The Crusader Coalition

Crusading Rhetoric in the Islamic State's Magazines Dabiq and Rumiyah

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Abstract

Since the turn of the century, jihadist terrorist organizations have increasingly made use of social media outlets and the Internet to disseminate their propaganda. A recent case in point is the Islamic State, which uses the Internet to share its online magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* with its audience. These magazines provide an in-depth look into how the Islamic State interprets the world and how it frames this worldview for its audience. In constructing its worldview, the Islamic State uses historical analogies and other forms of rhetoric that link the current struggle to the era of the Crusades. This research has explored how the Islamic State uses such crusading rhetoric in framing its worldview in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The methodology used in this research rests on the three framing techniques of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing, which were applied on several articles from *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* in which the use of crusading rhetoric was prevalent. From these case-studies became evident that the use of crusading rhetoric is central in the construction of the diagnostic frame, which rests on a rigid dichotomy between 'camp of Islam' and the 'Crusader Coalition.' The prognostic frame and the motivational frame included much less crusading rhetoric. The main reason for this is the shift from interpretation to divine obligation and faith: in the prognostic and motivational frame Allah's promises for victory and the divine obligation of waging jihad were central. Crusading rhetoric was only used to make sense of the world in a way that would accommodate violent interpretations of Islam. This construction of a worldview rested on subjective interpretation rather than the divine prescriptions used in the prognostic and motivational frames.

Keywords: *ISIS, Islamic State, framing, discourse, Salafism, jihadism, Dabiq, Rumiyah, crusade, crusading rhetoric, tawhid.*

A Note on Transliteration

In this research, Islamic concepts have been written as they are written in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. However, words ending on 'h,' such as shari'ah, *jahiliyyah*, and *hijrah*, have been written without the 'h,' which is more common and grammatically more correct. In citations from *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* the 'h' has been included.

Introduction

In October of 2001, a mere month after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, Osama bin Muhammad bin Laden, one of the co-founders of the terrorist organization al-Qaeda, was interviewed by Taysir Alluni, one of al-Jazeera's most celebrated reporters. When asked if he had any message for the viewers, Bin Laden rhetorically remarked that the current struggle between Islam and the West was a revival of the crusades.[1] Bin Laden compared the allies of America to Richard the Lionheart, Barbarossa from Germany, and Louis from France, the crusader kings of the twelfth century, who 'all immediately went forward the day Bush lifted the cross.'[2] George W. Bush, President of the United States, too, utilized the crusades in one instance when he spoke about his 'war on terror.'[3] Though similar in use, both rhetorical expressions carried different implications regarding their own position and the position of their enemy.

Since the end of the crusading era in the late thirteenth century, the crusades have become compelling rhetorical tools for both the West as well as the Middle East.[4] Political figures and scholars of the latter in particular have shown a profound interest in utilizing crusading rhetoric as a tool for explaining any harmful political conditions caused by the West. One example of crusading rhetoric in such particular instance can be found in the Ottoman Empire of the late nineteenth century when Sultan Abdulhamid II blamed European imperialism for the disintegration of the empire. According to the Sultan, Europe was carrying out a crusade against the Ottomans to undermine the latter's political authority.[5]

Following the statement of Sultan Abdulhamid II, the twentieth century saw a resurgence of interest in the use of crusading rhetoric for addressing extant political challenges.[6] Since the 1970s, this resurgence has taken a somewhat menacing turn, for militant Islamists have since incorporated the crusades within their narratives in response to the Western interventions in the Middle East and Muslim countries elsewhere.[7] A recent case in point is the Islamic State, a terrorist organization that has received a substantial amount of news coverage since its formation in June of 2014 because of their brutal execution videos and several terrorist attacks in the West, and their rapid territorial expansion in Iraq and Syria.

[1] Bruce Lawrence, *Messages to the World. The Statements of Osama Bin Laden* (London: Verso, 2005) 127.
[2] Osama bin Muhammad bin Laden, cited in Lawrence, *Messages to the World*, 127.
[3] Adam Knobler, "Holy Wars, Empires, and the Portability of the Past: The Modern Uses of Medieval Crusades," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48 (2006): 323.
[4] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press) 69.
[5] Ibid., 68.
[6] Ibid., 68,71.
[7] Ibid., 73.

The importance of crusading rhetoric in the narrative of the Islamic State becomes evident when looking at its most sophisticated propaganda medium - the online magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. Several issues of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* refer to the crusades in their titles, for example 'The Failed Crusade,' and 'Break the Cross.' Furthermore, the sheer amount of references to the crusades within the magazines betrays a profound interest in metaphorically using the crusades, as can also be inferred from the introduction of the first issue of *Dabiq*, in which the Islamic State frames its current endeavors through a millenarian view of the crusades.[8]

Since the first publication of *Dabiq*, the magazine has been subject of several analyses. However, no study so far has explored the use of crusading rhetoric in the magazines despite the insights such research could provide regarding the rhetorical foundations of the Islamic State's narrative. In this research, therefore, I will analyze the magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* so as to explore how the Islamic State utilizes crusading rhetoric in conceptualizing and recounting its ideological and motivational discourse. Special attention will be given to how this use of crusading rhetoric influences the framing processes of the Islamic State's narrative, and how this use changes over time. The research question that is central to this research is:

How does the Islamic State frame its ideological and motivational discourse through the use of crusading rhetoric in its online magazines Dabiq *and* Rumiyah*, published between 2014-2017?*

The research question is inspired by the hypothesis that the Islamic State bases its discourse principally on crusading rhetoric and, in particular, on the dictation of a continuation of the crusades into the present. While propagating the idea of an ongoing conflict between the Western states and the Muslims in the Middle East, the Islamic State embeds the crusades within Muslim history, thereby transforming it into an integral aspect of both Muslim identity as well as the religion of Islam. The hypothesis of this research entails that by using crusading rhetoric the Islamic State is able to position itself and its enemies within a framework that carries unambiguous connotations of who is good and who is evil. This hypothesis will be elaborated on in the theoretical framework used in this research.

This research is divided into three parts. The first part includes a discussion of the current state of research on the magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*; an elaboration on the

[8] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Dabiq 1: The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq* 1 (2014): 4, 5.

methodology used to analyze the primary sources; and an explication of the theoretical framework used in this research.

In the second part of this research, the historical and ideological foundations of the Islamic State are discussed. The former will provide insight into the rise of the Islamic State. The latter will discuss the meanings of Islamic concepts and the selective interpretations that radical Islamists use. The most important events that will be deliberated upon are the Iraq War of 2003 and the Syrian Civil War that began in 2011. After this conceptualization and contextualization, I will explore why the medieval crusades form such compelling rhetorical tools, especially for Middle Eastern Muslims.

The third part of this research concerns the analysis of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. First, an overview will be presented that includes the general results of the analysis. Hereafter the use of crusading rhetoric will be analyzed through several case studies. Lastly, the flexibility of the crusading rhetoric will be discussed by exploring its development over time within the magazines.

In this research, the first fifteen issues of *Dabiq* and the first thirteen issues of *Rumiyah* have been included, which encompasses all existing issues to date. The insights in the rhetorical foundations of the magazines that this research yields, may provide helpful tools to better construct an opposing narrative that targets the rhetorical foundations of Islamic State propaganda. Furthermore, this research exemplifies how the use of rhetorical tools can assist terrorist organizations, in general, in constructing their propaganda.

Previous Research

Since the first publication of *Dabiq* in June of 2014, the magazine has been the subject of several analyses. The majority of these researches concerns the practical purposes of the magazines, such as the intended audience, and the degree to which the magazines are used to mobilize supporters. The following section will give a brief overview of some of the most significant findings that these analyses have yielded.

One of the first analyses conducted on *Dabiq* comes from counterterrorism expert Harleen Ghambir, who has conducted an in-depth content analysis of the first issue of the magazine. In her analysis, Ghambir found that the Islamic State is preoccupied with articulating the religious justification of its caliphate mission above anything else.[9] Besides supporting this claim by referring to the multitude of articles within *Dabiq* that express this

[9] Harleen K. Ghambir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State," *Institute for the Study of War* (2014) 10.

religious justification, Ghambir furthermore points out that the Islamic State almost exclusively utilizes hadith[10] from the *sahihain* - the most trusted collections of hadith - so as to create a religiously strong foundation for its claim of being the rightful caliphate.[11] Through *Dabiq*, Ghambir concludes, the Islamic States attempts to consolidate its political and religious control regarding the declaration of the caliphate by articulating the religious justifications of the latter based on Quranic verses and well-known hadith.[12]

Regarding the practical purposes of *Dabiq*, the political scientist Brandon Colas has explored the intended audiences of the magazine as part of his analysis. Colas finds that the intended audience consists of three groups. The first and second group concern Muslims in the West, and Western policymakers respectively, which are common targets of jihadist propaganda. The third group embodies those that have joined, or are about to join, the Islamic State and fail to integrate within the organization or the caliphate.[13] Therefore, *Dabiq* is not only a demonstration of the military victories of the Islamic State, or the religious justifications of the latter's endeavors, but also a tool through which the Islamic State corrects organizational issues.[14]

The appeal of the messaging of the Islamic State to these audiences has primarily been accredited to its professional production, its graphic use of violence, and its effective use of social media.[15] However, Haroro Ingram, expert in jihadist propaganda, critiques this view and has given a more elaborate explanation of how the Islamic State is able to mobilize its supporters and attract recruits. In his analysis of the first nine issues of *Dabiq*, Ingram explores how the magazine shapes and creates identities for its audiences within a narrative of crises. According to Ingram, crises induce a need in individuals for a solution, therefore making them susceptible to radicalizing language.[16] Ingram finds that, through *Dabiq*, the Islamic State constructs a narrative of crisis through which it proposes dichotomous identities that its audience can adopt. These identities consist of, on the one hand, those who follow the true faith and join the Islamic State, and, on the other hand, those who do not join the Islamic

[10] A hadith is a verse concerning the Sunna – the actions, statements, and utterances of Prophet Muhammad, recorded by Islamic scholars who were in the presence of the Prophet or heard it from those who were in the presence of the Prophet.
[11] Ghambir, "Dabiq," 6.
[12] Ibid., 1, 2, 10.
[13] Brandon Colas, "What Does *Dabiq* Do? ISIS Hermeneutics and Organizational Fractures within *Dabiq* Magazine," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 40 (2017): 175.
[14] Colas, "What Does Dabiq Do?" 181, 182.
[15] Haroro J. Ingram, "An Analysis of Islamic State's *Dabiq* Magazine," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 51 (2016): 459.
[16] Ibid., 463.

State and are, therefore, labeled as unbelievers. Through these identities, the Islamic State provides their audience with a simple solution for the crises - joining the Islamic State.[17]

In the first months after the first publication of *Dabiq*, analyses were predominantly focused on the practical purposes of the magazine and shied away from examining its contents and the meanings thereof. Security specialists Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie were the first to conduct a large-scale analysis of the contents of *Dabiq*. In their research, Droogan and Peattie analyzed the narrative themes within the first thirteen issues. They distinguished several themes that the Islamic State utilizes to structure its magazine. The global theme concerns the belief that 'Islam is at war,' which is divided into several sub-themes, including 'Religion,' 'Enemies,' 'Call to arms,' and 'Building the Caliphate.'[18] Droogan and Peattie argue that, through these narrative themes, the Islamic State attempts to position itself as the vanguard of a global Islamist revolution and to provide religious legitimacy and justification for its actions.[19]

All these studies have briefly noted the usage of terms like 'crusades' or 'crusaders' but none elaborate on it. A possible explanation for this may be that these studies adopted a political scientific approach, thereby preoccupying themselves with the practical implications of the magazines rather than their content. Studies that have provided an in-depth content-analysis of *Dabiq* often incorporated crusading rhetoric into the terminology of jihad, thereby obscuring the use of crusading rhetoric under religious language. In this research, the use of crusading rhetoric will be discussed separately from jihad so as to stress the importance of the former within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

Studying the use of crusading rhetoric in its own right could yield significant insights in the message of the Islamic State. After all, terrorist propaganda is fundamentally rhetorical.[20] Acquiring an understanding of its message is therefore crucial, and relies much on comprehending its stylistic language and the use of historical analogies. By focusing on the latter aspect, I will explore the use of crusading rhetoric by the Islamic State in framing its politico-military discourse in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. An important aspect is that this study will not take into account other propaganda outlets of the Islamic State.

Another challenge stems from the selective and specific ways in which the Islamic State utilizes various Islamic concepts, verses, or historical events throughout its magazines.

[17] Ingram, "An Analysis of Islamic State's *Dabiq* Magazine," 461, 474.
[18] Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, "Mapping the Thematic Landscape of *Dabiq* Magazine," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 71 (2017): 614.
[19] Ibid., 617.
[20] Randall G. Rogan, "Jihad Against Infidels and Democracy: A Frame Analysis of Jihadiest Ideology and Jurisprudence for Martyrdom and Violent Jihad," *Communication Monographs* 77 (2010): 395.

This research includes the concepts and events that are of relevance to the use of crusading rhetoric, but it is important to note that this relevance depends on their ascribed meaning. To account for this, I will critically discuss possible definitions of relevant concepts so as to determine their actual position within crusading rhetoric.

Methodology: Framing

In *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, the Islamic State utilizes selective interpretations of history and Islamic texts so as to accommodate its own worldview. To account for this practice and to explore its dynamics, I have adopted a methodology based on the process of framing . David Snow and Robert Benford, professors in sociology, have written a substantial amount of research on the process of framing, which they define as the discursive actions through which movements create and maintain meaning.[21] Snow and Benford define the products of framing processes as collective action frames, which are the tools through which collective action groups are shaped.[22] According to Snow and Benford, collective action frames are essentially schemata of interpretation that include a set of beliefs and meaning that intend to legitimize the activities of the collective action group and inspire participants to undertake action.[23]

In explaining how collective action frames are constructed, Snow and Benford distinguish three core elements that form the basis of the interpretative frame of the collective action group. The first element is diagnostic framing, which entails the identification of a problematic situation and its causality that requires change or ameliorative action.[24] Hereafter follows the framing of a prognosis of the problem and how the collective action group is deemed capable of affecting this change.[25] The last element is a call to arms or a rationale for undertaking action. It is through this motivational framing that collective action groups are able to construct appealing messages that mobilize their audiences.[26]

Having conceptualized the process of framing and the central elements therein, it becomes evident why framing is of importance in this research. Frames help the Islamic State in conveying their worldview to its audiences, propagating a set of beliefs and meanings that are of importance within that worldview. Hence, framing is a helpful tool for constructing propaganda. By distinguishing between the different framing process, I will explore how the

[21] Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Collective Action Groups: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 613, 614.
[22] Ibid., 614.
[23] Ibid., 614.
[24] David Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Moevement Research* 1 (1988): 199, 200.
[25] Ibid., 199, 201.
[26] Snow and Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," 199, 202.

use of crusading rhetoric assists the Islamic State in constructing diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames in their magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

Framing: The Quantitative Approach

Before being able to explore the importance of the use of crusading rhetoric in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, I had to determine how prevalent the use of crusading rhetoric was in the magazines. The first step for this was to simply count the amount of direct and indirect references made to the crusades. The direct references are based on the terms 'crusade(s),' 'crusader(s),' and 'crusading.' The indirect references consist of the terms 'Rome,' 'Roman(s),' 'Christian(s),' 'Christianity,' and 'cross(es).' These terms have been included due to their potential relevance to the crusades. The link between Christianity and the crusades is easily made, for the crusades were mobilized by the Christians. The term 'cross(es)' has been added because of the symbolic value in Christianity. The terms 'Rome' and 'Roman(s)' have been included because of their importance in the hadith on *malahim*, which will be explained in Chapter II. Of each potential indirect reference, the context of the reference was thoroughly analyzed so as to determine its relevance to the use of crusading rhetoric.

Hereafter, every individual reference was analyzed so as to determine any connection to certain concepts and themes. For example, references that were used in a context of jihad were connected to the concept of jihad. References that were used in a context of victory for the Muslims were connected to the theme 'Victory for Islam.' It is important to note that one reference could be connected to multiple themes or concepts. The concepts were named by looking at which terminology was used in the context of the direct references. After all, references connected to the concept of jihad often included the term within the same sentence in which the reference was made. The themes were inspired by their recurrence or importance in academic work on radical Islamic discourses. For example, the theme 'Clash of Civilizations' stems from the eponymous work of Samuel P. Huntington. The work of Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie has been especially helpful in this, for they have adopted an extensive list of narrative themes, some of which have been adopted in this research.[27] In Chapter IV, I will explore some of these connections more in-depth during the analysis of the use of crusading rhetoric.

In this analysis, I will apply the framing processes through a case-specific approach. This approach has been adopted because of the fact that references to the crusades are

[27] Droogan and Peattie, "Mapping the Thematic Landscape," 596, 597, 598, 599.

scattered throughout all issues of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, thereby making it impractical to discuss every reference individually. A case-specific approach allows me to discuss important or interesting extracts from the magazines so as to construct a clear and cogent analysis on the use of crusading rhetoric in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The case-studies that have been adopted consist of individual articles taken from the magazines. Each article has been selected based on its explanatory value for the use of crusading rhetoric. Thus, each case-study provides an in-depth understanding of the ways in which the Islamic State views the world through a prism of crusading rhetoric.

Reasons for Using History

From the works of Snow and Benford, it becomes evident that framing is a crucial tool in communicating the discourse of collective action groups. Arguably the most important aspect of framing is the motivational frame through which the collective action group attempts to recruit and mobilize its audiences so as to gain additional support.[28] Successful motivational framing stems from the extent to which the frames of collective action groups are congruous with the frames of the audience. This so-called 'frame resonance' is the result of a process that Snow and Benford call 'frame alignment, which concerns linking the frames of the collective action groups to the frames of its intended audiences.[29]

One aspect of frame alignment concerns the creation of new meanings for existing concepts and events, as well as the alteration of existing understandings and meanings.[30] However, these new meanings or understandings must hold true to existing cultural narrations so as to be considered credible and complementary to the interests, values, and beliefs of the audience.[31] In other words, the diagnostic and prognostic frames that a collective action group wishes to promote have to be modified so as to be congruent with existing cultural narrations. However, this possibly impedes the intention of the collective action group, for they may wish to promote entirely new meanings or understandings, or to change present meanings or understandings into more radical or controversial interpretations. In this case, the histories of the extant cultural narrations are likely to be reinterpreted by the collective action groups so as to support the latter's radical or controversial worldview while remaining recognizable and credible for their audiences.

[28] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad: Intramovement Framing Contests and al-Qaeda's Struggle for Sacred Authority," *IRSH* 49 (2004): 176.
[29] Snow and Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," 624.
[30] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Collective Action Groups," 625.
[31] Snow and Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," 210.

The theoretical framework of this research rests on the notion that the Islamic State, as a carrier of radical interpretations of extant cultural concepts, is inclined to utilize history in the explication and propagation of its radical interpretations and meanings. To support this statement, I will briefly discuss how history can be utilized in the process of frame alignment, and how it subsequently transforms cultural narrations through the reinterpretation of their respective histories.

Within the social sciences, history is regarded as being the most crucial tool for collective action groups in the construction and maintenance of shared understandings of the world.[32] In creating such worldviews, collective action groups use history so as to produce a relation between that which occurred in the past and the present state of affairs. Through this process, a worldview is created that expresses a connection between historical events and actors on the one side and existing socio-political conditions on the other.[33] What is interesting to note about this connection between past and present, is that the historical events *an sich* are reflected onto the present, while their meaning is modified so as to fit in the contemporary frames of the collective action groups.[34] Thus, in essence, history is reinterpreted by collective action groups, which allows them to associate new meanings to historical events and actors. In doing so, a collective action group can construct an appropriate and attractive framework that aligns with the extant cultural narrations of the audience and concurrently introduces the new meanings and understandings of the collective action group.

The degree to which history is reinterpreted depends on the extent to which the new meanings and understandings of the collective action groups differ from the meanings and understandings to which the audience adheres. If, for example, a collective action group wishes to propagate relatively radical or violent interpretations towards a comparatively modest audience, it would require a high degree of reinterpretation and a substantial amount of explication. Yet no matter the differences between new and extant meanings and understandings, the reinterpretation of history will likely yield positive results regarding frame resonance as long as this reinterpretation remains credible in the eyes of the audience and is supported by a respected authority.[35]

[32] James H. Liu and Denis J. Hilton, "How the Past Weighs on the Present: Social Representations of History and Their Role in Identity Politics," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 44 (2015): 537, 539.
[33] Jonathan Friedman, "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity," *American Anthropologist* 94 (1992): 837.
[34] Liu and Hilton, "How the Past Weighs on the Present," 544.
[35] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Collective Action Groups," 622; Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad," 167, 168.

In the case of radical interpretations of radical Islamic groups, the criteria of credibility and authority are two sides of the same coin. Both are determined by the reputation and authority of the Islamic scholars on whose texts radical Islamist organizations base their interpretations.[36] Hence, by using the Quran and well-known hadith, radical Islamic organizations substantiate their message and its respective meanings and understandings on highly authoritative and credible sources that carry over a high degree of historical and cultural resonance to the audience. This furthermore strengthens the worldviews of radical Islamic organizations, for critics can only question the interpretations of the used sources but not the actual contents of the Quran and hadith because of their cultural value.[37]

The use of history for collective action groups rests on the fact that histories and historical accounts can only speak through modern-day interpreters.[38] Therefore, collective action groups can propagate a reinterpretation of history, founded on credible and authoritative accounts, so as to construct a frame that resonates with their audiences and concurrently introduces the latter to the meanings and interpretations of the collective action groups. In turn, this frame resonance strengthens the worldview of the collective action group. As a result, history should form a compelling tool for the Islamic State through which it can promote its radical worldview in a credible and authoritative way.

Theoretical Concepts

The methodology and the theoretical framework have mentioned the terms 'jihadism,' 'terrorism,' and 'crusading rhetoric' several times already, and they will be repeated throughout this research. For that reason, a short definition of these terms will be provided below.

The definition of the term 'terrorism' used in this research comes from the political scientist Brigitte L. Nacos. Her definition has been chosen because it not only incorporates general definitions of terrorism but also includes certain aspects that are quintessential to modern-day terrorism. In her book *Mass-Mediated Terrorism*, Nacos defines terrorism as premeditated violence by non-state actors that deliberately target civilians to further political objectives and achieve publicity.[39] This definition succeeds in encapsulating the three main characteristics of terrorism as proposed by the historian Randall D. Law. The first characteristic is that terrorism is a tactic used as a result of rational decision making, therefore

[36] Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad," 162.
[37] Ghambir, "Dabiq," 6.
[38] Liu and Hilton, "How the Past Weighs on the Present," 540.
[39] Brigitte L. Nacos, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism. Mainstream and Digital Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2016) 5, 14.

being premeditated violence.[40] Secondly, this premeditated violence is to serve as a means to an end - often a politically motivated end.[41] Lastly, terrorism is a communicative act intended to influence the behavior of one or more audiences by achieving as much attention from the media as possible.[42]

In addition to terrorism, the terms jihadism and Islamism will also be used within this research. Jihadism refers to the focus of radical Islamic groups on waging violent jihad against the perceived enemies of Islam.[43] Islamism, or political Islam, refers to the desire to apply shari'a to its full extent - thereby replacing any secular ideologies.[44] Islamism is not inherently violent. In this research, however, the focus will be on the radical dimension of Islamism. It will, therefore, often be used in conjunction with jihadism and terrorism, and should then be interpreted as the wish to implement shari'a by any means possible.

[40] Randall D. Law, *Terrorism. A History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009) 3.
[41] Ibid., 3.
[42] Ibid., 3.
[43] Ibid., 282.
[44] Ibid., 282.

Chapter I: The Rise of the Islamic State

The Islamic State is a relatively new organization, for it was established in late June of 2014 when it declared a caliphate. The roots of the Islamic State, however, can be traced back to 1999, when the radical Islamist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi founded *Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad* (JTJ). Originally established to overthrow the Kingdom of Jordan, the JTJ soon joined the jihadist struggle against the American military forces in Afghanistan in 2001. After partaking in the Iraq War of 2003 where it pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda, the JTJ rebranded and reformed several times before it eventually became the Islamic State in Iraq - the direct predecessor of ISIS, which would thereafter become the Islamic State. The crux of the development from JTJ into the Islamic State and the latter's ability to quickly consolidate its regional power is found in the Iraq War of 2003 and the Syrian Civil War that started in 2011.

The Iraq War will be discussed by using the book *A History of the Modern Middle East* by the late historian William L. Cleveland and the historian Martin Bunton. Thereafter, the Syrian Civil War will be elaborated on by discussing the book *The Syrian Jihad* by Charles R. Lister. Throughout this historical contextualization, the significance of events and circumstances will be emphasized by relating them to the development of the Islamic State and its consolidation of power. Finally, this section will shortly sketch the development of the Islamic State's territorial control after the declaration of the caliphate.

The Iraq War

On September 11, 2001, members of the terrorist organization al-Qaeda hijacked four passenger airlines and crashed two planes into the World Trade Center, one in the Pentagon, and another one in a field near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Bush administration quickly retaliated, commencing a 'war on terror' in an attempt to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that was allegedly hiding Osama Bin Laden, the main orchestrator of the attacks and founder of al-Qaeda. Soon after, the United States would shift its attention to Iraq because of the latter's alleged possession of biochemical weaponry.

The Iraqi government claimed that it had destroyed all its weapons of mass destruction after the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Inspectors verified that destruction had taken place but could not identify the amount that had been destroyed. It was therefore recorded as 'neither verified destroyed nor believed to still exist.'[45] It was this ambiguity that allowed the United

[45] Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 194.

States to claim the continued existence of hidden stockpiles so as to legitimize the invasion of Iraq which ensued in March of 2003.

In *A History of the Modern Middle East,* Cleveland and Bunton argue that the occupation of Iraq by American forces was one of the primary catalysts for the rise of the Islamic State. The first months of the war saw the Iraqi forces being swiftly neutralized by the American military. The latter subsequently occupied Iraq, cleansed the Iraqi government, and disbanded the Iraqi military[46] - although some scholars argue that the Iraqi army simply disintegrated. After the American invasion, Iraq only remained a country in name, for its economic and social infrastructure were utterly destroyed. This caused considerable resentment among the Iraqi population who suffered the consequences of a destroyed economy and a severe decrease in security.[47] Cleveland and Bunton stress that the chaotic situation in Iraq, as well as the disenfranchised military personnel - approximately 3750.000 individuals, provided fertile soil for any upcoming insurgencies.[48]

Iraq experienced a rapid increase in radical insurgencies after 2003. Whereas most insurgencies consisted of Iraqis angered by the lack of security and employment, some insurgencies took a more radical approach. One of these radical insurgencies was Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's JTJ, which profited immensely from the influx of disenfranchised Sunni Muslims.[49]

The JTJ was led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi - a jihad-veteran of the Afghan War of 1979. He was well-trained in guerilla warfare and terrorist tactics as well as drenched in a radical interpretation of Islam. Al-Zarqawi regarded the presence of Western influences and Shi'a Muslims in the Middle East as the last obstacles for purifying Islam and establishing an Islamic state, which would put Islam at the center of both politics and the social sphere.[50] The presence of American troops in Iraq was, therefore, the main reason why the JTJ had come to Iraq.

During the Iraq War, al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and swore to assist them in their struggle against the United States. Al-Zarqawi renamed the JTJ into *Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn*: al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). To cleanse Islam from extraneous influences, AQI predominantly targeted American forces and other foreigners. Shi'ite Muslims, too, became victims of AQI's brutal execution methods.

[46] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 526.
[47] Ibid., 526.
[48] Ibid., 526.
[49] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 526.
[50] Charles R. Lister, *The Syrian Jihad. Al-Qaeda, The Islamic State and the Evolution of an Insurgency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) 262.

Two years after the beginning of the war, the insurgents were handed an opportunity to increase further and justify its violent behavior against its enemies. In 2005, elections were held in Iraq and the Shi'ite Nuri al-Maliki was chosen to become the new prime minister. Now with a Shi'ite prime minister in charge, the Sunni Muslims - approximately 30% of the Iraqi population - were systematically marginalized in Iraq. Cleveland and Bunton state that the marginalized Sunni Muslims in Iraq provided the radical insurgents with recruits and an increase in support regarding their violent campaigns against the United States and the Shi'ite government.[51] AQI, too, capitalized on this influx of recruits and even attracted the support of smaller insurgent organizations. AQI merged with five other factions to become *Majlis Shura al-Mujahideen* (MSM), which was to consolidate control over the Sunni population in Iraq.[52] In the following months, MSM thrived on the influx of Sunni recruits and capitalized on the political and economic instability that plagued Iraq. It was able to consolidate large swaths of land and even achieved several victories over the remaining Iraqi forces, which only increased the Sunni support for MSM.[53]

In 2006, a few months after the establishment of MSM, the organization experienced a setback as al-Zarqawi was killed in an American air strike. Al-Zarqawi was succeeded by Abu Ayyub al-Masri, who rebranded AQI into *al-Dawla al-Islamiyya fi Iraq* - the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). For the following five years, ISI would be the target of American counter-terrorist campaigns, which nearly succeeded in destroying ISI.[54] However, the Syrian Civil War that began in 2011 provided ISI with the highly anticipated opportunity to make its return.

The Syrian Civil War

The Syrian Civil War was part of a series of uprisings in the Middle East that aimed at achieving political liberalization, social justice, and fair distribution of national resources in response to the regime's failures to account for popular demands, especially from the younger populations.[55] Although the first act of public protest against the government of Bashar al-Asad took place on January 26 of 2011, the key catalyst for the Civil War occurred on March 6 in the city of Deraa, when fifteen schoolboys were arrested and allegedly tortured for having painted the phrase 'The people want to topple the regime' on a wall. Following their arrest, the people of Deraa mobilized a protest in which they demanded the release of the schoolboys.

[51] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 527, 528, 530.
[52] Ibid., 266.
[53] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 529, 530.
[54] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 268, 269, 270.
[55] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 538, 539.

During the protest, Syrian police forces opened fire on the civilians, killing four people, thereby delivering the spark that ignited the revolution.[56]

As was the case in Iraq, various militant oppositional groups emerged during the revolution to either topple the regime of President al-Assad or to take advantage of the ensuing chaos by recruiting disenfranchised individuals.[57] In his book *The Syrian Jihad*, the political scientist Charles Lister states that the Syrian Civil War provided the suitable environment for radical organizations because Syria lacked a strong insurgent opposition. The Syrian army was relatively weak and suffered from a severe lack of financial investments.[58] To further exacerbate the relative military weakness of Syria, Lister states that Syrian security officials provided radical insurgencies with the necessary space to operate within the power vacuum that had been created during the revolution.[59] As long as such organizations did not oppose the Syrian government, radical organizations were tolerated so that they would fragment the opposition of the Syrian government.[60] Due to this negligence of the Syrian government, radical insurgents were able to establish deeply rooted networks in various Syrian communities, which were used for military efforts, recruitment and gateways to the black market. The latter provided jihadist movements with the opportunity to not only militarize the 2011 protests but also mobilize a powerful jihadist dynamic within Syria.[61]

Due to the chaos that ensued the Syrian Civil War, the relative weakness of the Syrian army, and the aforementioned networks, the Civil War formed an attractive destination for ISI, which was looking to revitalize its movement after suffering heavy losses in Iraq.[62] To celebrate the expansion into Syria in 2013 - and to remain true to its name, ISI rebranded itself into the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). According to Lister, ISIS capitalized immensely on the chaos of the civil war and acquired considerable gains - both territorially as militarily, which enabled ISIS to lay the bureaucratic foundations that steadily transformed ISIS into a state-like organization.[63] Eventually, out of all factions fighting the Syrian regime, ISIS became the most powerful one. So powerful even, that ISIS proclaimed itself to be the rightful leading authority of global jihad, thereby discrediting the authority of its former affiliate, al-Qaeda.[64]

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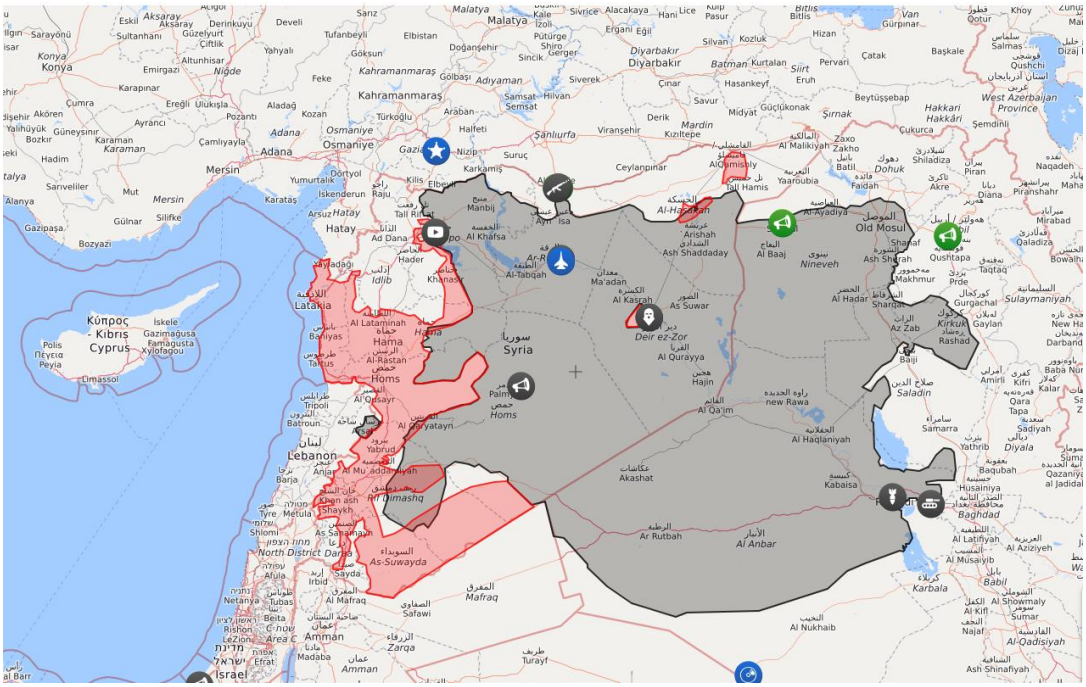
[56] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 12, 15, 18.
[57] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 549.
[58] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 29, 30.
[59] Ibid., 8, 33.
[60] Ibid., 33, 245.
[61] Ibid., 35, 47, 119.
[62] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 119.
[63] Ibid., 119; Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 271, 272.
[64] Ibid., 216.

From ISIS to the Islamic State

The self-proclaimed authority of ISIS was given considerable credence on June 10 of 2014, when ISIS captured the city of Mosul in Iraq, sparking a massive Sunni uprising against the Shi'a Prime Minister. Subsequently marching towards Baghdad, ISIS acquired American weaponry, which was transferred to Syria to fuel further expansion and manage the consolidation of its territory during the Civil War.[65] For the ISIS leadership, the rapid successes of ISIS indicated that it was the opportune moment to realize its wish of establishing a caliphate and to rebrand itself as the Islamic State.[66] Over a period of fifteen years, ISIS had secured its long-term durability through consolidating its financial strength; established a sophisticated governance model; and thrived on its impressive military momentum gained during the Syrian Civil War, culminating into the declaration of the long-awaited caliphate.[67]

Since the declaration of the caliphate, the Islamic State has had a difficult time holding on to and managing its territory. On its apex in 2015 (Image 1), the territorial control of the Islamic State ranged from Aleppo to Mosul, and from the vicinity of Baghdad to the vicinity of Damascus - the latter two cities being heavily defended by government forces.[68]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Homs
Palmyra
Syria
Lebanon
Beirut
Damascus
Tripoli
Baghdad
Mosul
Old Mosul
Nineveh
Kirkuk
Erbil
Ar Ramadi
Fallujah
Al Anbar
Ar Rutbah
Al Qa'im
Al Hasakah
Qamishly
Kobani
Manbij
Al Bab
Jarabulus
Afrin
Tall Rifaat
Ain Isa
Al Khafsa
Ash Shaddadayi
Al Baaj
Al Hadar
Sinjar
Tal Afar
Al Qaryatayn
Palmyra
Al Mayadin
Abu Kamal
Al Qurayya
Al Suwar
Al Kasrah
Ma'adan
Al Tabqah
Ar Raqqah
Ayn Issa
Tell Abyad
Suruç
Nizip
Gaziantep
Kilis
Reyhanlı
Antakya
Iskenderun
Dörtyol
Ceyhan
Osmaniye
Kahramanmaraş
Elbistan
Malatya
Sivrice
Alacakaya
Erzincan
Tercan
Pülümür
Hozat
Ovacık
Çemişgezek
Pertek
Mazgirt
Nazımiye
Hozat
Tunceli
Elazığ
Palu
Bingöl
Genç
Karlıova
Varto
Muş
Bulanık
Malazgirt
Hasköy
Patnos
Ağrı
Doğubeyazıt
Eleşkirt
Hamur
Tutak
Diyadin
Taşlıçay
Tuzluca
Iğdır
Aralık
Karakoyunlu
Kağızman
Digor
Sarıkamış
Kars
Selim
Susuz
Çıldır
Ardahan
Göle
Çıldır Gölü
Posof
Artvin
Yusufeli
Şavşat
Borçka
Hopa
Arhavi
Kemalpaşa
Ardanuç
Murgul
Yusufeli
Artvin
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Karayazı
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Pasinler
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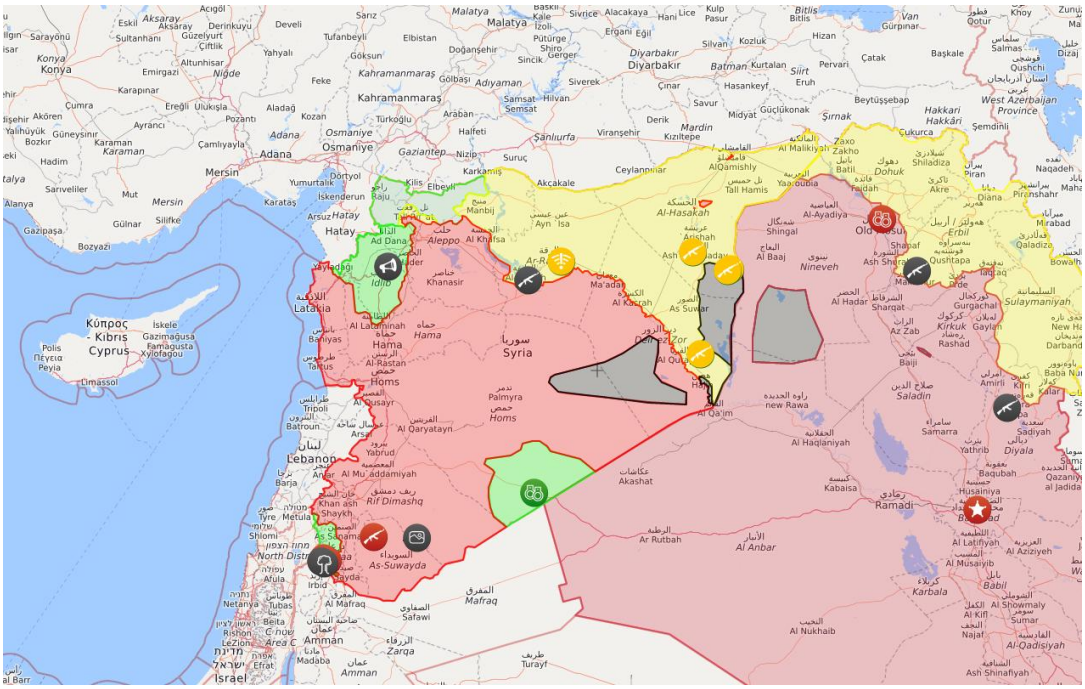
Hınıs
Karayazı
Horasan
Narman
Oltu
Olur

However, at the time of writing, the Islamic State merely retains a fraction of its territory (Image 2). Its current areas of influence consist of small areas in the border regions of Iraq and Syria. Its allies are still active in North-Sinai, Afghanistan, and the Philippines.[69]


Syria
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Cyprus
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Palmyra
Raqqa
Deir ez-Zor
Idlib
Latakia
Tartus
Damascus
As-Suwayda
Rif Dimashq
Mosul
Erbil
Kirkuk
Baghdad
Ramadi
Fallujah
Samarra
Al Anbar
Nineveh
Sulaymaniyah
Diyala
Saladin
Karbala
Babil
Al Qadisiyah
Al Muthanna
Dohuk
Duhok
Amman
Irbid
Mafraq
Safawi
Zarqa
Turayf
Al Nukhaib
Al Qaim
Akashat
Kabaisa
Al Haqlaniyah
Al Baaj
Shingal
Tall Hamis
Al Hasakah
Qamishly
Ash Shaddadi
Al Malikiyah
Zakho
Shiladiza
Batil
Faidah
Akre
Piramshahr
Naqadeh
Mahabad
Bowaih
Qaladiza
Shaqlawa
Ash Shirqat
Al Hadar
Gurgachal
Kirkuk
Az Zab
Rashad
Baiji
Amirli
Yathrib
Al Latifiyah
Al Aziziyah
Al Musayyib
Al Kifl
Najaf
Al Shinafiyah
Ash Shanafiyah
Sumar
Al Showmaly
Al Ayadiya
Ash Shura
Shahaf
Qushtapa
Erbil
Hrabad
Diana
Pirm

Chapter II: The Terminology of the Radical Islamic Discourse

The Islamic State is not unique in its commitment to realizing a caliphate, for many jihadi organizations, including al-Qaeda and Hamas, emphasize the need for establishing a caliphate. To understand this sentiment, I will explore the political dimension of Islam as viewed by radical Islamists, and how this dimension is used and abused by radical Islamists. This dimension will be explored in this chapter so as to explicate the importance of a caliphate for the Islamic State. Furthermore, several important concepts will be addressed of which an understanding is required to comprehend the worldview of the Islamic State.

Political Islam

In *Religion and Globalization*, John Esposito, Darrell Fasching and Todd Lewis, professors in religious studies, discuss various world religions within the processes of modernization and globalization. In explicating Islam, the authors state that Muslims believe that Allah has given humankind the world so as to act as his representatives and establish the rule of Allah on earth.[70] According to the authors, the Quran, being the word of Allah, demands that the umma, the transnational community of Muslims, spreads and institutionalizes an Islamic order so as to create a socially just society in which Islam can be manifested.[71] As a result, Islam not only pertains to the religious sphere but also the political sphere, for being Muslim not only entails being part of the umma but also living in an Islamic community-state based on shari'a.[72]

Shari'a is a crucial concept within Islam. It is often translated as Islamic Law, but this understates the importance and complexity of the concept. Shari'a concerns the divinely mandated path of Allah - the Muslim conception of life in conformity with Allah's will.[73] Islamic Law, nonetheless, is an essential aspect of shari'a, for it concerns the laws taken from the Quran that are required to be followed so as to live in accordance with shari'a.[74]

According to the Islamic State and multiple Islamic scholars, Muslims have struggled to live according to shari'a due to cultural clashes caused by the crusades, Western colonialism and imperialism, and modern-day military interventionism, globalization, and

[70] John L. Esposito, Darrell J. Fasching, Todd Lewis, *Religion and Globalization. World Religions in Historical Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2008) 188.
[71] Ibid., 188.
[72] Ibid., 190.
[73] Esposito, *Religion and Globalization*, 213; Brandon Colas, "Understanding the Idea: Dynamic Equivalence and the Accurate Translation of *Jihadist* Concepts," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2018): 11.
[74] Ibid., 213.

modernization.[75] In addition to these foreign influences, radical Islamic scholars saw the sectarianism within Islam, such as the Sunni-Shi'a divide, as another - even more significant - cause for the deviation from shari'a. To protect Islam from these dangers, Islamic scholars looked for answers in the Quran, finding solace within the latter's political dimension.

The answers provided by the political dimension of Islam became much more prevalent during the 1970s and 1980s when the Middle Eastern states experienced growing popular demands for restoring Islam to a central role in political and social life. This so-called Islamic Resurgence was a rejection of the dependence on Western models of power, and the secularization of politics in the Islamic World.[76] During the Islamic Resurgence, Islam was rapidly and actively politicized, thereby forming a more satisfactory Islamic alternative to Western ideologies.[77]

It was during this period that a radical movement emerged that attempted to purge Islam of extraneous influences so as to return it to the prophetic traditions.[78] Framing themselves as a revolutionary traditionalism - a political radicalism based on the religious traditions of Islam - these radical Islamists emphasized the distinction between true Muslims and unbelievers, utilizing jihad to restore Islam within politics and apply the rules of Islam throughout society.[79] A crucial figure in this period was the Egyptian activist Sayyid Qutb, who believed that Egypt had fallen victim to foreign influences hostile to Islam and shari'a, and called for an Islamic resistance against everything that posed a threat to Islam.

Sayyid Qutb on Jahiliyya and Tawhid

On a study mission in America in 1948, Qutb became appalled by the materialistic, racist, and sexually permissive American society.[80] Afraid that such influences might further infiltrate Islam, Qutb, after his return to Egypt, joined the Muslim Brotherhood to defend Islam against any Western influences. In 1954, Qutb was arrested and accused of plotting to assassinate Egyptian nationalist and future president, Gamal Abdel Nasser. In prison, Qutb wrote several works, eventually culminating in *Milestones,* in which he explained the threat that *jahili* forces posed to Islam.

[75] Esposito, *Religion and Globalization,* 192, 193.
[76] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 371, 372.
[77] Gubara Said Hassan, "Radical Islam / Islamic Radicalism: Towards a Theoretical Framing," (2013): 2. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266030514_Radical_Islam_Islamic_Radicalism_Towards_a_Theoretical_Framing accessed on April 14, 2018.
[78] Ibid., 1, 2.
[79] Ibid.," 2.
[80] Qutb, *Milestones. Ma'alim fi'l-tareeq* (Birmingham: Maktabah Booksellers and Publishers, 2006) 8.

In the Quran, *jahiliyya* refers to the period in Arabia before Islam, constituting the idea of pre-Islamic ignorance and disregard for the will of Allah. In *Milestones*, Qutb uses the concept of *jahiliyya* to refer to any extraneous influences that prevent Muslims from living according to shari'a and prevent Islam from materializing in the political sphere.[81] Qutb saw that the Islamic World was filled with *jahili* influences. Even Islam had become polluted by *jahiliyya*. To cleanse Islam, Qutb argued, Muslims had to remove themselves from everything *jahili*, and return to deriving everything from the Quran and the Sunna (the deeds and sayings of the Prophet) so as to restore Islam and shari'a.[82]

A crucial aspect of this return to the divine basics of Islam concerned the restoration of the centrality of *tawhid* within Islam and shari'a. In Islam, *tawhid* concerns the unity of Allah and is articulated in the creed *la ilaha illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah* - 'there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger' - emphasizing that only Allah is to be worshiped. *Tawhid* stresses the monotheistic nature of Islam, and, in practice, stands for the fact that Allah decides everything, thereby making secularism and any other separation between the sacred and profane impossible. An example of this absolute nature of *tawhid* is found in *Milestones*, in which Qutb states that *tawhid* entails that all sovereignty belongs to Allah alone. As a result, *tawhid* challenges all systems that are based on man-made laws because any rulership of man over man takes away sovereignty from Allah, thereby breaking *tawhid* and becoming an act of *shirk*, an Islamic term denoting the association of other beings with Allah and polytheism.[83] According to Qutb, the only rulers that are to be followed are those who rule according to Islamic Law, thereby establishing a society based on shari'a.[84] Any Muslim leader who fails to rule in accord to shari'a is a *taghut* (plural: *tawaghit*).*Taghut* is the Islamic term for idol, and is used to refer to contemporary Arab rulers who fail to implement shari'a.[85]

Qutb saw the return to *tawhid* and the removal of the *tawaghit* from power as essential for purging Islam from *jahiliyya*. Qutb advocated a long-term campaign of both ideological as well as military conflict, guided by a vanguard of believers who would defend Islam and remove *jahiliyya* from society by establishing a caliphate.[86] In this argumentation lies the importance of establishing a caliphate for radical Islamic organizations. The caliphate would serve as a defensive beacon under which Islam would be safe from any *jahili* influences. On

[81] Qutb, *Milestones*, 35, 55.
[82] Ibid., 34.
[83] Ibid., 40, 67, 94, 149.
[84] Ibid., 68, 70.
[85] H. Rahman, "Jibt, Taghut and the Tahkim of the Umma," *Arabica* 29 (1982): 50, 56.
[86] Ibid., 11.

multiple occasions, radical Islamic organizations such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have identified themselves as the vanguard of Islam that would establish the caliphate.

Abu Bakr al-Naji on the Management of Savagery

The importance of a caliphate was further articulated by Abu-Bakr Naji, an Islamist strategist and purported to be the head of the media and propaganda division of al-Qaeda. In his book *The Management of Savagery*, Naji explicated the practical workings of a caliphate, in particular in relation to the contemporary struggles of al-Qaeda. Published in 2004, a year after the Iraq War, Naji asserted that now was the time for the jihadi organizations to drive the American forces out of the Islamic World. To establish this, Naji discerned two consecutive phases. The first phase concerned waging jihad against American forces and the *tawaghit* to vexate and exhaust them, leading to the destabilization of the region, which would allow the jihadi organizations to consolidate territory and establish the foundations for a caliphate.[87]

Following the phase of vexation and exhaustion would come the phase of the management of savagery. Naji explicates the latter as being the phase in which the jihadi organizations should manage people's needs, such as food, medical treatment but also security, and justice, all in accordance with shari'a.[88] Essentially, the management of savagery means to avoid the eruption of a phase of fitna (unrest or rebellion).[89] During this phase, Naji asserted that the jihadis were to consolidate their territorial and administrative control further, thereby erecting a proto-state that would function as the foundations for a caliphate.[90]

Several scholars have linked the work of Naji to the rise of the Islamic State. It is likely that the Islamic State, as a former branch of al-Qaeda, has adopted several techniques of al-Qaeda, especially from the latter's media and propaganda division. In the twelfth issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State mentions the work of Naji, stating that it was of significant influence on Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. After reading the book, al-Zarqawi allegedly said: 'It is as if the author knows what I am planning.'[91]

[87] Abu-Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*, translated by William McCants. Translation funded by the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University (2006) 16, 17.
[88] Ibid., 11.
[89] Ibid., 87.
[90] Ibid., 17, 18.
[91] Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, cited in Al-Hayat Media Center, "Just Terror," *Dabiq* 12 (2016):39.

Salafism

According to Naji, the type of jihadi organizations that had the most advanced and practical understanding of Islam and shari'a were the jihadi-Salafists.[92] These are organizations that use a radical interpretation of jihad so as to return Islam to the example of the Salaf, the first three generations of Islam who learned the religion directly from the Prophet and are, therefore, considered to be the most pious of Muslims. Salafism concerns emulating the Salaf as closely as possible in all spheres of life and is especially prevalent in Sunni Islam.[93] To emulate the Salaf, Salafis utilize the method of *ijtihad* rather than *taqlid* to live according to shari'a. According to Salafists, *ijtihad* concerns the independent and direct interpretation of the Quran and the Sunna rather than *taqlid*, the imitation of scholarly texts regarding shari'a.[94] Furthermore, *ijtihad* pertains that Salafis avoid *bid'a* - man-made additions to Islam from sources other than the Quran and the Sunna.[95] Through *ijtihad* Salafis claim to learn the original, unaltered message of Allah, allowing the Salafis to follow the example of the Salaf, for the latter, too, learned directly from the Quran and the Prophet, without any intermediaries such as Islamic scholars or *bid'a*.

It is important to note that Salafism is not a homogeneous movement, because there exists internal discussions on the use of violence, and whether or not Salafis should engage in politics or not. Most Salafis abhor violence, while others embrace it[96] - a division that is exacerbated in the debate on Salafi activity in the political sphere. The same division is present in the political sphere. Quietist Salafis refrain from any political activity, whereas political Salafis do engage in politics so as to attempt to realize a full application of shari'a within society.[97] A radical sub-movement of the political Salafis concerns the jihadi-Salafists, who believe that jihad ought not to be waged only between Muslims and non-Muslims, but also be used against perceived *tawaghit* in the Muslims world.[98]

Takfir and Kufr

A crucial component of jihadi-Salafists is their use of the concepts of *takfir* and *kufr*. *Takfir* means to declare a Muslim an apostate because of an act of *kufr*, the Islamic term for unbelief.

[92] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Just Terror," 3, 4, 80.
[93] Joas Wagemakers, "Salafism," in: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Religion* (2016). Retrieved from: http://religion.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.001.0001/acrefore-9780199340378-e-255?rskey=D0Ccww&result=1 accessed on April 15, 2018.
[94] Wagemakers, "Salafism," 4.
[95] Ibid., 12.
[96] Ibid., 7.
[97] Ibid., 13, 14, 16.
[98] Wagemakers, "Salafism," 17.

Non-violent groups argue that only Allah knows the true intentions of a Muslim. As a result, only Allah can declare *takfir* on someone. Jihadi-Salafists, in contrast, argue that *tawhid* commands both Islamic belief and Islamic action, meaning that an action considered to be *kufr* is enough to reveal someone as being a *kafir* (plural: *kuffar*) - an unbeliever. Hence, jihadi-Salafists argue that they can declare *takfir* on someone in the name of Allah.[99]

These radical interpretations of *takfir* and *kufr* have been exacerbated by Qutb, who, basing his assertion on the Sunna, stated that killing or being killed by a *kafir* guaranteed the Muslim entrance into Paradise.[100] In defending Islam and *tawhid* from *jahili* influences, which were perpetuated by the *kuffar* and the *tawaghit*, Qutb strongly advocated the use of violent jihad.

Jihad

In essence, jihad means to strive or struggle so as to live in accordance with shari'a.[101] Having its roots in the tumultuous historical period of the Prophet Muhammad, jihad carries strong violent connotations, which are elaborated on within the Quran, therefore being a concept that is exceptionally prone to radical interpretations.

The radical dimension of jihad, as explicated in *Milestones*, asserts that Islam is not merely a belief, but a way of life, as based on the concept of shari'a. Hence, according to the Salafi ideal of emulating the Salaf, no Muslim could live according to shari'a as long as *jahili* institutions and traditions impeded the relations between men and Allah.[102] Jihad, therefore, was to be used so as to establish Allah's authority and shari'a, and end all lordship based on man-made laws.[103] Furthermore, to protect shari'a from *jahili* influences, jihad also entailed the defense of Islam by means of fighting the *kuffar*, involving every act necessary to dismantle their power.[104] Only when all the world was ridden from *jahiliyya*, people would have the absolute freedom to accept Islam.[105] In other words, jihad had to be continued until the entire world was included in the territory of Islam so that the umma would be able to establish a single, unified real of Islam that would create a just political and social order.[106]

[99] Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad," 160.
[100] Qutb, *Milestones*, 320, 355.
[101] 'Jihad.' Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1199?_hi=0&_pos=1 accessed July 15, 2018.
[102] Ibid., 81, 83.
[103] Ibid., 81.
[104] Qutb, *Milestones*, 232.
[105] Ibid., 85.
[106] Michael G. Knapp, "The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam," *Parameters* 33 (2003): 83.

It is important to note some caveats to jihad that help explain the jihadi-Salafi preoccupation with fighting the *tawaghit* and their obsession with denouncing others as being *kuffar*. The first important note to jihad is that it can only be waged if it has been directed by a legitimate ruler.[107] In the case of the jihadi-Salafists this would mean that no jihad could be waged, as there are - in their perception - no legitimate Muslim rulers. Hence, radical Islamic groups derive their legitimacy for waging jihad from the argumentation that the Western invasion into Islamic territory and the consolidation of power by the *tawaghit* have created an emergency situation in which Muslims cannot wait for authorization other than the authorization given directly by Allah.[108] Through this reasoning, the jihadi-Salafist factions frame their jihad as being a direct command from Allah. This claim acts as an alternative justification until the *tawaghit* have been defeated, and a legitimate Muslims leader has taken power. Nonetheless, basing their jihad on the direct will of Allah adds a compelling religious-cultural aspect to the jihad of the jihadi-Salafists.

Secondly, jihad can only be waged against non-Muslims, for shari'a denounces all warfare or division among Muslims.[109] This explains why jihadi-Salafists are exceptionally preoccupied with denouncing those who do not adhere to their specific interpretation of Islam as *kuffar*, for only then may they be fought.[110] After all, declaring *takfir* on someone entails that the individual is no longer considered to be a Muslim. This also explicates why jihadi-Salafists argue that *takfir* can be declared by anyone, and not only by Allah.

Lastly, jihad is defensive and is, therefore, only justified against *kuffar* that have initiated aggression against the umma or Islam.[111] Multiple opinions have been given regarding why jihad should not be defensive, or why jihad is not defensive at all. The most eloquent argument comes from Naji, who states that defensive jihad does not begin when the *kuffar* aggress the umma. Instead, when the *kuffar* are left alone, they will be able to become a stable force, thereby becoming a force that can threaten the umma. As a result, destroying the stability of the *kuffar* is the most effective way for defensive jihad.[112]

Hijra

A crucial concept that is often related to jihad by radical Islamists is *hijra*. This concept - often translated as emigration - concerns the flight of the Prophet Muhammad in 622 from

[107] Knapp, "The Concept and Practice of Jihad," 86.
[108] Ibid., 87, 88, 89.
[109] Ibid., 84.
[110] Ibid., 84.
[111] Ibid., 85.
[112] Naji, *The Management of Savagery*, 108.

Mecca to Medina where people were more welcoming to his prophecy. Hence, *hijra* concerns the flight from *dar al-harb* - the land of *Jahiliyya* - to *dar al-Islam* - the land of shari'a.[113] From the historical example of the Prophet, those who undertake *hijra* are promised victory. After all, Muhammad eventually returned to Mecca, converting the citizens to Islam.[114]

In radical Islam, *hijra* has become a recruitment call and is, therefore, one of the first steps for undertaking jihad.[115] This radical interpretation is founded on Qutb's interpretation of *hijra*. Qutb associated *hijra* with a condemnation of the society from which one retreated, for it had become part of *jahiliyya*.[116] After making *hijra*, Qutb argued, Muslims are permitted to wage jihad against the *jahili* society, for they had been aggressed by *jahili* influences.[117]

The Radical Islamic Discourse of the Islamic State

Radical Islamic organizations are groups of Muslims who advocate the use of jihad in the radical sense advocated by authors such as Sayyid Qutb. For this research, one branch of radical Islam is particularly important: jihadi-Salafism. The latter entails a radical movement in Islam that advocates a return to the example of the Prophet - mainly regarding the principle of *tawhid*. To establish this return, jihadi-Salafists advocate the use of jihad against the *kuffar* and the *tawaghit*, which should eventually result in the establishment of a caliphate, in which Muslims could live in full accordance to the example of the Prophet.

The caliphate of the Islamic State was founded on a plan proposed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who envisioned the protection of Islam against foreign influences only possible when the religion was restored within a single caliphate.[118] Inspired by Islamic thinkers such as Qutb, al-Zarqawi adopted a jihadi-Salafist doctrine and combined it with an advocacy for the practice of *takfir*, thereby branding those who do not agree with the Salafi ideal as infidels, and worthy of death.[119] Further inspired by Qutb, the Islamic State has identified

[113] John O. Voll, "The Mahdi's Concept and Use of 'Hijrah'," *Islamic Studies* 26 (1987): 38; Matan Uberman and Shaul Shay, "Hijrah According to the Islamic State: An Analysis of Dabiq," *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 8 (2016): 16.
[114] Voll, "The Mahdi's Concept," 35.
[115] Ibid., 39.
[116] Ibid., 39.
[117] Qutb, *Milestones*, 354.
[118] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Return of Khilafah," 35.
[119] L. C. Robinson, "Just Terror: The Islamic State's Use of Strategic "Framing" to Recruit and Motivate," *Orbis* 61 (2017): 173.

itself as a vanguard of Islam, claiming that it fights to defend Islam for all Muslims everywhere.[120]

In support for its *takfiri* principles and its role in defending Islam, the Islamic State has adopted the argument of Naji on defensive jihad, which entailed that destroying the stability of the *kuffar* is the most effective way of defensive jihad. The argument of Naji explains why the Islamic State not only wages jihad against the near enemy - the *tawaghit* - but also against the far enemy, being the *kufri* regimes of the West.

As part of its jihad against the West, the Islamic State has adopted the concept of *hijra*, propagating that '*hijra* does not cease as long as there is jihad.'[121]. However, *hijra* in the discourse of the Islamic State carries a more specific meaning. The Islamic State asserts that emigrating towards *dar al-Islam* is not sufficient enough anymore, for even in these territories Muslims are persecuted for their religion. Hence, the Islamic State calls for *hijra* from both *dar al-harb* as well as d*ar al-Islam* towards a new Islamic safe haven - the caliphate.[122]

The promise of victory confined in *hijra* remains a crucial aspect of the Islamic State's conception of *hijra*. Not only because it encourages potential recruits to join the Islamic State, but furthermore because the worldview of the Islamic State is founded on a millenarian expectation. Millennialism, or millenarianism, is the belief in a future where life on earth will be fundamentally transformed, which will usher into a new, more just world.[123] The Islamic State bases its millenarian narrative on an interpretation of a hadith about the *malahim al-kubra* (great battles). Originally, the hadith concerns the final conflict between the Muslims and the armies of the Byzantine Empire. The Islamic State, however, interprets the latter as being the crusaders. In the view of the Islamic State, then, the hadith signifies the final battles between the Muslims and the crusaders. According to the hadith, during the battles Jesus would return to earth to lead the Muslims to victory. Hereafter, the Mahdi, the savior figure in Islam, would appear to rule over a just kingdom on earth until Judgement Day and the end of the world.[124] After the *malahim al-kubra*, the Muslims would reign victorious over their enemies, after which the Muslim armies would conquer *Rûm*. In Arabic, the term *Rûm* has multiple definitions and can, therefore, be translated in different ways. The most basic definition translates the term as the city of Rome. A broader definition entails the Byzantine

[120] Al-Adnani, "This is the Promise of Allah," 14; Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, "March Forth Whether Light or Heavy," 3, 5, 10. Retrieved from: https://yolandaelvira.wordpress.com/2015/05/15/march-forth-whether-light-or-heavy/ accessed April 14, 2018.
[121] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Return of Khilafah," 36.
[122] Uberman, "Hijrah According to the Islamic State," 17.
[123] David Nathaniel Petit, "Eschatology in the ISIS Narrative," Master's Dissertation for the Master of Arts and the Master of Global Policy Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Texas (2015).
[124] Ibid., 10.

Empire concerning the majority of territories in and around the Mediterranean Sea. According to a more radical interpretation, Rome connotes the heritage of the Byzantine Empire - the entire modern Western world.[125] It is this radical interpretation that the Islamic State appears to utilize, as will be explained in Chapter IV.

The Historical and Ideological Foundations of the Islamic State

In the last two chapters, I have sketched the historical rise of the Islamic State and the radical Islamic discourse to which it adheres. The central discursive element in both chapters was the conviction of radical Islamic organizations that Islam is under attack from *jahili* influences. The Islamic State experienced one such example during the Iraq War of 2003 when US forces invaded Iraq.

As explained in this chapter, the influx of *jahili* influences into Islam threatens several crucial elements of Islam, especially the centrality of *tawhid* and the possibility to live in accordance with shari'a. To cleanse Islam from this pollution, the Islamic State has founded a caliphate, in which Islamic values are to be protected from foreign influences. In addition, the Islamic State has commenced a terrorist campaign against its enemies.

To support both its political mission of establishing a caliphate as well as its military mission of expulsing the foreign invaders from the Muslims lands, the Islamic State has launched an elaborate propaganda network in which it disseminates its politico-military discourse. The magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are the most elaborate propaganda outlets of the Islamic State. Before analyzing these magazines on their use of crusading rhetoric, it is crucial to understand how the crusades have come to form such compelling rhetorical tools. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

[125] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Return of Khilafah," 4, 5.

Chapter III: Muslim Views on the Crusades

As noted in the introduction, the crusades are compelling rhetorical tools for anti-Western Muslim activists in the Middle East. In this chapter, the rhetorical utility of the crusades will be discussed - answering how the crusades were experienced by the medieval Muslims, and exploring which aspects of the crusades continue to be utilized, in particular in the radical Islamic discourse. Throughout the discussion, the focus will lie on the Muslim view of the crusades. Finally, the crusades will be related to the process of framing so as to emphasize their rhetorical utility for modern-day radical Islamic organizations.

The Historiography of the Crusades

Current understandings of the crusades rest on the 'Big Bang'-theory, which asserts that a religious mass movement, caused by Pope Urban II in a sermon at Clermont in 1095, brought the crusades into being. From this mass movement, the theory states, all crusading institutions and crusading campaigns were created - subjecting the Muslim lands in the eastern Mediterranean to an unprecedented full-scale invasion.[126] The 'Big Bang'-theory fails to acknowledge pre-existing elements that provide support for the argument that the crusades developed in a piecemeal fashion. One crucial element is the existence of Muslim accounts on the crusades, which have long been ignored by Western scholars despite their potential academic merit.[127] An example of such an account comes from the medieval Muslim author Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami, who wrote *Kitab al-Jihad* in 1105, six years after the crusader conquest of Jerusalem. Al-Sulami's work has achieved canonical status in the Islamic historiographical tradition on the crusades and provides compelling insights into the Muslim perspective on the crusades. These views will be incorporated and elaborated on below. However, a brief history of the crusades will be provided first.

The Crusades

In 1095, Pope Urban II held a sermon at Clermont, in which he addressed the situation in Jerusalem and called upon Christians to set out and liberate the city from Muslim oppression, thereby mobilizing the First crusade. The real motivations of the Pope remain unclear. Some argue that the First crusade was, in fact, part of a broader movement to liberate Christians throughout the Mediterranean from aggression and oppression - a struggle commenced by

[126] Paul E. Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades: A New Synthesis," *History* (2008): 183.
[127] Ibid., 182.

Urban II's predecessor, Pope Gregory VII.[128] Others, however, argue that the crusade provided Urban II with an opportunity to gain recognition for the papacy's authority over temporal rulers.[129]

Whichever motivation applied, the promise of the remission of one's sins, the allure of war booty, and participation in the possible liberation of the holy city in the name of God were sufficient to motivate many Christians to join. In 1097, the crusaders had reached Constantinople, embarking on the journey through Anatolia towards Jerusalem. The First crusade was considerably successful in reclaiming the Christian lands. Edessa and Antioch were conquered in 1098, Jerusalem followed in 1099, and Tripoli was the last victory of the First crusade in 1109.

Due to the political disunity that had plagued the Muslims lands since the tenth century, no well-organized Muslim response against the Christian invaders occurred.[130] Most Muslim lords made truces with the crusader armies, in the hope that the latter would pass them by.[131] The first considerable steps towards Muslim recovery may be found in 1144 when Muslim armies, led by Imad al-Din Zengi, reclaimed the city of Edessa. Zengi's triumph, however, was short-lived, for he was assassinated in 1146. The Muslim recovery, however, did not wane. The campaign was continued by Zengi's son, Nur al-Din, who combined strong politics with religious propaganda so as to unify the Muslim lands in an attempt to encircle the crusader territories. After Nur al-Din's death in 1174, his lieutenant, Saladin continued the unification of Muslims lands so as to create a unified front against the crusaders. This tactic culminated in the reclamation of Jerusalem in 1187. In doing so, Saladin achieved heroic status in both Western as well as Muslim accounts of the crusades.

It took another century before the Muslims would completely conquer all lost territories. The Mamluk sultan Baybars mobilized the final counter-crusading campaign in 1250. The crusaders, structurally and military weakened, were unable to defend their crusader states against the Muslim resurgence.[132] The crusader city of Antioch was lost to the Muslims in 1268, and in 1289 followed Tripoli. The counter-crusade culminated in the fall of Acre, after which the crusaders were forced to abandon their territorial possessions - restoring the eastern Mediterranean under Muslim rule.

[128] Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 191.
[129] Esposito, *Religion and Globalization*, 232.
[130] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 18, 19.
[131] Ibid., 21.
[132] Ibid., 29.

Muslim Views of the Crusades

A number of contemporary Muslim sources on the crusades have survived. The earliest accounts come from the Damascene jurist Alib bin Tahir al-Sulami and the chroniclers Ibn al-Qalanisi and al-Azhimi. Other important, and more complete, accounts were written in the thirteenth century by authors such as Ibn al-Athir and Ibn al-Adim. What is interesting in all these accounts is that the authors skim over the military aspects of the crusades, instead focusing on events through a religious prism based on God's will.[133]

In the first accounts, the crusaders are confused with inhabitants of the Byzantine Empire through which the crusaders traveled to reach the Middle East. Al-Sulami was the first to make a distinction between the Byzantines and the crusaders by calling the latter *al-Ifranj* or *al-Firanj*.[134] These two terms referred to the Franks, the inhabitants of the Carolingian Empire and, more generally, to the inhabitants of West-Europe. In his book *Kitab al-Jihad*, al-Sulami provided a legal treatise for waging jihad against the Franks as well as an overview on the crusades in general. He envisioned the crusades as a continuation of the conquests of Toledo in Andalusia by the Christians in 1085 and Sicily in 1091. Hence, according to al-Sulami, the crusades were part of a wider Christian-led war against Islam in the Mediterranean.[135]

This view was elevated to canonical status by Ibn al-Athir in his book *al-Kamil fi al-Ta'rikh*, in which al-Athir established a direct connection between the Christian conquests of Muslim lands in Andalusia, Sicily, and North Africa and the Frankish invasion of the eastern Mediterranean.[136] The works of al-Sulami and al-Athir became essential in contemporary Islamic historiography and formed the foundation of most contemporary Muslim accounts.[137] This development helped fossilize the idea in Islamic historiography that the crusades were part of a general movement against Islam, mobilized and undertaken by the Christian states of West-Europe.[138]

The practicalities of this supposed movement against Islam is most explicitly recorded in the works of the chroniclers al-Qalanisi and al-Azhimi, who recorded the fall of Antioch and the conquest of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man in1098. The latter is not of substantial importance in Christian accounts of the crusades. For Muslims, however, this battle is of crucial importance,

[133] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 32.
[134] Ibid., 31, 72. As stated before, the term 'Crusader(s)' is not used in contemporary Muslim accounts. Instead, they were consistently referred to as Franks. The Arab term for Crusaders (*al-Salibiyyun*) was not used until the nineteenth and twentieth century, and refers to 'those who take up arms in the service of the Cross.'
[135] Ibid., 72; Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 184.
[136] Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 185, 186.
[137] Ibid., 187.
[138] Ibid., 188, 189.

especially in modern readings of crusading history. Namely, the Frankish conquest of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man symbolizes the apex of the crusading credo: the holy lands had to be liberated from the infidels, the latter being considered inconvertible - essentially meaning that the quickest way to liberate the holy lands was by killing all non-Christian occupiers. Certainly, the battle of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man was one of incredible carnage. The Franks not only destroyed the city, but also tortured and killed a significant number of citizens before confiscating their possessions.[139] This already gruesome view was further exacerbated during the conquest of Jerusalem during which the Franks killed Muslims, including men of holy status such as Imams and Islamic scholars.[140] Many Muslims fled from the carnage as reported by al-Qalanisi. In safer places, such as areas that had constituted truces with the crusaders, Muslim authors reported on the new political rulers of the eastern Mediterranean.

Racial Stereotypes in Muslim Works

In the pre-crusading era, the Muslims already had an idea of what the Franks looked like. These stereotypical views were based on the writings of the Greco-Roman scholar Claudius Ptolemy, whose work had reached the Middle East through the works of the tenth-century Muslim scholar al-Khwarazmi.[141] According to the Ptolemean view, the Franks were prone to savagery and continuously pursued warfare and conflict. This made them courageous, well-organized, and adapt in fighting, but also treacherous, filthy, and rude.[142] Above all, they lacked clear religious solidarity and basic intelligence.[143]

Once the Franks had invaded the Muslim lands, the inhabitants of the latter were provided a close encounter with the barbarians from the West. The crusades, unsurprisingly, did not change the stereotypes the Muslims had had of the Franks. If anything, the crusades only helped to affirm the stereotypical views.[144]

The Frankish invaders were considered to be polluters of Muslim sacred space, for many of such spaces were reshaped to fit the Christian faith.[145] One notable element of such changes was the erection of the cross above the cities and holy places the crusaders had conquered, as reported by al-Qalanisi.[146] Ironically, the cross, too, was seen as something vulgar for the Muslims, for the Arab term for cross (*salib*) also means plunder - a

[139] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 63.
[140] Ibid., 63, 64.
[141] Ibid., 269.
[142] Ibid., 270.
[143] Ibid., 271.
[144] Ibid., 321, 322.
[145] Ibid., 288.
[146] Ibid., 364.

quintessential Frankish characteristic according to the Muslims. For this reason, the Franks were compared to pigs, dogs, devils, and other impure beasts. They were above all labeled as *kuffar*, for they practiced *shirk* regarding worshipping the cross.[147]

Nonetheless, there exist accounts that explicitly praise some crusaders. Some crusaders were applauded by Muslim authors when they had shown to be an outlier of the stereotypical view about the Franks. For example, Baldwin the Little was praised for his wise and sound judgment - establishing himself as a remarkably intelligent ruler.[148] Others, such as Frederich II and his son, Manfred II, were considerably acclaimed for their interest in Islam and the friendly contacts with the Egyptian Muslims they had established.[149] St. Louis also received several honorable mentions, for he had shown himself to be a highly devout Christian[150] - doing away with the stereotype that the Franks held no religious solidarity. Nonetheless, the Muslims were relatively negative - or at least, indifferent - about most crusaders and went to some extent to eloquently express their opinions. One extreme example concerns Conrad of Montferrat, who was considered to be 'the epitome of the wily tyrant, [...] It was for him [...] that the Inferno was created.'[151]

Notwithstanding some differences in opinion on the crusaders, on one thing the Muslim authors agreed: the invaders had been very successful in their campaign to reclaim their holy lands. As al-Athir put eloquently: 'The sultans disagreed [...] and the Franks seized the lands.'[152] It was now up to the Muslims to consider their options for reclaiming their lands.

Jihad

Looking to cleanse their sacred places from profane influences and to gain retribution for the crude displays of violence the Muslims had suffered, contemporary Muslim authors eagerly searched for a solution that would unify all Muslims in a united front against the crusaders. Inspired by the Quran, Muslim authors and political leaders adopted the concept of jihad, which was to form the core element of the counter-crusade movement.

Since the first successes of the crusades, contemporary Muslim authors had explained these successes by asserting that the Muslims had lost the spirit of jihad,[153] which was perhaps a religious explanation stemming from the political disunity that was widespread among the

[147] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 303.
[148] Ibid., 336.
[149] Ibid., 339, 340.
[150] Ibid., 336.
[151] Ibid., 344.
[152] Ibid., 83.
[153] Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 58.

Muslims in that time. One of the first to call for a revitalization for jihad was al-Sulami, who emphasized that jihad was a responsibility for every able-bodied Muslim, especially in times when Islam was under attack.[154] Al-Sulami even went so far as to assert that the defeat of the Muslims was a punishment from Allah for abandoningg religious duties and neglecting jihad.[155] Alongside al-Sulami, other isolated calls were made for the restoration of the spirit of jihad, but these found a scarce audience due to the continuing political disunity that afflicted the Muslim lands.[156] It was not until Imad al-Din Zengi that the revitalization of jihad would commence.[157]

Called 'the leader of jihad,' Zengi commenced a propaganda campaign that was to usher Muslims to wage jihad against the invaders under the promise of Paradise.[158] This campaign was successful in forging ties between the religious and military sphere, which provided possibilities for an intensification of the revitalization of jihad and the restoration of the Muslim lands.[159] Zengi's son, Nur al-Din, adopted this campaign and contributed to it by making the liberation of Jerusalem a focal point for jihad.[160] The conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin only confirmed the idea that jihad was the right path in expelling the crusaders, turning Nur al-Din and Saladin into exemplars of jihad.[161]

Under the leadership of the Mamluk sultan Baybars in the mid-thirteenth century, the Muslim recovery movement received another propaganda campaign regarding jihad. During this campaign, founded on the ideas of the scholar Ibn Taymiyya, jihad was given a Salafist and rather radical dimension. Namely, Ibn Taymiyya saw how *dar al-Islam* was under attack from the outside. The solution, however, was to turn inward and first cleanse Islam itself from heretics and infidels, mainly referring to the Shi'ites and other non-Sunni Islamic groups.[162] The introspective jihad, according to Ibn Taymiyya, would not only return Islam to its pure form by ridding it from 'infidel contamination' but would concurrently renew individual spirituality and create a united Islamic society, which could not only expel the crusaders but could triumph over the entire world.[163]

[154] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 70.
[155] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 105.
[156] Ibid., 104, 108.
[157] Ibid., 103.
[158] Ibid., 110, 111.
[159] Ibid., 108.
[160] Ibid., 148, 164.
[161] Ibid., 174, 193.
[162] Ibid., 243; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 70.
[163] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 242; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 70.

Eventually, the crusaders were forced to leave the Muslim lands because of the successful jihad led by Baybars. This victory contributed to the status of Ibn Taymiyya's ideas on jihad, which would remain influential in the Middle East whenever it was threatened by external or internal enemies of Islam. In the twentieth century, Ibn Taymiyya's ideas were adopted by radical Islamic organizations, which utilized his ideas for their own cause. His ideas were transformed by radical Islamic organizations into tools for justifying radical interpretations of jihad.[164]

The 'Post-Crusade' Era

As noted before, the First crusade is arguably the most important one, for it is considered to be the most glorious crusade in the eyes of the West, and the most influential one for the Muslims due to its impact on Muslim life and Islam.[165] Another reason why the First crusade can be regarded as the most important one is the fact that crusades following the First crusade did not succeed in establishing new crusader states and only achieved marginal gains - if any.[166] The Muslim recovery commenced soon after the First crusade and the beginnings of the structural decline of the crusaders can be found in the same period. Tied up in a zero-sum game over the holy lands, the crusaders gradually lost territory. Notwithstanding the short-lived success during the Sixth crusade, the religious campaigns of the Christian West slowly fiddled out.

It is crucial to understand that there was no decisive end to the crusades. Even after the fall of Acre in 1291, no treaty or any agreement was reached between both sides - the crusaders taking their leave appeared to suffice for the Muslims. Yet, various offenses continued to be launched from both sides, which were often interpreted as acts that continued the crusades or revitalized the spirit of jihad.[167] It has, therefore, not been uncommon that past Western aggressions have been linked - and continue to be linked - to the medieval crusades.[168]

The first cogent Muslim account on the crusades that appeared after the Middle East had become subjected to Western colonialism came from the Egyptian scholar Sayyid Ali al-Hariri. In *Splendid Accounts in the crusading Wars,* al-Hariri presented a historical overview on the crusades based on medieval Islamic sources. Following the historical overview, al-

[164] Wagemakers, "Salafism," 4.
[165] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 83.
[166] Ibid., 83.
[167] Ibid., 589.
[168] Ibid., 592.

Hariri asserted a connection between the crusades and his own time by referring to a statement made by the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II. The latter claimed that political imperialism was a European-led crusade against the Ottoman Empire.[169] The statement of Abdulhamid II and the account of al-Hariri restored Muslim interest in the crusading era and were inherited by a new generation of Muslims who began studying the crusades through a prism of anti-imperialism - concluding that the crusades had indeed not ended.[170]

Sayyid Qutb, too, adopted such an interpretation regarding the crusades. Qutb linked colonialism to crusaderism by asserting that Western imperialism had been a mere cover for the crusades.[171] Qutb further emphasized his statement by stating that Islam had been suffering from 'savage hostility' perpetrated by the crusaders from the eleventh century until his time.[172]

The focal element of the accounts of al-Hariri, Qutb, and other Muslim authors was the idea - or the reality - of a continuing struggle between Christianity and Islam that had been going on since the pre-crusading era.[173] Nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism, in this view, was regarded as a form of retribution for the failure of the crusades. This idea was exacerbated by the alleged utterance of the British Imperial Governor Edmund Allenby, who, after conquering Jerusalem in World War I, stated that 'only now have the crusades come to an end.'[174] It is unsure whether this statement was ever actually uttered by Allenby, yet it signifies how the Muslims saw the specter of the crusades to be in every Western imperial act.

In the late twentieth century, al-Qaeda, too, adopted the view of a continuing conflict between Christianity and Islam, which they saw being enacted under the guise of imperialism and the foreign occupation of Muslim lands. In 1998, al-Qaeda released 'The World Islamic Front Statement of Jihad against Jews and crusaders' that mentioned a 'brutal crusader occupation of the [Arabian] Peninsula.'[175]

In facilitating a response to such illegitimate occupation of Muslim lands and the continuing crusade against Islam, Islamic scholars, politicians, and radical Islamic organizations considered the original Muslim response to the First crusade. The idea arose that the successful jihads, as led by the likes of Nur al-Din and Saladin, could be replicated

[169] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 592.
[170] Ibid., 595, 602; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 61.
[171] Qutb, *Milestones*, 177; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 74.
[172] Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 190.
[173] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 590; Knobler, "Holy Wars," 320.
[174] Ibid., 604.
[175] Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 181, 182.

against the modern crusades.[176] Thus, the jihadi campaigns of the medieval Muslims were transformed into guides for future action, thereby immersing radical Islamic organizations into a rhetorical frame based on the medieval crusades.

Crusading Rhetoric

The utility of the crusades as a rhetorical tool has been explored by the historian Adam Knobler. He argues that the crusades form such compelling rhetorical tools because the events form a portable symbolic memory that can be readily applied to existing political circumstances.[177] For the West, the crusades symbolically stand for justice, virtue, and piety. Hence, crusading rhetoric is used by the West to frame existing conflicts as having just causes.[178]

In the Muslim view, the crusading metaphor was inverted. Muslims used the crusading metaphor to indict current political circumstances directed against Muslims and Islam by foreign influences, thereby evoking negative elements by referring to a continuation of millennium-old hostile sentiments in the West. Thus, the crusades became a negative image of the past.[179]

Knobler asserts that both views have one element in common, namely that, through the use of crusading rhetoric, they create an unambiguous representation of good versus evil.[180] The importance of this symbolic representation cannot be overemphasized, for in this opposition lies the reason why the crusading metaphor forms such a compelling rhetorical tool for radical Islamic organizations. For further elaboration, it is imperative to refer back to the processes of framing and understand how crusading rhetoric finds a place in the frames of radical Islamic organizations.

As noted before, Benford and Snow define frames as schemata of interpretation that allow individuals to understand and interpret events within their lives and the world.[181] Frames can be constructed individually but are most often provided by some external group. In the case of this research, the frames are provided by the Islamic State - a radical Islamic terrorist organization. Terrorist organizations require a particular way of constructing their frames because they are confronted with the necessity to radicalize and mobilize their audience. The most effective frame for establishing this is a frame of opposition, which

[176] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 73.
[177] Knobler, "Holy Wars," 294.
[178] Ibid., 323, 324.
[179] Ibid., 294, 323.
[180] Ibid., 324.
[181] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Collective Action Groups," 614.

creates an 'us versus them' mindset among potential members.[182] Such a mindset inspires the latter to action. Hence, the crusades - with their unambiguous notions of good versus evil - prove to be the perfect tool for radical Islamic organizations on which to base their diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames.

Another crucial element of why crusading rhetoric is so compelling, is because of its cultural resonance to modern Muslims, for crusading is for many Muslims still a reality.[183] By using crusading rhetoric, radical Islamic organizations appeal to their audience on both a historical and religious level, making it more likely for their frames to be adopted by potential recruits.

Furthermore, crusading rhetoric is compelling to radical Islamic organizations, for it carries forth a historical example. Even though the crusades had no clear victor,[184] the jihadi campaigns of the medieval Muslims did prove to be hugely successful and, as stated before, could be carried out once again - possibly yielding the same degree of success as during the twelfth century. Through this conviction, radical Islamic organizations are able to construct a continuity between past and present. From this continuation, the radical Islamic organizations can propagate a historical mission, which, in the case of the Islamic State, entails the expulsion of all *jahili* influences from Islam and the Middle East. The means for achieving this goal have also been adopted from the medieval example: waging jihad for however long with however many casualties, thereby emulating the medieval Muslims who fought the crusaders for nearly two hundred years before being victorious.

Such a commitment may be considered radical, or even fanatical, but within the context of the crusades it is relatively easy to explain. When God is used for military purposes, victory becomes absolute, thus making the destruction of everything pagan logical and necessary. If one side were to win, peace would be perpetual, for the dead do not fight any longer.[185]

[182] Rogan, "Jihad Against Infidels and Democracy," 408.
[183] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 77.
[184] It could be argued that the Muslims were the final victors of the Crusades but this is downplayed by Muslims themselves, for they regard the Crusades as a period during which Islam was contaminated by foreign influences. In other words, even though the Muslims drove the invaders away, they had suffered immense losses in religious and social aspect. Another argument can be found in the widespread assumption that the Crusades never ended, therefore having no decided victor.
[185] Mastnak, *Crusading Peace*, 126, 127.

Chapter IV: The Crusades in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*

As explicated in the previous chapter, the crusades form compelling rhetorical tools for jihadi-Salafists, for the crusades are culturally resonant with the audiences of jihadi-Salafist propaganda. Furthermore, the crusades provide a means for creating an unambiguous 'us versus them' mindset among potential members. Given the utility of crusading rhetoric and its prevalence in Middle Eastern literature and politics, I will now analyze how the crusades are utilized within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

References to the Crusades

The importance of crusading rhetoric within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* becomes evident. In the 28 issues of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* - an approximate 1500 pages - 1291 references to the crusades or other elements of crusading rhetoric were found. This constitutes an approximate of 46 references per issue. The total number of references per issue varied starkly, ranging from as low as nine references in the second issue of *Dabiq* to as much as 119 references in the ninth issue of *Dabiq*. In Figure 1, the total number of references per issue is listed. From this figure, no particular trend can be discovered. There appears to be no steady increase or decrease over time, nor do the outliers - the second, ninth, and fifteenth issues of *Dabiq*, for example - show any hint in their titles that might constitute more or less use of crusading rhetoric. Quite the opposite is true, in fact, for the fourth issue of *Dabiq* titled 'The Failed Crusade' does not constitute itself as a considerable outlier, even though its title implies an increase in references to the crusades.

The total number of direct references to the crusades based on the terms 'crusade(s),' crusader(s),' and 'crusading' was 996. The total number of indirect references to the crusades based on the terms 'Rome,' 'Roman(s), 'Christian(s),' 'Christianity' and 'cross(es).' was 284. The number of multimodal references, consisting of images, was a total of 11. In Figure 2, the total number of references are listed.

The majority of references to the crusades contained a connection to one or more themes or concepts. These results have been included in Figure 2. Of the total number of references - both direct and indirect - a connection was found to one or more themes or concepts in 990 cases. The most prevalent connected concepts were *takfir* and *kufr*, respectively 274 and 217 times.

Issue	Title	Total number of references	Date of Publication
Dabiq 1	*The Return of Khilafah*	16	5 July 2014
Dabiq 2	*The Flood*	9	27 July 2014
Dabiq 3	*A Call to Hijrah*	15	10 September 2014
Dabiq 4	*The Failed Crusade*	72	11 October 2014
Dabiq 5	*Remaining and Expanding*	23	21 November 2014
Dabiq 6	*Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan*	17	29 December 2014
Dabiq 7	*From Hypocrisy to Apostasy*	67	12 February 2015
Dabiq 8	*Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa*	31	30 March 2015
Dabiq 9	*They Plot and Allah Plots*	119	21 May 2015
Dabiq 10	*The Law of Allah and the Law of Men*	72	13 July 2015
Dabiq 11	*From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions*	87	9 September 2015
Dabiq 12	*Just Terror*	91	18 November 2015
Dabiq 13	*The Rafidah*	42	19 January 2016
Dabiq 14	*The Murtadd Brotherhood*	54	13 April 2016
Dabiq 15	*Break the Cross*	105	31 July 2016
Rumiyah 1	*Stand and Die*	22	5 September 2016
Rumiyah 2	*A Message From East Africa*	51	4 October 2016
Rumiyah 3	*The Weakest House is That of A Spider*	43	11 November 2016
Rumiyah 4	*Hijrah Does Not Cease as Long as the Kuffar Are Fought*	25	7 December 2016
Rumiyah 5	*The Syrian Sahwat*	31	6 January 2017
Rumiyah 6	*We Fear That A Calamity May Strike Us*	22	4 February 2017
Rumiyah 7	*Establishing the Islamic State*	15	7 March 2017
Rumiyah 8	*Among the Believers Are Men*	21	4 April 2017
Rumiyah 9	*The Ruling on the Belligerent Christians*	63	4 May 2017
Rumiyah 10	*The Jihad in East Asia*	61	17 June 2017
Rumiyah 11	*The Ruling on Ghanimah, Fay, and Ihtitab*	37	13 July 2017
Rumiyah 12	*It Will Be A Fire That Burns*	35	6 August 2017
Rumiyah 13	*Allah Cast Terror Into Their Hearts*	45	9 September 2017

Figure 1 *Total number of references to the Crusades in each issue of Dabiq and Rumiyah.*

	Type of reference			Connection		Act of Othering or self-accreditation			
	Direct	Indirect	Image	Yes	No	Self	Othering	Both	None
Total number of references per category	996	284	11	990	301	80	535	234	442
Total number of references	1291			1291		1291			

Figure 2 *Total number of direct and indirect references, including the total numbers of references that have a connection to concepts or themes; and their role in acts of Othering and self-accreditation.*

An example of a connection between a reference to the crusades and the term *kufr* can be found in the second issue of *Dabiq*, in which the 'crusaders' are labeled as supporters of *kufr* and the apostate Muslims.[186] The most prevalent connected theme was 'Western

[186] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Flood," *Dabiq*, (2014): 30.

Malevolence' with a total number of 176 times. An example of this theme is found in the first issue of *Dabiq*, in which the media of the 'crusaders' is accused of deceiving its audiences by spreading falsehoods.[187] In Figure 3.1 and 3.2, all concepts and themes, including their definitions, are listed with their respective number of appearances. In 301 cases, no connection was found to other concepts or themes. A case in point of such an unconnected reference can be found in the fourth issue of *Dabiq*, in which an article simply addresses the European and American states as being 'crusaders.'[188] In many of the cases in which no connection was found, it concerned a mere nomenclature of the enemies of the Islamic State.

Concept	Number of Occurences	Definition
Bay'a	12	*Irrevocable pledge of allegiance.*
Hijra	28	*Migration from Dar al-Harb to Dar al-Islam.*
Hudud	1	*Punishments fixed in the Quran related to crimes of theft, adultery, false accusation, drinking intoxicants, apostasy, and robbery.*
Irja	19	*Postponement of judgement or punishment.*
Jahiliyya	9	*The period in Arabia before Islam. Pre-Islamic ignorance.*
Jihad	91	*To struggle in the name of Islam.*
Kufr	217	*Unbelief.*
Malahim	17	*The great apocalyptic battles between the Crusaders and the Muslims.*
Martyrdom	19	*Sacrifice in the name of Islam after which one acquires glory in Paradise.*
Milla of Ibrahim	4	*The path of Ibrahim - the religion of Islam.*
Mubahala	4	*Curse of God that reveals who tells the truth.*
Salaf	8	*The first three generations of Islam.*
Shaytan	4	*Satan.*
Shirk	86	*Polytheism; the breaking of tawhid.*
Taghut	124	*A Muslim leader who does not rule according to the full extent of Shari'a.*
Takfir	274	*Declaring someone an apostate.*
Taqlid	1	*Blind imitation.*
Tawhid	23	*Divine Unity.*

Figure 3.1 *Concepts related to crusading rhetoric within Dabiq and Rumiyah.*

The use of crusading rhetoric was often combined with an act of Othering or accrediting oneself. Referring to Figure 3.2, themes such as 'Western Malevolence,' 'Victory for Islam,' or 'Middle Eastern Malevolence,' carry strong connotations of Othering or self-accreditation. Moreover, the latter two can coincide. Hence, the total number of acts of Othering and self-accreditation were counted and organized under the headings 'Self,' 'Other,' 'Both,' and 'None.' The first concerns references that exclusively accredit the Islamic State and its message or its ongoing military campaign. 'Other' is used for references that exclusively vilify or discredit the enemies of the Islamic State. The term 'Both' is used for references that include both acts of Othering as well as acts of self-accreditation. 'None' is used when neither act can be

[187] Idem, "The Return of Khilafah," 37.
[188] Idem, "The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq* 4 (2014): 7.

discerned. In total, this analysis yielded 80 acts of exclusive self-accreditation, 535 acts of Othering, and 234 cases in which both acts happen simultaneously. In 442 cases no action could be discerned. These results have also been included in Figure 2.

Theme	Number of Occurences	Definition
Apocalypse and Prophecy	74	*References to the end of time, 'The Hour,' or a belief that the end of the world is nigh.*
Christianity	144	*Monotheistic religion based on the Divine Manifestation of the birth of Jesus Christ.*
Clash of Civilizations	77	*The belief that Islam and the West are separate and irreconcilable civilizations that are engaged in a conflict with each other.*
Continuing Crusade	23	*The belief that the medieval Crusades never ended but continued under the guise of colonialism, imperialism, and interventionism.*
Cross	70	*The symbol of Christianity.*
Defending Islam	15	*The claim that the Islamic State defends Islam from jahili influences.*
Delivering Justice	13	*The claim that the Islamic State is delivering justice on a local and global scale through acts of retribution.*
Expansion of Islam and Shari'ah	55	*Implementing Shari'ah in conquered territories.*
Global Conquest	12	*The expansion of Islam on a global scale.*
God's Will	71	*The claim that the Islamic State is carrying out the will of Allah; appeals for Allah to grant success to the Islamic State.*
Jews and Zionism	82	*The belief that the Jews are plotting to usurp the Middle East.*
Legitimacy	9	*The claims and actions of the Islamic State are legitimate and supported by the Quran and the Sunna.*
Middle Eastern Malevolence	52	*The enemies of the Islamic State in the Middle East behave in generally malevolent manners against the Muslims.*
Obedience to God	21	*Claim that the Islamic State is obeying Allah, thereby commanding that Muslims obey Allah by obeying the Islamic State.*
Occupation of Muslim Lands	62	*The invasion or occupation of Muslims lands by non-Muslims or tawaghit.*
Rome	85	*Rome; also interpretable as the Byzantine Empire, or the entire Western world.*
Salahuddin	1	*Saladin, the Kurdish leader who defeated the Crusaders and conquered Jerusalem.*
Superiority of Islam, God, Quran	23	*The superiority of Islam, Allah, and the Quran over other religions, gods, individuals, and groups.*
Terror and Violence	68	*The encouragement of the use of violence and terror against the enemies of the Islamic State.*
Treachery	35	*The claim that apostate Muslims have betrayed Islam. Also called hypocrisy.*
True Islam	92	*The claim that the verson of Islam that the Islamic State adheres to is the true version of Islam.*
Ummah	80	*The claim that the ummah is being attacked by the enemies of Islam, and that the Islamic State acts on behalf of the ummah.*
Victory for Islam	60	*The claim that every victory the Islamic State achieves is in the name of Islam; the expectation that Islam will reign victorious.*
Western Citizens as Crusaders	47	*The portrayal of Western citizens as willingly collaborating with their governments.*
Western Cowardness	11	*The claim that the West is afraid of the Islamic State.*
Western Malevolence	176	*Western countries are acting in generally malevolent manners against the Muslims.*

Figure 3.2 *Themes related to crusading rhetoric within Dabiq and Rumiyah.*

An important caveat must be explained regarding the category in which no acts of Othering or self-accreditation were discerned. The terms 'crusader(s),' 'crusade(s),' and 'crusading' carry certain implications with them. However, these implications have not been considered to be an act of Othering. Only the references which had a clear connection to negative elements have been considered to be an act of Othering. Nonetheless, every single direct reference to the crusades can be considered as an act of Othering, purely because of the negative connotations that the term 'crusader(s),' 'crusade(s),' and 'crusading' carry.

This general overview has shown how prevalent the use of crusading rhetoric is in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. It has little in-depth analytical purpose but mainly functions to provide some expectations for the following analysis. For example, from this general overview, it can be expected that the Islamic State mainly refers to the crusaders in a direct manner and loads the term with negative aspects through the act of Othering.

The Crusades in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*

References linked to the use of crusading rhetoric are scattered throughout all issues, and the Islamic State seems to expect from its audiences to understand what is meant by the crusades. There appears to be an existing discourse of crusading rhetoric on which the Islamic State continues - adding its own radical interpretations so as to shape the discourse to fit its needs. Fortunately, for those not familiar with crusading rhetoric, the Islamic State explicates what it means by this metaphor in several articles. I will focus on these articles in a case-specific approach so as to present a structured and cogent analysis. The selected articles provide an opportunity to look into the mind of the Islamic State, allowing the reader to understand how the Islamic State views the world through a lens of an ongoing crusade against Islam.

I will add to the case-studies some general remarks, which are related to three organizing elements that form the foundation of the worldview of the Islamic State. These remarks stem from other articles found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* that are not part of the case studies. The selected elements concern the themes 'Clash of Civilizations'[189] and 'Victory for Islam,' and the concept of jihad. The term 'Clash of Civilizations' constitutes the foundation of the diagnostic frame of the Islamic State's discourse. In this 'Clash of Civilizations,' jihad shapes the prognostic frame, while the idea of a 'Victory for Islam' forms the essence of the

[189] This term was coined by the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington and constitutes the idea that Islam and the West would partake in a clash of cultures - the so-called 'Clash of Civilizations.' The term has been adopted here to symbolize the incompatibility and hostility between Islam and non-Islamic ideas as propagated by the Islamic State. In addition, the Islamic State, too, portrays the current struggle as a 'Clash of Civilizations' although they do not refer to Huntington.

motivational frame. An in-depth explanation of the importance of these elements within the worldview of the Islamic State will be given in their respective sections below.

This analysis is structured taking the organizing elements as guiding principles. First, the theme 'Clash of Civilizations' will be explained by discussing the worldview of the Islamic State as presented in the first issue of *Dabiq*. Thereafter, the concept of jihad will be discussed. The theme 'Victory for Islam' will be explored lastly. Throughout this chapter, the organizing elements will be supported by several case studies that showcase how the Islamic State utilizes crusading rhetoric.

Clash of Civilizations

In the first issue of *Dabiq*, the worldview of the Islamic Stateis introduced by its caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. From this excerpt, it becomes clear that the Islamic State separates the world into two different camps with no third camp or middle ground present. In the words of al-Baghdadi:

> "O Umma of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr and hypocrisy - the camp of the Muslims and the mujahideen everywhere, and the camp of the Jews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the Jews."[190]
>
> Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

The main discourse of the Islamic State envisions the current geopolitical situation as being a conflict between the Islamic State and those who adopt the former's view of Islam against literally everybody else. From this worldview, it becomes evident that the Islamic State envisions a world in which a clash of civilizations is ongoing. Because it shapes the very foundation on which the Islamic State bases its worldview, the theme 'Clash of Civilizations' forms the overarching element of all other themes and concepts. In *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, 'Clash of Civilizations' is referred to within the use of crusading rhetoric a total of 77 times and is thereby not a remarkable outlier. The theme, however, recurs in nearly every issue of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

[190] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Return of Khilafah," 10.

It is relatively easy to determine how the theme 'Clash of Civilizations' is used within the context of crusading rhetoric. After all, the crusaders are one of the enemies of Islam within the geopolitical divide that the Islamic State propagates. Furthermore, the connection between the idea of a 'Clash of Civilizations' and crusading rhetoric rests on the assertion that the enemies of Islam are enacting a crusade against the Islamic State.[191] Hence, the theme 'Clash of Civilization' is utilized within the use of crusading rhetoric to signify the very crusade itself - an ongoing conflict between Islam and its enemies. The geopolitical divide, therefore, is essentially a continuation of the medieval crusades and the eras of colonialism, imperialism, and the Cold War.

The aspect of continuation that characterizes the current crusade is made in the fourth issue of *Dabiq*, in which the Islamic State emphasizes the historical nature of the conflict. It asserts that, since the time of Muhammad, the Muslims have continuously waged jihad against the 'cross-worshipping Romans,' who are considered to be crusaders.[192] The Islamic State then asserts that this enmity between the crusaders and the Muslims will persist until the crusaders are defeated.[193]

The aspect of continuation can be further inferred from the following statement by spokesperson al-Adnani, who claimed that:

> "[...] we promise you by Allah's permission that this campaign will be your final campaign. It will be broken and defeated, just as all your previous campaigns were broken and defeated, except that this time we will raid you thereafter, and you will never raid us."[194]
>
> Abu Muhammad al-Adnani

In this statement, al-Adnani links the current crusade to its historical predecessors. The Islamic State interprets history to construct a continuity between past and present contexts, which is used to carry over past experiences of the medieval crusades.[195] These past experiences rest on the outcome of the medieval crusades, which are addressed in the

[191] Idem, "The Failed Crusade," 44.
[192] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Failed Crusade," 32.
[193] Ibid., 32.
[194] Ibid., 37.
[195] This statement is essential for this thesis but is not discussed in-depth here. The next chapter will elaborate on this statement and also include additional similar occasions that are discussed in this chapter so as to provide a coherent and structured overview of how the Islamic State utilizes history and framing.

statement: the Islamic State perceives the outcome of the medieval crusades to be a victory for Islam, for they had been broken and defeated.

Through the theme 'Clash of Civilizations,' the Islamic State is able to construct a clear diagnostic frame, which propagates the idea of an ongoing international crusade against Islam. For a more detailed description of the diagnostic frame of the Islamic State it is helpful to look at the first case study of this analysis.

Case 1: 'Why We Hate You and Why We Fight You'

This article from the fifteenth issue of *Dabiq* lists the reasons why the Islamic State - and allegedly, Islam in general - hates the West. Written somewhere between the 13th of June and the 31st of July in 2016, the article addresses the Orlando nightclub shooting of June 12, 2016. After hailing the perpetrator of the attack as a martyr, the Islamic State quickly shifts its attention to the reactions of the West on the attack, which was considered to be a terrorist attack based on hate and senseless violence. The Islamic State partially agrees, affirming that it was a terrorist attack and that it was an act of hate. However, according to the Islamic State, the attack was not senseless, for it was an act of revenge for the senseless crimes of hate and terror that the West have conducted against Islam.[196] Thereafter, the Islamic State asserts that its enemies still do not understand why they are hated and being fought. The remainder of the article includes the reasons for why the Islamic States hates the West, and why it fights the latter.

As stated in the article, the primary reason why the Islamic State hates the West is that the latter embraces disbelief by breaking *tawhid*. The breaking of *tawhid* mainly occurs through the religions of Christianity and Judaism that worship other entities next to God, such as Jesus and the Holy Spirit - thereby taking away Allah's divine unity.[197] The breaking of *tawhid* furthermore occurs through the adoption of man-made laws - thereby taking away sovereignty and power from Allah.[198] Other reasons for why the Islamic State hates the West stem from the latter's acts of ridiculing Allah and the Prophet, and Islam in general; as well as the violent atrocities that the West has conducted against the Muslim people.[199] However, the Islamic State stresses, the primary reason for its hate remains the belief that the West embraces *kufr*.[200]

[196] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Break The Cross," *Dabiq* 15 (2016): 30.
[197] Ibid., 31.
[198] Ibid., 31.
[199] Ibid., 32.
[200] Ibid., 33.

The fact that the Islamic State regards the citizens of the West as disbelievers also explains why the Islamic State fights the West. Two excerpts from the Quran are cited in the article that explain how Muslims should treat those who disbelieve.[201]

> "Indeed, we are disassociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allah. We have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone."[202]
>
> Al-Mumtahanah 4

> "And fight them until there is no fitnah [paganism] and the religion, all of it, is for Allah."[203]
>
> Al-Baqarah 193

From these two citations, the Islamic State infers that Allah has ordered the umma to fight the disbelievers, in particular the Jews and the Christians, until they convert their religion to Allah. As a result, the Islamic State argues, the battle between the West and the Islamic State - or the umma - will only end once all enemies of the Islamic State have embraced Islam.[204]

This belief of combating the enemy is exacerbated by the idea that the West has made it its primary goal to spread their secularism, nationalism, atheism, and religion to Muslim lands.[205] Here, the theme of a 'Clash of Civilizations' recurs, emphasizing the idea that Islam is under attack. Islam, therefore, has to be defended - a cause that the Islamic State has taken upon itself in the name of Allah and the umma.

This article clearly illustrates the underlying diagnostic frame of the Islamic State's worldview, being the conviction that the West is actively perpetrating a campaign against Islam. Multiple reasons lie at the foundation of this conviction, but the most important one remains the disbelieving nature of the West. The Islamic State emphasizes the religious matter of the conflict: not economic or political reasons explain the current struggle; rather it is mainly - or, as sometimes argued, entirely - founded on religion. It is unclear whether or not the Islamic State emphasizes this to support its own worldview and to motivate fellow

[201] It is important to note that, of course, the Islamic State has adopted these excerpts because they fit their worldview and advocate the use of violence. In actuality, Christians and Jews have been forgiven
[202] Al-Hayat Media Center "Break The Cross," 31.
[203] Ibid., 31.
[204] Ibid., 33.
[205] Ibid., 32.

Muslims to wage jihad against the enemies of Islam, or because it wishes to embellish its rhetoric of the current crusade, which forms the essence of the current struggle.

The latter possibility is not very likely, for there is little mention within this article of the crusaders. Twice is referred to the crusaders. Once as an adjective: 'a sodomite crusader nightclub'[206] and once as a synonym for the West: 'The crusaders continue their war against Islam,'[207] which is the caption of an image used in the article. However, because the article speaks about 'the West' enacting a war against Islam, it can be inferred that the Islamic State possibly uses 'the West' and 'the crusaders' interchangeably within the article. However, this interchangeability is only applicable for this article, for usually 'the crusaders' refers to a much larger group of countries than just 'the West.' This will be discussed later. For now it is important that 'the West' is more properly understood as being a sub-group of the crusaders but is merely used interchangeably here because the Islamic State explicitly focuses its attention on the West, therefore utilizing the latter term so as to not confuse its audience by the utility of the much broader term 'crusaders.'

The Extinction of the Gray Zone

The diagnostic frame proposed in the article and the Islamic State's worldview is repeated throughout the magazines, for the Islamic State continuously asserts that the enemies of Islam wish to rid the world from Islam and *tawhid*, and replace it with *jahiliyya*.[208] To add further gravity on the diagnostic frame, the Islamic State stresses that there exists no possibility for Muslims to remain neutral in the current conflict. As stated by al-Baghdadi in the citation above, the current 'Clash of Civilizations' is a clash between two camps, with no third camp present. The absence of the third camp is called 'The Extinction of the Gray Zone,' and is the topic of the second case study.

Case 2: 'The Extinction of the Gray Zone'

Written somewhere between January 8, 2015 and early February, this article discusses the continuously diminishing possibility of remaining neutral in the conflict between Islam and the camp of *kufr*. According to the Islamic State, this dichotomy originated from the 9/11-attacks, after which President George W. Bush asserted that 'either you are with us or you are

[206] Ibid., 30.
[207] Al-Hayat Media Center "Break The Cross," 33.
[208] Idem, "The Weakest House Is That of A Spider," *Rumiyah* 3 (2016): 2; Idem, "It Will Be A Fire That Burns," *Rumiyah* 12 (2017): 33.

with the terrorists.'[209] Osama Bin Laden then transformed this statement into 'either you are with the crusade or you are with Islam.'[210]

Having restated the main premise of its worldview, the Islamic State addresses the position of the Muslims within the current conflict. The Islamic State argues that since the 9/11-attacks, many individuals have attempted to remain neutral in the conflict between Islam and the camp of *kufr*.[211] In the article, it is asserted that adopting a neutral stance - also called remaining in the Gray Zone - will soon be impossible, for the Gray Zone is on the brink of extinction.[212]

The primary cause for the extinction of the Gray Zone, according to the Islamic State, is the establishment of the caliphate, which gave every Muslim a body of Islam to which they can make *hijra* and where they can live according to shari'a.[213] This is the principal cause for the extinction of the Gray Zone, for, the Islamic State argues, no Muslim has an excuse anymore for living in the lands of *kufr* and apostasy any longer unless he is an apostate himself.[214] Refusing to join the caliphate of the Islamic State, therefore, entails an act of major sin and hypocrisy.[215]

Hypocrisy is an important concept within Islam, meaning the feigned belief in Allah. In this article, however, it is used to refer to all Muslims who have not aligned with the views of the Islamic State or joined its caliphate, thereby trying to remain neutral. By stating Quranic verses and excerpts from the hadith literature, the Islamic State lists the rulings of shari'a on the hypocrites. First and foremost, the hypocrites are not to be taken as allies. Furthermore, they are not to be listened to, respected, or defended, and are to be fought if they openly expose their hypocrisy.[216] The latter ruling is especially compelling for the Islamic State, because it allows the latter to explain how the hypocrites can no longer remain in the Gray Zone. To explain which Muslims are considered hypocrites, the Islamic State cites the following hadith:

> '[...] if a man hears the verses of Allah being denied and mocked and sits with the kafir mockers without being coerced, without forbidding them, and without getting up and leaving until they change the subject, then he is a kafir

[209] Idem, "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," *Dabiq* 7 (2015): 54.
[210] Ibid., 54.
[211] Al-Hayat Media Center "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," 57.
[212] Ibid., 66.
[213] Ibid., 61.
[214] Ibid., 55.
[215] Ibid., 55.
[216] Ibid., 65.

> like them [...] because his remaining with them entails approval of kufr. And approval of kufr is kufr.'
>
> Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah

From this hadith, it can be inferred that the Islamic State considers every Muslim that tolerates disbelief is a hypocrite, and even a *kafir* himself. This is the crux of why the Gray Zone is on the brink of extinction, for remaining in the Gray Zone itself entails tolerance of the camp of *kufr*. Hence, those remaining in the Gray Zone are automatically removed from the Gray Zone by the Islamic State and placed in the camp of *kufr* as allies of the crusaders.

This connection to the crusaders is made on multiple occasions throughout the magazine. The most explicit example is when the Islamic State asserts that since the 9/11-attacks, the hypocrites - consisting of the 'deviant "Islamic" movements, the palace "scholars," and the apostate *tawaghit*'[217] - have all joined the crusaders in the war against Islam.[218] Thus, all Muslims who refrain from joining the Islamic State are supporters of the crusaders, for they tolerate the latter's mockery and disbelief, making them disbelievers as well.

Hereby, the Islamic is not only artificially creating the two-camp nature of the current conflict but also creating a robust motivational frame for Muslims to join the Islamic State in the current 'Clash of Civilizations.' The motivational frame rests on the propagation of the idea of the extinction of the Gray Zone, which is an attempt of the Islamic State to force its audiences to pick a side while keeping in mind that, to not be declared a hypocrite and a *kafir*, one would have to join the Islamic State.

From this explanation, it can also be explained why the Islamic State only addresses the neutral Muslims and not other neutral individuals who are not Muslim. After all, non-Muslims are already part of the camp of *kufr* and allies of the crusaders, for they do not believe in Allah. Hence, the 'extinction of the Gray Zone' is purely an ideological tool for the Islamic State to advocate the geopolitical divide between Islam and its enemies, while concurrently motivating Muslims to join its organization and constructing a tool for declaring *takfir* on those Muslims who do not ally with the Islamic State.

From this case study, it has become evident that the Islamic State adheres to a bold worldview that positions Islam as opposed to the camp of *kufr*. This 'Clash of Civilizations' forms the foundation of the Islamic State's diagnostic frame and is supported by a wide array of motivational frames. The most important motivational frame rests on the idea of the

[217] Al-Hayat Media Center "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," 54.
[218] Ibid., 54.

'extinction of the Gray Zone,' which is a fabricated idea through which the Islamic State tries to actively destroy the possibility for remaining neutral within the conflict. In the worldview of the Islamic State, every single individual is forced to take sides, whether it is the camp of 'true Islam' or the camp of *kufr*.

The Crusader Coalition

The actors on both sides of the 'Clash of Civilizations' are discussed in great detail in the magazines. However, the members of the presupposed two camps shift throughout the magazines. The camp of the Islamic State is the most consistently defined as the camp of the umma, of true Islam, and the camp of truth.[219] Acting on the ideas of Qutb, the Islamic State attempts to portray itself as the vanguard of Islam, who fights for all Muslims everywhere.[220]

The antagonists of Islam - those who are pursuing the crusade against the Islamic State - are less consistently defined. After all, they encompass all who oppose the Islamic State. From the worldview as expressed by al-Baghdadi, it becomes clear that all enemies of the Islamic State are labeled as *kuffar* or apostates (those, on whom has been declared *takfir*). More specifically, the camp of *kufr* consists of apostates, Jews, crusaders, all nations and religions of *kufr*, America, Russia, and all their allies. This conviction is interestingly worded, for the crusaders are mentioned as a group separate from the other members of the camp of *kufr*, yet they are all considered to be the perpetrators of the current crusade. As a result, the term 'crusaders' appears to be used as an umbrella term as well as a denomination of a specific group within the camp of *kufr*. In the eleventh issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State defines who the crusaders are. The article concerned with this explanation is, therefore, the third case study of this research.

Case 3: 'From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions'

Published on September 9, 2015, the eleventh issue of *Dabiq* focuses on the historical parallel between the Battle of al-Ahzab and the current War of Coalitions. The Battle of al-Ahzab (the Battle of the Parties) was a battle that took place in 627 between the Prophet Muhammad and his followers and the *mushrikin*, the Jews, and the apostates, who had formed a joint coalition against the message of the Prophet. The battle took place near Medina and is a symbol for

[219] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Return of Khilafah," 10; Al-Zarqawi, cited in: Idem, "A Call to Hijrah," *Dabiq* 3 (2014): 12.
[220] This is also emphasized by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In a speech transcribed in the ninth issue of *Dabiq*, he stated that 'It is the war of every Muslim in every place, and the Islamic State is merely the spearhead in this war.'

Muslim steadfastness and faith in Allah as a means for achieving victory.[221] In the article, the Islamic State argues that the Battle of al-Ahzab is akin to the current struggle of the Islamic State, which faces a similar 'coalition of *kuffar*,' called the Crusader Coalition.[222] From this parallel between the Battle of al-Ahzab and the current Crusader Coalition, it becomes evident that the Islamic State not only takes the crusades as an example for the current conflict, but goes one step further by tracing the current conflict back to the time of Muhammad. This connection evokes the idea that the current struggle is a continuation of a millennium-old conflict between Islam and a coalition of enemies.

The Islamic State appears to use two different terms for the current coalition of enemies: the camp of *kufr* and the Crusader Coalition. This synonymy is nowhere explicitly stated by the Islamic State but can be inferred from statements made throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The Islamic State defines the camp of *kufr* as a coalition of crusader nations, *tawaghit*, *sawha*[223] and Shi'ite[224] militias, *murtadd* (apostate) armies, and everyone who allies, acquiesces, or tolerates any of the aforementioned parties.[225] Considering this definition, the crusaders are listed as 'crusader nations,' not as the Crusader Coalition. The Crusader Coalition, therefore, must consist of the crusader nations and the other parties mentioned in the Islamic State's definition of the camps of *kufr*.

In the article, the Islamic State includes a list of countries and organizations that are considered part of the Crusader Coalition. According to the Islamic State, the Crusader Coalition consist of the countries that are partaking in Operation Inherent Resolve[226] but the Islamic State has added its own ideas regarding which other countries are involved in the war against Islam.[227] The following citation lists all the nations which the Islamic State considers to be crusaders - either by partaking in Operation Inherent Resolve or by individually being involved in the war against the Islamic State and its allies.

> Afghanistan, the African Union, Albania, Algeria, the Arab League, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and

[221] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," *Dabiq* 11 (2015): 46.
[222] Ibid., 46.
[223] The *sawha* movement is an Iraqi security force funded by the United States that combated al-Qaeda in Iraq, and later became one of the most important local proxies against the Islamic State.
[224] Instead of 'Shi'ite,' the Islamic State refers to the latter as 'Rafidi,' which is the Sunni designation for Shi'ism. The Islamic State also utilizes the term Rafidi to refer to Iranian Shi'ites in particular or Iran in general. Here, however, the term Rafidi designates all Shi'ite factions. Hence, the term 'Shi'ite' has been used.
[225] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 54.
[226] Operation Inherent Resolve is the official name for the military campaign aimed at destroying the Islamic State launched in 2014.
[227] Ibid., 47.

> Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, the Gulf Cooperation Council, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malaysia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, NATO, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, the Organization of 'Islamic' Cooperation, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, South Korea, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Yemen.[228]

These countries are explicitly labeled as crusaders, for they are involved in the crusade against Islam and the Islamic State on a political, financial, and military level.[229]

This list is important, for it showcases how the Islamic State gives a new dimension to the crusades. After all, Russia, Israel (the Jews), and most members listed were not participants of the medieval crusades. The historical reality of the medieval crusades is twisted and turned so as to accommodate the modern worldview of the Islamic State. On the one hand, this reinterpretation holds true to the historical reality, for the current crusade is considered to be a religiously motivated campaign - just like its medieval predecessors. On the other hand, those enacting the crusade are determined based on the modern struggle, with no regards for who the medieval crusaders were. As discussed in Chapter III, religious conflicts leave no room for nuance. So too knows the Islamic State, for all its enemies and those attempting to stay neutral are labeled as crusaders or allies thereof - a view that supports the dichotomous worldview of the Islamic State. The only nuance found in the use of crusading rhetoric is that Muslims are not considered as crusaders but allies thereof. The term crusaders is exclusively reserved for the non-Muslim enemies of the Islamic State. In this sense, the Islamic State does hold true to the historical reality of the medieval crusades.

[228] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 47, 48. Note: this is not a direct citation from the article. In the magazine, the countries are divided based on their involvement in Operation Inherent Resolve, and their individual involvement in the war against the Islamic State.
[229] Ibid., 48.

In addition to this extensive list, the Islamic State inserts an important footnote that emphasizes that the aforementioned list does not include all nations that share enmity towards Islam. The Islamic State asserts that:

> 'If one were also to add to it the countries that are involved covertly, tacitly, or passively in the war against the Islamic State, it would include all the countries of the world [...]'[230]

The Islamic State once more stresses that there exist only two camps within the current 'Clash of Civilizations' - the camp represented by the Islamic State and the camp of *kufr*. This citation further supports the synonymy between the camp of *kufr* and the Crusader Coalition. The quote shows that the camp of *kufr* and the Crusader Coalition are absolute terms - both exclude the possibility to remain neutral within the conflict, for whoever tolerates the *kuffar* or remains passive alongside the crusaders becomes an enemy of Islam.

The Tawaghit

Besides the crusaders, the camp of *kufr* contains other members. The second party of the camp of *kufr* are the *tawaghit*. The principal reason why the Islamic State denounces contemporary Arab rulers as *tawaghit* is based on the limited implementation of shari'a by those rulers. According to the Islamic State, the current Arab rulers are not implementing nor ruling according to the full extent of shari'a. Hence, these Arab leaders are ruling (partially) on man-made laws, thereby taking away sovereignty from Allah and thus breaking *tawhid*.[231] From this critique, no clear connection to the Crusader Coalition can be discerned. In the ninth issue of *Dabiq*, however, the Islamic State explicates how the *tawaghit* and the crusaders are connected.

Case 4: 'From the Pages of History: The Flags of Jahiliyyah'

In this article, written in May of 2015, the Islamic State discusses the origin of the flags raised by the current Arab regimes - considered by the Islamic State to be *tawaghit*. According to the Islamic State, these flags are based on a design made by Mark Sykes. As part of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Islamic State explains, Sykes developed a flag that would serve as a

[230] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 48.
[231] Rahman, "Jibt," 50, 56

basis for the flags of the newly-found nationalist Arab states.[232] Although partially correct, the flag was originally intended to create the idea of an Arab community which was to fuel the revolt against the Ottoman Empire. While minimal in effect, the flag nevertheless became a strong influence for Arab nation-building after World War I.

The Islamic State, too, is aware of this influence but exacerbates it by stating that all countries that have a modified version of the flag designed by Sykes are puppet regimes of the crusaders.[233] To these countries belong Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, the United Arabian Emirates, and Yemen. Modified versions of the flag are also raised by the Ba'th Party, and various nationalist movements in Iran, Mali, Morocco, and Somalia.[234] According to the Islamic State, the flags represent the crusaders.[235]

The Islamic State, furthermore, notes that each color of the flag represents an Islamic group - all deemed to be apostates by the Islamic State.[236] The flag also represents Arab nationalism, which is a violation of *tawhid*, for nationalism takes divine reverence away from Allah and grants it to the nation. Hence, the Islamic State asserts that the flag of Sykes represents apostasy and *shirk*, and is, therefore, a symbol of *jahiliyya*.[237]

Thus, the connection between the *tawaghit* and the crusaders is based on the adaptation of a modified version of a flag designed by the latter. According to the Islamic State, this constitutes that the regimes raising those flags have pledged their allegiance to the crusaders and have accepted *jahiliyya*.[238] By accepting *jahiliyya* and allying with the crusaders, the *tawaghit* are placed in the camp of *kufr*, which makes them an enemy of Islam and the Islamic State. Their membership of the Crusader Coalition rests on their national flags, symbols that represent their allegiance to the crusaders. The *tawaghit* are essentially considered to be puppet regimes of the crusaders, abiding by their will and abandoning Islam in the process - an assertion often made by the Islamic State throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.[239]

The *Sawha* and Shi'ite Militias

The third party of the camp of *kufr* consists of the *sawha* and Shi'ite Militias. From *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, it becomes evident that the Islamic State is less concerned about the former than the

[232] Al-Hayat Media Center, "They Plot and Allah Plots," *Dabiq* 9 (2015): 20.
[233] Al-Hayat Media Center, "They Plot and Allah Plots," 22.
[234] Ibid., 22.
[235] Ibid., 22.
[236] Ibid., 21.
[237] Ibid., 21.
[238] Ibid., 22.
[239] Ibid., 22.

latter party. In the eleventh issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State explains that the Shi'a Crescent - a predominantly Shi'a region in the Middle East ranging from Lebanon to Iran to Bahrain - has transformed into a 'solar eclipse.'[240] According to the Islamic State, this 'eclipse' originated in the Iranian Revolution after which Ayatollah Khomeini exported the '*shirk'* religion of Shi'ism across the Middle East.[241] The Iraqi government was the first to fall to Shi'ism when, in 2005, the Shi'ite Nuri al-Maliki was elected President of Iraq. Since then, the Islamic State argues, Shi'ism has been waging war against Sunni Islam. Therefore, the Shi'ites are the most important allies of the crusaders.[242]

The *sawha*[243] forces, on the other hand, are not considered to be a real threat to the efforts of the Islamic State. The first *sawha* factions emerged during the Iraq War and were tribal gangs that supported the American forces starting in 2005. Currently, the Islamic State claims, the *sawha* forces have sided with the crusaders against the Islamic State.[244] Hence, the link to the Crusader Coalition is quickly established. In the words of the Islamic State: 'the *sawha*h forces blatantly fight for the crusaders and the *tawaghit* against Islam and the Muslims.'[245] The Islamic State carries quite a wide interpretation of the term *sawha*, for it not only uses it to refer to the Iraqi proxies fighting the Islamic State but also for several factions such as the Kurdish-Iraqi Peshmerga, the Kurdish PKK, and the Free Syrian Army. Although large in number, the Islamic State asserts that all these groups lack both skill and faith, which is why they have been expelled from territories held by the Islamic State, even though they were supported by crusader airstrikes.[246]

The Murtadd Forces

The term *murtadd* signifies a Muslim that has apostatized from Islam. According to the shari'a, an apostate is in principle subject to the death penalty[247] - a ruling strongly advocated by the Islamic State. As can be inferred from the previously discussed articles and the discourse of radical Salafism, being an apostate alone is justification enough for jihadi-

[240] Idem, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 52.
[241] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 52.
[242] Ibid., 52.
[243] Not to be confused by the Saudi-Arabian movement al-*sawha* al-Islamiyya, which is a Saudi Salafist movement for peaceful political reform.
[244] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 53.
[245] Ibid., 54.
[246] Idem, "The Failed Crusade," 42.
[247] 'Murtadd.' Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1627 accessed on May 27, 2018. Legal opinions vary regarding this rule. Some reject the use of the death penalty, stressing instead that the Quran prohibits coercion in matters of religion. Furthermore, punishment for apostasy varies between men and women.

Salafists like the Islamic State to kill said apostate. The Islamic State, however, goes beyond this justification and assert that there are more reasons to kill apostates. This, and the connection between the apostates and the crusaders is best explained in the seventh issue of *Rumiyah*.

Case 5: 'That Allah Should Test Those Who Believe'

This article was written in February of 2017 and is relatively short. It does, however, make some important points, for it addresses the alleged malevolent nature of apostates. According to the Islamic State, the apostates have a goal to destroy the caliphate so as to take control over the Muslim lands and return to *jahiliyya* through *shirk* and man-made laws.[248] In essence, the apostates wish to break *tawhid* and remove Islam from the earth - a goal for which they are prepared to destroy and kill every Muslim in their way, or so the Islamic State claims.[249]

To achieve this, the apostates have joined a coalition made up of the crusaders, the Shi'ites, the *sawha*, and the *tawaghit*[250] - a coalition much reminiscent of the camp of *kufr* and the Crusader Coalition. The Islamic State asserts that the apostates are being led by the *tawaghit*, and the *tawaghit* by the crusaders.[251] Hence, the apostates are essentially agents and military factions of the *tawaghit* and are, therefore, serving the interests of the crusaders who control the puppet *tawaghit* regimes of the Middle East.

Furthermore, the Islamic State argues that the *tawaghit* themselves are also apostates. Thus, the term apostates is used to make a subtle distinction between the *tawaghit* and the citizens or 'Muslim' allies of these regimes. In general, however, the term 'apostates' includes the *tawaghit*, thereby making the apostates members of the Crusader Coalition.

The Crusader Coalition and the Camp of Kufr

The Islamic State argues that the current crusade is being enacted by a coalition of various and highly diverse groups, consisting of the crusaders, the *tawaghit*, the *sawha* and Shi'ite forces, the apostates, and all those who do not ally with the Islamic State - as propagated by the belief of the 'extinction of the Gray Zone.' This camp of *kufr* is highly synonymous with the Crusader Coalition but even though both refer to the same parties, each term still carries different connotations with it. The term 'camp of *kufr*' is used to generalize all enemies of the

[248] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Establishing the Islamic State," *Rumiyah* 7 (2017): 4.
[249] Ibid., 4.
[250] Ibid., 5.
[251] Ibid., 5.

Islamic State as being disbelievers or apostates that embrace *kufr* by breaking *tawhid*. This act of Othering aids the Islamic State in acting on its jihadi-Salafist nature by adding legitimacy to the violent actions of the Islamic State against the *kuffar* and the apostates. Thus, the term 'crusader(s)' is used to imply the disbelieving nature of the enemies of Islam, thereby legitimizing acts of terror and violence against them.

The term 'Crusader Coalition,' on the other hand, symbolizes the millennium-old historical conflict between the Salaf and a coalition of enemies of Islam. By utilizing this rhetoric, the Islamic State traces the current conflict back to the time of Muhammad. Essentially, the term 'Crusader Coalition' is used to generalize all enemies of the Islamic State as being millennium-old enemies of Islam.

Through these acts of Othering, the Islamic State constructs a dichotomous worldview on which it bases its jihadi-Salafists justifications for declaring *takfir* on non-allied Muslims and killing its *kufri* and apostate enemies. Figure 3.1 shows that the concepts of *kufr*, *takfir*, *taghut*, and *shirk* were amongst the most connected concepts to the use of crusading rhetoric. This shows that through the use of crusading rhetoric, the Islamic State is able to 'other' its enemies by not only calling them crusaders but also by loading negative connotations onto the term 'crusader(s).'

It is evident that the camp of *kufr* and the Crusader Coalition are highly synonymous but different in their respective rhetorical implications. Nonetheless, the diagnostic frame they construct are alike - they both portray Islam as the target of an ongoing crusade enacted by enemies of Islam. In the next sub-chapter I will discuss what is to be done against the enemies of Islam.

Jihad

The prognostic frame of the Islamic State can be deduced from the diagnostic frame. After all, the latter advocates an ongoing crusade perpetrated by the enemies of Islam. Hence, according to the historical example of Medieval *mujahidin*, jihad should be the focal point of the prognostic frame advocated by the Islamic State. Furthermore, jihad is of crucial importance in the radical Islamic discourse, in particular in the discourse of jihadi-Salafists such as the Islamic State.

Jihad is referred to a total of 91 times within the context of the crusades. Being the focal point of the medieval Muslim recovery movements, the concept of jihad continues to enjoy this status within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, for jihad is considered to be the ultimate means

for defending shari'a and Islam against the Jews, the apostates, and the crusaders.[252] In several issues of *Rumiyah* it is even argued that the Islamic State has revived the spirit of jihad[253] - reminiscent of the medieval leaders of jihad such as Nur al-Din and Saladin, who began their jihad against the crusaders by restoring the importance of jihad within Muslim society.

Jihad is seen as the means for overcoming the current threat posed by the enemies of Islam. This prognosis is supported by a motivational frame that entails a firm belief that Islam is the religion of the sword, not the religion of pacifism. As the Islamic State asserts in the seventh issue of *Dabiq*, violent jihad is inherent to Islam, and all reinterpretations or nuances of jihad are, in fact, deviations from the word of Allah.[254] This view is exacerbated in the fourteenth issue of *Dabiq*, in which is stated that jihad is an obligation when the umma is under attack.[255]

This motivational frame is embellished by reports about *mujahidin* who have died while waging jihad. In a series of articles titled 'Among The Believers Are Men,' the Islamic State acclaims the *mujahid* for attaining martyrdom for the sake of Allah. Hence, by showcasing multiple martyred *mujahidin*, the Islamic State urges potential members to follow their example. The motivational frame of jihad is further strengthened by the assertion that Allah only rewards those with Paradise who have undertaken *hijra* or have waged jihad - making it an obligation for every able-bodied Muslim to do so.[256] The eleventh issue of *Dabiq* arguably best captures the essence of the motivational frame for waging jihad, for in this issue it is argued that those who do not wage jihad are no better than the *kuffar*.[257]

The motivational frame of joining the jihad is thus much akin to the motivational frame for joining the camp of the Islamic State. Both provide the audience with a choice: either join the Islamic State and wage jihad against the *kuffar* or become a *kafir* yourself.

The Goals of Jihad

Throughout the magazines, jihad is given alternative goals - some more specific than others, and mostly dependent on the context of the articles. When discussing the 'extinction of the Gray Zone' in the seventh issue of *Dabiq*, for example, the jihad is seen as a means for

[252] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Rafidah," *Rumiyah* 13 (2017):23.
[253] Idem, "The Syrian *sawhat*," *Rumiyah* 5 (2017): 8; Idem, "The Jihad in East Asia," *Rumiyah* 10 (2017): 38.
[254] Al-Hayat Media Center, "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," 20.
[255] Idem, "The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq* 14 (2016): 47.
[256] Idem, "The Murtadd Brotherhood," 17; Idem, "They Plot and Allah Plots," 3, 4.
[257] Idem, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," 13.

destroying the Gray Zone.[258] In a more general context, jihad is presented as the means to destabilize and wipe out the enemies of Islam.[259]

As explicated before, the enemies of Islam - the camp of *kufr* - include a multitude of parties. The Islamic State appears to be adopting Ibn Taymiyya's idea of an inward jihad focused on cleansing Islam, before turning towards the enemies outside Islam. In the fifth issue of *Dabiq*, it is asserted that jihad must be waged against the enemies of Islam, starting with the Shi'ites, then the *tawaghit*, and finally the crusaders.[260] This clearly shows a strict separation of the targets of jihad as well as a chronological guideline.

However, waging jihad against 'literally everybody else' does not allow for an approach in which those, who are simultaneously combating the Islamic State, are individually isolated as targets of jihad. Hence, as more issues are released, the strict separations are blurred as the Islamic State increasingly adds more targets of jihad. Eventually, jihad is to be waged against not only the Shi'ites, the *tawaghit*, and the crusaders, but also the Nusayri, the Jews, the Christians, the supporters of democracy, the *mushrikin* and the enemies of Islam and the *kuffar*, in general.[261]

The Islamic State utilizes jihad within different contexts, framing it as being the most effective means of combating whichever enemy is the target in the specific context. In the ninth issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State clearly shows that it is aware of the role jihad played in the Muslim resistance against the medieval crusades and the later era of colonialism. As concluded by the Islamic State, the historical jihad was to rid the Muslim lands from man-made laws and establish a caliphate based on shari'a[262] - a stage now reached by the Islamic State itself. In the fourteenth issue of *Dabiq*, the final stage of jihad is explained as the complete establishment of Allah's rule on earth.[263] The Islamic State bases its jihad on the example of the medieval Muslims and their jihad against the crusades while adding to it a millenarian outlook on the future based on *malahim* and the ensuing global conquest of Islam.

By connecting the concept of jihad to its historical example in times of the crusades, the Islamic State is able to create a strong prognostic frame based on religious and historical elements that resonate with their Muslim audiences. Interestingly, the Islamic State does not

[258] Idem, "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," 62.
[259] Idem, "The Laws of Allah or the Laws of Men," *Dabiq* 10 (2015): 64; Idem, "The Weakest House Is That of A Spider," 9.
[260] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Remaining and Expanding," 27.
[261] Idem, "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy," 62, 70; Idem, "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions," *Dabiq* 11 (2015): 13; Idem, "The Rafidah," 50; Idem, "The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq* 14 (2016): 33; Idem, "The Syrian *sawha*t," 7.
[262] Idem, "Remaining and Expanding," *Dabiq* 5 (2014): 21.
[263] Idem, "The Murtadd Brotherhood," 17.

explicitly mention the idea that the medieval jihad against the crusaders can be emulated - a widespread belief in the radical Islamic discourse.[264] Instead, jihad is seen as a divine obligation when Islam is under attack. Notwithstanding the importance of the religious motivation for waging jihad, it does retain its historical status of being the means by which the crusaders are to be fought.

Victory for Islam

It has become clear that the theme 'Clash of Civilizations' facilitates the essence of the diagnostic frame that the Islamic State propagates throughout its magazines. The ensuing prognostic frame rests on waging jihad against the enemies of Islam so as to achieve victory. Each frame carries its own motivational sub-frames. However, these sub-frames do not constitute the main motivational frame of the Islamic State. Rather, the motivational frame rests on a combination of divine obligation and divine prophecies that, together, facilitate the 'Victory for Islam.'

The theme 'Victory of Islam' signifies the core of the millenarian expectation of the Islamic State. As explained, after the *malahim*, Islam would reign victorious over a just kingdom before Judgment Day and the end of time. The theme is referred to a total of 60 times within the context of crusading rhetoric, and, contrary to jihad, is explicitly linked to its historical example. First seen in the fourth issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State asserts that the crusaders have been defeated before, and will be defeated again. It is thereafter emphasized that the current struggle will be the final crusade before the events of *malahim*.[265]

Besides worldly explanations for the imminent 'Victory for Islam,' the belief in the latter is predominantly founded on a divine promise, namely the hadith on the *malahim*. The hadith about the *malahim* has already been explained before, but is important to note that the Islamic State utilizes various hadith that all refer to the *malahim* and the global conquest of Islam. These hadith are all gathered in an article in the third issue of *Rumiyah*, which will be the final case study of this chapter.

Case 6: 'Towards the Major Malhamah of Dabiq'

On October 16 of 2016, the Islamic State lost control over the town of Dabiq to Turkish and Syrian joint forces. Conquered during the early campaigns of the Islamic State in 2014, the town of Dabiq posed little strategic significance. It was the ideological significance of the

[264] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 73.
[265] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Failed Crusade," 17.

town that explains why it came under Islamic State control. After all, it was the prophesized place where the final battle between the Muslims and the crusaders would occur.

The article used in this case study was published within a month after the loss of Dabiq and featured in the new revamped version of *Dabiq* magazine - *Rumiyah*.[266] The article discussed the loss of the town of Dabiq, which was considered by the West to be a psychological victory over the Islamic State. The Islamic State counters this claim by stating that the lost battle was but a minor battle rather than part of the *malahim*.[267] The real events of *malahim* would be preceded by several signs, but, the Islamic State argues, the 'cross-worshippers' and their 'apostate allies' are oblivious to this fact.[268] Hence, the Islamic State repeats the hadith that mention the signs of *malahim* and the event itself. Summaries of these four hadith are included below.

The first hadith comes from the hand of Abu Hurayrah - one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad - who recorded the Prophet's explanation of the events of *malahim*. According to the Prophet, the events of *malahim* would commence once the Romans have set up their camps near Amaq and Dabiq. An army of the best Muslims of Islam would leave for the Romans so as to fight them. One third of these Muslims would flee; one third would achieve martyrdom, and the last third of the Muslim army would achieve victory over the Romans after which they would conquer Constantinople. While dividing the spoils of war, the *Dajjal* (the False Messiah) would emerge in Sham.[269] The Muslims will prepare to fight the *Dajjal* and his army. During the prayer before the battle, Jesus will descend and lead the Muslims to victory. The *Dajjal* will be killed by Jesus himself.[270]

This hadith is succeeded by a hadith concerning the comments on *malahim* by Ibn Mas'ud - another companion of the Prophet. Much akin to the first hadith, Ibn Mas'ud, while pointing towards Sham, said that the Romans would gather an army against the Muslims, and the Muslims would gather an army against the Romans. The Muslims would fight them to the death with no intention to return except victorious. On the fourth day of the battle, Allah would grant victory to the Muslims. Then, the *Dajjal* would appear and go after the families

[266] It is unclear whether or not the Islamic State changed the title of the magazine because it had lost the town of Dabiq. After all, the name of the magazine had already been changed in September when the first issue of *Rumiyah* was released.
[267] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Weakest House is that of A Spider," 25.
[268] Ibid., 25.
[269] Sham is a region in the eastern Mediterranean encompassing modern-day Syria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and North-Saudi Arabia.
[270] Information used in this paragraph taken from: Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Weakest House is that of A Spider," 25.

of the Muslims who had stayed behind. The Muslim army would follow the *Dajjal* and become the best of Muslims on the face of the earth.[271]

The third hadith discusses the signs of *malahim*, which are to be established before the final battles between the Muslims and their enemies will be completed. According to the hadith, the Prophet said mentioned six signs that would precede the events of *malahim*. First was the Prophet's death. Secondly, the conquest of Jerusalem. Then, the death of another prominent figure. Hereafter, the Muslims would experience a period of immense wealth, which would be followed by the fifth sign: a period of rebellion. The last sign would be the establishment of a truce between the Muslims and the Romans during which both parties would fight a common enemy. After defeating this enemy, the Romans would violate the truce and march onto the Muslims with 80 banners, 12.000 men under each banner.[272]

This treaty is explained in the fourth hadith that is cited in the article. According to the Prophet, the Muslims would have a treaty of security with the Romans during which both parties will fight an external enemy. The Muslims and Romans would be victorious over this enemy, and after the victory, the Romans would erect a cross and exclaim 'The cross has prevailed.' Then, a Muslim would say 'Rather Allah has prevailed,' and rush to the cross and break it. The Romans would then violate the treaty by killing the breaker of the cross. The Muslims and Romans present at this event would then battle. The Muslims would be defeated by the Romans and rewarded with martyrdom. The Romans, thinking they could defeat the remaining Muslim armies, would then march upon the Muslims under 80 banners, each banner leading 12.000 men.[273]

From these hadith, the Islamic State concludes that not all signs of the *malahim* have yet occurred. Namely, the truce between the Muslims and the Romans has yet to be established. Hence, the *malahim* cannot yet take place. The loss of Dabiq is, therefore, but a temporary victory for the crusaders, for they will still be defeated during the events of *malahim*.[274]

Interestingly, none of the hadith cited in the article mention the crusaders, but mention the Romans instead as enemies of Islam. In the fourth issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State asserts that the term 'Romans,' in times of the Prophet, was used to refer to the Christians of Europe

[271] Information used in this paragraph taken from: Ibid., 25.
[272] Information used in this paragraph taken from: Ibid., 25.
[273] Information used in this paragraph stems from: Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Weakest House is that of A Spider," 25, 26.
[274] Ibid., 26.

and their colonies in Sham.[275] This interpretation can even be further extrapolated to mean West-Europe or the West in general. Whether or not the Islamic State goes this far in their interpretation of the term 'Romans' remains unclear. However, the Islamic State does see the United States as one of the main crusader nations. It is, therefore, likely that the Islamic State does indeed interpret the term 'Romans' as meaning the West in general so as to account for the fact that its enemies come from all over the world.

The connection between the crusaders and the Romans is a recurring topic in the magazines - both implied and explicit. Throughout the magazines, the hadith and excerpts hereof are used within the context of the crusades. For example, the return of Jesus is thought to be the figure who would commence a campaign to 'break the cross.'[276] The cross is undoubtedly a symbol of Christianity, but does not necessarily have to refer to the crusades. Breaking the cross, however, is a symbolic act reminiscent of the medieval Muslim campaign during the First crusade, which set out to rid Islamic holy places from *jahili* influences such as crosses and other elements of *shirk*. A more explicit example of the connection between the *malahim* and the crusades can be found in the very first issue of *Dabiq*. Here, the hadith about the *malahim* is introduced as follows:

> "As for the name of the magazine, then 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 [...] One of the greatest battles between the Muslims and the crusaders will take place near Dabiq."[277]

From this introduction can be deduced that the Islamic State does, in fact, relate the *malahim* to their current struggle against the crusaders even though the hadith do not mention the crusaders explicitly.

The Promise of Allah

The importance of *malahim* in the worldview of the Islamic State cannot be overstated and can be inferred from the quotes of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Ham'zah al-Muhajir that

[275] Idem, "The Failed Crusade," 34.
[276] Al-Hayat Media Center, "Break the Cross," 48, 82.
[277] Idem, "The Return of Khilafah," 4.

preface every issue of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The quote that is used in *Dabiq* comes from Al-Zarqawi:

> "The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify – by Allah's permission – until it burns the crusader armies in Dabiq."[278]
>
> Abu Musab al-Zarqawi

The quote used in *Rumiyah* comes from al-Muhajir, also known as Abu Ayyub al-Masri, the successor of al-Zarqawi:

> "O muwahhidin, rejoice, for by Allah, we will not rest from our jihad except beneath the olive trees of Rumiyah."[279]
>
> Abu Ham'zah al-Muhajir

Both citations exert the millenarian belief that the Islamic State will defeat the crusaders near Dabiq, after which it will conquer the cities of the Romans.

The citations also show that the Islamic State is cautious in its expectations of the *malahim*. Both quotes emphasize that the successes of the Muslims - the defeat of the crusader armies and the conquest of Rome - are purely dependent on Allah's permission. This can be further inferred from a series of articles that concern interviews with the Amirs (Commanders) of jihadi organizations affiliated with the Islamic State. When asked about the military successes within the region, the interviewees firstly accredit Allah, and only thereafter accredit their members and operations. A typical example comes from the fourth issue of *Rumiyah*, in which the Commander of Tripoli, Abu Hudhayfah al-Muhajir, is interviewed. When asked to summarize the past events surrounding the military campaign on Tripoli, the Commander first spends a paragraph on thanking Allah, quoting hadith verses in between appraisals, before actually answering the question.[280]

The focus on Allah as creator and cause of everything is not exclusive to the Islamic State, for it is a crucial component of Islam in general - see the centrality of *tawhid* in the works of Sayyid Qutb and the Salafist discourse as discussed in Chapter II. Nevertheless, the

[278] Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, cited in ibid., 2.
[279] Abu Hamzah al-Muhajir, cited in idem, "Stand and Die," *Rumiyah* 1 (2016): 2.
[280] Idem, "Hijrah Does Not Cease as Long as the Kuffar Are Fought," *Rumiyah* 4 (2016): 10.

reliance of the Islamic State on Allah's will remains essential, for it functions as the foundation for the motivational frame that is constructed through the hadith on *malahim*.

This motivational frame is most visibly constructed in the fourth issue of *Dabiq*. Aptly named 'The Failed Crusade,' the issue focuses considerable attention on the will of Allah and its role in defeating the crusaders. The main argument made in this issue rests on the belief that the enemies of Islam stand powerless against the will of Allah.[281] Hence, the promise of Allah - the hadith on *malahim* - will not fail, for it is bound to establish itself - if not during the current struggle, then in the future.[282] This belief is best articulated by Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, who, in his speech 'Indeed Your Lord is Ever Watchful,' stated the following:

> "We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it [...]"[283]
>
> Abu Muhammad al-Adnani

This excerpt is repeated throughout the fourth issue of *Dabiq*, and is evidently of great importance for the Islamic State. From the citation, it becomes clear that the Islamic State not only views the permission of Allah to be the foundation of the future victory of Islam, but also views the will of Allah to be the leading cause that will realize this permission. Hence, Allah becomes the beginning and the end of the Islamic State's millenarian battle against the crusaders. Since the enemies of Islam are powerless against the will of Allah, the latter's promise will become a reality. On this absolute interpretation of *tawhid* rests the motivational frame.

It has become clear that the Islamic State explicitly relates the *malahim* to the crusades, taking the hadith - the promises of Allah and the prophecies uttered by the Prophet - as guiding principles in envisioning the inevitable final result of its struggle against the crusaders. Due to the central importance of *tawhid*, the Islamic State is able to construct a strong resonant motivational frame for its audiences, which promises victory over the crusaders based on the will of Allah.

[281] Idem, "The Failed Crusade," 8.
[282] Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Failed Crusade," 5.
[283] Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, cited in ibid., 8.

The Crusades in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*

In this chapter, I have discussed three organizing themes and several case-studies based on articles from *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* so as to explore how crusading rhetoric is used by the Islamic State in its narrative. The selected articles presented an in-depth view of the ideas of the Islamic State regarding the current conflict. From the case-studies, it has become evident that the Islamic State utilizes crusading rhetoric so as to frame current political circumstances as foreign influences directed against Muslims and Islam. The crux of the use of crusading rhetoric is found in the diagnostic frame and rests on the conviction that Islam is under attack from a Crusader Coalition which is perpetrating a crusade against Islam. This crusade has divided the world into two camps - the camp of Islam and the camp of *kufr*. Most importantly, there exists no possibility to remain neutral in the current conflict. Essentially, the diagnostic frame warns all Muslims that the enemies of Islam wish to rid the world of Islam and *tawhid*, and return the Muslim world to *jahiliyya* through the application of man-made laws and Western influences such as capitalism and democracy.

The prognostic frame builds on the diagnostic frame and does not introduce many new uses of crusading rhetoric. The Islamic State primarily builds on the general jihadi-Salafist discourse, adopting jihad as a means to fight the *kuffar*, the *tawaghit*, and the apostates. It is, therefore, not surprising that jihad is the focal element of the prognostic frame. However, the Islamic State does not appear to use the widespread belief that the medieval jihadi campaigns against the crusaders can be emulated in the current struggle. Instead, jihad is central to the worldview of the Islamic State because it is a divine obligation for every able-bodied Muslim to wage jihad when Islam is under attack. Jihad is seen as the ultimate means to defeat the crusaders, not for its historical importance, but for its centrality in the radical Islamic discourse and the will of Allah.

This reliance on divine obligation is also seen in the motivational frame. The latter is three-fold, for it builds forth on both the diagnostic frame as well as the prognostic frame of the Islamic State, but also introduces a new aspect based entirely on the Quran and the hadith literature. Building forth on the diagnostic frame, the first part of the motivational frame rests on the propagation of the idea that there exists no possibility for any individual to remain neutral in the conflict. Hence, the Islamic State wishes to propagate its two-camp worldview by artificially demolishing neutrality. The latter is achieved by stating that anyone who remains neutral shows that he or she tolerates *kufr*, and is, therefore, a *kafir* himself. As a result, Muslims are urged to join the Islamic State so as not to become *kuffar* and fall in apostasy.

Building forth on the prognostic frame, the second part of the motivational frame rests on the promise and will of Allah. This element reiterates that jihad is a divine obligation when Islam is under attack but adds to this further motivation by stating that Allah only rewards those who have undertaken *hijra* or have waged jihad with Paradise. The Islamic State once more emphasizes that to be rewarded by Allah, Muslims have to join the Islamic State.

The last part of the motivational frame is almost exclusively founded on verses from the hadith literature and the Quran. The reliance on these sources stems from the Salafist nature of the Islamic State, which advocates a return to the example of the Prophet through self-study of the Quran and the hadith. Hence, the Islamic State exclusively uses its own interpretations of these sources in supporting its worldview and its motivational frame. By using the Quran and well-known hadith, the Islamic State substantiates its worldview and its motivational frame on highly authoritative and credible sources that carry over a high degree of historical and cultural resonance to its audience.

The Islamic State takes the hadith on the *malahim* as promises of Allah, which are bound to come true. The hadith are transformed into leading examples for the millenarian expectation of the Islamic State. Dedicating itself to this expectation, the Islamic State propagates the belief that Allah will grant the Muslims victory over the crusaders after which Islam will spread across the globe. The crucial element herein is that the promise of Allah is not only the instigator of the current conflict but also the guarantee that will eventually end the conflict. As a result, *tawhid* - the undivided power of Allah - lies at the beginning and the end of the current struggle, meaning that the crusaders are powerless to save themselves.

Chapter V: Conclusion

The use of crusading rhetoric by the Islamic State has been very much obscured in previous studies of the e-magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. In this research, I set out to do justice to the importance of the rhetorical foundations of terrorist narratives by exploring how the Islamic State utilizes crusading rhetoric in its magazines. The primary goal of this research was to provide a clear view into how important rhetorical tools could be within terrorist discourse and to provide a clear understanding of how the Islamic State utilizes such rhetoric to shape its narrative.

The methodology of this research rested on the process of framing. This methodology was used to explore how the Islamic State constructs its worldview through the processes of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing techniques. Furthermore, this methodology accounted for the selective manner in which the Islamic State interprets historical accounts and Islamic literature. Through this approach, I was able to analyze what place crusading rhetoric has in the worldview of the Islamic State.

The chapters preceding the analysis covered the historical context of the research, the radical Islamic discourse, and the crusades. Chapter I and Chapter II showcased what the historical and ideological foundations of the Islamic State are, of which an understanding is required to comprehend the language used within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. In addition, Chapter III provided an understanding of how the crusades are used as rhetorical tools.

The global findings of this research were presented in the general overview, which was used to showcase how prevalent the use of crusading rhetoric is and how it is ostensibly used by the Islamic State. These findings were further explored in the following section, which consists of a case study approach. This approach was adopted so as to limit the size of the primary source material and to comprehend how the Islamic State itself interprets the current conflict as a crusade and whom it views as being the crusaders.

In this research, I have shown that the Islamic State interprets the current conflict as being a crusade against Islam. The term 'crusaders' is used to refer to the enactors of that crusade, which, essentially, encompass all countries in the world. The Islamic State appears to use the term 'crusade' for its historical value. After all, it views the current conflict as a continuation of the medieval crusades and the eras of colonialism, imperialism, and the Cold War proxies. Hence, the term 'crusade' is explicitly linked to its historical value. The term 'crusader(s),' however, did not have this connection to its historical importance, but was used as a pure nomenclature and as a symbolic term to imply the *kufri* nature of the enemies of

Islam. In case of the use of the term 'crusade,' the past is imprinted on the present conflict so as to represent an ongoing crusade based on religious motives with the goal to rid the world of Islam. In the case of the term 'crusader(s),' the present is mirrored onto the past so as to label present enemies of the Islamic State as millennium-old adversaries of Islam.

Through the use of history, the Islamic State expresses a connection between historical events and actors on the one side and extant socio-political conditions on the other. Another example of this reinterpretation of history is seen in the ways the Islamic State treats historical events and actors. The Battle of al-Ahzab, for example, is reinterpreted by the Islamic State as a guide for future action, thereby becoming a historical example. Using the Battle of al-Ahzab, the Islamic State propagates the belief that through steadfastness and faith in Allah the Muslims will defeat the Crusader Coalition just like Muhammad and his followers defeated their enemies.

Historical actors were used similarly. The Islamic State reflected historical actors, such as the Romans in the hadith regarding *Malahim*, and the Prophet Muhammad, upon its present struggle and vice versa. Through this reflection, the Islamic State reinterprets the meaning these actors had in their respective era and applies it to the current struggle. In doing so, the Islamic State conveys the belief that the victory for Islam and the destruction of the 'Romans' is prophesized by Allah and Muhammad. By emulating the historical examples, the current struggle would, therefore, end just like its historical predecessors with the defeat of the enemy and a victory for Islam.

The most important result of this research came from the differences in the use of crusading rhetoric between the three different frames. Crusading rhetoric is central in the construction of the diagnostic frame. After all, in this frame the Islamic State defines the crusade and the crusaders. The prognostic and the motivational frame introduce limited new uses of crusading rhetoric, because they take much of their crusading rhetoric from the diagnostic frame.

The reason for this difference between the frames regarding crusading rhetoric rests on the importance of *tawhid* in the Islamic discourse. *Tawhid* entails that Allah is absolute. Therefore, Allah has all power over everything. The importance of *tawhid* is not found in the diagnostic frame. After all, the diagnostic frame is merely an interpretation of what is wrong in the world, which is according to the Islamic State that Islam is under attack. However, the prognostic and the motivational frame move beyond that point of interpretation and enter the sphere of Islam. Namely, Islam has to be defended, which calls for a Salafist return to the Quran and the hadith so as to act according to the will of Allah. From these sources, the

Islamic State constructs a prognostic frame that propagates waging jihad as the means to defeat the enemies of Islam. The motivational frame is also constructed on the Quran and the hadith, the former stating that jihad is an obligation when Islam is under attack and the latter providing the promise of victory through the hadith on *malahim*.

The prognostic and motivational frame are founded on religious motivations so as to achieve a high degree of frame resonance with the Muslim audiences of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. After all, the Islamic State is a terrorist organization that needs to convince and mobilize its audiences. Hence, it adopts religious arguments that convey a message of divine obligation and divine promises so as to give credence and authority to its diagnostic frame. The use of crusading rhetoric might assist in understanding the current conflict, but it is insufficiently resonant to mobilize the audience or to justify the radical actions of the Islamic State. In essence, the prognostic and motivational frame show that the Islamic State, like any other radical Islamic organization, uses and abuses religious tools so as to support its extreme worldview.

The differences in the fundamentals of the three framing processes result in the conclusion that crusading rhetoric is only central in the diagnostic frame of the Islamic State. In the prognostic and the motivational frame, crusading rhetoric makes way for elements in line with *tawhid* - the will and promise of Allah. This result is not entirely congruent to the hypothesis of this research, which expected that the Islamic State would base the majority of its narrative on a reinterpretation of the medieval crusades so as to construct a culturally resonant framework based on unambiguous connotations of good versus evil. Such a framework has been constructed, but it would be false to state that the foundations of this framework predominantly lie in the use of crusading rhetoric. Instead, the importance of *tawhid* in the jihadi-Salafist discourse has proven to be the major contributor to the Islamic State's narrative. Nevertheless, the use of crusading rhetoric was central in the construction of the diagnostic frame.

To answer the research question 'How does the Islamic State frame its ideological and political narrative through the use of crusading rhetoric in its online magazines Dabiq and Rumiyah, published between 2014-2017?' - the Islamic State utilizes several reinterpretations of the historical crusades so as to construct the idea of a life leading up to the present. This continuation is typified by the conviction that the crusades have never ended, and are still ongoing. The idea of an ongoing crusade is used to emphasize the religious nature of the conflict and the threat that it poses to Islam, while the labeling of the enemies of Islam as 'crusaders' is used because of the negative implications the term conveys rather than the

historical significance of the term. These two elements shape the use of crusading rhetoric within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* and allow the Islamic State to construct a strong diagnostic frame. In the prognostic and the motivational frame, however, crusading rhetoric is pushed to the background and made subject to *tawhid*, and especially the will and promise of Allah, so as to achieve a high degree of frame resonance with the audience. Hence, even though crusading rhetoric did constitute the diagnostic framework through an adaptation of historical examples and reinterpretations of history, the means to defend Islam were not found in their historical examples but in Islam itself.

Glossary

Bay'a	Irrevocable pledge of allegiance.
Bid'a	Man-made additions to Islam from sources other than the Quran and the Sunna.
Dajjal	False messiah.
Dar al-harb	The land of War. An enemy territory outside of the jurisdiction of shari'a.
Dar al-Islam	The land of Islam. A territory under the jurisdiction of shari'a.
Firanj	Franks.
Fitna	Unrest and everything related thereto, such as trial, temptation, sedition, rebellion, and social unrest.
Hadith	Verse concerning the Sunna.
Hijra	Emigration from *dar al-harb* to *dar al-Islam*.
Hudud	Punishments fixed in the Quran for theft, adultery, false accusation, drinking intoxicants, apostasy, and robbery.
Ifranj	Franks.
Ijtihad	Independent and direct interpretation of the Quran and the Sunna.
Irja	Postponement of judgment on someone who has sinned.
Jahiliyya	Period in Arabia before Islam; pre-Islamic ignorance.. In the radical Islamic discourse, this term refers to foreign influences polluting Islam.
Jihad	To struggle or strive so as to live in accordance with shari'a.
Jihadi-Salafism	Movement within Salafism that propagates a radical interpretation of jihad as the means for returning Islam to the example of the Salaf.
Kafir	Disbeliever.
Kuffar	Plural of *Kafir*.
Kufr	Disbelief.
Mahdi	Saviour figure of Islam, whose arrival would usher into a just and righteous age.
Malhamah	Singular of *malahim*.
Malahim	The Great Battles between the Muslims and the enemies of Islam near Dabiq.
Milla	Religion.
Mubahala	Curse of Allah that reveals who tells the truth.

Mujahid(in)	Muslims who wage jihad.
Murtadd	Apostate.
Mushrik(in)	Idolater or polytheist; someone who breaks *tawhid*.
Muwahhid(in)	Muslims who abide to *tawhid*.
Sahihain	'The sound ones.' The two most respected collections of hadith. They are considered to be second only to the Quran.
Salib	Cross. Also means plunder.
Salibiyyun	Crusaders.
Salaf	First three generations of Muslims who learned Islam directly from Prophet Muhammad, thereby becoming the most pious of Muslims.
Salafism	Movement in Sunni Islam that concerns emulating the Salaf as closely as possible in all spheres of life.
Shari'a	Divinely mandated path of Allah. The conception of life in conformity with Allah's will
Shaytan	Satan.
Shirk	Idolatry or polytheism; the breaking of *tawhid*.
Sunna	The actions and utterances of the Prophet and his companions.
Taghut	Idol. Used to refer to Muslim rulers who do not fully implement shari'a.
Takfir	Declaring a Muslim an apostate.
Taqlid	Blind emulation of scholarly texts on the Quran and the Sunna.
Tawaghit	Plural of *taghut*.
Tawhid	Central aspect of Islam. It concerns absolute monotheism - the unity and uniqueness of Allah.
Umma	Community of all Muslims everywhere. Expresses the unity and equality of all Muslims.

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