and wisdom concerning the obligation of
 1711 unifying under the banner of the Khilāfah. The mujāhidīn from Algeria advised the mujāhidīn

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1712 everywhere:

1713 “We especially remind the mujāhidīn who sacrificed all that is dear and precious, offered
1714 their souls without hesitation, and called out, ‘Our mission and goal is to establish Allah’s
1715 Sharī’ah on the Earth and Khilāfah upon the methodology of prophethood.’ So why do you
1716 delay this now? We ask you by Allah, does this delay bring joy to the believers and anger the
1717 kuffār? Or the opposite?”

1718 The mujāhidīn from the Arabian Peninsula informed the muwahhidīn of their lands that
1719 they no longer needed to travel far to perform jihād under the banner of the Khilāfah:

1720 “Therefore, O people of tawhīd in the Arabian Peninsula, the truth has appeared and
1721 prevailed. So come to your State and rally around your Khalīfah. O muwahhidīn in the lands
1722 of al-Haramayn, glad tidings, for the jihād that you prepared your saddles for has arrived to
1723 the doorsteps of your homes, and no borders will inhibit you from reaching it, nor will any
1724 passports or visas prevent you from achieving it.”

1725 The mujāhidīn from Libya directed the Muslims to the obligation of unity and refuted
1726 doubts against this obligation:

1727 “We pledged allegiance because there is no cure for khilāf (differing) other than the
1728 Khilāfah. Likewise, we call every Muslim towards this good, for indeed, it is even more
1729 infuriating for the enemies of Allah. By Allah, our rallying under one leader is harder on the
1730 enemies of Allah than a thousand victories on the battlefield. And do not be deceived by the
1731 desertion of the deserters. Ibn Hazm (rahimahullāh) said, ‘As for he who says that the imāmah
1732 is not valid except with the approval of the Ummah’s dignitaries all across the various lands,
1733 then this is false, because it is asking for something that is unachievable, is not within
1734 anyone’s capability, and is the most tremendous of burdens, whereas Allah does not
1735 burden anyone with what is beyond their scope. Allah says, {And He has not placed upon you
1736 in the religion any difficulty} [Al-Hajj: 78].”

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1737 The mujāhidīn of Sinai reminded the mujāhidīn of the obligation of unity under the
1738 Khilāfah:

1739 “As for my message to my mujāhid brothers on all the fronts, what do you desire? What
1740 do you aspire for? After a state was established for Islam and the Muslims and a Khalīfah and
1741 Amīr for the believers was appointed, suddenly you lag behind by not supporting it and you
1742 forsake it by not standing beneath its banner, at a time in which the world has completely
1743 gathered against it. What is wrong with you? What is your excuse, O mujāhidīn? Your unity
1744 is strength and your division is weakness. Its might is your might, if only you understood.
1745 There is no good in you if they reach it and harm it while you have a single breath left. And I
1746 do not think you will allow such to happen. So settle your matter, gather yourselves, and
1747 support your state, for you depend on it and it depends on you. By Allah, it is upon the clear
1748 truth and supported by Allah, the Mighty, the Strong. So fear Allah, your Lord. Do not let
1749 Shaytān deceive you with his propaganda and slander. Indeed, he is a clear enemy to you.”

1750 The mujāhidīn of Yemen counseled the Muslims with the prophetic advice and order for
1751 the times of division:

1752 “Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) had given us glad tidings of Khilāfah
1753 upon the methodology of prophethood. And indeed, by Allah, we have seen it as a Khilāfah
1754 upon the methodology of prophethood. And when we heard the trumpets of the Jews and
1755 Christians the callers upon the gates of Hellfire – we answered the order of Allah’s Messenger
1756 that obliged sticking to the jamā’ah of the Muslims and their Imām, for Hudhayfah
1757 (radiyallāhu ‘anh) said, ‘The people used to ask Allah’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa
1758 sallam) about good, and I used to ask him about evil, fearing that it might overtake me...’ In
1759 the hadīth, he says, ‘Is there any evil after this good?’ He responded, ‘Yes, callers upon the
1760 gates of Hellfire. Whoever answers them will be throw into it by them.’ He said, ‘O Allah’s
1761 Messenger, describe them to me.’ He said, ‘They are from our skin and speak with our

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1762 tongues.’ He said, ‘So what do you order me with if I reach that time?’ He said, ‘Stick to the
1763 jamā’ah of the Muslims and their Imām’ [Al-Bukhārī and Muslim].”

1764 Then on the 20th of Muharram 1436, the Khalīfah Ibrāhīm (hafidhahullāh) officially
1765 announced the acceptance of their bay’āt, the establishment of wilāyāt, and the nullification of
1766 all parties and groups therein. In one of the most powerful addresses given since the
1767 establishment of the Islamic State, he said, “Glad tidings, O Muslims, for we give you good
1768 news by announcing the expansion of the Islamic State to new lands, to the lands of al-
1769 Haramayn and Yemen... to Egypt, Libya, and Algeria. We announce the acceptance of the
1770 bay’ah of those who gave us bay’ah in those lands, the nullification of the groups therein, the
1771 announcement of new wilāyāt for the Islamic State, and the appointment of wulāt for them.”

1772 Prior to the announcement of the new wilāyāt, a number of groups in Khurāsān, al-
1773 Qawqāz, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines, and elsewhere had pledged their allegiance to
1774 the Khalīfah, and continue to do so daily. The Islamic State announced the acceptance of the
1775 bay’āt from all of these groups and individuals – may Allah accept their noble oath and keep
1776 them firm upon their covenant, free of falter – but delayed the announcement of their
1777 respective wilāyāt, while recognizing that some groups from the aforementioned lands are
1778 larger and stronger than a few of those related to the newly announced wilāyāt. This delay
1779 should end with either the appointment or recognition of leadership by the Khalīfah for those
1780 lands where multiple groups have given bay’āt and merged, or the establishment of a direct
1781 line of communication between the Khalīfah and the mujāhid leadership of lands who have
1782 yet to contact the Islamic State and thus receive information and directives from the Khalīfah.
1783 May Allah bring glad tidings from these lands and others soon and fill the believers’ hearts
1784 with further joy.

1785 The Khalīfah Ibrāhīm said: “We also announce the acceptance of bay’āt given by the
1786 groups and individuals in all of those mentioned wilāyāt and others. We ask every individual

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1787 amongst them to join the closest wilāyah to him, and to hear and obey the wālī appointed by
1788 us for it.”

1789 Thus, after the passing of eight years since the establishment of the Islamic State in
1790 Ramadān 1427, the unfaltering mujāhidīn brought delight to the heart and soul of every
1791 muwahhid on the surface of the Earth through their unity and expansion. This achievement
1792 was just an issue of patience, as Rasūlullāh (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “Know that
1793 there is much good in being patient in the face of what you dislike, that with patience comes
1794 victory, that with suffering comes relief, and that with hardship comes ease” [Sahīh: Reported
1795 by Imām Ahmad on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās]. However, some people expect blatant,
1796 material results to come spontaneously. They are those who Rasūlullāh (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa
1797 sallam) described with his words, “But you are a people who hasten” [Sahīh al-Bukhārī on the
1798 authority of Khabbāb], and because they did not see this expansion days after the
1799 announcement of the Islamic State eight years ago, but instead saw the Sahwah conspiracy
1800 and the withdrawal of much of the Islamic State to the Anbār desert, they lost hope in the
1801 victory promised by Allah to the muwahhid mujāhidīn. And sufficient for us is Allah, and He
1802 is the best Disposer of affairs.

1803 Now those who carried on with patience – despite what they faced of imprisonment,
1804 pursuit by kāfir intelligence and security agencies, distance from friends and families,
1805 poverty, the death of companions, and injuries – have reaped the fruit of their efforts for the
1806 benefit of future generations of Muslims all over the world. May Allah preserve these patient
1807 leaders and soldiers, and reward them with great good on behalf of Islam and the Muslims.
1808 Each of these new lands is important for the future expansion of the Islamic State and
1809 provides it with greater experience and further resources.

1810 **29.To the Tawaghit**

1811 Issue 7, Pages 18-19

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1812 As for my message to Doctor Muhammad Morsi, then I say to him: first of all, I ask Allah
 1813 to relieve you of your suffering, guide your heart, and rectify for you your religion and
 1814 worldly affair. I also ask Allah to keep your heart firm, fill your heart with certainty, faith,
 1815 and firmness, so that you support His religion and law without fear or compromise,
 1816 and that He bestows you with adherence to the statement of al-Mustafā (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa
 1817 sallam), “The best jihād is a word of truth in front of an unjust ruler” and his statement
 1818 (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), “The leader of martyrs is Hamzah Ibn ‘Abdil-Muttalib and a
 1819 man who confronts an unjust ruler, orders him with good, and prohibits him from evil, and so
 1820 the ruler kills him.” And I advise you while sincerely directing this advice towards you and
 1821 hoping for your guidance, success, and firmness. So I say, you dealt with the secularists and
 1822 assented to them, with the crusaders and conceded to them, with the Americans and gave
 1823 them guarantees, with the Israelis and recognized the submissive treaties with them, with
 1824 Mubārak’s army who were raised upon American aid and you assented to them, and with the
 1825 floggers from the Interior Ministry and assured them.

1826 So what was the result? Today you are in a great tribulation. Either you hold on to the
 1827 truth without wavering or budging, and so you refuse the corrupt judiciary, secularist laws,
 1828 and secularist constitution, insist upon liberating every hand-span of the occupied lands of
 1829 Islam, refuse to recognize any treaty or agreement that abandons those lands, and promise
 1830 your Lord that you will openly declare the truth His law obligates upon you, and that you do
 1831 not abandon so even slightly. Then, I give you good tidings that you will be a hero of this
 1832 Ummah, and one of its eminent symbols and great leaders. The Ummah will amass in Egypt
 1833 and the Islamic world behind you in its battle with its enemies. If Allah takes you while you
 1834 are sincere upon this condition, then have good tidings of a good ending and great reward in
 1835 your afterlife. So fear Allah regarding yourself, your party, and the masses of the Ummah in
 1836 Egypt and the rest of the Islamic world who look towards you, waiting to see what you will

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1837 do. So do not be slack in supporting the religion and raising the rule of the Sharī'ah.
 1838 Remember the stance of the Imām of Ahlus-Sunnah, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (rahimahullāh) when
 1839 he refused to turn back from the truth, so Allah kept the Ummah firm by him thereafter. And
 1840 if you continue on in what you are currently upon, then Allah knows best how you will end
 1841 up. I ask Allah for me, you, and the rest of the Muslims uprightness upon His religion until
 1842 we meet Him while He is pleased with us. [At-Taharrur min Dā'irat al-'Abath wal-Fashal].

30. Foreword

1844 Issue 10, Pages 3-4

1845 Two weeks ago, on the Friday marking the 9th day of the blessed month of Ramadān, the
 1846 Crusaders and the Rāfidah were struck by a wave of attacks in three different regions, one of
 1847 them in the crusader city of Lyon. The day of the attacks would come to be known as “Bloody
 1848 Friday,” a day that brought more healing to the hearts of the Muslims and the mujāhidīn, and
 1849 filled the hearts of their enemies with terror and rage.

1850 In Lyon, a daring Muslim came to the defense of the Khilāfah by storming a French
 1851 factory and beheading a kāfir belonging to France, a crusader coalition nation waging war
 1852 against the Khilāfah. Two even bloodier strikes were carried out in Tunisia and Kuwait by
 1853 wilāyāt of the Islamic State. In Kuwait, a Rāfidī temple was rocked by an explosion set off
 1854 by Abū Sulaymān al-Muwahhid, a mujāhid who charged into the midst of the Rāfidah and
 1855 punished them in revenge for Ahlus-Sunnah and in defense of the Khilāfah, which the
 1856 government of Kuwait is waging war against as part of the crusader coalition. In Tunisia, the
 1857 mujāhid Abū Yahyrā al-Qayrawānī made his way into a hotel beach resort in the town of
 1858 Sousse with an assault rifle and massacred dozens of citizens belonging to a number of
 1859 European crusader states also involved in the coalition waging war against the Islamic State.

1860 These were the latest in a line of attacks carried out over the past year by soldiers of the
 1861 Khilāfah around the world – including those from the wilāyāt of the Khilāfah itself – in

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1862 response to the Islamic State’s call to fight the mushrikīn wherever they’re found, especially
 1863 those belonging to the member nations of the crusader coalition, a coalition that fights the
 1864 Sharī’ah wherever it’s established, seeking to uproot it and replace it with a nationalist
 1865 democracy. Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-‘Adnānī (hafīdhahullāh) stated, “O muwahhidīn in
 1866 Europe, America, Australia, and Canada... O muwahhidīn in Morocco and Algeria... O
 1867 muwahhidīn in Khurāsān, al-Qawqāz, and Iran [the Sunnī Kurds and the Sunnī Arabs]... O
 1868 muwahhidīn everywhere upon the face of the Earth... O brothers in creed... O people of
 1869 walā’ and barā’... O patrons of the Islamic State... O you who have given bay’ah to the
 1870 Khalīfah Ibrāhīm everywhere... O you who have loved the Islamic State... O you who
 1871 support the Khilāfah... O you who consider yourselves from amongst its soldiers and
 1872 patrons...” “Your state is facing a new campaign by the crusaders. So O muwahhid, wherever
 1873 you may be, what are you going to do to support your brothers? What do you wait for as the
 1874 people have become two encampments and the heat of the war increases day by day? O
 1875 muwahhid, we call you up to defend the Islamic State. Dozens of nations have gathered
 1876 against it.

1877 **They** began their war against **us** at all levels. So rise O muwahhid. Rise and defend your
 1878 state from your place wherever you may be” [Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful]. The call to
 1879 defend the Islamic State – the only state ruling by Allah’s Sharī’ah today – continues to be
 1880 answered by sincere Muslims and mujāhidīn around the world prepared to sacrifice their lives
 1881 and everything dear to them to raise high the word of Allah and trample democracy and
 1882 nationalism. In contrast, the jihād claimants in Shām and other regions are prepared to
 1883 sacrifice the principles of the religion and wage war against the Islamic State in defense of a
 1884 jāhilī nationalism coated with a thin veneer of “Sharī’ah,” knowing full well that should they
 1885 succeed in taking any territory from the Khilāfah, that territory would no longer be ruled by
 1886 Allah’s pure Sharī’ah.

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1887 To further demonstrate the disgraceful nature of these jihād claimants, one only needs to
 1888 take note that the Muslims who set out to answer Shaykh al-‘Adnānī’s call to defend the
 1889 Khilāfah often find themselves marching forward alone, with none to rely on for support in
 1890 their efforts to defend the Sharī’ah except Allah. The jihād claimants, on the other hand, are
 1891 relatively large groups of well-armed fighters that have the ability to take and hold territory
 1892 and impose their will. Yet they refuse to establish the rule of Allah despite the strength and
 1893 consolidation that He has granted them.

1894 In further contrast between the sincere muwahhidīn and the jihād claimants, one can see
 1895 that the likes of the muwahiddīn who terrorized the kuffār on “Bloody Friday” and even
 1896 before that, are typically vilified and made out to be extremists on the fringes of society, or
 1897 individuals suffering from poverty, unemployment, or other social issues. Yet they persist in
 1898 their jihād, not concerning themselves with how they will subsequently be portrayed in the
 1899 sorcerous media or what the people would say about them. This is simply because they
 1900 pursue the pleasure of Allah, not the pleasure of the people. The cowardly jihād claimants, in
 1901 comparison, with their large numbers, heavy weaponry, and their claim of some regions of
 1902 Shām, are nonetheless afraid of implementing the Sharī’ah lest they offend the people,
 1903 therefore choosing instead to pursue the pleasure of the people over the pleasure of Allah.

1904 Allah’s Messenger said, “Whoever pleases Allah at the expense of angering the people,
 1905 Allah will be sufficient for him against the people’s harm, and whoever pleases the people at
 1906 the expense of angering Allah, Allah will [abandon him and] leave his affair to the people”
 1907 [Reported by at-Tirmidhī from ‘Ā’ishah]. Thus we renew our call to the sincere Muslims
 1908 around the world to march forth and wage war against the crusaders and apostates who seek
 1909 to wipe out the Sharī’ah. March forth, neither fearing the blame of the critics, nor seeking
 1910 the pleasure of the people, for the hukm belongs to Allah, not the people. {Legislation is not
 1911 but for Allah} [Yūsuf: 40]