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IDEOLOGY OF THE ISLAMIC STATE: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
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COLLEGE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
Abstract.....	viii
Chapter 1: Topic, Research Questions, Methodology, and Overview	1
The Islamic State: Brief Historical Background	1
Approaching the Research Questions.....	6
Methodology: Qualitative Analysis of Texts	10
Rationale for Methodology.....	10
Summary of Stage 1 – Coding Text	13
Summary of Stage 2 – Analyzing Coded Text.....	19
Summary of Stage 3 – Deriving Islamic State Ideology	19
Summary of Stage 4 – Addressing Research Questions	20
General Overview.....	20
Chapter 2: Qualitative Analysis.....	22
Determining Codes/Categories.....	22
Scholarly understanding of al-Qaeda/Salafist Jihadism	22
Qualitative Analysis Codes/Categories	26
Comparable Salafist Jihadi Ideology, as Expected by Scholarship.....	27
Results of Qualitative Analysis of <i>Dabiq</i> and <i>Rumiyah</i>	29
Chapter 3: Discussion.....	31
What is the Ideology of the Islamic State?.....	31
On the International Order.....	31
On the Arab-Israeli Conflict.....	31
On Sectarianism.....	32
On Violence/Combat	32
On Islamic Governance	33
On State-Building (Caliphate).....	33
On Economics	34
On Other Jihadist Organizations	34
On Self-Image	35

On Modernity	35
How Does Islamic State Ideology Differ from Current Scholarly Understanding of Salafist Jihadism?	36
Charting Differences	36
Chi Square Test	38
What is the Meaning of these Differences?.....	40
Chapter 4: Conclusion	44
An Emergent Shift in Salafi Jihadi Ideology on Muslim Unity	44
Problems for Future Research	46
The Problem of Participation in Islamic Discourse.....	46
The Problem of “Holographic” Ideology: Rhetoric vs. Reality and Quantification	51
The Problem of Modernity	56
Final Thoughts.....	61
Bibliography	63
Appendix A: Ideological Elements by Code/Category	72
The International Order	72
The Arab-Israeli Conflict	78
Sectarianism	79
Violence/Combat	82
Islamic Governance	87
State-Building (Caliphate).....	90
Economics	95
Other Jihadist Organizations	97
Self-Image	99
Modernity	105

List of Tables

Table 1 - Scholarly Understanding v. Islamic State Ideology	37
Table 2 - Chi Square Statistic/P-Value.....	39
Table 3 - Frequency/Percentages of Codes and Ideological Elements.....	55

List of Figures

Figure 1 - AQUAD 7 Load Screen.....	14
Figure 2 – Loading Files into AQUAD 7.....	16
Figure 3 – Textual Coding in AQUAD 7.....	18

Abstract

This study addresses a lacuna in scholarship on the ideology of the Islamic State resulting from the greater focus on al-Qaeda in scholarship on Salafist jihadism.

Through a qualitative analysis of the entire runs of the Islamic State's magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, this study offers full and granular image of the group's ideology.

Following this, the categorical differences between the ideologies of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State are identified and the meaning of these differences is discussed as well as the potential problems they pose for future scholarship – including an elaboration on the ideology of the Islamic State as representative of an emergent shift in Salafist jihadi ideology regarding Muslim unity.

Chapter 1: Topic, Research Questions, Methodology, and Overview

Since its apparent eruption onto the world stage in June of 2014, the Islamic State has shocked and disrupted the Middle East, and the world at large, with its violent theatrics and intense sectarianism. Though it came to wide attention in June of 2014, following its capture of Mosul, declaration of a renewed Caliphate, and rebranding itself as the Islamic State (formerly The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), the group has its origins at least as far back as 2003 in the immediate aftermath of the invasion of Iraq by Coalition forces led by the United States. Though ostensibly past the zenith of its power in terms of territory, the Islamic State's influence on the region, Salafi jihadism, and the world at large, has been profound. The Islamic State has conducted or inspired over one-hundred and forty successful attacks in twenty-nine countries as of February 2018.¹ Even if and/or when the Islamic State is fully stripped of all its territorial holdings, the true extent of the group's impact is unlikely to become fully clear for years.

The Islamic State: Brief Historical Background

While the Islamic State as it has become most widely known came into being in June of 2014, its origin extends back through predecessor groups into the late 1990s. Below is a brief overview of the group's history from its origins onward.

In 1999, Jordanian national and Salafi jihadist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi founded his own organization, Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, with the intention

¹ Tim Lister, Ray Sanchez, Mark Bixler, Sean O'Key, Michael Hogenmiller and Mohammed Tawfeeq, "ISIS goes global: 143 attacks in 29 countries have killed 2,043," *CNN*, 2-12-2018.

of fighting and overthrowing the government of Jordan.² Zarqawi and his organization were strong proponents of the pronouncement of takfir – declaring other Muslims to be apostates and targeting them for death.³ Following al-Qaeda’s 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq by US-led Coalition forces, Zarqawi and his organization entered Iraq to participate in the insurgency against US occupying forces and their Iraqi allies.⁴

The activities of Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad were characterized by suicide bombings, the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and an intense sectarian focus of its attacks on Iraqi Shias.⁵ The group’s violence also included a flare for theatrics – Zarqawi and his fighters became notorious for filming the beheadings of captured enemies and distributing the videos on the internet.⁶

In October of 2004, Zarqawi pledged the allegiance of himself and his organization to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda organization as an affiliate, changing its name to Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn, more generally known as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), though Zarqawi himself never called his group by this name.⁷ The relationship between Zarqawi and al-

² Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* (New York: Reagan Arts, 2015), 12–13.

³ William McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State*, First Picador ed. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, [2016] 2015), 10–11.

⁴ Joby Warrick, *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS*, First Anchor Books ed. (New York: Penguin Random House, [2016] 2015), 98.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 113–114.

⁶ Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016), 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 21–22.

Qaeda's central leadership was a strained one, especially over Zarqawi's continual focus on sectarian violence and takfirism.⁸

AQI's intense violence against Iraqi Shias and its violence against Sunni Muslims it considered apostates – including a series of roughly one-hundred attacks against voters participating in the democratic apostasy of the legislative elections of Iraq in January of 2005 – increasingly alienated AQI from more nationalist Sunni Iraqis.⁹ In an attempt to counteract this unpopularity and network with more like-minded jihadis and insurgents, Zarqawi formed the Mujahideen Shura Council in January of 2006.¹⁰ That June, Zarqawi was killed in a US airstrike, and leadership of AQI passed to Abu Ayyub al-Masri.¹¹

In October of 2006, the Mujahideen Shura Council announced the creation of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) out of AQI, elected Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as its leader, and later dissolved itself into the new organization.¹² AQI was folded into ISI, and its leader Abu Ayyub al-Masri was named War Minister.¹³ Through this period, despite the name change, ISI remained an al-Qaeda affiliate and continued to be generally referred to as AQI internationally.

From 2007 through 2010 ISI experienced cycles of setbacks and resurgence in its fight against American and Iraqi forces. In April of 2010, both Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri were killed in a raid, and most

⁸ Fawaz A. Gerges, *ISIS: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 72–74.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, 41–44.

¹¹ Stern and Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror*, 62.

¹² Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 93.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 94.

of the group's leadership had been killed or captured by this time.¹⁴ That May, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was named the new leader of ISI.¹⁵

The arrival of Baghdadi as leader saw another resurgence of the group. As Iraqi Sunnis continued to chafe under the sectarian politics of the majority Shia government, Baghdadi was able to bring experienced Sunni fighters and former Baathist regime officials to fill out its leadership structure – while growing Sunni disaffection with the new Iraqi government helped to replenish ISI's overall numbers.¹⁶ The resurgent ISI was able to exacerbate sectarian conflict within Iraq through renewed sectarian violence into 2012, while the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in August of 2011 saw the group begin to make inroads into Syria through 2013.¹⁷

With this expansion into Syria, the group again renamed itself, now as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in April of 2013. The group brought its propensity for intense sectarian violence into its conflict with Bashar al-Assad's Alawite-controlled government.¹⁸ As ISIS became increasingly violent and continued to proliferate in Iraq and Syria into late 2013, the tension between itself and al-Qaeda's central leadership – always fraught with tension – reached a breaking point.¹⁹ In October of 2013, al-Qaeda's leader Ayman al-Zawahiri (who replaced bin Laden following his death in 2012) ordered ISIS to dissolve

¹⁴ McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse*, 45.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Warrick, *Black Flags*, 259.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 260.

¹⁸ Charles R. Lister, *The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, The Islamic State and the Evolution of an Insurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 119–120.

¹⁹ Stern and Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror*, 68.

itself and for Baghdadi to focus his efforts in Iraq.²⁰ Baghdadi refused and remained active in Syria, culminating in al-Qaeda publicly disavowing ISIS in February of 2014.²¹

Such disavowal hardly mattered to Baghdadi, whose forces had captured Fallujah the previous month.²² By mid-June of 2014, ISIS had captured Mosul as well.²³ Flush with new power and territory, and now independent of al-Qaeda, ISIS once again changed its name. On June 29, 2014, Baghdadi declared himself the Caliph of a revived global Caliphate and renamed ISIS, simply, the Islamic State (IS), demanding the allegiance of Sunni Muslims worldwide.²⁴

What followed was a whirlwind of expansion and violence for which the world found itself unprepared. The Islamic State rapidly expanded its territorial gains into 2014, expanding over vast portions of Iraq and Syria and shocking the world with its revival of the institution of slavery against the captured Yazidi population in northern Iraq, and its theatrical display of intense violence combined with media and technical acumen.²⁵ This included a surge of Islamic State orchestrated and inspired terror attacks globally, achieving more violence against the West in a matter of years than al-Qaeda had managed over decades.

While these features of the Islamic State generated the most attention internationally, the group also expended unprecedented effort and resources in

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 69.

²² Gerjes, *ISIS: A History*, 169.

²³ Patrick Cockburn, *The Jihadis Return: ISIS and the New Sunni Uprising* (New York: OR Books, 2014), 50.

²⁴ Lister, *The Syrian Jihad*, 221.

²⁵ McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse*, 111–113; for discussion of how this media acumen translated into the digital sphere, see also Elizabeth Bodin-Baron, Todd C. Helmus, Madeline Magnuson, Zev Winkelman, *Examining ISIS Support and Opposition Networks on Twitter* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 2016).

establishing a jihadist state. Thousands of administrative documents discovered following the recapture of Mosul demonstrate the full extent to which the Islamic State sought to functionally actualize its namesake: expansive public works and sanitation, health services and administrative apparatuses, an economy with a robust system of taxation, an education system extending through graduate studies, a court system, and others.²⁶ Erstwhile citizens liberated from Islamic State control often characterized its state services as significantly more advanced than those present before Islamic State control.²⁷

Ultimately, the Islamic State was divested of its heartland in Iraq and Syria, with nearly all of its territory there retaken by the end of 2017. Despite this, in the interim, the Islamic State has spawned affiliated organizations across three continents.²⁸ While the Islamic State, as it was most visible in Iraq and Syria, may be ultimately destroyed, the scope of its impact may well take years to fully understand.

Approaching the Research Questions

The apparently spectacular deviation of the Islamic State's praxis from that of the al-Qaeda to which it, and its previous incarnations, had previously sworn allegiance, was shocking in many quarters - from academic and policy circles to the international media and public at large. The core of this shock is the lingering sense that al-Qaeda represents the "cutting edge" and benchmark of Salafi jihadism worldwide. This sense developed in the wake of al-Qaeda's

²⁶ Rukmini Callimachi, "The ISIS Files," *New York Times*, 3-4-2018.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Office of the Spokesperson, "State Department Terrorist Designations of ISIS Affiliates and Senior Leaders," U.S. Department of State, 2-27-2018.

spectacular attacks on the United States in September of 2001.²⁹ This sense corresponded with al-Qaeda's own self-image (and may indeed be the only item upon which al-Qaeda and the United States agreed) and extended to the point that elements within academic and policy circles conceived of al-Qaeda's ideology as a sort of free-floating Salafist jihadi meme proliferating into a global "leaderless jihad."³⁰ While this particular memetic conception has been controversial among academics, it has persisted.³¹

Outside of the "leaderless jihad" concept, al-Qaeda still retains the status of Salafi jihadism benchmark as the overall leader of the "global jihad" against the West in the perception of academic and policy circles. This has been more of a reflection of the sense of al-Qaeda as the Salafist jihadi "cutting edge," and has persisted even as the group has waxed and waned in relative marginality as an actor.³² Indeed, aside from the prestige that went along with the 9/11 attacks, the

²⁹ For a discussion of this development, see Barak Mendelsohn, *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), especially 53–59.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 57–58. For the concept of "leaderless jihad," see Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). Notably, Sageman considers this memetic function as active even in the absence of action or even the continued existence of al-Qaeda.

³¹ For example, see the exchange between Sageman and Bruce Hoffman over the matter, which was intense enough that it generated national attention: Elaine Sciolino and Eric Schmitt, "A Not Very Private Feud Over Terrorism," *New York Times*, 6-8-2008; For examples of persistence, see Antoine Bousquet, "Complexity Theory and the War on Terror: Understanding the Self-Organising Dynamics of Leaderless Jihad," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 15 no. 3 (2011): 1–25; also Jason Burkeman, *The New Threat: the Past, Present, and Future of Islamic Militancy* (New York: The New Press, 2017).

³² See Barak Mendelsohn, *The al-Qaeda Franchise: The Expansion of al-Qaeda and its Consequences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), especially 61–65. Here, Mendelsohn expresses this dichotomy well, characterizing al-Qaeda as too incompetent to use the prestige of 9/11 to pull itself out of marginality, arguing that the adoption of the franchising strategy was an attempt to counter its increasingly marginal status post-9/11, and that this strategy has backfired by only accelerating its marginalization.

group became increasingly marginal as an actor subsequently.³³ In this sense, the benchmarking has been more of a reflection of al-Qaeda as an idea of what is normative for Salafi jihadism.³⁴ This has persisted long past the operational capacity which made al-Qaeda this benchmark in the first place.³⁵ The spectacular advent and behaviors of the Islamic State have presented a challenge to the scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism, one to which it has had difficulty responding.

This difficulty has much to do with the time the Islamic State's forerunner organizations spent as al-Qaeda affiliates/franchises. While it was understood by scholars during this period that there was a certain level of tension between the senior leadership of al-Qaeda and Zarqawi's organization in Iraq, the general sense was that at its core was a debate over praxis in the jihad arena of Iraq, rather than one of real differences of objective or ideology. This is especially notable in one particular aspect: the original alliance between al-Qaeda and Zarqawi was based around a sort of timetable and praxis compromise, which Brian H. Fishman has discussed in his 2016 monograph *The Master Plan: ISIS, al-Qaeda, and the Jihadi Strategy for Final Victory*.

This "master plan" was a part of the agreement wherein Zarqawi and his fellows swore allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2004.³⁶ It consists of a seven-stage timetable including the reestablishment of the Caliphate between 2013 and

³³ Vahid Brown, "Classical and Global Jihad: Al-Qai'da's Franchising Frustrations," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, and Ideological Fissures*, Assaf Moghdam and Brian Fishman (eds.) (New York: Routledge, 2011), 88.

³⁴ Mendelsohn, *The al-Qaeda Franchise*, 61.

³⁵ Phillipe Migaux, "Al Qaeda," in *The History of Terrorism from Antiquity to ISIS*, Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin (eds.) (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 328–331.

³⁶ Brian H. Fishman, *The Master Plan: ISIS, al-Qaeda, and the Jihadi Strategy for Final Victory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 17.

2016, with a “final victory” for the jihadis projected around 2020.³⁷ Scholarly treatment of this “master plan” illustrates the persistence of the concept of al-Qaeda as a benchmark for what is normative in Salafi jihadism. Prior to the split between al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, this “master plan” was utilized as an exemplar of al-Qaeda’s status as the benchmark and leader of Salafi jihadism.³⁸ This persisted until the Islamic State broke away from al-Qaeda.³⁹ After this break, however, there has been a move to retain the sense of al-Qaeda normativity vis-à-vis Salafi jihadism, leading to a disavowal that the “master plan” was ever actually a part of that benchmark – even from scholars who had previously utilized it as an example of such.⁴⁰

This reflects a certain lack of plasticity in regard to scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism in response to the Islamic State. While the unavoidable concession has been made to the clear differences in praxis between al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, the benchmark of al-Qaeda as normative for Salafi jihadism has persisted. Brian H. Fishman has noted that this has caused scholars to be slow in investigating, or even acknowledging, major ideological differences between al-Qaeda and the Islamic State outside of the sectarianism which drives its spectacular violence.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ For a discussion of the “master plan” as it pertained to al-Qaeda’s engagement with the Arab-Israeli Conflict, see Barak Mendelsohn, “Al-Qaeda’s Palestinian Problem,” *Survival* 51 no. 4 (2009): 71–86.

³⁹ For an example from months before this break, see Martin Rudner, “Al Qaeda’s Twenty-Year Strategic Plan: The Current Phase of Global Terror,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 36 no. 12 (2013): 953–980.

⁴⁰ For an example of this, see Mendelsohn, *The al-Qaeda Franchise*, 94–97.

⁴¹ Brian H. Fishman, “The Master Plan: ISIS, al-Qaeda, and the Jihadi Strategy for Final Victory” (Lecture, Sponsored by The Center for Right-Wing Studies, University of California, Berkeley, CA, February 2, 2017).

It is to this lacuna, the overall ideology of the Islamic State, that the present study directs its research questions:

1. What is the ideology of the Islamic State?
2. How does Islamic State ideology differ from current scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism?
3. What is the meaning of these differences?

Researchers on the topic of the Islamic State's ideology who are seeking to answer questions such as those above at least have the benefit of not lacking for available documentary materials. The Islamic State is a prolific publisher of online content, from magazines and documentary films, to the polished and theatrical execution videos which have garnered such attention in Western media coverage and scholarship. Rather than focus on the production value or savvy of the group's internet magazines, this study will utilize them as a source of information.

Methodology: Qualitative Analysis of Texts

In pursuit of answers to this study's research questions on the ideology of the Islamic State, the text of the group's al-Hayat Media Center English-language magazines *Dabiq*, published from 2014–2016, and *Rumiyah*, published from 2016–2017, will be subject to computer-aided qualitative analysis (QA) of its content. The rationale for this methodology, outlined below, builds upon extant but limited qualitative analysis work on the Islamic State.

Rationale for Methodology

Since the increase of Salafi jihadist utilization of the internet, qualitative analysis studies on these groups' published content, especially al-Qaeda, have

enriched the knowledge base of both academic scholars and policy makers. Through the course of the War on Terror since 2001, such analysis has heavily focused its attention on al-Qaeda. Such studies have allowed for much greater granularity in the understanding of Salafi jihadist strategies, objectives, and ideology – with al-Qaeda serving as a benchmark.⁴²

The advent of the Islamic State, given its relative youth in comparison to its “parent” organization, al-Qaeda, has generated a limited amount of qualitative analysis on its published content. Such analyses have focused on the strategies and objectives of the Islamic State, seeking to parse the relevant differences between the newer group and al-Qaeda along these dimensions.⁴³ While such analyses have been useful in expanding understanding of strategic and objective differences beyond the obvious, such as the wide use of theatrical executions and sectarian violence, qualitative analysis work on Islamic State ideology has thus far been lacking.

Overall, it is assumed that the ideology of the Islamic State, given its status as a Salafi jihadist group, is essentially the same as the ideology of al-Qaeda. There is a certain illogic to this, as the drastic differences in objectives

⁴² See, for example: Gregory L. Keeney and Detlof von Winterfeldt, “Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists,” *Risk Analysis* 30 no. 12 (2010): 1803–1816; Valentina Bartolucci and Steven R. Corman, *The Narrative Landscape of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb* (Tempe, AZ: The Center for Strategic Communication, 2014); Manuel R. Torres, “Analysis and Evolution of the Global Jihadist Movement Propaganda,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18 no. 3 (2006): 399–421; Anne Aly and Jason-Leigh Striegher, “Examining the Role of Religion in Radicalization to Violent Islamist Extremism,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35 no. 12 (2012): 849–862.

⁴³ See, for example: Celine Marie I. Novenario, “Differentiating Al Qaeda and the Islamic State Through Strategies Publicized in *Jihadist Magazines*,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 39 no. 11 (2016): 953–967; Also, see Fishman, *The Master Plan*; While engaging in QA on Salafi jihadist web content to build course syllabi at West Point, Fishman stumbled upon the material serving as the basis of *The Master Plan*. See the lecture in which he discusses this process: Fishman, “The Master Plan,” Lecture.

and strategies between the groups at least implies a difference in the ideology informing the Islamic State's objectives and strategies. Yet, scholarly understanding of the Islamic State's ideology remains rooted in the corpus on Salafi jihadism developed primarily through analyses of al-Qaeda, by way of the group's persistent status as a benchmark as discussed above. That the groups have gone to war against one another, with each decrying the other as fundamentally in error, and even existentially illegitimate, highlights a need to approach the ideology of the Islamic State as a discrete subject of analysis. This study seeks to address this lack.

A systematic qualitative analysis of the Islamic State's *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* magazines, in addition to providing answers to the above research questions, holds three distinctive additional merits:

1. Offers a more complete picture of the differences between the Islamic State and al-Qaeda beyond strategies and objectives.
2. QA on the roughly 700,000 words of both magazines allows for a robust and truly granular understanding of the Islamic State's ideology.
3. Provides an image of developing trends in, and the cutting edge of, Salafi jihadist ideology as represented by the Islamic State as a break from the al-Qaeda benchmark.

The third listed benefit is the most important from a utilitarian standpoint: the scholarly corpus of Salafi jihadist ideology needs to be current in order to remain relevant.

Further, from a policy standpoint, a clear and accurate understanding of the Islamic State is ultimately vital to the success of any effort to combat the Islamic State. As Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz rightly observes, the first and most vital judgment of those making war is to “[...]”

establish...the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.”⁴⁴ This all-important judgment is impossible for as long as the scope of the Islamic State’s ideology remains a mystery – which it will so long as it is merely assumed to reflect that of al-Qaeda.

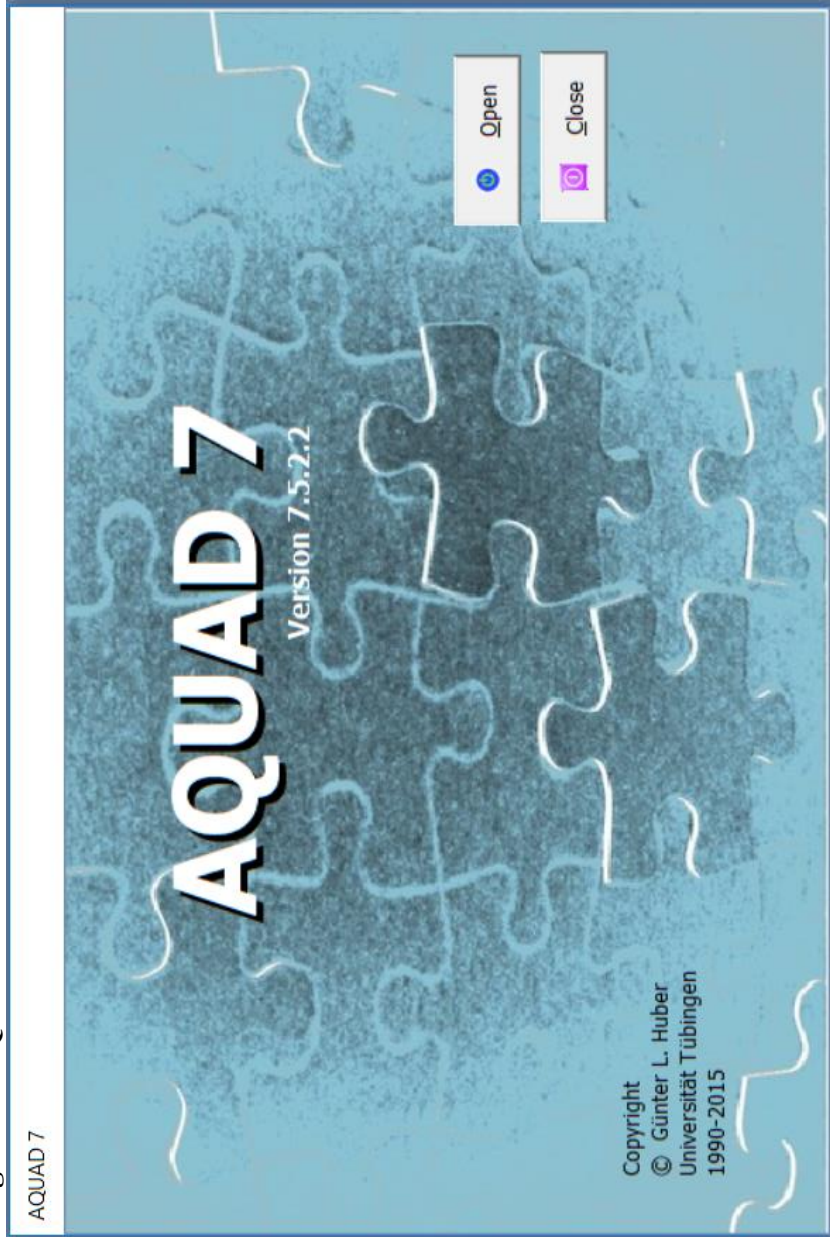
The qualitative analysis of the Islamic State’s English-language magazines for this study is carried out in four separate stages, as summarized below:

Summary of Stage 1 – Coding Text

First, the entire runs of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* will be coded for content utilizing the AQUAD 7 software, illustrated below:

⁴⁴ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret (eds., trans.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1989] 1832), 88.

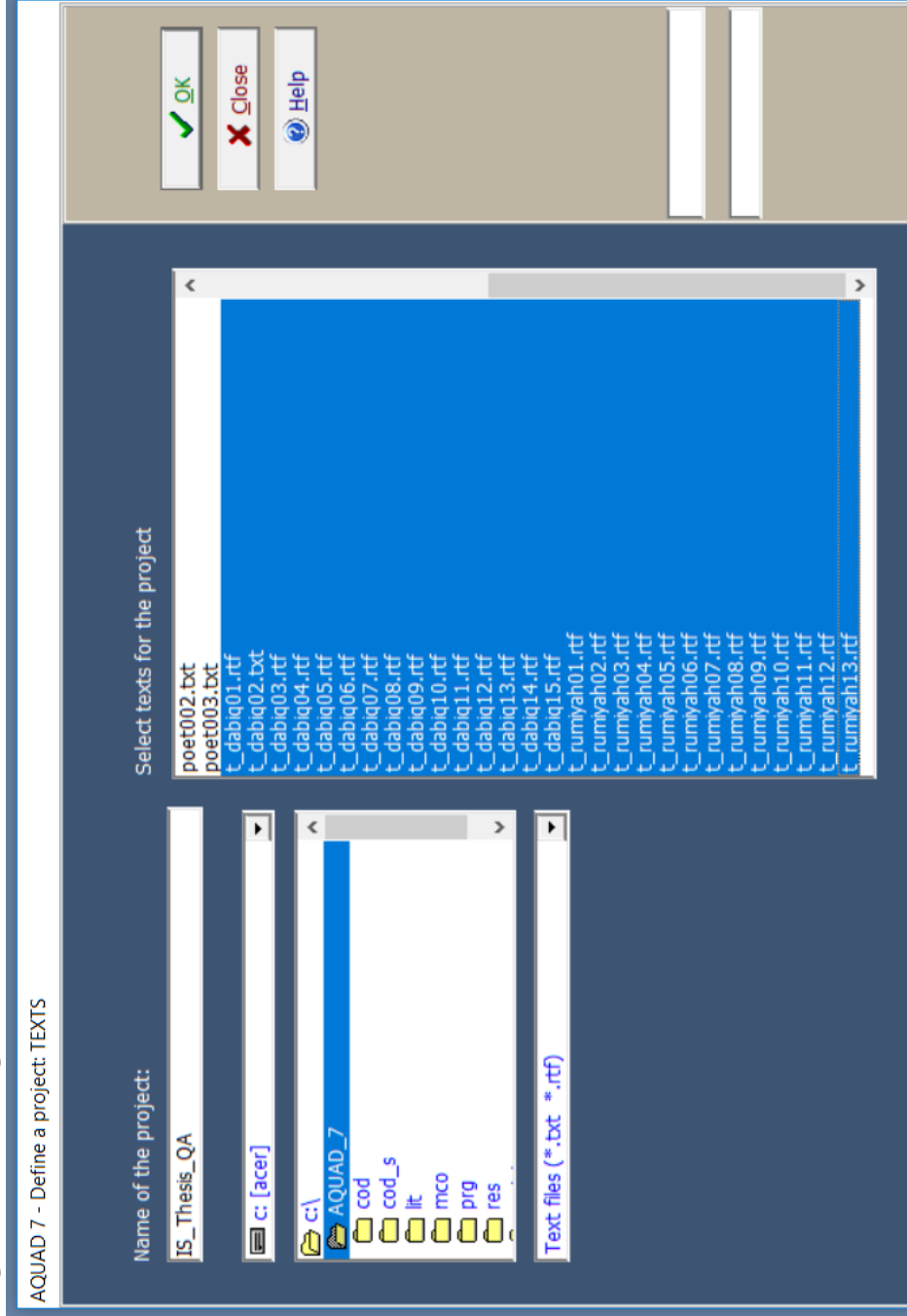
Figure 1 - AQUAD 7 Load Screen



AQUAD 7 is an open-source, freeware, qualitative analysis package created by Günter L. Huber, retired Chair of Educational Psychology at the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Tübingen. The AQUAD 7 software, along with its documentation, can be found at: <http://www.aquad.de/>

The raw text of *Dabiq* (16 issues) and *Rumiyah* (13 issues) are parsed from each issue and converted to rich text format (.rtf) files, with file names in ascending order (t_dabiq01, t_dabiq02...etc.). These files are then imported into the AQUAD 7 software, as illustrated below:

Figure 2 – Loading Files into AQUAD 7



Within the AQUAD 7 software environment, the text of each issue of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* is read and coded. In Qualitative Analysis, segments of text are selected and assigned codes. Each code represents a particular category. For the purpose of the present study, each category reflects a topic of ideological context. For example: segments of text pertaining to topics such as “International Order” or “Arab-Israeli Conflict” will be assigned the appropriate code/category. This process is illustrated below:

Figure 3 – Textual Coding in AQUAD 7

Text Content analysis (Project: IS_Thesis_QA)

Memo from	to	Code	Req.	Length
0	125	06_State-Building (Calphate)	4810	210
0	148	06_State-Building (Calphate)	5931	975
0	171	01_International Order	7041	432
0	181	01_International Order	7481	248
0	187	01_International Order	7739	259
0	187	05_Islamic Governance	7739	259
0	187	06_State-Building (Calphate)	7739	259
0	193	01_International Order	8052	802
0	193	04_Violence/Combat	8052	802
0	193	06_State-Building (Calphate)	8052	802
0	193	09_Self-Image	8052	802
0	214	01_International Order	8947	607
0	214	03_Sectarianism	8947	607
0	214	04_Violence/Combat	8947	607
0	214	08_Other Jihadist Organizations	8947	607
0	214	09_Self-Image	8947	607
0	226	01_International Order	9561	112
0	226	05_Islamic Governance	9561	112
0	226	06_State-Building (Calphate)	9561	112
0	230	01_International Order	9704	1071
0	230	06_State-Building (Calphate)	9704	1071
0	230	09_Self-Image	9704	1071
0	257	09_Self-Image	10981	140
0	264	01_International Order	11201	879
0	264	06_State-Building (Calphate)	11201	879
0	292	01_International Order	12374	424
0	292	05_Islamic Governance	12374	424
0	292	06_State-Building (Calphate)	12374	424
0	292	09_Self-Image	12374	424
0	302	01_International Order	12806	548
0	302	06_State-Building (Calphate)	12806	548
0	315	01_International Order	13363	831
0	315	04_Violence/Combat	13363	831
0	315	06_State-Building (Calphate)	13363	831
0	335	06_State-Building (Calphate)	14202	358
0	335	07_Economics	14202	358
0	347	06_State-Building (Calphate)	14568	121
0	347	07_Economics	14568	121
0	351	06_State-Building (Calphate)	14697	123

136} Muslim Ummah with news of victory, thereby
137} guiding them towards obedience of His
138} Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa
139} sallam) - the path to Jannah.
140} Below are some of the most important excerpts
141} from the two speeches.
142} God brings for the Muslim Ummah
143} AmruHu minni said: "O Muslims everywhere,
144} glad things to you and expect good. Raise your
145} head high, for today - by Allah's grace - you
146} have a state and Khilafah, which will return
147} My earthly rights to us, and address
148} the enemy with the A... and...
149} white man and black man, the easterner and
150} westerner are all brothers.
151} It is a Khilafah that gathered the Caucasus,
152} Indian, Chinese, Shami, Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian,
153} Maghribi (North African), American, French,
154} German, and Australian. Allah brought their
155} hearts together, and thus, they became brothers
156} by His grace, loving each other for the sake of
157} Allah, standing in a single trench, defending and
158} guarding each other, and sacrificing themselves
159} for one another.
160} Their blood mixed and became one, under a
161} single flag and goal, in one pavilion, enjoying this
162} blessing, the blessing of faithful brotherhood.
163} If kings were to taste this blessing, they would
164} abandon their kingdoms and fight over this
165} grace. So all praise and thanks are due to Allah."
166} breaking news
167} 8 9
168} cabiq
169} A new era has arrived
170} of might and dignity for the Muslims
171} **Amrullah said: Soon, by Allah's**
172} **permission, we will see the Muslim**
173} **Ummah everywhere as a single, united**
174} **front, honor being revered, with his head raised**
175} **high, and his dignity preserved.**
176} **Anyone who dares to offend him will be**
177} **disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to**
178} **harm him will be cut off.**
179} **So let the world know that we are**
180} **living today in a new era.**
181} **Whoever was headless must now be alert.**

For the complete list of ideological context codes/categories and the process of their determination, see Chapter 2. The completion of this process makes up the first stage of this study's qualitative analysis.

Summary of Stage 2 – Analyzing Coded Text

In the second stage of qualitative analysis, the AQUAD 7 software is used to aggregate the coded text segments by type and then output them as individual text files, again by code/category, for analysis. These aggregated collections are carefully analyzed to derive an expansive set of ideological elements of the Islamic State. For example, an ideological element derived from a text segment from the code/category “International Order” would be something like “Jihad is the only acceptable Islamic response to the international order.”

The complete list of these elements, organized by code/category, can be found in Appendix A. From these ideological elements, a complete framework of the Islamic State's ideology will be constructed in the next stage.

Summary of Stage 3 – Deriving Islamic State Ideology

The ideological elements of the previous stage of qualitative analysis are condensed in order to derive the framework of the Islamic State's overall ideology, organized by code/category. For example, the condensed ideological elements pertaining to the code/category “International Order” will derive an overview of the Islamic State's ideology regarding the International Order. The results of this process will be applied in the next stage.

Summary of Stage 4 – Addressing Research Questions

At length, the findings of the qualitative analysis will be brought to bear upon the research questions outlined earlier in the Introduction:

1. What is the ideology of the Islamic State?
2. How does Islamic State ideology differ from current scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism?
3. What is the meaning of these differences?

The process of this qualitative analysis will be integrated into the structure of this study as outlined in the overview below.

General Overview

The qualitative analysis on the textual content of the Islamic State's English-language magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, and the derivation of the Islamic State's ideology, is carried out in Chapter Two. This is accomplished by first surveying the scholarly corpus on the ideology of Salafi jihadism, for which al-Qaeda serves as the benchmark, in order to generate the codes/categories which are then used for this study's qualitative analysis. This will proceed as outlined above.

Chapter Three comprises a discussion of the answers to this study's research questions using the qualitative data derived within the previous chapter. This will take the form of an overview of the Islamic State's ideology, organized by code/category, and a charting of the apparent differences in relation to scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology. In addition to this, a Chi square test is run to determine what the qualitative data indicates about the relationship between the ideology of the Islamic State and what should be

expected of that ideology based on current scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology. The final research question is also addressed, discussing the meaning of these ideological differences.

Finally, within the Conclusion, the scope of discussion is expanded to address the potential relevance of this study's parsing of the Islamic State's ideology more broadly upon scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism more generally and considerations pertinent to future scholarship.

Chapter 2: Qualitative Analysis

In order to execute a qualitative analysis of the text of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* magazines, a list of ideological codes/categories must first be generated with which the text will be coded. This process is laid out below, followed by a summary of the results of this study's QA.

Determining Codes/Categories

What follows is a summary of the scholarly consensus of the ideology of Salafi jihadism, the scholarship of which uses al-Qaeda as a benchmark, as discussed above. From this consensus, a list of qualitative analysis codes/categories will be generated, which will be used in coding the text of the Islamic State's *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* magazines.

Scholarly understanding of al-Qaeda/Salafist Jihadism

The ideology of Salafi jihadism views the international order as illegitimate because it is un-Islamic. Broadly speaking, the post-Ottoman international order is seen as a Westernized imposition by "Crusaders and Zionists" that is fundamentally hostile toward Muslims. The global culture of this international order exists in a state of contemporary jahiliyyah (mirroring the religious ignorance of pre-Islamic Arabia), which must be Islamized overall. This is to be done on a state by state basis, individual nation-states are to be Islamized by inspiring populist Islamist revivals – the sum of these will form a sort of confederation of Islamic polities. At length, the whole of the Western international order is to be Islamized in this fashion. In the interim, terrorism

will continue until the West withdraws from Islamic lands and the State of Israel is destroyed.⁴⁵

Along those lines, the Arab-Israeli Conflict is ideologically prominent. The destruction of Israel is to include likewise the destruction, or the expulsion, of Israel's Jewish population. This is a high priority, as Israel is viewed as one of the primary causes of continued Western presence within Islamic lands. The fight against Israel extends to support for other organizations, including those with differing ideologies, such as the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, and even across the Sunni-Shia divide, to include Hezbollah. In line with this is a general support for the cause of Palestinian nationalism.⁴⁶

This willingness to support even Shia groups like Hezbollah in its fight against Israel illustrates the overall low-priority given to the Sunni-Shia divide. This follows from a sense that sectarian disputes can and should remain sidelined until such a time as the greater visions of ending Western involvement in Muslim lands and the destruction of Israel are realized. This has included a cool, yet not hostile, relationship with the government of Iran.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See R. Gunaratna and A. Oreg, "Al Qaeda's Organizational Structure and its Evolution," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33 (2010): 1043–1078; Manfred B. Steger, "Religion and Ideology in the Global Age: Analyzing al Qaeda's Islamist Globalism," *New Political Science* 31 no. 4 (2009): 529–541.

⁴⁶ See R. Rowland and K. Theye, "The Symbolic DNA of Terrorism," *Communication Monographs* 75 (2008): 52-85; Keeney and Winterfeldt, "Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists"; Steger, "Religion and Ideology in the Global Age"; Reuven Paz, "Jihadists and Nationalist Jihadists: Al-Qa'ida and Hamas," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, and Ideological Fissures*, Assaf Moghdam and Brian Fishman (eds.) (New York: Routledge, 2011), 203–219. Notably, the Arab-Israeli Conflict has historically been one of, if not the only, matter upon which consensus cuts across all ideological demographics of the Muslim world; Mendelsohn, "Al-Qaeda's Palestinian Problem."

⁴⁷ See Keeney and Winterfeldt, "Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists"; Eban Kaplan, "The Al-Qaeda – Hezbollah Relationship," Council on Foreign Relations, 08-10-2006; "Iran's Link to Al-Qaeda: The 9-11 Commission's Evidence (Document)," *Middle East*

In terms of violence and combat, the ideological focus is on mass-casualty terror attacks – with an emphasis on attacking Western, and especially US, targets. This “Far Enemy” emphasis follows from a logic that the West/US can be induced to divest itself from involvement in Muslim countries, and from support of Israel, if mass-casualty attacks are persistent and sustained. Achieving Western/US divestment will open the window for jihadis to successfully spearhead the popular uprising against the un-Islamic post-colonial states in Muslim lands. This includes support for and participation in local insurgencies against Western intervention (such as the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq). The gruesome execution of individual enemies and careless collateral damage to Muslim civilians are discouraged as counter-productive to winning the hearts and minds of the Muslim masses.⁴⁸

The ideology on governance holds that the only possible legitimate government is one based upon Islamic law (sharia). However, there is no fixed conception of what this should or could look like. Generally, this leans toward the support of Islamizing the structures of states already extant in Muslim lands – of inspiring through jihadi activities a populist movement wherein Muslims will self-Islamize the governance of their own states. In this regard, state-building is an overall low priority. While the ideology supports the ultimate creation of a Caliphate, this is a long-term goal that – as mentioned above – is not possible until the “Far Enemy” is defeated and driven out of Muslim lands.

Quarterly 11 no. 4 (2004): 71–74; Paul Hastert, “Al Qaeda and Iran: Friends or Foes, or Somewhere in Between?” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30 no. 4 (2007): 327–336.

⁴⁸ See Keeney and Winterfeldt, “Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists”; Steger, “Religion and Ideology in the Global Age.”

At this point, the Islamization of extant states in Muslim lands is expected to flow organically from the Muslim masses themselves.⁴⁹

The generally paltry ideological coverage of state-building carries over to sparse coverage of economics. In terms of group funding, the focus is on donations to front the costs of its own operations and the funneling of funds to “jihad arenas” (areas of active jihadist insurgency). Beyond this, economic ideology centers on a form of economic warfare against the West/US. The idea is to “bleed” them economically through the massive expenditures required both to combat jihadi activity and to repair/recover from damage caused by mass-casualty terror attacks. There is also a sense that the global economy can be gradually Islamized by the transfer of greater amounts of wealth into Muslim lands through Western/US continued dependency on petroleum.⁵⁰

Overall, the ideology is flexible enough that they are willing to collaborate with other jihadi groups, even when these groups are ideologically different – to the extent that outright conflict with other jihadi groups is sought to be avoided. This follows from a logic that the greater goal of ejecting the “Far Enemy” from its involvement in Muslim lands and support of Israel takes immediate precedence over other concerns. This is an outgrowth of its ideological self-perception as an elite vanguard of pure Islam ushering in a

⁴⁹ See Keeney and Winterfeldt, “Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists”; Steger, “Religion and Ideology in the Global Age”; Donald Holbrook, “Al-Qaeda’s Grievances in Context: Reconciling Sharia and Society,” *International Relations* 30 no. 4 (2016): 473–493; Reza Pankhurst, “The Caliphate, and The Changing Strategy of the Public Statements of Al-Qaeda’s Leaders,” *Political Theology* 11 no. 4 (2010): 530–552; Note that this has undergone some revisionism since the breakaway of the Islamic State, resetting the ideology of state-building once again in the undefined future: see discussion on the “master plan” in Chapter 1.

⁵⁰ See Keeney and Winterfeldt, “Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists”; Gal Luft, “Al Qaeda’s Economic War against the United States,” *Journal of Energy Security*, January 24, 2005.

populist wave of Islamization. In the service of their Manichean struggle with the Crusaders and Zionists, al-Qaeda views itself as an exemplar of collaboration and leadership among jihadis engaged in this struggle.⁵¹

Qualitative Analysis Codes/Categories

From the summary above, nine qualitative analysis codes/categories can be derived. A tenth code is also necessary as an addendum: on the matter of the relationship between Salafi jihadists and modernity, scholarly opinion is very fractious and lacks consensus. Some scholars view Salafist jihadi ideology, and often Islamism overall, as existentially anti-modern.⁵² Other scholars contend that Salafi jihadism is a thoroughly modern phenomenon.⁵³ This scholarly disagreement extends to modernity vis-à-vis the Islamic State.⁵⁴ This study's project of generating a granular image of the Islamic State's ideology provides

⁵¹ See Keeney and Winterfeldt, "Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of Terrorists"; Steger, "Religion and Ideology in the Global Age"; Bernard Haykel, "Al-Qa'ida and Shiism," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic and Ideological Fissures*, Assaf Moghdam and Brian Fishman (eds.) (New York: Routledge, 2011), 185–202. Importantly, Haykel's examination elaborates on the tension between the relatively moderate Salafi position on sectarianism, and differing ideological camps more generally, taken by al-Qaeda upper leadership – and the much more radical and sectarian elements in Iraq. These latter elements were Zarqawi and those who later formed the core of the Islamic State.

⁵² See, for example: Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Anthony F. Roberts (trans.) (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Inside Jihadism: Understanding Jihadi Movements Worldwide* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Steger, "Religion and Ideology in the Global Age," 537. Notably, Steger treats modernity as a sort of object that, like the international order and the nation-state, al-Qaeda seeks to Islamize.

⁵³ See, for example: John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 4th ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998); Muhammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008); John Gray, *Al-Qaeda and What it Means to be Modern*, (London: Faber, 2003); Assaf Moghdam and Brian Fishman (eds.), *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, and Ideological Fissures* (New York: Routledge, 2011). Overall, the Moghdam and Fishman volume conveys a sense of an inherently ambivalent modernity to Salafist jihadism.

⁵⁴ For an example asserting the Islamic State's anti-modernity, see Gerges, *ISIS: A History*; On the other hand, John Gray has asserted the essential modernity of the Islamic State, see John Gray, "The Anomaly of Barbarism: The Brutality of Islamist Terrorism has Many Precedents," *Lapham's Quarterly* 9 no. 2 (2016).

an opportunity for that image to potentially address the scholarly ambiguity over Salafi jihadism and modernity. Thus, a tenth *modernity* code/category will be added to this study's qualitative analysis.

The following is a list of codes/categories generated for this study's qualitative analysis from the summary above:

1. International Order
2. Arab-Israeli Conflict
3. Sectarianism
4. Violence/Combat
5. Islamic Governance
6. State-Building (Caliphate)
7. Economics
8. Other Jihadist Organizations
9. Self-Image
10. Modernity

While these codes/categories can be used in this study's qualitative analysis of *Dabiq* and *Rumiya*, there needs to be something readily available against which to compare the resultant qualitative data, which is outlined below.

Comparable Salafist Jihadi Ideology, as Expected by Scholarship

The above summary of the scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology must be made useful for the comparison required to answer this study's research questions. To accomplish this, that summary has been condensed into discrete units. These units correspond to the various ideological aspects of Salafist jihadism as understood by scholarly consensus and serves as an indicator of what is expected from the ideology of the Islamic State by that consensus. There

are thirty-six of these indicators in total. These are listed below, organized by code/category:

1. International Order

1. Illegitimate and Un-Islamic
2. Westernized Post-Ottoman International Order (Jahiliyyah)
3. To be Islamized Overall
4. Nation-States to be Islamized individually
5. Confederation of Islamic polities
6. End of Terrorism Contingent on West withdrawing from Islamic lands/Destruction of Israel

2. Arab-Israeli Conflict

7. Destruction of Israel
8. Jews to be Destroyed/Expelled
9. High Priority
10. Support of Palestinian Authority
11. Support of Hamas
12. Support of Palestinian Nationalism
13. End of Terrorism Contingent on West withdrawing from Islamic lands/Destruction of Israel

3. Sectarianism

14. Low Priority
15. Disputes Sidelined until West expelled from Muslim Lands and Israel Destroyed
16. Willing to collaborate across the Sunni-Shia Divide

4. Violence/Combat

17. Focus on Mass-Casualty Terror Attacks
18. Focus on “Far Enemy”/Western/US Targets
19. Support local insurgency against Western intervention
20. Avoid Gruesome Execution of Enemies

5. Islamic Governance
 21. Sharia-based Government only Legitimate Government
 22. Supports Islamizing the structures of Extant Muslim States
 23. Inspire Muslims to self-Islamize their own States (populist)
6. State-Building (Caliphate)
 24. Low priority
 25. Long-term goal
 26. Not possible until defeat of “Far Enemy”
 27. Islamization of Extant States into an Islamic Confederation
7. Economics
 28. Support through donations
 29. Economic Warfare Against the West (Bleeding)
 30. Islamize Global Economy through Transfer of Wealth (Oil)
8. Other Jihadists Organizations
 31. Willing to Collaborate
 32. Willing to affiliate even if ideologically different
 33. Avoid Conflict with other organizations
9. Self-Image
 34. An Elite Vanguard of Pure Islam
 35. Ushering in Populist Wave of Islamization
 36. Locked in Manichean Struggle with West (Crusaders and Zionists)

These indicators will be utilized after the results of this study’s qualitative analysis are obtained.

Results of Qualitative Analysis of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*

Stage One of QA on *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, coding the text, generated 2,100 coded segments. Of these: 364 were coded for International Order (17.33%); 13 were coded for Arab-Israeli Conflict (0.62%); 287 were coded for Sectarianism

(13.67%); 295 were coded for Violence/Combat (14%); 266 were coded for Islamic Governance (12.67%); 260 were coded for State-Building (Caliphate) (12.38%); 45 were coded for Economics (2.14%); 149 were coded for Other Jihadist Organizations (7.10%); 364 were coded for Self-Image (17.33%); and 57 were coded for Modernity (2.71%).

Stage Two of QA on *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, analyzing the coded text, generated 373 distinctive ideological elements. Of these: 74 elements were derived on the International Order (19.89%); 9 elements were derived on the Arab-Israeli Conflict (2.42%); 44 elements were derived on Sectarianism (11.83%); 64 elements were derived on Violence/Combat (17%); 29 elements were derived on Islamic Governance (7.80%); 43 elements were derived on State-Building (Caliphate) (11.56%); 26 elements were derived on Economics (6.99%); 17 elements were derived on Other Jihadist Organizations (4.57%); 56 elements were derived on Self-Image (15.05%); and 10 elements were derived on Modernity (2.69%). The complete list of these ideological elements is recorded in total in Appendix A.

Stage Three of QA on *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, deriving Islamic State ideology, generated an overview of the Islamic State's ideology by context code/category. This overview is recorded in the following chapter, where this study turns to answering its research questions.

Chapter 3: Discussion

With the first three stages of QA on *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* complete, Stage Four applies the results to this study's research questions. The results of Stage Three are recorded below as the answer to the first research question:

What is the Ideology of the Islamic State?

On the International Order

The international order is illegitimate because it is un-Islamic. The Ottoman Empire's adoption of Westernized idolatries led the Muslim world to ruin and allowed for its destruction. The international order is a Westernized imposition by "Crusaders and Zionists" that is fundamentally hostile toward Muslims. The global culture of this international order exists in a state of contemporary jahiliyyah (mirroring the religious ignorance of pre-Islamic Arabia), which must be destroyed and replaced by a revival of the Muslim world in the form of the Islamic State's Caliphate. Nation-states are born out of the idolatry of nationalism, as such they must all be destroyed and replaced by the Caliphate. At length, the whole of the Western international order is to be destroyed and replaced in this fashion. Terror attacks can never truly end; however, a temporary truce might be possible if the Crusaders cease their violence against Muslims and end their support for apostate regimes and the State of Israel.

On the Arab-Israeli Conflict

While Israel must be destroyed, and its Jews subjected to paying the jizya, this is a low priority. At its core, the Arab-Israeli Conflict is rife with apostasy. The idolatry of Palestinian nationalism must be destroyed first before the Jewish

state can be dealt with appropriately. The Palestinian Authority, Hamas, and especially Hezbollah are apostate organizations which must be destroyed. The Islamic State rejects Palestinian nationalism along with all other Western-derived idolatries.

On Sectarianism

The Islamic State holds sectarianism as its highest priority, to the extent that they view the world as two distinctive camps: the Islamic State as the true manifestation of Islam, and the world of idolatry encompassing everything and everyone else. This paramount focus on sectarian disputes is such that the Islamic State holds that it must annihilate apostasy within Muslim lands before the “Far Enemy” of the West can effectively be fought. For them, the Sunni-Shia divide is unbridgeable – the Shia must be eradicated. This underscores why fighting Israel is a secondary concern in the Islamic State’s ideology – all the apostasy that exists must be destroyed first. Only when united can the Muslims succeed in destroying Israel and the Crusaders who support it.

On Violence/Combat

In terms of violence and combat, the ideological focus is on the conquest/liberation of Muslim lands under apostate rule. While there is also a focus on terror attacks on targets in the West, this focus is less urgent and not necessarily mass-casualty oriented. Rather, the Islamic State seeks to inspire individual Muslims worldwide to engage in spontaneous violence against the Crusaders in their own homelands, with an emphasis on the frequency of violence rather than on the scale. The emphasis on localized conquest and

expansion follows from the logic that the Muslim lands must be united before the “Far Enemy” can be effectively fought, which is to say that the “Islamic Giant” must rise again as the existential opponent of the Crusaders. In line with the Islamic State’s intense ideological sectarianism, publicizing the gruesome execution of captured Crusaders and apostates is emphasized, on the logic that it will strike terror into the enemies of Islam and raise the morale of the Muslims.

On Islamic Governance

The only possible legitimate government is one based upon Islamic law (sharia), and the Islamic State is the only entity capable or even willing to implement such a government. It is not possible to Islamize the idolatrous institutions of nation-states or democratic systems – they must be destroyed and replaced by the Caliphate. To this end, the Islamic State calls Muslims to leave their homelands and immigrate to its territories and be a part of the construction of the Islamic State’s holistic Islamic governance.

On State-Building (Caliphate)

State-building, through the establishment and expansion of the revived Caliphate in the present, is the obligation of all Muslims and of supreme ideological importance. It is the item of highest priority, upon which all other ideological aspects are predicated. Only state-building can unify the Muslims and enable them to defeat the “Far Enemy” and the State of Israel. Only destroying the extant nation-states in Muslims lands and replacing them with the ever-growing Caliphate can preserve Islam from the pollution of Western idolatries. It is impossible to Islamize the extant nation-states, as they were born out of idolatry

and Crusader machinations. Rather, the Islamic State, while forthcoming about the hardships they will face, calls Muslims to abandon those nation-states and join with the Islamic State in destroying the current world and rebuilding a Muslim world in its place.

On Economics

The Islamic State's ideology on economics, in the same vein as state-building, is oriented toward destroying the extant global economy – which is used by the international order as a weapon to oppress and enslave Muslims – and building an Islamic economy in its place. To this end, such an economy is primarily war booty based. The wealth captured by jihadis through combat with apostate and Crusader forces is to be redistributed within the Islamic State for the purposes of state-building and seeing to the well-being of Muslims. This includes a focus on the targeting of fiat currencies and the petrodollar for replacement by a gold standard. Not unlike other Western ideologies, these features of the global economy are inherently un-Islamic, and thus must be destroyed. To that end, the Islamic State seeks to seize the oil production of Muslim lands and force the rest of the world to pay for petroleum in physical gold, thereby weakening and ultimately destroying the petrodollar system and, ultimately, fiat currencies and the current global economy.

On Other Jihadist Organizations

The Islamic State holds that any non-apostate jihadi group will swear allegiance to and join the Islamic State, thereby dissolving itself into its broader force of jihadis. Thus, it is unwilling to work with other jihadist organizations as

distinctive entities, especially not those whose ideology differs from its own. In that aspect, the sectarianism of the Islamic State's ideology comes to the fore – it refuses to collaborate or affiliate with groups it deems to be apostate. Rather, such “so-called” jihadist organizations must be actively fought until they are destroyed, or its members have repented and abandoned it for the Islamic State.

On Self-Image

The Islamic State's ideological self-perception is that of an egalitarian state for all Muslims and the only site in the world that holds to and serves true Islam.

The Islamic State exists as a refuge and a fortress for Muslims against a world of darkness, idolatry, and apostasy. From this fortress, the Islamic State stages its Manichean struggle with the Crusaders and Zionists, as well as their apostate slave proxies. The Islamic State is where the ingathering of sincere Muslims will take place – it will then surge outward, washing over the world and purging it of idolatry until all that remains is the Caliphate. The Islamic State views itself as the literal manifestation of the dichotomy between Islam and idolatry. People have two choices: either the Islamic State or the Flood.

On Modernity

The Islamic State identifies “modernity” as code for Westernization, and thus for idolatry. Rather than meaning anything particularly special, the “modern” is simply a designation of time – that which is contemporary. The language of so-called “modernity” is used to deceive Muslims into Westernized apostasy.

Things such as secularism, liberalism, nationalism, democracy, and communism are not “modernity,” they are merely contemporary Western idolatries. Just like

racism, another element of the Crusaders' precious "modernity," these idolatries have no place among the Muslims. The Islamic State also rejects the notion that "modernity" is the source of contemporary scientific and technical advances, and instead contends that these are all the result of the natural capacities of the human mind which God endowed upon mankind.

How Does Islamic State Ideology Differ from Current Scholarly Understanding of Salafist Jihadism?

Having established the ideology of the Islamic State, this ideology can be compared against the scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology.

Charting Differences

Scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadism would expect the ideology of the Islamic State to share the thirty-six indicators of ideology derived for comparison in the previous chapter. This is to say that when the overview of the Islamic State's ideology in the previous section is compared to the indicators from Chapter 2, the scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadism would expect them to match: they should share the same indicators of ideology. However, when this comparison is charted on the table below, a very different picture begins to emerge:

Table 1 - Scholarly Understanding v. Islamic State Ideology

<u>Expected Indicators</u>	<u>IS Indicator Match</u>
1.1) Illegitimate and Un-Islamic	Yes
1.2) Westernized Post-Ottoman International Order (Jahiliyyah)	No
1.3) To be Islamized Overall	No
1.4) Nation-States to be Islamized individually	No
1.5) Confederation of Islamic polities	No
1.6) End of Terrorism Contingent on West withdrawing from Islamic lands/ Destruction of Israel	No
2.7) Destruction of Israel	Yes
2.8) Jews to be Destroyed/Expelled	No
2.9) High Priority	No
2.10) Support of PA	No
2.11) Support of Hamas	No
2.12) Support of Palestinian Nationalism	No
2.13) End of Terrorism Contingent on West withdrawing from Islamic lands/ Destruction of Israel	No
3.14) Low Priority	No
3.15) Disputes Sidelined until West expelled from Muslim Lands and Israel Destroyed	No
3.16) Willing to collaborate across the Sunni-Shia Divide	No
4.17) Focus on Mass-Casualty Terror Attacks	No
4.18) Focus on "Far Enemy"/Western/US Targets	No
4.19) Support local insurgency against Western intervention	No
4.20) Avoid Gruesome Execution of Enemies	No
5.21) Sharia-based Government only Legitimate Government	Yes
5.22) Supports Islamizing the structures of Extant Muslim States	No
5.23) Inspire Muslims to self-Islamize their own States (populist)	No
6.24) Low priority	No
6.25) Long-term goal	No
6.26) Not possible until defeat of "Far Enemy"	No
6.27) Islamization of Extant States into an Islamic Confederation	No
7.28) Support through donations	No
7.29) Economic Warfare Against the West (Bleeding)	No
7.30) Islamize Global Economy through Transfer of Wealth (Oil)	No
8.31) Willing to Collaborate	No
8.32) Willing to affiliate even if ideologically different	No
8.33) Avoid Conflict with other organizations	No
9.34) An Elite Vanguard of Pure Islam	No
9.35) Ushering in Populist Wave of Islamization	No
9.36) Locked in Manichean Struggle with West (Crusaders and Zionists)	Yes

As seen above, the ideology of the Islamic State appears to fall well outside of contemporary scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadism. Of the thirty-six expected indicators of Salafist jihadi ideology within the scholarly corpus, the Islamic State shares only four: that the international order is illegitimate and un-

Islamic; that Israel must be destroyed; that only sharia-based government is legitimate; and that Muslims are locked in a Manichean struggle with the West's Crusaders and Zionists. These four shared ideological aspects reflect the contours of Salafist jihadism in only the broadest strokes of scholarly understanding, but in none of the granular ideological details. Notably, these shared indicators are found amongst Salafists overall – even non-violent Salafists – and amongst fundamentalist Islamists more generally.⁵⁵

Chi Square Test

The chi square statistical hypothesis test is used to determine the relationship between a variable and its indicators. It can be used to determine how the ideology of the Islamic State relates to what should be expected of that ideology based on current scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadism.

Within a chi square test, the expectation that Islamic State ideology exhibits a close relationship with scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology represents the null hypothesis (H_0) and would be reflected by a low chi square statistic and a high P-Value (above 0.05). The alternative hypothesis (H_a), that there is little or no relationship between Islamic State ideology and scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology, would be reflected by a high chi square statistic and a low P-Value (below 0.05). The formula for the chi square statistic is given below:

⁵⁵ See, for example Barak Mendelsohn, "God vs. Westphalia: Radical Islamist Movements and the Battle for Organizing the World," *Review of International Studies* 38 no. 3 (2012): 589–613. Here, Mendelsohn compares al-Qaeda as the benchmark of Salafist jihadism to its non-violent political Salafist counterpart Hizb ut-Tahir (Party of Liberation).

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Where:

O_i = Observed in Category (Number of IS Indicator Matches from Table 1)

E_i = Expected in Category (Number of Expected Indicators from Table 1)

The chi square statistic and P-Value are worked out in the table below:

Table 2 - Chi Square Statistic/P-Value

Category	O_i	E_i	$\frac{O_i - E_i}{E_i}$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
1. International Order	1	6	-5	25	4.16666667
2. Arab-Israeli Conflict	1	7	-6	36	5.14285714
3. Sectarianism	0	3	-3	9	3
4. Violence/Combat	0	4	-4	16	4
5. Islamic Governance	1	3	-2	4	1.33
6. State-Building (Caliphate)	0	4	-4	16	4
7. Economics	0	3	-3	9	3
8. Other Jihadist Orgs	0	3	-3	9	3
9. Self-Image	1	3	-2	4	1.33

Chi Square:	28.9695238
P-Value:	0.00032016

As seen in the table above, the chi square statistic is very high while the P-Value is very low, which reflects that the null hypothesis (H_0) should be rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_a): that there is little or no relationship between Islamic State ideology and scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadi ideology. This underscores what is apparent from the charting in Table 1: the ideology of the Islamic State is categorically different from Salafist jihadi ideology as it is understood within scholarship.

Further, the low P-Value indicates that it is unlikely that such broad differences are random noise, or that the Islamic State's ideology is so radically

different from scholarly understanding of Salafist jihadism by chance alone. Such vast differences beg some explanation, leading into the study's next research question.

What is the Meaning of these Differences?

The meaning of these differences, and their scope, is well illustrated by returning to the matter of the “master plan” compromise that initially brought Zarqawi and al-Qaeda together in 2004. What was important about this compromise is that it glossed over the ideological differences between Zarqawi and senior al-Qaeda leadership rather than resolving them. Sidestepping the issue of sectarian violence entirely, which was the matter upon which al-Qaeda's senior leadership and Zarqawi were most at odds, the “master plan” essentially took al-Qaeda's ideological long-view and overlaid a timetable upon it.⁵⁶

This was meant to mollify Zarqawi away from behaviors which the leadership of al-Qaeda found ideologically objectionable, especially his intense violence against the Shia of Iraq. Importantly, this sectarianism loggerhead had roots far deeper than Zarqawi's activities in Iraq following the US invasion – this had been an issue between the leadership of al-Qaeda and Zarqawi since their first collaboration within Afghanistan in 1999.⁵⁷ By positing a discrete timetable, the master plan's original author, Sayf al-Adl, hoped to form a bridge between the ideological demands of Zarqawi and his people for immediate and

⁵⁶ Fishman, *The Master Plan*, 34-36.

⁵⁷ Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 116-117.

tangible work toward establishing the Caliphate and al-Qaeda's ideological desire that sectarian violence be sidelined in Iraq.⁵⁸

Ultimately, this bridge failed, as Zarqawi would turn to alternative (unofficial) avenues of fostering sectarian warfare in Iraq, and following his death in a 2006 American airstrike, the leadership of al-Qaeda ceased to adhere to this timetable. Al-Qaeda's abandonment of the master plan is a major part of the Islamic State's critique of al-Qaeda as an apostate group and their response to the refusal of al-Qaeda to integrate itself into the Caliphate – which the Islamic State declared in 2014 within the framework of al-Adl's master plan. Accordingly, as per that master plan, al-Qaeda should have folded itself into the Islamic State's military and bureaucratic structure upon its advent as the renewed Caliphate. Thus, in the eyes of the Islamic State, al-Qaeda is guilty both of apostasy and a betrayal of an agreed upon course of action that had been in place for a decade.⁵⁹

What is key here is that despite the attempts by both al-Qaeda's leadership and Zarqawi's AQI to use each other in the pursuit of their own goals, the two groups never shared the same ideology. Moreover, the successors of Zarqawi quickly became even more extreme than he had been, owing to the history of the Iraq which had provided his sectarianism such fertile ground in the first place.⁶⁰ The focus on al-Qaeda and the perception of the group as the leader

⁵⁸ Fishman, *The Master Plan*, 34.

⁵⁹ Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, No.1: The Return of the Khilafah, July 5, 2014, 34-35.

⁶⁰ This included, of course, a history of sectarian social organization and rule since the fall of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the increasingly anti-Iranian/Shia sectarian rhetoric of the latter-day Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein, and the long history of weaponized rape in the environs. See, Gershon Lewental, "'Saddam's Qadisiyyah': Religion and History in the Service of State

of a Salafist “global jihad” by scholarly and policy circles left both thoroughly unprepared to understand the Islamic State when it “suddenly” appeared and began behaving in a manner strikingly different from the al-Qaeda benchmark.

From a scholastic and policy perspective, the ideological differences represented by the Islamic State mean that a reevaluation of Salafist jihadism is needed within scholarly and policy circles. The categorical differences between the Islamic State’s ideology and what scholarship on Salafist jihadism would expect questions the utility of al-Qaeda as the benchmark of Salafist jihadism, at least in its current formulation. This is highlighted by the current state of al-Qaeda itself, which appears to have begun an as yet unclear ideological shift, both following the death of Osama bin Laden and in response to the Islamic State’s challenge to its self-perception as the cutting edge of jihad.

For instance, al-Qaeda has become willing to engage in support actions and power sharing with non-Islamist elements both in Yemen and in Syria – turning even more sharply away from the earlier master plan that brought al-Qaeda and Zarqawi together during the American occupation of Iraq.⁶¹ Notably, this has also been a major issue of contention that the Islamic State has with post-bin Laden al-Qaeda.⁶² Beyond this, the ideology of al-Qaeda’s leadership is experiencing a certain degradation amongst its own affiliates. Al-Nusra Front, once al-Qaeda’s affiliate in Syria, for example, has spun away from al-Qaeda

Ideology in Ba‘thi Iraq,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 50 no. 6 (2014): 891–910; Ariel I. Ahram, “Sexual Violence and the Making of ISIS,” *Survival* 57 no. 3 (2015): 57–78.

⁶¹ See, for example: Ben Hubbard, “Al Qaeda Tries a New Tactic to Keep Power: Sharing It,” *The New York Times*, 7-9-2015; recall also that the trend has developed where scholars now deny that the “master plan” was ever normative, whereas before, it was extolled as an exemplar of al-Qaeda’s benchmark status.

⁶² Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, No.10: The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men, July 13, 2015, 67–69.

and merged with roughly one-hundred other Salafist jihadi groups fighting in the Syrian Civil War – forming the conglomeration Tahrir al-Sham.⁶³ While these developments don't give any clear indication what direction (or more likely – directions) Salafist jihadi ideology will move in the future, the current use of the core of al-Qaeda as a benchmark is experiencing diminishing returns of analytical robustness.⁶⁴

⁶³ Alaa Addin Ismail, “Tahrir al-Sham Arrests of Qaeda Leaders Cranks up Zawahiri – Julani Dispute,” *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 11-30-2017. Notably, while it has broken off from al-Qaeda into its own group, Tahrir al-Sham has not experienced the same ideological rejection of nationalism as the Islamic State.

⁶⁴ There is an increasing trend where predictions based on the persistent al-Qaeda benchmark are quickly shown to be incorrect by sea changes within Salafi jihadism. For the “master plan” as an entrenched al-Qaeda facet months before its rejection, see Rudner, “Al Qaeda’s Twenty-Year Strategic Plan”; For the real-world uselessness of Salafist jihadi internet media months before the Islamic State breakaway and its highly successful use of the internet, see Barak Mendelsohn, “Al Qaeda and Global Governance: When Ideology Clashes with Political Expediency,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26 no. 3 (2014): 470–487; For al-Qaeda’s firm control over Nusra months before the group’s breakaway, see Mendelsohn, *The al-Qaeda Franchise*, 192–193.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

Moving forward, reevaluation of Salafist jihadi ideology is going to require a mindfulness of the pitfalls of basing analyses on any one group for use as a benchmark. Such mindfulness is of increasing importance given that there is possibly an emergent break within Salafist jihadism overall into three generally distinct ideological divisions. For example, while most Salafist jihadis fall into either the “Far Enemy” or “Near Enemy” ideological camps, both seek to unseat the power of and then Islamize the extant states of the international order along Salafist lines. The Islamic State, on the other hand, represents a third ideological camp that seeks to destroy extant states and the international order outright, and replace it all with an entirely new Salafist world order.

An Emergent Shift in Salafi Jihadi Ideology on Muslim Unity

What is important within this emergent break represented by the Islamic State is a fundamental difference in the ideological concept of Muslim unity, specifically, what manner of Muslim unification is ideologically legitimate. This is the core of the categorical difference between the ideology of the Islamic State and scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism in its current formulation. Al-Qaeda and other Salafist jihadi groups believe that it is ideologically legitimate to act upon the extant international order and alter it. When taken more broadly among fundamentalists, this is generally referred to as Islamization. But in the case of Salafist groups, both violent and non-violent, there is a particular distinction that is more accurately called “Salafication.” The idea is to take the existing order and shape it (through a process of jihad or

through activism), and the Muslims within it, into as close a facsimile of early Islamic society as possible. It is this processional nature, with its intention to take the existing world and alter it into something sufficiently or recognizably Salafi, that allows al-Qaeda and other Salafi jihadist groups to engage with state actors and treat with more ideologically diverse allies.

However, for the Islamic State, this approach to Muslim unification is ideologically illegitimate. Informed by its ideological sectarianism and takfirism, the ideology of the Islamic State demands that Muslim unity be achieved by destroying the existing world and replacing it outright. Thus, state-building is an ideological requirement for the Islamic State. In a sense, they see themselves as literally recreating the world. More specifically, they are recreating a Muslim world that ceased to exist with the fall of the Ottoman Empire. This recreated world will expand as it conquers and destroys an ever-larger part of the Western-dominated world, encompassing Muslims as it grows and, in this way, achieving Muslim unity – by repeating the *method* of the early Islamic conquests.

This fundamentally different ideological conception of Muslim unification at the core of the Islamic State's ideology has been largely missed by scholarship utilizing the al-Qaeda benchmark. This scholarship has identified the Islamic State's expansion and state-building as merely an alternative choice of praxis akin to, but ideologically indistinguishable from, al-Qaeda's franchising strategy.⁶⁵ Scholarly consideration of this shift in ideology on Muslim

⁶⁵ Mendelsohn, *The al-Qaeda Franchise*, 28–30.

unification is essential to developing an updated scholarly understanding of Salafi jihadism.

Problems for Future Research

Along with this consideration, there are several particular problems which study of Salafist jihadism will need to address or avoid in reevaluating the phenomenon. These are discussed below.

The Problem of Participation in Islamic Discourse

Throughout the duration of the international community's fight against the Islamic State, academics of both scholarly and policy circles have been drawn into the discourse of the Islamic world over the definitional limits of Islam.

While this has been something of an issue since the War on Terror began, the advent of the Islamic State in 2014 has exacerbated this problem substantially.

The participation within this discourse vis-à-vis the Islamic State has taken its most immediately visible form on the matter of names: specifically, the use of the term "Daesh" to refer to the Islamic State.

Use of the term "Daesh" as a derogatory name for the Islamic State began as part of the discourse amongst Muslims in opposition to the Islamic State and its ideological vision of Islam – at heart, part of the wider discourse on the definition of Islam. Coined in 2013 by Syrian activist Khaled al-Haj Salih, the Arabic acronym rendered in English as "Daesh" is a linguistic combination of "counter-takfirism," satire, and insult.⁶⁶ On one level, acronyms in Arabic are uncommon, so taken as a word, "Daesh" is a gibberish word without meaning –

⁶⁶ Alice Guthrie, "Decoding Daesh: Why is the new name for ISIS so hard to understand?" *Free Word*, 2-19-2015.

and it is used in this way to delegitimize the Islamic State in Islamic discourse.⁶⁷ Further, this acronym is one letter different from the word *daes*, meaning “someone or something that crushes or tramples,” and this similarity is employed as an insult against the Islamic State’s claims to be rebuilding the Muslim world.⁶⁸ Finally, and here is where the element of “counter-takfirism” comes in to play, Khaled al-Haj Salih elaborates that “both the shape of the word [‘Daesh’] and the combination of letters in it are redolent of words from al-jahaliyya, the pre-Islamic dark ages,” and thus calling the group “Daesh” pronounces the group’s un-Islamic nature.⁶⁹

The Islamic State considers the term “Daesh” a grave insult to itself, and, moreover, a besmirchment of Islam, threatening and carrying out violence against any who use it – Khaled al-Haj Salih was forced to flee Syria after the term’s proliferation there.⁷⁰ Soon thereafter, demands were made by figures in the Muslim world that both news media outlets and political leaders also use the term “Daesh.”⁷¹ This usage quickly began to filter into scholarly and policy circles as well.⁷²

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ For a few examples, see Ishaan Tharoor, "ISIS or ISIL? The debate over what to call Iraq’s terror group," *The Washington Post*, 6-18-2014; Zeba Khan, "Call it Daesh, not ISIL (or ISIS)," *CNN*, 10-7-2016; "Islamic State, Daesh or Isis: the dilemma of naming the extremists," *The Week*, 12-2-2015; Fred McConnel, "Australian PM says he'll now use Daesh instead of Isil for 'death cult' – but why?" *The Guardian*, 1-12-2015; Amanda Bennet, "Daesh? ISIS? Islamic State? Why what we call the Paris attackers matters," *The Washington Post*, 11-25-2015.

⁷² As examples, see Joseph A.E. Shaheen, "Network of terror: how DAESH uses adaptive social networks to spread its message," NATO STRATCOM COE, 2015; Claire Smith, Heather Burke, Cherrie de Leiuon and Gary Jackson, "The Islamic State’s symbolic war: Da’esh’s socially mediated terrorism as a threat to cultural heritage," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 16 no. 2 (2016): 164–188; Jamie Hansen-Lewis and Jacob N. Shapiro, “Understanding the Daesh Economy,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 no.4 (2015): 142–155.

While it may be reasonable, if dubious, for this trend to occur within media outlets or in the political leadership, it is counterproductive to use “Daesh” in scholarly or policy circles, if for no other reason than a surreptitious designation of the Islamic State as inherently un-Islamic guts any capacity for granular or useful analysis of the group’s ideology, which is a problem already difficult enough to approach due to the increasingly outmoded persistence of al-Qaeda as a benchmark for Salafist jihadism. Further, the use of “Daesh” cuts against the general academic standard where the self-identification of a group is given pride of place in terminology.⁷³ If this pride of place is maintained for groups as disparate as the alt-Right and the Latinx community, the same must also apply to the Islamic State.

Further, academic participation within this discourse can generate adverse effects, whether intended or not. For instance, Zeba Khan, a JSK Fellow at Stanford University and one of the most vocal proponents for the use of “Daesh” outside the broader Islamic community, posits that its use will undermine the legitimacy of the Islamic State.⁷⁴ However, Khan also reiterates that “American officials should not be in the business of telling Muslims at home or abroad who is or isn’t Muslim.”⁷⁵

There are significant problems with Khan’s contentions. First, the Islamic State is ultimately unconcerned with its legitimacy in the eyes of any entities other than itself and God – and is content to present its ideology and let

⁷³ There is also a particular irony that a Western academe which holds the cultural criticism of Edward Said in such esteem would simultaneously take it upon itself to define what is and is not “Islamic.”

⁷⁴ Khan, “Call it Daesh, not ISIL (or ISIS).”

⁷⁵ Zeba Khan, “Words matter in ‘ISIS’ war, so use ‘Daesh’,” *The Boston Globe*, 10-9-2014.

it speak for itself. Second, it is impossible for American officials to adopt “Daesh” as a terminology without it being anything other than “telling Muslims at home or abroad who is or isn’t Muslim” – this much is clear from the very nature of the term itself as elaborated above. Moreover, the proliferation of its use has resulted ultimately in a violent manifestation of “the business of telling Muslims at home or abroad who is or isn’t Muslim.”

This process was already underway, even before usage of the term “Daesh” proliferated and exacerbated it, from the moment then President Barack Obama decided to involve the United States and lead the fight against the Islamic State:

Now let’s make two things clear: ISIL is not “Islamic.” No religion condones the killing of innocents. And the vast majority of ISIL’s victims have been Muslim. And ISIL is certainly not a state. It was formerly al Qaeda’s affiliate in Iraq, and has taken advantage of sectarian strife and Syria’s civil war to gain territory on both sides of the Iraq-Syrian border. It is recognized by no government, nor by the people it subjugates. ISIL is a terrorist organization, pure and simple. And it has no vision other than the slaughter of all who stand in its way.⁷⁶

Aside from the general fallacy that “terrorism” is some discrete thing rather than a strategic praxis in the employ of an ideology, Obama’s statement did two things simultaneously. First, ironically, it pronounced “counter-takfir” on the Islamic State. Second, it made a broad statement of what defines Islam and placed the Islamic State outside of that definition.⁷⁷ This statement gelled with the proliferation of the term “Daesh” and set the tone for what has come after.

⁷⁶ Zeke J. Miller, “Full Text of Obama’s Address on ISIS,” *Time*, 9-10-2014.

⁷⁷ Notably, this was done in apparent disregard of what already existed, by September of 2014, of the Islamic State’s extensive elaboration upon its terms of engagement for violence and combat as well as its ontology of innocence.

On the one hand, we have the Islamic State declaring who is and is not Muslim and punctuating that declaration with the force of arms. On the other, we have an American-led Coalition doing the same, under the banner “The Global Coalition Against Daesh” since September of 2014.⁷⁸ Hence, far beyond American officials being in the business of telling Muslims at home or abroad who is or isn’t Muslim, the advocacy of Zeba Khan and other academics has resulted in the officials from scores of states and institutions outside the Islamic discourse in the business of doing so.⁷⁹

Unsurprisingly, the Islamic State has taken note of this paradigm and employed it in its general ideological narrative.⁸⁰ This paradigm of designating groups, especially the Islamic State, as un-Islamic in policy statements or through the proliferation of the use of the term “Daesh” since 2014 across media outlets, political leadership, academia, and policy circles has not done anything to undercut Islamic State ideology. Rather, it has provided Islamic State ideology with further validating proofs of the Manichean nature of its worldview:

Certainly, O America, you know that you have no savior. You have become prey for the soldiers of the Khilafah in every region of the earth. You have become bankrupt and the signs of your end are apparent and visible to the eyes. There is no better evidence of this than that an uncouth idiot [President Trump] has assumed authority over you, while he has no idea what Sham is, what Iraq is, and what Islam is – yet he still raves about showing enmity to it and declaring war against it.⁸¹

⁷⁸ “Our Mission,” *The Global Coalition Against Daesh*.

⁷⁹ “Our Partners,” *The Global Coalition Against Daesh*.

⁸⁰ For example, see Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, no.7: From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone, February 12, 2015, 78; Al-Hayat Media Center, *Rumiyah*, no. 7, March 7, 2017, 19.

⁸¹ Al-Hayat Media Center, *Rumiyah*. no. 9, May 4, 2017, 34.

In consideration of the global proliferation of Islamic State inspired violence since 2014, the participation of the West in Islamic discourse has at most proven to be an ineffectual and empty gesture, and at worst has aided the Islamic State in the presentation of its ideological position to potentially sympathetic Muslims. It is senseless for professionals in ostensibly fact-based fields of academics and foreign policy analysis to choose one side of an ongoing *kulturkampf* and adopt it as definitive. This practice should be avoided and the use of “Daesh” as a term for the Islamic State in scholarly and policy circles is best abandoned.

The Problem of “Holographic” Ideology: Rhetoric vs. Reality and Quantification

Throughout the duration of the Islamic State’s time as a nascent state, its media releases about its state-building and other endeavors were generally written off by scholars and politicians as propaganda whose rhetoric could not match the reality of its territories, a stance informed by the al-Qaeda Salafist jihadi benchmark and that group’s long history of media rhetoric in the absence of action.⁸²

Yet, these sorts of dismissals are questionable when directed at the Islamic State’s media. While the media rhetoric of al-Qaeda is intended to curate and preserve its reputation in the Muslim world, this is of little concern to the Islamic State. Further, substantial documentary evidence and testimonials of Islamic State endeavors have been recovered from its former territories, as noted

⁸² See Torres, “Analysis and Evolution of the Global Jihadist Movement Propaganda”; Mendelsohn, “Al-Qaeda’s Palestinian Problem”; Mendelsohn, “Al Qaeda and Global Governance.”

in Chapter One.⁸³ These endeavors were communicated to its media audience, while maintaining a forthcoming honesty about those efforts as a work in progress which would mean certain hardship for the Muslim who answered their call to join the Islamic State, as clearly reflected in the overview of the Islamic State's state-building ideology laid out in Chapter Three. This reflects more of a paradigm where its ideological rhetoric reflected reality, rather than one of propaganda rhetoric juxtaposed against reality. This is also clear in the Islamic State's media releases of an economic nature.

The Islamic State expended considerable time and resources in the pursuit of economic endeavors to actualize the economic aspects of its ideology seen in Chapter Three. This included the cultivation of revenue streams such as: petroleum, extortion and taxation, phosphates, and cement, among others.⁸⁴ Though this economic structure was ultimately destroyed, the Islamic State had a relatively stable economy in 2014, with its international trade remaining largely intact despite Coalition efforts at least until late 2015. Moreover, until that point, the Islamic State maintained a relatively more secure business environment than adjacent regions, such that it succeeded in attracting significant foreign direct investment from across the region – mirroring the relatively more advanced public services of its state-building efforts.⁸⁵ These

⁸³ Callimachi, "The ISIS Files."

⁸⁴ See Jean-Charles Brisard and Damien Martinez, "Islamic State: The Economy-Based Terrorist Funding," Thomson Reuters, 2014; "The Islamic State (IS) - How the World's Richest Terrorist Organization Funds its Operations," Infographic, Thomson Reuters, 2014.

⁸⁵ See Nour Malas and Maria Abi-Habib, "Islamic State Economy Runs on Extortion, Oil Piracy in Syria, Iraq: Group Pirates Oil, Exacts Tribute From Locals, Making It Among World's Richest in Terror," *Wall Street Journal*, August 28, 2014; Orlando Crowcroft, "Isis: Inside the struggling Islamic State economy in Iraq and Syria," *International Business Times*, April 11, 2015; Joanna Paraszczuk, "The ISIS Economy: Crushing Taxes and High Unemployment," *The Atlantic*,

efforts also included the Islamic State's attempt to revive the gold-standard by minting its own dinars, which had been announced initially in *Dabiq* and then unveiled through the release of a pair of high-production value videos elaborating on their ideological reasoning at greater length, though the materials for this project were ultimately seized by Turkish forces.⁸⁶

Like many others on topics of state-building and economics, scholars dismissed Islamic State media releases about the gold dinar as propaganda rhetoric, in this case both because of the known challenges of running a precious metals-based economy and because of the Islamic State's lack of short-run capacity to circulate gold dinars.⁸⁷ While this may well have been true, they also miss the point. The Islamic State's actual *efforts* toward minting and circulating dinars sought to progressively seize oil production as war booty and begin forcing its sale in exchange for gold, while simultaneously attempting to destroy the petrodollar system and redistribute this wealth of gold into a Muslim economy in the form of minted dinars.⁸⁸ Vitaly, these efforts followed the dismissed Islamic State media releases about the gold dinar, and the overall economic ideology of the Islamic State laid out in Chapter Three, point for

September 2, 2015; Erika Solomon, "Isis Inc: Loot and taxes keep jihadi economy churning," *The Financial Times*, December 14, 2015; Aaron Y. Zelin and Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Jihadology Podcast: Reality of The Islamic State's Finances and Economy," *Jihadology*, Podcast, December 15, 2015; Callimachi, "The ISIS Files."

⁸⁶ See Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Rise of the Khalifah and the Return of the Gold Dinar," Video, August 29, 2015; Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Dark Rise of Banknotes and the Return of the Gold Dinar," Video, October 11, 2015; Hannah Lucinda Smith, "Turkish police raid illicit mint making Isis currency," *The Times*, October 8, 2015.

⁸⁷ Hansen-Lewis and Shapiro, "Understanding the Daesh Economy," 149; Al-Tamimi, "Caliphate under Strain," 3.

⁸⁸ Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Rise of the Khalifah and the Return of the Gold Dinar;" Al-Hayat Media Center, "The Dark Rise of Banknotes and the Return of the Gold Dinar;" Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, no.5: Remaining and Expanding, November 21, 2014, 18; Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, no.6: Al Qa'idah of Waziristan: A Testimony from Within, December 29, 2014, 64.

point. The key here is that the Islamic State's media releases about the gold dinar were not propaganda rhetoric, they were *policy statements*. Whether or not the Islamic State could have succeeded in fully carrying out those policy statements is, ultimately, irrelevant. What is relevant is that the Islamic State acted on them in earnest, and continued to, even as a global military coalition repeatedly stymied those efforts and ultimately destroyed its nascent state. Here again, rhetoric reflected reality.

All of this represents an immediacy inherent to the Islamic State's ideology that the more drawn-out nature of the al-Qaeda benchmark for Salafi jihadism provides no frame of reference for. This is a result of the essentially "holographic" nature of the Islamic State's ideology. Like in holography, where any given piece of a hologram may be used to instantly reconstruct the whole of a holographic image, the Islamic State's ideology shares a similar quality wherein any given piece of its ideology inheres the whole. In this sense, the Islamic State views the state of the global economy vis-à-vis Muslims as sufficient reason, alone, for the Islamic State's Caliphal enterprise.

This applies even to aspects of the Islamic State's ideology that are of apparently lower priority. For example, while the Arab-Israeli Conflict is an extremely low priority for the Islamic State, the very existence of a Jewish State is likewise sufficient reason, alone, for the Islamic State's Caliphal enterprise – even if its ideological prioritization demands that apostates must be destroyed first. This intrinsic quality of Islamic State ideology, its holographic nature,

presents a very real problem for quantification in analysis of the Islamic State’s ideology.

While it is tempting to attempt to quantify the ideology of the Islamic State, and of Salafist jihadism overall, for the purposes of comparative statistical analysis – especially considering the current development of three distinctive strains of Salafist jihadi ideology – any approach attempting to quantify Salafist jihadi ideology is going to run into the problem of its “holographic” nature. To help illustrate this, the numbers corresponding to the results of Stage One and State Two of this study’s qualitative analysis have been recorded onto the table below:

Table 3 - Frequency/Percentages of Segments and Ideological Elements

Code/Category	Segment Frequency	Element Frequency
International Order	364 (17.33%)	74 (19.89%)
Arab-Israeli Conflict	13 (0.62%)	9 (2.42%)
Sectarianism	287 (13.67%)	44 (11.83%)
Violence/Combat	295 (14%)	64 (17%)
Islamic Governance	266 (12.67%)	29 (7.80%)
State-Building (Caliphate)	260 (12.38%)	43 (11.56%)
Economics	45 (2.14%)	26 (6.99%)
Other Jihadist Organizations	149 (7.10%)	17 (4.57%)
Self-Image	364 (17.33%)	56 (15.05%)
Modernity	57 (2.71%)	10 (2.69%)
Total	2100	372

While it may appear as though these numbers and the attached percentages would lend themselves well to certain analyses, such as weighing the relative

importance of one aspect of the Islamic State's ideology in comparison to the others by way of frequency, this is not the case.

Note how low a percentage the code/category "Economics" represents of the total frequency of segments and elements in Table 3. On the surface, it may appear from this quantitative data that economics is of little importance to Islamic State ideology. However, as the discussion of its endeavors above demonstrates, economics is important to the Islamic State out of all proportion of what is otherwise apparent from the quantitative data in Table 3. This reflects that "holographic" quality of the Islamic State's ideology and underscores the problem of attempting to apply the metrics of Islamic State ideology to analysis in any meaningful way. Such application, therefore, should be pursued with great caution.

The Problem of Modernity

As noted in Chapter One, there is no scholarly consensus on the orientation of Salafist jihadism vis-à-vis modernity, and this extends to Islamism more generally. The same is true in the case of the Islamic State, though generally scholars falling into the anti-modern camp tend to view the spectacular and theatric violence displayed by the Islamic State as being proof-positive of the group's "virulent" anti-modernity.⁸⁹ On the other side of this debate, scholars

⁸⁹ For a variety of examples, see Javier Lesaca, "On Social Media, ISIS Uses Modern Cultural Images to Spread Anti-Modern Values," The Brookings Institution, 9-24-2015; Wolfgang Mühlberger, "Islamic Soul-Searching on Scorched Earth: ISIL Launches a New Brand of Islamism, Which Requires a Uniform Coalition to be Defeated," FIIA COMMENT 19 (2016) Online; John Allen, "Remarks at the Center for the American Progress by the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition To Counter ISIL," U.S. Departments of State, 7-14-2015; Nuray Mert, "The Myth of Sykes-Picot and its Shortcomings," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 6-23-2014; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, "Cultural Assessment of the

will point to this same spectacular and theatric violence and contend that the Islamic State rather displays the hallmarks of many of the perpetrators of modernity's greatest atrocities.

While the camp of scholars which views the Islamic State as modern certainly makes the salient, if obvious, point that brutal and systematized violence on a grand scale is hardly exempted from the range of modern phenomena, neither is it a particular feature. Such violence abounds on both sides of whatever dividing line of modernity one cares to draw. Approaches utilizing a more diverse criteria than violence, such as Daniel Lerner's formulation of modernization theory, views modernity – especially within the Middle East – in terms of Westernization.⁹⁰

This formulation is shared by the ideology of the Islamic State, to a degree. While the Islamic State does view modernity as a byword or euphemism for Westernization, it also responds to the concept of modernity with sarcasm. From its ideological perspective, the “modern” has little real meaning beyond its use as a temporal designation of the contemporary. Aside from this rote meaning, the Islamic State uses quoted forms such as “modern” and “modernist” to refer to groups and individuals it deems to have been swayed by Western “idolatries” into apostasy. In the eyes of the Islamic State, this “modernity” is in fact a false modernity, specifically one which has imposed Western-derived universalisms – such as secularism, liberalism, nationalism, democracy, and

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)," Global Cultural Knowledge Network, 5-30-2016, especially 38, 51, 72.

⁹⁰ See Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: The Free Press, 1958).

communism – upon an Islamic universalism with which it is existentially incompatible. Notably, these same Western universalisms are held by scholars of modernization theory and economic development such as Lerner and David C. McClelland to be essential elements of modernity.⁹¹

While this paradigm of Westernization became scholastically normative of modernization during the mid-twentieth century in large part because the post-Ottoman order in the Middle East served as a sort of Westernized modernization laboratory during the Mandatory System, that process has been identified by Samuel P. Huntington as very destabilizing.⁹² Following the end of the Cold War, the troubled process of modernization in the Middle East had created sufficient instability that Huntington devised his paradigm of “clash of civilizations” wherein he predicted that Western modernity would come into violent conflict with Islamic civilization.⁹³ Unsurprisingly, this formulation is shared by the Islamic State:

Indeed, it is Allah who prepared the Earth for the bloodiest battle before the Hour, to see His slaves sweat in spilling their blood and that of His enemies. All the factors were laid down precisely. The Crusaders and the Jews in the Levant, the Rafidah in Iraq and Persia, and the Caliphate in the center. It is the clash of encampments – “civilizations” – that many saw coming, as it is found in Allah’s signs throughout history and current events. And yet the denier claims that all this is the result of mere chaos!⁹⁴

The Islamic State clearly accepts this general premise in an Islamic context, though it also identifies and rejects Western “modernity” as conceptually non-

⁹¹ Ibid., 43–68; See also, David C. McClelland, *The Achieving Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), 159–183.

⁹² See Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (London: Yale University Press, 1968), 40–42.

⁹³ See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

⁹⁴ Al-Hayat Media Center. *Dabiq*, no.15: Break the Cross, April 13, 2016, 13.

existent. Be that as it may, and while approaches toward modernity as a phenomenon still tend to favor Western forms in their identifications of processes, there has been a shift toward a consideration that modernity is not necessarily Westernization by definition.⁹⁵ With this in mind, it is possible to view the ideology of the Islamic State as representing a distinctively Islamic iteration of modernity.

Many of the features of modernity are indeed there. The Islamic State rejects tradition in the form of considering most of the history of Islamic quietism and jurisprudence, especially since the Ottoman period, as being accretions of deviant innovation. Note, this should not be confused with the Islamic State's ideological emphasis on early Islamic praxis and especially early prophetic figures like Abraham. Rather than undercutting a rejection of tradition, these elements represent that aspect of modernity which seeks a return to or reliance on first principles. In the context of Western modernity, this would be the equivalent of the developments of Natural Religion and, later, Deism among Enlightenment figures such as Baruch Spinoza, or before this, the forwarding of biblical religion and the rejection of accumulated Catholic tradition by Protestant Reformation figures such as Martin Luther. Faith in the inevitability of social and technological progress is also present, through the Islamic State's ideology on state-building. When considering the primacy of religion as the primary mode of identity construction within the Islamic State's ideology, its state-building ideology emerges clearly as an Islamic version of the

⁹⁵ See Gerard Delanty, "Modernity," *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, George Ritzer (ed.) (Chichester, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

developments of both the nation-state and public education also associated with modernity. The emphasis on formal equality typical of modernity is also present, as is that particular tendency of modernity to be infatuated with its own sense of historical novelty:

Were the muwahhid to search every book authored by the historians, he would not find mention of any state similar to the Islamic State, particularly as it exists following its revival under the wing of Amirul-Mu'minin Abu Bakr (may Allah support him and keep him firm). For has any state ever been established in human history in the manner that the Islamic State was revived with its expansion into Sham? Contemplate – may Allah have mercy upon you – the states that existed throughout history, both the Muslim states and the mushrik states. Were any of them established by the emigration of poor strangers from the East and the West, who then gathered in an alien land of war and pledged allegiance to an “unknown” man, in spite of the political, economic, military, media, and intelligence war waged by the nations of the world against their religion, their state, and their hijrah? And in spite of the fact that they did not have any common “nationality,” ethnicity, language, or worldly interests, nor did they have any prior acquaintance! This phenomenon is something that has never occurred in human history, except in the case of the Islamic State! And nothing like it will ever occur thereafter except in relation to it; and Allah knows best.⁹⁶

Ultimately, all of the phenomena associated with modernity are present within the Islamic State’s ideology, albeit in a distinctively Islamic form. This development makes perfect sense in its own context, when it is borne in mind that the same figure from whom the Islamic State inherited its sectarian ideology on pronouncing takfir, Sayyid Qutb, also sought to build a distinctively Islamic modernity free of the pollutions he saw as inherent to Western civilization.⁹⁷

Clearly, solving the problem of modernity within scholarship on the ideology of the Islamic State, and in reevaluating Salafist jihadism overall, is going to require an ontology which looks beyond historical Western iterations of

⁹⁶ Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, no. 3: A Call to Hijrah. September 10, 2014, 5.

⁹⁷ John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 4th ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 318.

modern phenomena and abandons arbitrary binaries based on the use of violence alone.

Final Thoughts

While the Islamic State is not the momentous and high-profile presence that it was during its initial explosion onto the regional and global stages, the group has come back from being declared dead before. The group currently has reverted back to operating as a jihadi network targeting people important to the structure and security of Iraq, as they did prior to the resurgence that led to their 2014 declaration of a Caliphate.⁹⁸ It is not unlikely that the Islamic State is biding its time with a strategy of low-level harassment while it waits for Coalition troop withdrawals to give it the opening it needs to reassert itself – also like it did last time.

Whatever the case may be, the capacity of the Islamic State to begin rebuilding its nascent Caliphate in Iraq and Syria may be less relevant than what the dissemination of its ideology may portend for the future of Salafist jihadism. This study has demonstrated the categorical differences that the ideology of the Islamic State exhibits in comparison to that of al-Qaeda. The impact of this ideology, which one might tentatively call an “alternative Salafist jihadism,” has already swayed many thousands in addition to those who actually traveled to the Islamic State during its period of prominence – inspiring lone wolf attacks and the formation of new groups swayed by their ideology around the world.

⁹⁸ Rhys Dubin, “ISIS 2.0 Is Really Just the Original ISIS,” *Foreign Policy*, 4-3-2018.

The intense sectarianism and Manichean worldview of the Islamic State is certain to have an impact on those groups and individuals who embrace its ideology in the coming years. While al-Qaeda may be trending ideologically toward more direct cooperation with parties and governments it once sought to destroy, as noted above, the ideology of the Islamic State represents a hard tack in the direction of an even more extreme concept of Muslim unification. Those who follow ideologically after the Islamic State are going to be similarly intractable – which could lead to the proliferation of unceasing existential conflicts across the globe, each its own small war of annihilation. With that prospect in mind, this study concludes with the presentation of a message for the West from the ideologues of the Islamic State on its own behalf:

What's important to understand here is that although some might argue that your foreign policies are the extent of what drives our hatred, this particular reason for hating you is secondary [...] even if you were to stop bombing us, imprisoning us, torturing us, vilifying us, and usurping our lands, we would continue to hate you because our primary reason for hating you will not cease to exist until you embrace Islam. Even if you were to pay jizyah and live under the authority of Islam in humiliation, we would continue to hate you. No doubt, we would stop fighting you then as we would stop fighting any disbelievers who enter into a covenant with us, but we would not stop hating you [...] The gist of the matter is that there is indeed a rhyme to our terrorism, warfare, ruthlessness, and brutality. As much as some liberal journalist would like you to believe that we do what we do because we're simply monsters with no logic behind our course of action, the fact is that we continue to wage – and escalate – a calculated war that the West thought it had ended several years ago [...] So you can continue to believe that those “despicable terrorists” hate you because of your lattes and your Timberlands [...] or you can accept reality and recognize that we will never stop hating you until you embrace Islam [...] ⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Al-Hayat Media Center, *Dabiq*, no.15, 32–33.

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Appendix A: Ideological Elements by Code/Category

The International Order

364 codes (17.33%); 74 elements (19.89%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. The international order must be destroyed.
2. The international order will learn what terrorism really is.
3. The international order is inherently idolatrous (nationalism, democracy, etc.).
4. The international order has disgraced and humiliated Muslims by ruling over them, robbing them of their birthright.
5. The world is divided into two camps: (true) Muslims and everyone else, encompassing the international order.
6. Jews control the international order.
7. Muslims must remove themselves from the international order.
8. The Islamic State is a destructive repudiation of the international order.
9. The Islamic State is a viable alternative to the international order.
10. The Islamic State is to be a global state, destroying and replacing the international order.
11. The borders imposed by the international order, such as those derived from Sykes-Picot, are un-Islamic and must be destroyed.
12. The Islamic State embraces a collaborative method superior to the hegemony of the international order.
13. Muslims must, and can only, reject the international order that subjugates them.
14. Muslims are obligated to revolt against the sinful and unjust tyranny of the international order.

15. Islam is both a political and religious order, inseparable, beyond any claims of the international order.
16. The manmade laws of the international order are idolatry.
17. A Muslim who submits to the manmade laws of the international order commits apostasy.
18. Ideologies of the international order, such as nationalism, are a poison which in the past inhibited the revival of the Caliphate.
19. Jihad is the only acceptable Islamic response to the international order.
20. Islamist “parties” operating within the international order are apostate and thus fundamentally illegitimate.
21. The international order must be divested of Muslims through hijra (immigration) to the Caliphate.
22. The international order is to be brought to chaos through jihad.
23. The Islamic State is a jihadi state that exists outside of the international order and cannot be a part of it – it exists in a different world.
24. The international order must be destroyed so that the Islamic State can preserve the Muslim masses against the risk of apostasy.
25. The individual Muslim in the world beyond the territory of the Islamic State can remove him/herself from the international order by swearing allegiance to the Caliph and weakening the international order from within itself.
26. The nation-state as a fixture of the international order is fundamentally idolatrous. All such nation-states are to be destroyed.

27. The international order is based upon the polluted ideology that individuals possess the absolute liberty to choose between truth and falsehood.
28. The story of Noah and the Flood is analogous to the polluted ideology of choice that pervades the international order.
29. The only true choice is between Islam and the Flood (destruction of the international order).
30. The international order has polluted Muslim lands with things that contradict Islam: such as Baathism, secularism, liberalism, democracy.
31. The international order encompasses the lands of hypocrisy, which much be abandoned by Muslims for the Islamic State – the land of sincerity.
32. The laws of the international order have no meaning for Muslims
33. The laws of the international order claim that it is legitimate for the United States to kill any number of Muslims as “collateral damage,” yet labels jihadis barbaric and criminal.
34. The violence of the international order against Muslims must be met with violence in like kind.
35. The advent of the Islamic State is unprecedented in history, heralding the destruction of the international order and advent of a new age.
36. The international order enslaves Muslims through its global economic system of labor and wages.
37. Living within the international order “kills the heart” of Muslims and renders them vulnerable to apostasy.
38. Jihad cannot end until the international order is destroyed.

39. The international order is by nature an act of aggressive warfare, a Crusade, against Muslims.
40. The Islamic State will destroy the international order and replace it with a fully functional Islamic society.
41. America is threatening its hegemony over the international order by empowering enemies like Russia and Iran in its drive to fight the Islamic State because the US doesn't have the wherewithal to confront the Islamic State directly.
42. Supposed scholars and pseudo-jihadis who try to stand in a middle ground between the international order and the Islamic State are in fact servants of the international order, there is no "gray zone."
43. The international order has no legitimacy to tell Muslims what Islam is.
44. Each nation-state of the international order that attacks or supports the war against the Islamic State has opened itself up to attacks in their own homelands.
45. The totality of the international order, from economics to journalism and media, is at war with Muslims out of hatred for Islam.
46. The international order is content to kill Muslim women and children in the name of its own interests.
47. The media of the international order routinely ignores Crusader massacres of Muslims.
48. Each region, group, or area that declares itself a part of the Islamic State destroys a piece of the international order and becomes part of a new world.

49. The Islamic State is a holistic replacement for the international order it will destroy, from media to economics, such as its minting of dinars.
50. The Islamic State has confounded the international order's attempts to destroy it for a dozen years.
51. The Arab Spring was a false revolution supported by the international order to further disrupt Muslim unity and increase apostasy.
52. The Shia and other apostates must be wiped out before the international order can truly be destroyed effectively.
53. Part of the US hegemony over the international order is its possession of much of the world's gold and the petrodollar system.
54. The true reason for the 2003 US Invasion of Iraq was the attempt by Saddam Hussein to abandon the petrodollar for its oil sales and use petroeuros instead.
55. The norms of the international order are meaningless, only the norms of Islam matter – the two are existentially incompatible.
56. No peace can exist between the international order and the Islamic State, only impermanent conditional truces are possible.
57. It is as natural for the international order to attempt to destroy the Islamic State as it is for the Islamic State to seek the destruction of the international order.
58. The sexual revolution drove the US and the international order into a spiral of immorality.
59. The international order, dominated by Western "Civilization," considers its moral degeneracy and its idolatry to be "values."

60. The post-Arab Spring governments are puppet governments intended to keep Muslims subservient to the international order.

61. The Islamic State is a refuge for Muslims outside the international order, where they will not be polluted by the idolatrous ideologies of Crusaders, Zionists, and their apostate lapdogs.

62. The current international order and its idolatrous ideologies cannot be “Islamized,” they must be destroyed and replaced with a world order based upon the religion of Allah.

63. The international order’s violence against Muslims has terrorized them into believing wild conspiracy theories about the extent and capacities of its power.

64. The flags of the nation-states imposed upon Muslims by the international order were originally designed by Mark Sykes, they are idolatrous and illegitimate.

65. The international order’s laws against slavery are irrelevant, clear provisions for the existence and regulation of slavery exist within Islam.

66. The immediate damage caused by apostate Muslims embracing the international order is more dire than that of the international order at large.

67. Nationalism divides Muslims and enables their subjugation by the international order.

68. The international order has finally managed to coopt al-Qaeda since the death of Osama bin Laden, making them allies and supporters of the apostate states they once tried to destroy.

69. The international order's division of nationality and race are against the unity of Islam.
70. The international order's oppression of Muslim lands has driven many Muslims out of these lands, weakening them and exposing these Muslims to the risk of apostasy.
71. Ottoman deviance made Muslim lands vulnerable to the West, making it possible for the rise of the international order of today.
72. The apostate post-colonial rulers are proxies of the international order's subjugation of Muslims.
73. Because of its generally democratic and representative nature, all the citizens of the international order are guilty and culpable for its violence against Muslims and Islam.
74. The current international order is the result of the Crusader's war against Islam.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

13 codes (0.62%); 9 elements (2.42%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. Israel will be destroyed.
2. The Jews there will be subjugated and made to pay the jizya or killed if they refuse.
3. Apostate regimes and groups offer only empty words for the Muslims in Palestine.
4. Hamas' participation in democratic elections make it an apostate group that must be destroyed.
5. The "jihad" of Hamas is a false jihad.

6. The government of the Palestinians is apostasy and must be destroyed.
7. Palestinian nationalism is apostasy and must be destroyed.
8. The apostasy of Muslims in Palestine must be eradicated before the battle can turn to the Jewish State itself.
9. It is not an “Arab-Israeli” conflict, it is a Muslim-Jewish conflict.

Sectarianism

287 codes (13.67%); 44 elements (11.83%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. There are only two camps in the world, the Islamic State and the world of idolatry.
2. Anyone claiming to be a Muslim who doesn't swear allegiance to the Islamic State is an apostate.
3. It is obligatory for the Islamic State to make war on apostates and restore Islam among Muslims.
4. The concept of “free choice” for Muslims between religious and secular government is apostasy.
5. Nationalism, democracy, secularism, liberalism, Marxism, and Baathism are idolatry, Muslims who engage in them are apostates.
6. Manmade law is idolatry, Muslims who make and follow them are apostates.
7. The Islamic State is like Noah before the Flood, offering the choice between Islam and destruction.
8. The Islam of the Islamic State is the true Islam, with many proofs that apostates ignore.

9. Tombs and ancient ruins are idolatrous, especially when used to shore up nationalism, and must be destroyed.
10. Hamas' participation in democratic elections make it an apostate group that must be destroyed.
11. The "jihad" of Hamas is a false jihad.
12. The government of the Palestinians is apostasy and must be destroyed.
13. Palestinian nationalism is apostasy and must be destroyed.
14. The apostasy of Muslims in Palestine must be eradicated before the battle can turn to the Jewish State itself.
15. Religious pluralism is apostasy.
16. So-called Islamists and jihadis who fight the Islamic State announce their apostasy in the act of taking up arms.
17. Any apostate who repents and swears allegiance to the Islamic State before being captured shall be welcomed back into the fold of Islam. Otherwise they will be killed.
18. Barack Obama is an apostate.
19. The Islamic State's war with the Kurds is not a nationalistic war, it is a religious war against Kurdish apostasy – some of the most gallant jihadis fighting Kurdish apostates are Kurds themselves.
20. The Yazidi were pagans from the pre-Islamic period who remained pagan but became "Islamized" over time, they are ineligible for jizya and it is permitted to enslave their women.
21. Any Muslim who allies with Christians or Jews is an apostate.

22. There is no “gray zone” between the Islamic state and the Crusaders, Muslims who attempt to stay in the such a “gray zone” are apostates.
23. The Shia are the first priority for attack.
24. Takfir is necessary and required but is not to be proclaimed without proof of apostasy.
25. The Islamic State is not a khawariji group, regardless of the claims of its detractors, and opposes khawarijiism along with all other forms of apostasy.
26. Al-Qaeda slid into apostasy after the death of Osama bin Laden.
27. When people say that Islam is “the religion of peace” and mean pacifism, that is apostasy.
28. The apostasy of democracy ascribes Allah’s sole right of legislation to mankind.
29. Islam and nationalism cannot coexist because nationalism and citizenship places the nation-state before Islam as the primary unit of identity.
30. Jihad is only valid if it is done correctly, fighting for the sake of the apostate nations of Muslim lands, even against Crusaders, is itself apostasy rather than jihad.
31. Nationalist groups that use “Islamic” language are still apostates.
32. It is not permissible for Muslims to fight alongside apostates, even against other apostates – instead, Muslims should fight both parties.
33. Islam is the answer to the racism that plagues the lands of the Crusaders.

34. Claims that no Islamic power tried to wipe out the Shia fails to account for the fact that the Shia were only numerous enough to form their own state 400 years ago.
35. A belief in American exceptionalism is apostasy.
36. Pacifist Salafis are apostates.
37. The Muslim Brotherhood is a particularly virulent apostate group, including its offshoot Hamas.
38. Christians have only three options: embrace Islam, submit to the jizya and Islamic dominance, or continue fighting the Islamic State and face death.
39. It is good and right for Muslims to hate disbelievers.
40. The blood of all disbelievers is halal to shed so long as they and Muslims exist in a state of war.
41. The Ottoman state was also an apostate state, one which led the Muslim lands to ruin.
42. All war is religious war, any other reason or slogan is a lie and a deception.
43. The only thing apostate ideologies, governments, and parties in Muslim lands accomplish is to divide Muslims amongst themselves and empower their Crusader enemies.
44. It is forbidden to kill disbelievers with whom the Muslims have a covenant (dhimmi status/jizya).

Violence/Combat

295 codes (14%); 64 elements (17%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. Within its territory, anyone who resists the authority of the Islamic State is to be fought if they persist after their error has been pointed out.

2. Those who dispute the legitimacy of the Islamic State must be fought.
3. Jihad is an obligation for Muslims, especially when Muslim lands have been invaded by disbelievers.
4. Chaos and terror are to be used to prevent any apostate regime from maintaining stability in its power.
5. Jihad will destabilize regions in apostate countries, which can then be established as Muslim strongholds.
6. Appropriate violence is to be used within the Islamic State in dealing with laws, such as the stoning of a woman for adultery.
7. Enemy arms and armor are to be taken as war booty.
8. Crusader personnel may be taken for ransom and executed if payment is refused by the Crusader's government.
9. If American "collateral damage" is acceptable, so are terror attacks against "civilians."
10. Apostates and Crusaders are equally valid targets.
11. If a tribe engages in action against the Islamic State, that entire tribe is rendered apostate – except for those individuals who disavow their tribes.
12. Combat is the best means to gain wealth.
13. The death of executed abductees is the fault of the Crusader and apostate government who refuse to ransom their own people.
14. The Islamic State's jihad is ultimately a defensive one, it was the Crusaders who invaded and subjugated Muslim lands.
15. The fighters of the Islamic State can only be killed, never defeated.

16. The jihad against the Crusaders is repayment for their own aggression.
17. The preferred occupation of Muslims is jihad.
18. The pagan Yazidis are to be fought, killed, and enslaved unless they turn to Islam.
19. Despite its prowess in battle, the true power of the Islamic State's fighters comes from Islam.
20. The war made against the Islamic State is the greatest testimony from Allah as to the rightness of its cause.
21. Jews and Christians are not to be allied with in battle.
22. It is vital that Muslims attack people in each of the countries currently engaged in war with the Islamic State, and that these countries know why the killing occurred.
23. Journalists are valid targets because they are agents of the Crusaders and apostate regimes.
24. The urgency of Allah's commands gives the Muslim fighter the capacity for great feats.
25. The Shia must be destroyed first before the rest of Islam's enemies can be fully dealt with.
26. Apostate Palestinians must be destroyed before Israel can be effectively fought and destroyed.
27. Apostates cannot be allies, they must be fought.
28. Guard duty is vital and must not be neglected.

29. Physical and martial training are obligatory upon Muslims for the purposes of jihad.
30. Any state attacking the Islamic State or aiding those who do will result in the Islamic State raising the priority of attacks on that state and its people.
31. Violence will be returned upon Crusaders and apostates in the same manner it was inflicted upon Muslims.
32. Retaliatory burning by fire is justified through five distinctive and explicit proofs.
33. Moral and correct Islamic conduct is required of all soldiers of the Islamic State.
34. Blood must not be spilled unjustly.
35. The art of warfare is to be studied closely and applied to operations.
36. Maintain discipline, but do not oppress the men under your command.
37. Islam is the religion of the sword, not the religion of pacifism.
38. Warfare cannot end until the religion of the world is for Allah alone.
39. Temporary truces with enemies are permissible, but not permanent peace treaties.
40. Only war in the cause of Islam is legitimate.
41. The children of the Islamic State will be better soldiers than their fathers because they were born and raised in war.
42. The destruction of ancient and contemporary iconography is an essential part of jihad.
43. Slaves are to be treated fairly.

44. Though enslaved, Yazidi women and other enslaved pagans must not be forcibly converted to Islam.
45. The call to jihad overrides all other considerations, including the disapproval of one's parents, should they do so.
46. The Islamic State's war against opium production will continue.
47. The only complete solution to America's war with Islam is either to accept Islam or pay the jizya.
48. The violence by and inspired by the Islamic State will teach the Crusaders the true meaning of terrorism.
49. "Islamic scholars" who legitimize apostate regimes against the Islamic State are valid targets, as they are apostates themselves.
50. The death of a single Muslim is graver than the massacre of every idolater in the world.
51. Those who survive the Islamic State's violence are intended to be physically and mentally maimed as a message to its enemies.
52. Any apostate who repents before capture will be given amnesty, even if he killed a million Muslims during his apostasy. If he is captured before repentance, however, a painful death awaits him.
53. The soldiers of the Islamic State are righteously bloodthirsty and fight a war of just terror against the Crusaders and apostates.
54. The violence of the Islamic State is far from senseless. It proceeds from a set of very specific Islamic rules.

55. Takfir and attack are only permissible if the apostasy of the individual or group is certain.
56. What the West refers to as “lone-wolf” attacks are in fact designated “just terror operations.”
57. The Crusaders and apostates were mistaken in thinking that driving the Islamic State from Dabiq would break its resolve to fight.
58. Supplication and appeal to Allah is as important a weapon of jihad as tanks and machine guns.
59. The valor of Islamic State soldiers is unrivaled.
60. Islamic State violence is to be focused also upon smuggling and others who prey on Muslims in the chaos of war.
61. Soldiering for the Islamic States requires both valor and patience, as the venture is as much about building a state for Islam as it is destroying its enemies.
62. People of the Book who refuse to submit to the jizya must be destroyed along with their houses of worship.
63. People of the Book who separate themselves clearly away from others who fight the Islamic State, especially cowering in Churches, are not to be attacked. Leave them to cower while the Islamic State kills the others, then subject them to jizya – they may retain their Churches.
64. The Islamic State will destroy the enemies of Islam or else die in the attempt.

Islamic Governance

266 codes (12.67%); 29 elements (7.80%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. There is no conflict between technical knowledge and Islamic governance.
2. Islamic governance is to be a global religious governance.
3. The collecting of zakah funds for the maintenance of public services is vital.
4. Islam and politics have always been inseparable.
5. Islamic leadership is both a political and religious vocation.
6. The Quran itself is a book of governance, legislation, and enforcement, which secularism has made people forget.
7. It is obligatory to institute Islamic governance in any territory under the control of Muslims.
8. A leader is only to be obeyed if his orders do not conflict with Islam, otherwise he is to be obeyed utterly.
9. Islamic governance and the Caliphate require each other.
10. Nationalism is an apostasy antithetical to Islamic governance.
11. A jihadi state is the ideal environment for the establishment of Islamic governance.
12. Islamic governance must address contemporary concerns as well as matters of the faith, such as drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, and money counterfeiting.
13. The establishment of Islamic governance is an imperative, it cannot wait for some foggy future.
14. Islam is a holistic way of life which cannot be approached piecemeal. To deny the necessity of Islamic governance is to deny Islam.

15. Islamic governance must both fight its enemies and provide for its people to the best of its ability.
16. Proper Islamic governance requires careful consideration in its rulings on matters of apostasy and the status of different groups.
17. The Yazidi have been ruled a pagan group despite their worship of Iblis. Rather than an apostate creed, the Yazidi religion is a pagan religion that was Islamized through proximity to Muslim cultures across history which failed in their duty to properly deal with them.
18. Islamic governance must deal gently with Muslims and let them feel the sweetness and honor of Islam and must beware of making Muslims fear Islam and its rulings – and must help the people accept its more bitter aspects.
19. Islamic governance requires active engagement by Muslims through the avenues of discussion between the people and power.
20. Islamic governance must not isolate itself from the realities of the lives of the masses.
21. Leaders in Islamic governance must hold themselves and others responsible for executing justice in the name of Allah in their endeavors.
22. Partisanship is dangerous to effective Islamic governance and must be avoided.
23. Democracy is fundamentally incompatible with Islamic governance because democracy is an apostasy which ascribes to man the same authority of legislation to men which belongs to Allah alone.

24. Islamic governance and nationalism cannot coexist: there is no such thing as an Iraqi or a Palestinian or a Syrian: there are Muslims and disbelievers, that is all.
25. Proper Islamic governance makes provision for both religious and technical education.
26. Islamic governance through the Prophetic Methodology (emulation of Muhammad's actions and rulership) is the proper way.
27. "Machiavellianism" is apostasy, the ends do not justify the means – forgoing any of Allah's law in governance makes that government un-Islamic.
28. Proper Islamic governance prevents the kind of racial unrest and violence currently being seen in America.
29. For a Muslim who would support Islamic governance, the only path is hijra to one of the Islamic State's territories.

State-Building (Caliphate)

260 codes (12.38%); 43 elements (11.56%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. The Islamic State is an immigrant state meant for all Muslims, be they Caucasian, Indian, Chinese, Iraqi, Yemeni, German, etc.
2. The state must be built upon the talent of doctors, engineers, scholars, and specialists as well as upon jihad.
3. Administration arms like the Public Relations and Tribal Affairs are essential elements of building the Islamic State.
4. Providing public works and services, as well as implementing religious enforcement, are integral to the building of the Islamic State.

5. The Islamic State must bring security to the areas under its control to foster the return of economic growth and the establishment of public services.
6. Enduring the hardship of building the Islamic State is obligatory for Muslims and especially those on the path of jihad.
7. Building the Islamic State has always been the goal of true jihadis since the revival of jihad this century.
8. The Islamic State is unique to this age for being entirely founded by jihadis. It is a jihadi state; its very existence is an essential act of jihad.
9. The Islamic State increases security by stamping out drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, and money counterfeiting.
10. The Islamic State must see also to the medical care of the Muslims in its territory.
11. The Islamic State's state-building and its renewal of the Caliphate is fulfilling one of the fundamental elements of Islam.
12. The Islamic State is built as a refuge and a fortress for Muslims who have been oppressed by the world made by the Crusaders.
13. The state being built is a new Islamic giant – the opponent and ultimate destroyer of Western civilization.
14. The institution of slavery is an integral element of state-building in the Islamic model that has been revived after its unlawful abandonment.
15. The dissolution of international borders is integral to the building of the Islamic State, which repudiates the nation-states of Sykes-Picot and will see them destroyed.

16. The Islamic State must build the appropriate bureaucracy needed to administer its growing state, such as the General Services Committee, which focuses on infrastructure with projects aimed at restoring electricity, and building irrigation networks for agriculture, as well as cleaning and repairing the state's roads and highways.
17. Administrative offices are also necessary to ensure the maintenance of justice and matters such as caring for orphans and the needy.
18. Building an Islamic economy is an integral part of building the revived Caliphate. To that end, the Islamic State has taken steps to begin minting its own gold dinars.
19. The Islamic State builds its state by bringing unity to the Muslims, dissolving all previous group distinctions and parties.
20. The increasing of lands under control of the Islamic State is as important to building the state as it is to the freedom of Muslims under the Crusader and apostate yoke.
21. The state of the Muslims is an egalitarian state where "the blood of every Muslim is equal" before Allah.
22. The Islamic State, in its infancy, is weak and vulnerable relative to the power of its enemies. However, the Muslims must persist in the building.
23. To build its state, the Muslims must be as sweet and gentle with its own people as it is vicious and unyielding with its enemies.
24. For the proper building of the Islamic State, guard duty is as important as front-line fighting.

25. The Islamic State seeks the consultation of its people, the appropriate channels to do so are to be maintained.
26. The officials of the Islamic State cannot merely see to their own security. Building a state requires that its officials take up seeing to the needs of the people.
27. The Islamic State cannot be built if it sheds innocent blood, for Allah will withhold His blessing from the state if it builds itself in such a way.
28. The Islamic State must spurn tyranny as it builds its state.
29. Expanding the Islamic State by incorporating new provinces must be done according to a deliberate process.
30. The “Far Enemy” cannot be defeated first, or at all, without the establishment of a state for all Muslims. This is the Islamic State.
31. The Islamic State will build its state with all sincere Muslims who seek to join it, even one who previously fought it – even if he killed a million Muslims – if he repents he will be welcomed into the state as a brother.
32. Nationalism is antithetical to building a state for Muslims.
33. The young are essential to the building of the Islamic State as a generation of children raised in a true state of Muslims will become the spectacular flower of Islam.
34. The immigration of Muslim women to the Islamic State is as important for the building of the state as the immigration of men.

35. The Islamic State is a true Muslim state built upon Islam, not like the apostate states, which were built upon Western ideologies and through Crusader machinations.
36. Building the Islamic State requires the development and maintenance of the full range of cutting edge medical services including its clinics, hospitals, and the opening of medical colleges in Raqqa and Mosul open to both males and females.
37. The state-building of the Islamic State is required to include all the elements of a complete Muslim society.
38. The lie of the “Arab Spring” has swelled the Islamic State, bringing those Muslims who finally understand the falsehood of the apostate regimes and the clear hand of Crusader machinations.
39. Order and sustainability are vital to the building of a state of Muslims, hence the issuance of ID cards and measures such as fishing quotas.
40. The Islamic State will not build itself on the growing and selling of opium.
41. The successful building of a state requires vigilance against abuses, thus the Islamic State has established and maintains the Central Office for Investigating Grievances as well as several other bodies for eliminating injustice and rooting out corruption within the state.
42. The motherhood of Muslim women is a necessity for building the Islamic State.

43. There are no borders in building the Islamic State, its provinces spring up wherever the Muslims cast off the world made by the Crusaders and seize the place as their own and for Islam.

Economics

45 codes (2.14%); 26 elements (6.99%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. The global economy is designed as a weapon to ruin Muslims, this economic warfare sets apostate leaders against the interest of their people, who are stolen from.
2. The Islamic State will bring down the corrupt global economy, developing an Islamic economy in its place.
3. The Crusader imposed borders of Sykes-Picot is part of the economic warfare designed to restrict and impoverish Muslims, destroying those borders will facilitate free trade among Muslims.
4. The global economy oppresses Muslims under wage slavery to non-Muslim masters.
5. The Islamic State fights for economic as well as political liberation from the Crusader dominated international order and global economy.
6. The Islamic State will wage its own economic counter-offensive against the Crusader global economy.
7. The global economy will be, over time, taken from the apostates and Crusaders as war booty and redistributed to Muslims.

8. The global economy is an inherently corrupt, interest-based system.
9. The economic wealth of the Crusaders is spent lavishly in attacking Muslims.
10. Muslims must exit the Crusader global economy. The gold dinar is integral to this process.
11. The global economy will be ruined by the worldwide collapse of the dollar.
12. The free-market mechanisms of gold value represent true value, rather than the contrivances of monetary policy.
13. The petrodollar system is a tool for American imperialism.
14. Economic sanctions are economic warfare that constitutes the murder of Muslims who die in poverty.
15. Iraq's move to adopt the petroeuro was the true cause of the 2003 American invasion.
16. The Islamic State's seizure of apostate oil production and the sale of its own cheap oil is intended to attack the global economy by destabilizing the petrodollar system – ultimately destroying the petrodollar system by forcing the rest of world to pay for Muslim oil in actual gold.
17. Fiat currencies are a tool of Crusader dominance and oppression of Muslims.
18. The Islamic economy created by the Islamic State will be a gold-based economy.
19. Saudi economic addiction to the petrodollar system has led them into apostasy and the betrayal of Muslims.
20. The Afghan drug trade is part of the global economy's perversion of Muslim wealth.

21. The Islamic State seeks the immigration of technically skilled Muslims to aid in the construction of a complete Islamic economy.
22. The money seized as war booty is to be redistributed to fund state services.
23. Religious taxes as redistribution of wealth are vital to establishing an Islamic economy, as well as the restoration of personal property rights for Muslims.
24. An Islamic economy is a war booty dominated economy.
25. The Islamic State must create a secure environment for economic growth.
26. An Islamic economy must make fighting poverty a priority in its drive to build a welfare state for the Muslims and liberating them from the wage slavery of the Crusader global economy.

Other Jihadist Organizations

149 codes (7.10%); 17 elements (4.57%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. Other jihadist organizations have been corrupted by the apostasy of nationalism.
2. Other jihadist organizations have abandoned the obligation to establish a Caliphate and institute sharia in their territory.
3. Other jihadist organizations warring with the Islamic State are not jihadist at all, they are apostate groups that must be destroyed.
4. Any jihadist organization that does not swear allegiance to the Caliphate, now that it is established, is an apostate group that must be fought and destroyed like the others.
5. Al-Qaeda has slid into apostasy since the death of Osama bin Laden and must now be fought like the others.

6. So-called jihadists decry the Islamic State in bizarre competition with the apostate regimes.
7. Other jihadists groups are more concerned with strutting before the global media than they are committed to fighting for Islam, such is their apostasy.
8. The jihadis of Algeria have been amongst the most faithful and persistent in all the Muslim lands, and the Islamic State is thrilled to have brought many of them within their ranks. Though regrettably, many jihadi groups in Algeria too have been tainted by the apostasy of nationalism.
9. Jihadi organizations in the past have been far too liberal with who they will ally themselves with, thus has apostasy crept through their ranks and ruined their organizations.
10. A jihadist organization that refuses to make takfir against those who clearly deserve it, giving “benefit of the doubt” where there is none, is itself an apostate organization.
11. The jihadis of an organization must abandon it when it becomes clear that its leadership has apostatized, lest the jihadis apostatize along with them.
12. Al-Qaeda’s statements about how it would participate within a democratic system are a clear indicator of their apostasy.
13. The “jihadi” claimants squander their power and the territory under their control, refusing to implement the sharia and fighting the Islamic State.
14. Al-Qaeda’s latter-day alliance with apostate regimes and support of the Crusader coalition against the Islamic State is indisputable proof of their apostasy.

15. Following the apostasy of al-Qaeda, only the Islamic State can lead the Muslims.
16. Hamas is not a real jihadist group. They are an apostate nationalist militia and must be destroyed.
17. Other so-called jihadists will readily ally themselves with the Shia and are thus apostates.

Self-Image

364 codes (17.33%); 56 elements (15.05%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. The Islamic State has emerged, by the grace of Allah, to end the age of darkness that has afflicted Muslims and create a new dawn of Islamic power.
2. The Islamic State is the only legitimate leader of the Muslims, all Muslims who refuse to join, or who fight them, are apostates.
3. The Islamic State is an entity at the cutting edge of technology, with all the technical accoutrements of “modernity” without the stain of apostasy.
4. The Islamic State is a poly-ethnic, polyglot, immigrant state built by and for Muslims, unique in history.
5. The Islamic State is the only entity that can provide the religious lifestyle and education that Muslims thirst for in their hearts.
6. The Islamic State is a state of Muslims based up the Prophetic Methodology – any such state cannot abide the persistence of wrongdoers.
7. The Islamic State is an egalitarian state under the eyes of Allah who made all Muslims equal in blood – its leaders must and will be held to the same standards as the rest of the Muslim community.

8. The Islamic State combines political and religious leadership as is only proper for the community of Muslims.
9. The Islamic State is the entity that most emulates the religion of Abraham in its leadership of Muslims.
10. The Islamic State is subordinate to Allah, even it cannot order Muslims to disobey the law, nor would it.
11. The Islamic State is the culmination of the goal of all true jihadis since the revival of jihad this century.
12. The Islamic State exists to create terror and chaos within the lands of apostasy and idolatry, creating a new world out of that chaos.
13. The Islamic State's revival of the Caliphate as an institution provides a clear place for Muslims to gather and focus their efforts.
14. The Islamic State opens its arms to all repentant Muslims and welcomes them into the new world of the revived Caliphate.
15. The Islamic State is the land of Muslims who are the best people on earth, living in true Islam and waging just war against the Crusaders and apostates.
16. The Islamic State is like Noah before the Flood, offering the choice between Islam and destruction.
17. The Islamic State itself becomes like the Flood, washing over and destroying apostasy and idolatry in the lands of the Muslims and then beyond to ultimately cleanse the entire world.

18. The Islamic State is in a position similar to that faced by the Prophet Muhammad during his own lifetime – the world is shrouded in the darkness of idolatry.
19. The Islamic State cleaves to true Islam because it is the law of Allah and the only true proof against idolatry and the Crusaders who would see the Muslims destroyed.
20. The Islamic State conducts itself according to stringent Islamic law, it is not the mad entity bent on senseless violence that the Crusader and apostate media depicts it as.
21. The Islamic State is a stranger in this world in same way that the first Muslims were strangers to their districts, tribes, families, and clans during the time when Islam was first transmitted to the Prophet Muhammad.
22. The Islamic State is the site of true Islam, Muslims who immigrate there have their prior sins wiped clean through their act of hijra.
23. The Islamic State is a refuge for Muslims outside the international order, where they will not be polluted by the idolatrous ideologies of Crusaders, Zionists, and their apostate lapdogs.
24. The Islamic State is a jihadi state that exists outside of the international order and cannot be a part of it – it exists in a different world.
25. The Islamic State is a holistic replacement for the international order it will destroy, from media to economics, such as its minting of dinars.
26. The Islamic State is not a khawariji group, regardless of the claims of its detractors, and opposes khawarijiism along with all other forms of apostasy.

27. The Islamic State is unique to this age for being entirely founded by jihadis.

It is a jihadi state; its very existence is an essential act of jihad.

28. The Islamic State is a true Muslim state built upon Islam, not like the apostate states, which were built upon Western ideologies and through Crusader machinations.

29. The Islamic State is a work in progress, pursued in sincerity by Muslims. Its people must be patient with the hardships of building a new state and assist it with their efforts and consultations.

30. The Islamic State is the reality of George W. Bush's prediction that the Muslim lands were changing in such a way that will bring about the destruction of Western Civilization.

31. The Islamic State did not initiate the war it is currently fighting, it was started by the Crusaders and their apostate slaves who have oppressed and killed many Muslims since the fall of the Ottomans.

32. The Islamic State has come to understand that a state cannot be established and maintained without ensuring that a portion of its soldiers look after both the religious and worldly affairs of the Muslims, so it will fight the enemies of Islam and build the state of the Muslims with equal vigor and dedication.

33. The Islamic State is legitimated by the fact that the Crusaders and apostates unite against it.

34. The Islamic State is the inspiration for the violence of Muslims worldwide against the Crusaders and apostates.

35. The Islamic State is a state of Truth, it cannot coexist with Falsehood.

36. The Islamic State is a land without borders, its provinces spring up wherever the Muslims cast off the world made by the Crusaders and seize the place as their own and for Islam.
37. The Islamic State is required to pronounce takfir against the rising tide of apostasy, but it must only do so with certainty.
38. The Islamic State is required to keep all of its covenants, both to the Muslims and those disbelievers who pay the jizya.
39. The Islamic State fears the attack of the enemy, but it fears Allah more.
40. The Islamic State is compelled to deal with the Muslims in its territories gently, so that they will feel the sweetness and honor of Islam and accept even its more bitter aspects.
41. The Islamic State is a bulwark against the menace of the apostate Shia of Iran.
42. The Islamic State is the true inheritor of the martyred sheik Osama bin Laden – al-Qaeda has fallen into apostasy since his death.
43. Following the apostasy of al-Qaeda, only the Islamic State can lead the Muslims.
44. The Islamic State is the only entity implementing the sharia untainted by Western idolatries.
45. The Islamic State is a concrete and tangible entity to satisfy each Muslim's natural desire for belonging to something greater, bringing life back to the zeal latent in the Muslim's heart.

46. The Islamic State takes lessons from the failures of the disbelieving nations that came before it, it does not dig up and veneration their relics as the apostate regimes do.
47. While the Islamic State does employ terror in its just attacks against the Crusaders and apostates, it is so much more than merely a “terrorist organization.” Rather, it is a jihadi state for the Muslims that prepares the way for and awaits the Hour (End of Days).
48. The Islamic State is the reviver of the Islamic way of life, even if its ways enrage the Crusaders and apostates – their sensibilities are irrelevant to those in submission to Allah.
49. The Islamic State is accused of being “savage,” yet it offers kindness even to its slaves, as Allah commands.
50. The Islamic State is the only place where women can enjoy the full scope of Muslim womanhood.
51. The Islamic State is not a revival of the Ottoman Caliphate. While the Islamic State does seek to revive the Muslim world that was subjugated and destroyed with its fall, the Ottoman Caliphate itself had fallen into apostasy and thus led the Muslims to ruin.
52. The Islamic State is infinitely more steadfast than the Crusaders and apostates imagine, it will not abandon its faith and goals simply because they have managed to temporarily reverse some of the Caliphate’s territorial gains – even if is driven from Dabiq. There are clear signs of the Hour that must pass before the great battle there is to take place.

53. The Islamic State does not fight a single enemy who is free of idolatry – no one free of idolatry is an enemy of the Islamic State.
54. The Islamic State is resolved to only two outcomes for its venture: victory or the garden of eternity.
55. The Islamic State is not what it is by virtue of however many bars of gold it has, or how many soldiers it fields or planes fill its skies – it is what it is by virtue of its implementation of the sharia and its fight against the Crusaders and the apostates.
56. If the Islamic State and its soldiers do not undertake the obligation of fighting for the cause of Allah and rescuing the weak among the believers from the claws of idolaters, then who would?

Modernity

57 codes (2.71%); 10 elements (2.69%). Ideological elements listed below:

1. The term “modernity” is often a euphemism or byword for Westernization.
2. Secularism, liberalism, nationalism, democracy, and communism – these are not “modern” things, they are Western idolatries.
3. The language of “modernity” is used to deceive Muslims and lead them away from jihad and into Westernized apostasy.
4. The Islamic State is a unique advent in history. Nothing like it has come before and nothing like it will come after, excepting by relation.
5. “Modern-day” lands and “modern-day” cities of individualism are merely centers of Westernized idolatry.
6. The modern is merely a measure of time, that which is contemporary.

7. The “modernist” is simply one who values Crusader idolatries more than Islam.
8. The decline and ultimate destruction of Ottoman power was its corruption by Western idolatries.
9. Race is a construct of “modernity” which has no place within Islam.
10. “Modernity” has no monopoly on the achievements of the human mind, in the realms of science and technology, or any other realm. The nature of the human mind and its capacities are the gift of Allah.