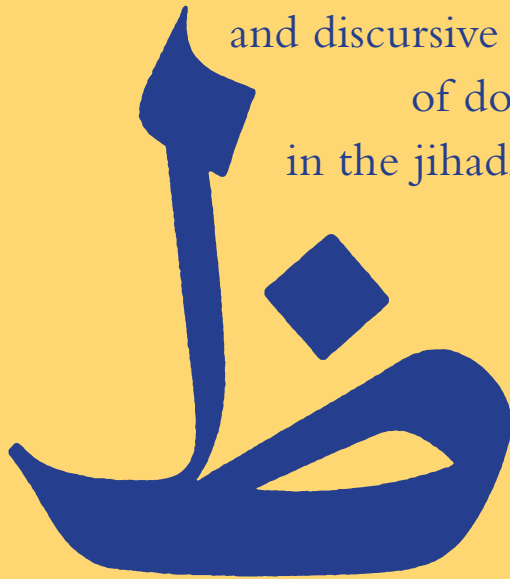


kurstin gatt

decoding dā'ish

an
analysis
of poetic exemplars
and discursive strategies
of domination
in the jihadist milieu





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Decoding DĀ'ISH

An Analysis of Poetic Exemplars and Discursive Strategies
of Domination in the Jihadist Milieu

Kurstin Gatt



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to my brother
Ryan

Abstract

Kurstin Gatt, *Decoding DĀ'ISH: An Analysis of Poetic Exemplars and Discursive Strategies of Domination in the Jihadist Milieu*. Beyond the images of bloody attacks, staged beheadings, and dismembered corpses, ideologically driven cults like the so-called 'Islamic State' work to generate obedience and compliance by producing, through their symbolic language, the potential for coercive power. This book joins a vibrant discussion about Jihadism by taking DĀ'ISH as a case study and explores the functionality of the Arabic language, and poetry vis-à-vis organizational power relations. Specifically, this research focuses on the use of language as a medium of communication, and on poetry – an ancient instrument of mobilization – as a tool to wield discursive power over the private and social life of a primary Arab audience.

To date, denominational poetry produced by jihadist groups remains underrepresented in the academic field. In part, this may be a result of the inaccessibility to retrieve jihadist material. The present work is grounded in theoretical frameworks that deal with the concept of domination, which is enforced through discursive strategies. The overarching theory of hegemony is characterized by manipulation and power abuse, and it is examined by taking into consideration the political and cultural context in which DĀ'ISH was founded, namely its emergence in the post-US-led invasion of Iraq and its roots linked to the Arabic-Islamic tradition. Through an analysis of language and poetic exemplars, I investigate how representations of the past are used as a mobilizing force primarily to legitimize the message of DĀ'ISH and also to inculcate a specific ideological worldview, to generate compliance and obedience, to create and consolidate group identity, to spur aggression against the enemy, and ultimately, to invoke acts of violence.

The past manifests itself in different dimensions. From the outside, the most obvious relics from the past are constituted by the classical register of the Arabic language, which is used as a lingua franca in the jihadist milieu, and the classical Arabic ode which stems from an oral tradition that has – for more than a millennium – served as a central vehicle of communication. Other manifestations of the past include pre-Islamic themes and logic of argumentation, Qur'anic allusions, historical figures, and ancient wisdom, all of which are exploited to galvanize support for DĀ'ISH. Representations of the past and the present are instrumentalized discursively, placing theologically loaded diction and culturally resonant symbols in critical places such as names of publishing institutes and media outlets to create a novel jihadist discourse.

The findings of this study suggest that the 'novel' discourse of DĀ'ISH gains its strength from tradition and the socio-political context. Once novel concepts and meanings enter a complex maze of repetition, primarily through a ritualistic form of poetry, these novel ideas become intertwined with the social memory and ultimately cemented in the collective jihadist schema. In turn, acquiring fluency in the discourse of DĀ'ISH becomes a primary indicator of compliance towards the hegemonic project of the organization. This investigation supports the need for a broader analysis of jihadist speech in all of its forms. Decoding discursive strategies exploited by jihadists to execute a spe-

cific ideological worldview is pivotal in building a long-term counter-jihadist narrative that exposes the discursive strategies of domination enforced through the symbolic world on the Arabic-speaking audience.

Abstract

Kurstin Gatt, *Decoding DĀ'ISH: An Analysis of Poetic Exemplars and Discursive Strategies of Domination in the Jihadist Milieu*. Jenseits der Bilder der blutigen Anschläge, inszenierten Enthauptungen und zerstückelten Leichen wirken ideologisch motivierte Kulte wie der sogenannte „Islamische Staat“ darauf hin, Gehorsam und Zustimmung zu erzeugen, indem sie durch die Symbolsprache das Potenzial für erzwungene Gewalt schaffen. Diese Arbeit ist intendiert als Beitrag zur Arabistik und Kritischen Diskursanalyse, und Teil einer engagierten Diskussion über Dschihadismus, in dem DĀ'ISH als Fallstudie dient. Die Analyse konzentriert sich auf die Funktionalität der arabischen Sprache und der modernen dschihadistische Dichtung im Kontext Machtstrukturen. Das Hauptinteresse besteht insbesondere darin, wie die arabische Sprache als Kommunikationsmittel und die Dichtung zur Mobilisierung mit der Absicht diskursiver Machtausübung über ein primär arabisches Zielpublikum genutzt wird.

Bisher wird die moderne dschihadistische Dichtung in der Wissenschaft kaum beachtet, obwohl das Phänomen des Dschihadismus mehrere Jahrzehnte alt ist. Dies ergibt sich zum Teil aus der Schwierigkeit des Zugangs zu Quellen. Basis der hiesigen Überlegungen sind Theorien, die die Herrschaft in der Durchsetzung diskursiver Strategien thematisieren. Die Untersuchung von übergreifenden Herrschaftstheorien, die auf Manipulation und Machtmissbrauch fokussieren, berücksichtigt den politischen und kulturellen Kontext, indem DĀ'ISH entstand, nämlich in der Zeit nach der US-geführten Invasion des Irak, und auch die sehr enge Beziehung zur arabisch-islamischen Tradition. Vor allem belegt die Arbeit anhand einer Untersuchung von Sprache und poetischen Beispielen, wie Darstellungen der Vergangenheit als mobilisierende Kraft verwendet werden können, um die Botschaft von DĀ'ISH zu legitimieren, und darüber hinaus dokumentiert sie die Indoktrinierung in einer ideologischen Weltanschauung, die Durchsetzung von Konformität und Gehorsam, die Schaffung und Festigung von Gruppenidentität, den Aufruf zu Angriffen gegen den Feind und schließlich die Motivation von Gewaltakten.

Der spezifische Bezug auf die Vergangenheit manifestiert sich auf unterschiedlichen Ebenen. Von außen gesehen erscheinen die meisten Spuren der Vergangenheit in der klassischen Form der arabischen Sprache, die unter dschihadistischen Gruppierungen als *Lingua franca* benutzt wird. Zudem manifestiert sich die Vergangenheit in Form der klassischen arabischen Ode, die aus einer mündlichen Überlieferung stammt und seit mehr als einem Jahrtausend als kollektives Kommunikationsmittel dient. Weitere Wiederverwendungen der Vergangenheit, die die Mobilisierung von DĀ'ISH genutzt werden, sind vor-islamische Motive, uralte Argumentationslogiken und Weisheiten, koranische Anspielungen und historische Persönlichkeiten. Die Darstellungen der Vergangenheit und der Gegenwart werden durch die Zusammenstellung von theologisch aufgeladenen Redewendungen und eine Symbolik, die an die Zielkultur angepasst sind, mit modernem Verlagswesen, Medienkanälen und moderner Kriegsführung zu einer diskursiven Strategie verbunden, wodurch ein neuartiger dschihadistischer Diskurs geschaffen wird. Die Studie ergab, dass der neuartige Diskurs von DĀ'ISH seine Stärke

durch Tradition, gesellschaftspolitische und religiöse Entwicklungen erlangt hat. Wenn neue Konzepte und Bedeutungen in ein komplexes Labyrinth aus Wiederholungen geraten, beispielsweise durch die rituelle Form der klassischen arabischen Dichtung, werden diese neuartigen Ideen mit dem sozialen Gedächtnis verflochten und schließlich im kollektiven dschihadistischen Schema verankert. Den neuartigen Diskurs von DĀ'ISH zu beherrschen, impliziert wiederum Zustimmung und Konformität und ist somit wichtiger Bestandteil des hegemonialen Projekts der Organisation.

Die vorliegende Untersuchung beweist die Notwendigkeit einer breiteren Analyse des dschihadistischen Diskurses. Die Dekodierung von diskursiven Strategien, die von Dschihadisten benutzt werden, um eine bestimmte ideologische Weltanschauung umzusetzen, ist von zentraler Bedeutung für den Aufbau eines langfristigen anti-dschihadistischen Gegen-Narrativs. Ein Verständnis der diskursiven Herrschaftsstrategien, die durch die symbolische Welt auf das arabischsprachige Publikum ausgeübt wird, könnte dazu beitragen, ihre Wirkkraft einzudämmen.

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Preface

From the outside, it is easy to perceive jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH in terms of repression and loathing. When we think of DĀ'ISH, we think of the orchestrated beheadings, destruction of world heritage, and terrorist attacks which rendered most of the world perilous at the very least. Certainly, I would not wish to diminish in any way the violence and brutality of militant jihadist groups. Yet if we want to understand how such an insurgent group worked and how it managed to hijack the hearts and minds of its recruits and manipulate the Arabic-Islamic tradition, such a focus may be misleading. From the inside, the most striking aspect of DĀ'ISH is its absolute control over its symbolic world, culminating in its extensive use of poetry in the jihadist milieu. This book proposes that if we want to understand the power of DĀ'ISH, then we must make sense of the messages with which individuals living under DĀ'ISH control are bombarded continuously, and decode these ways of communication to address how people come to embrace such deadly cults. How can people leave their families and homes to pledge loyalty to DĀ'ISH, which in turn takes away their freedom, their life, and threatens extreme violence to anyone who would question, let alone oppose it? This study challenges the common belief that radical fundamentalist organizations such as DĀ'ISH can only be defeated by means of violent physical warfare. Underlying this work is the assertion that understanding the jihadist discourse can help us understand better the jihadist milieu and, as a result, be able to provide a more effective counter-narrative to the jihadist paradigm. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* offers a contextualized insight into the controversial manifestation of religiously inspired political violence by analyzing strategies sharpened by decades of technique through which organizations like DĀ'ISH permeate flesh and blood of the people. Flowery language captivates children and adults emotionally and passionately and helps to reshape their understanding of reality, deactivate self-inhibiting norms associated with atrocities, and induce specific actions. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* is a long shot in the dark to understand the complex worldview of the organization, which operates as a form of power in its own right because those who control the power over meaning, also control the perception of reality. By exploiting the power of poetry to wield absolute control over the worldview of its adherents, DĀ'ISH attempts to legitimate brutality as virtue, concentrate bigotry, eulogize violence, and give a veneer of truth to the jihadist propaganda. By claiming control over the symbolic world and public discourse, jihadist currents cling to the Arabic-Islamic tradition to chase political power, riding roughshod over Qur'anic principles and traditions. Its laudatory slogans, single words, sempiternal images, ancient wisdom, and poetic verses are reinvented and subtly imposed on those living in the jihadist milieu in a million repetitions and taken on board mechanically and unconsciously. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* sheds light on how jihadist organizations exploit the symbolic world to strike further flames of discontent in war-torn countries like Iraq and Syria and wreak havoc over large areas and populations.

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I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the editors of the series *Literatures in Context Arabic-Persian-Turkish* for accepting the manuscript wholeheartedly and for their invaluable feedback. I would like to extend my gratitude to Verena Klemm who guided me through the publishing process, and to Sigrun Kotb who ensured that this manuscript is free of technical errors. Responsibility for any errors or inadequacies in the resulting work remains my own.

Words are not enough to express my indebtedness to my parents, who have supported me on my life journey. They have instilled many qualities in me and have given me a good foundation with which to meet life. They have taught me about determination, hard work, self-respect, persistence, and the importance of being independent. I thank them endlessly for their unconditional love and for providing me with all the possible means to reach for my goals even though they may not have always fully understood them.

Abbreviations

Often quoted sources are referred to in abbreviated form as follows:

CDA	‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ refers to an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of practice.
CHALABL	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic literature: ‘Abbasid Belles Lettres</i> , eds. Julia Ashtiany, T. M. Johnstone, John Derek Latham, Robert Bertham Serjeant, and G. Rex Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2008).
CHALMAL	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Modern Arabic Literature</i> , eds. Alfred Felix L. Beeston, Julia Ashtiany, Muhsin M. Badawi, María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
CHALPCP	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature in the Post Classical Period</i> , eds. Roger Allen, and Donald S. Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
CHALUP	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period</i> , eds. Alfred Felix L. Beeston, Julia Ashtiany, Muhsin M. Badawi, María Rosa Menocal, and Raymond P. Scheindlin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
DAN	Aḥlām al-Naṣr, <i>Uwāru al-ḥaqqī: al-dīwān al-shi‘rī al-awwal li-shā‘irati al-jihādi al-adība al-fāḍila Aḥlām al-naṣr</i> , e-book, accessed May 30, 2018, https://jihadology.net/2014/07/19/fursan-al-balagh-media-presents-a-new-release-from-a-e1%b8%a5lam-al-na%e1%b9%a3r-flames-of-the-truth/ .
DĀ‘ISH	See also ISO.
EQ	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an</i> , ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, vol. I–VI. (Leiden: Brill, 2001).
ISO	‘Islamic State Organization’ or DĀ‘ISH refer to the group once known as ‘the Islamic State of Iraq’ (ISI, October 2006 to April 2013), ‘the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham’ (ISIS, April 2013 to June 2014), and ‘the Islamic State’ (IS, June 2014 until present). This usage conforms to the group’s own shorthand for itself, namely, “the Islamic State” (<i>al-dawla al-islāmiyya</i>), or merely “the State” (<i>al-dawla</i>), which dates back to 2006.
KANAZI	George J. Kanazi, <i>Studies in the Kitāb Aṣ-Ṣinā‘atayn of Abū Hilāl Al-‘Askarī</i> (Leiden: Brill, 1989).
LANE	Edward William Lane, “An Arabic–English Lexicon. I–VIII.” <i>London and Edinburgh</i> 93 (1863).
LISĀN	Ibn Manzūr: <i>Lisān al-‘Arab</i> (Beirut, 1955–6).
WEHR	Hans Wehr, <i>A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic</i> (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1979).

A Note on Transcription

This work adheres to the transliteration system adopted by the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES):

Consonants

ʾ	d	ḏ	k
b	dh	ṭ	l
t	r	ẓ	m
th	z	ʿ	n
j	s	gh	h
ḥ	sh	f	w
kh	ṣ	q	y

Vowels

<i>Long Vowels</i>	<i>Short Vowels</i>	<i>Diphthongs</i>
ā	a	aw
ū	u	ay
ī	i	

- -a (-at in *iḏāfa*)
- al and (-)l- (e.g. *al-kitāb*; *wa-l-kitāb*; no sun letters)
- Initial hamza is always dropped
- The *nisba* ending is rendered -*iyya* in Arabic (e.g. *miṣriyya*)
- Technical terms for which there is no English equivalent and that is not found in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary are rendered in transcription.
- Proper names, technical terms, and geographic designations that have become standardized in English are either not translated or used in simplified transliteration without diacritical marks. Examples of these words include Baghdad, hadith, Hamas, Hizbullah, Islam, jihad, Mosul, Prophet Muhammad, Saddam Hussein, and Sunni Islam. In some exceptional cases, the ʿayn and hamza are retained for example al-Qaʿida, Qurʿan, Shariʿa, Shiʿa, Baʿth Party.
- Arabic titles of magazines are transliterated according to IJMES but without diacritics ex: al-Nabaʿ and Dabiq.

Introduction

Contextualizing *Decoding DĀ'ISH*

Since its emergence in 2006, the phenomenon of the 'Islamic State' has managed to assert itself as one of the world's most prominent militant jihadist groups of modern times by embodying the threat of relatively straightforward but highly shocking attacks. News about violent attacks, which were often communicated through heavy usage of psychological warfare with high-quality production of audio-visual publicity materials, has become palimpsestic, consisting of a series of translucent events overriding themselves. To date, there has been little agreement on the enigma of DĀ'ISH, which has managed to attract a significant number of individuals from the Arab-Islamic world and outside it to join it. However, trying to unravel DĀ'ISH and similar jihadist organizations through conventional narrative history and military tactics has proven relatively futile.

The phenomenon of DĀ'ISH is a growing field of study in which a variety of disciplines participate. Political scientists, media analysts, historians, religious scholars, Arabists, and experts of ideologies have delved into different aspects of this organization. The inter-disciplinary fields engaged in understanding DĀ'ISH are testimony to the multi-faceted dimensions that feed on religious, cultural, and political elements in the organization's day-to-day operations. In an attempt to reconstruct life under DĀ'ISH-controlled regions, research thus far has focused overwhelmingly on the experiences of eye-witnesses that have managed to escape from DĀ'ISH territory,¹ and on administrative documentation that has found its way out of the jihadist compound.² Other scholars have investigated DĀ'ISH vis-à-vis its connection to Islam³ and or its presence online.⁴ While these dimensions are undoubtedly valuable attempts to under-

1 For further reading on the subject, see also Donatella Rovera, "Escape from Hell: Torture and Sexual Slavery in Islamic State Captivity in Iraq," Amnesty International, 2014, accessed June 20, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/mde140212014en.pdf>.

2 For further reading on the subject, see also Rukmini Callimachi, "The ISIS Files," *The New York Times*, April 8, 2018, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-mosul-iraq.html>.

3 See also Ḥassan Muḥsin Ramaḍān, *Tashrīḥ al-fikr al-salaḥī al-mutaṭarrif* (Damascus: Dār al-ḥasād, 2009); Ibrahim Faw'ad, *Dā'ish: min al-najdī ilā al-baghdādī: nustālijyā al-khilāfa* (Beirut: Awal Centre for Studies and Documentation, 2015); Vincent al-Ghurrayib, *Dawlat al-khilāfa al-islāmiyya: al-tanzīr al-salaḥī al-jihādī* (Beirut: Dār al-walā', 2016).

4 For an analysis on how DĀ'ISH uses the digital world, see also Abdel Bari Atwan, *Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate* (London: Saqi Books, 2015); Adam Hoffman, and Yoram Schweitzer, "Cyber Jihad in the Service of the Islamic State (ISIS)," *Strategic Assessment* 18, no. 1 (April 2015); Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy* (London: Quilliam Foundation, 2015); Christina Schori Liang, "Cyber Jihad: Understanding and Countering Islamic State Propaganda," Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GSCP), Policy Paper 2 (2015); Daniel Milton, "Communication Breakdown: Unraveling the Islamic State's Media Efforts," Combating Terrorism Center, U.S. Military

stand the extent of brutality with which DĀ'ISH militants operate, analyses of militant jihadist movements cannot be solely governed by the paradigm of terrorism. This study proposes to shift focus on the language because Classical Arabic is exploited as a powerful medium through which DĀ'ISH transmits its ideology transnationally to other prospective recruits.⁵ Additionally, poetry serves jihadist groups as a cultural tool which is utilized to inculcate the jihadist worldview among an Arabic-speaking audience. From a discursive point of view, the analysis of language and poetry plays an essential role in the maintenance of and communication in the jihadist groups because it takes into account culturally dependent and resonant symbolism that is continuously appropriated by jihadist groups.

Aims and Scope of the Study: The Disciplinary Context

The primary purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of jihadist discourse. More specifically, this book investigates discursive tools instrumentalized by DĀ'ISH to wield power over its primary Arabic-speaking audience by generating compliance. I argue that we cannot understand the insistent voice of DĀ'ISH unless we delve deep into the ancient past and reread the jihadist group in light of the tribal cultures that for over a millennium have expressed themselves in poetry and have attached great value to their cultural traits and traditions, including their tribal values and the Bedouin ethos that still permeate the jihadist milieu today. Thus the analysis of DĀ'ISH must take into consideration its appropriation of the Arabo-Islamic tradition, its ancient modes of communication, and political mobilization. More specifically, this study addresses the following questions:

1. How do discursive elements of the symbolic world seek to engender commitment in the target recipients in the form of domination?

Since this is a study about discourse, it is not the course of events that stands at the centre of this study; instead, it is the language that reflects events and, at times, shapes and nurtures them. The recognition that discourse operates as a disciplinary device does not imply that other forms of coercive control are not necessary. The blatant punitive

Academy, West Point, October 2016, accessed June 30, 2018, https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2016/10/ISMedia_Online.pdf; Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Nathaniel Barr and Bridget Moreng, "The Islamic State's Global Propaganda Strategy," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT)*, The Hague, Research Paper, March 2016, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://www.icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ICCT-Gartenstein-Ross-IS-Global-Propaganda-Strategy-March2016.pdf>; Douglas Wilbur, "Propaganda's Place in Strategic Communication: The Case of ISIL's Dabiq Magazine," *International Journal of Strategic Communication* 11, no. 3 (2017): 209–23.

- 5 The exploitation of specific discursive elements connected to the Arabic language plays a pivotal role in the jihadist propaganda due to the overwhelming number of recruits joining DĀ'ISH from Arabic-speaking countries. See also, "Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq," *The Soufan Group*, December 2015, accessed May 5, 2018, www.soufangroup.com/foreign-fighters/.

inducements, beheadings, and burning of soldiers alive are, no doubt, considerable. Incarceration and corporal punishments, however, are never the exclusive forms of control upon which jihadist organizations rely.⁶ Symbolic displays of power expressed discursively not only operate in tandem with overt coercive controls, but they are also themselves a subsystem of coercive control. The group's control of power is conceptualized vis-à-vis its contestation over the symbolic world, the management, and appropriation of meanings and events. DĀ'ISH controls and manipulates the symbolic world in the same manner that it constructs institutions of enforcement and punishment.

In the analysis of DĀ'ISH discourse, it is impossible not to experience a combination of what social scientists following Max Weber conceive as a loyalty-producing organization through traditional authority (domination) and its anxiety-inducing simulacrum. The absolute control over the symbolic world enables DĀ'ISH to appeal to potential recruits inside and outside of Iraq, justify the killing of civilians and fellow Muslims in insurgent attacks, legitimate organizations that engage in violence, and counter the claims of authorities in Iraq and around the Muslim world. Thus, specifying the nature of and rationale behind symbolic discursive displays in jihadist organizations such as DĀ'ISH can clarify more general concepts such as obedience, complicity, power abuse, and membership.

Crucial to this study is how discursive mechanisms work to exemplify and produce political power. This study is interested in how DĀ'ISH mobilizes its citizens and members to demonstrate and embody its power. It engages in discussing discursive strategies as an occasion for enforcing obedience, but also as the very mechanism of enforcement. In a more critical approach to power, we are especially interested in power abuse or domination, and how the jihadist ideology is used to legitimate such hegemony. More specifically, this research investigates how elements that form part of the collective heritage in the Arab world are appropriated through discursive means to produce and legitimate political power, thus helping to ensure the group's own survival and obedience from its supporters.

In a time when multiple jihadist organizations are striving to acquire political legitimacy, the cadence of the classical Arabic ode, which is characterized by syntactic parallelisms, rhymes, allusions and maxims, all couched in balanced structures, provides a useful and inexpensive tool to communicate messages and power relations among jihadist subscribers. Poetry and other forms of discourse play an essential role in enabling DĀ'ISH to wield control over the worldview of their subscribers, mainly because these elements serve as an emotional expression founded upon a unique orchestral coordination between the speaker and audience.

To bridge the gap between discourse and power abuse, this study avails itself of modern theories borrowed from the field of 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA). This growing field of research proposes a systematic approach to analyze the interdepend-

6 Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 27.

ence of ideology and communicative practices. It also explains how language is strategically deployed to legitimate violent actions and resist a demonized 'other.' The study is thereby concerned with the use of language, symbolism, and poetry as a communicative or symbolic form of 'social manipulation.' The concept of power abuse is connected to 'social manipulation' which implies the exercise of a form of illegitimate influence by means of discourse. Social manipulation is defined in terms of abuse of power, namely social domination between parties and its reproduction in everyday practices, including discourse.⁷ Manipulating how recipients understand particular events discursively is crucial, especially in the case of the brutal and violent acts committed by DĀ'ISH. The manipulative jihadist language that is embellished in highly emotional literary devices and associations through underlying effects can achieve shifts in a dominant logic. In a broader, semiotic sense, this work also argues that manipulation as an illegitimate influence is also exercised in the symbolic world by creating a flag, currency, and reconstructing the world map.

The reasons for classifying language-based and symbolic strategies as 'manipulative' are two-fold. Firstly, these strategies are intentional and covert. The jihadist discourse is premeditated, and it is constructed deliberately to thwart reality.⁸ Secondly, these strategies benefit the interests of DĀ'ISH, and they imply an asymmetrical relation between DĀ'ISH and its recipients.⁹ By combining theories of domination with theories of literary criticism and CDA, this work discusses how content and form, together with residual and archaic references to other inter-textual poetical output can help to spread the jihadist message in this time and age.

2. What are the hallmarks of DĀ'ISH discourse, and what function does poetry play in the jihadist milieu? More specifically, what are the main literary themes, motifs, and devices used in these poems, and how do these devices contribute towards building up a jihadist ethos?

The study aims to unravel some of the mysteries concerning the debate on Jihadism through an examination of its discursive strategies by giving due importance to the semantic field, imagery, recurring motifs, morphological patterning, parallel structures, intertextualities, and other elements which shape this discourse in particular. These language-based aspects are analyzed in light of the culture and tradition that nurtured them. Recurring lexical items, metaphors, and field-specific lexicon, which promote resilience, steadfastness, belligerence, and the element of never-ending combat and struggle, gained strength from the traditional virtues of honour, dignity, courage, perse-

7 See also Teun Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," in *Discourse and Society* 17, no. 3 (2006): 359–83.

8 See also Frans Van Eemeren, "Foreword: Preview by Review," in *Manipulation and Ideologies in the Twentieth Century: Discourse, Language and Mind*, eds. Louis Saussure, and Peter Schulz, vol. 17 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005), xi.

9 Louis de Saussure, and Peter Schulz, eds., "Introduction," in *Manipulation and Ideologies in the Twentieth Century: Discourse, Language and Mind*, vol. 17 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005), 6.

verance in the face of evil most of which are enshrined in the pre-Islamic Bedouin ethos and the Islamic code of Arab societies. Phraseology derived from the Qur'an and classical Arabic poetry creates a specific aura of authenticity as a result of the fact that it is not usually deployed in day-to-day parlance but is used in a 'sacred' space which has been nurtured, cherished, and built up through time by multiple generations. The highly emotional rhetoric gleaned from the poetic tradition, and Islamic discourse enables DĀ'ISH to inject a spirit of struggle, resistance, and resilience by means of a hard-hitting language and an ethos of war.

This work locates modern jihadist poetry in the long-standing Arab poetic tradition spanning over a millennium by indicating possible influences on DĀ'ISH poetry and its position in the broader literary framework of modern Arabic poetry. Due to the form of jihadist poetry, this study investigates the superficial link between jihadist poetry and the Arabic poetic tradition. The jihadist poem is composed following the classical ode known as *qaṣīda* that has held a revered position in the Arabic culture for centuries. The dominance of its poetic form has inspired poets stretching from the pre-Islamic era to as far as the twentieth century, after which significant shifts in poetic sensibility began to emerge. From the twentieth century onwards, the classical ode remained in power but was now challenged with new poetic forms and techniques. During the modern period, the fundamental elements of the classical *qaṣīda* have been retained. Still, this model has undergone some changes that are also reflected in DĀ'ISH poetry. Additionally, this book discusses whether such poetry has unique characteristics when compared to other poems of Classical Age and Modern Times.

This study sheds light on discourse as a site of symbolic action, that is, the decisive and distinctive manner in which it acts in the world. Form and content are discussed concurrently because of the interplay of form and content in shaping that action. Even though the form and content are inseparable, they are still clearly distinguishable, and both work in different ways to promote specific goals. The analysis of poetry is carried out by resorting to the contribution of literary scholarship by both classical literary critics and modern Arabists. Traditional scholarship of Arabic literary criticism plays a crucial role in understanding the poetic voice within any jihadist group mainly because it focuses on the poetic discourse as a finely interconnected whole with its literary and discursive mechanisms that all work together to create an encompassing narrative for DĀ'ISH and those subscribed to its ideology. In this manner, literary devices are not only prized for their ornamental function, but they also play a pivotal role in substantiating an argument and, ultimately, manipulating the populace.

This book examines the functions of jihadist poetry as the primary medium of communication in the jihadist milieu. The features of poetry are to be understood in the context of the Arabic poetic tradition that laid particular importance to this form of discourse as attested by the centrality of poets and poetry in the pre-Islamic and Islamic societies. For this reason, the functions of modern jihadist poetry are linked to the functions of classical Arabic poetry that have already been discussed extensively elsewhere

by prominent scholars in the field of Arabic studies, including Beatrice Gruendler, Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, and Wen-Chin Ouyang.¹⁰

Additionally, the book discusses DĀ'ISH poetry in terms of its mnemonic techniques that are attributed to orally based thought. Oral communication, or the process of verbally transmitting information and ideas from one individual or group to another, has held an essential spot in the cultural space of the Arabic-Islamic tradition for socio-political reasons. Although one cannot infer that the jihadist milieu is a case of a 'primary oral' culture, the function and form of poetic discourse, including its incessant repetitions, its aesthetic appeal, its simplicity of verses, and the centrality of the communal experience hint towards mnemonic techniques adduced to orality. In turn, these techniques facilitate memorization, consolidation of the in-group bond, and subtle transmission of the group's message. This work culls theories from Walter Ong's work entitled *Orality and Literacy* to understand the power of specific techniques attributed to orality in the poetry of DĀ'ISH. Ong's work remains one of the more recent monographs that discusses the Oral Literary theory, which can be traced mainly to the work of two scholars, Milman Parry (1902–1935) and Albert Lord (1912–1991). By referring to the 'Oral Literary Theory,' the discussion focuses on the mnemonic imperative of oral poetry that is central to the effectiveness of ideological transmission in DĀ'ISH poetry. By adopting this systematic theoretical framework, this work presents the organization's world through its own eyes and voice, thus providing a greater understanding of the manipulative strategies used to spread the group's worldview, its political culture, self-images, guiding myths, and the making of a jihadist identity. The main focus of this book culminates in the analysis of how DĀ'ISH poetry is instrumentalized to legitimate, authenticate, and justify violence.

3. How is the past manipulated to reflect a modern worldview?

The dialectal relationship between tradition and modernity has a functional role to play in the overall discursive strategies devised by DĀ'ISH. Discursively, manipulation involves the usual forms and formats of ideological discourse. Manipulation is usually based on trust, which the manipulator often gains by engaging in argumentation. This work deliberates that discursive logics of argumentation exploited by DĀ'ISH are not to be understood in terms of the group's appeal to logic or rationale but to other forms of appeal that are more current in the specific Arabo-Islamic milieu including the appeal to tradition (*argumentum ad antiquitatem*), the appeal to authority (*argumentum ad vere-*

10 See also Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, trans. Catherine Cobham (Cairo: American University of Cairo, 2000); Beatrice Gruendler, Verena Klemm, and Barbara Winckler, "Arabische Literatur," in *Islam: Einheit und Vielfalt einer Weltreligion*, ed. Rainer Brunner (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2016), 360; Beatrice Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry: Ibn Al-Rūmī and the Patrons Redemption* (London: Routledge, 2010), 3–76; Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 180–282; Wen-Chin Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture: The Making of a Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 55–88.

cundiam), the appeal to consequences (*argumentum ad consequentiam*), and the appeal to emotion (*argumentum ad passiones*).

Appeals made to tradition and authority are perhaps the two most recurring types of logics of argumentation in DĀ'ISH discourse.¹¹ The group's instrumentalization of the Arabic-Islamic tradition should not be taken at face value but should be considered as a strategic means to reach an ideological end. From an argumentative viewpoint, the appeal to tradition or antiquity, whereby a thesis in an argument is deemed correct on the basis that it is correlated with past and present traditions, is a type of logical fallacy. One major issue concerning this logical fallacy is connected to the ambiguous definition of the term 'tradition' because its signification varies among different periods, cultures, religions, and geographical locations. Assuming that DĀ'ISH links itself to the Arabic-Islamic tradition, the concept of tradition includes a long-standing history spanning over several centuries transnationally. Admittedly, this variegated span over time and geographical location carry different messages and ideologies through which jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH sift to justify their unique worldview.

By framing modern-day warfare within an Islamic tradition, figurative language does not merely serve as an ornamental device but becomes an expression of argumentation within itself. This logic of argumentation communicates the subtle message that the unfolding political events in the region are pre-destined, and DĀ'ISH is only fulfilling religiously inspired apocalyptic events. The role played by tradition in DĀ'ISH discourse is three-fold. First, tradition and its wealth of associations serve as a powerful force of argumentation based on comparisons between modernity and the glorious Islamic past. Second, the process of sifting through tradition is instrumentalized to create a new ideology. The selective reconstruction of the past is strategically mobilized to manipulate the populace discursively and symbolically. Third, tradition normalizes a modern jihadist worldview, through which ideas and actions come to be regarded as 'normal' and morally justified in the jihadist milieu.

Different facets of tradition that surface in DĀ'ISH discourse – whether in the form of classical language, classical ode, ancient wisdom, the pre-Islamic nomenclature system, imagery culled from religious texts, mythological Muslim warriors – are attractive and appealing because they arouse emotions and provoke passion especially for a society that is deeply connected to its history, traditions, and faith. DĀ'ISH plays upon the sensitivity and emotions of a cultured milieu in which the merest reference to the Qur'an strikes up extraordinary reverberations. Poetry with overtones of Islamic terms serves as a powerful instrument for honing this reverberatory faculty and, thus, for attuning and orienting the sense to the divinely ordered world. The supremacy of the Qur'an, religious metaphors, allusions, formulae, and Islamic values appeal to the Islamic ethos. In this case, the argument relies on one's respect for what authority has said. The appeal to authority papers over gaps in logic and evokes deep cultural ties,

11 Theories on tradition are based on the seminal work of Edward Shils entitled *Tradition*, which was the first extensive study on the multifaceted understanding of tradition. See also Edward Albert Shils, *Tradition* (London: Faber and Faber, 1981).

facilitating the manipulation of the collective memory by means of religious immunity. In devising religious associations strategically, DĀ'ISH aspires to gain a glow of authority, and generate compliance from its audience.

The appeal to authority is also an illegitimate use of force because of its apparent attempt to intimidate the primary Arab audience by daring them to challenge what is culturally believed to be unchallengeable. In this sense, there is interpenetration and almost identification of religion and DĀ'ISH; disagreeing with DĀ'ISH becomes equated with opposing Islam. This is a clear example of how faith, as an integral part of the Islamic tradition, is weaponized as a group identity meant to galvanize support for the jihadist cause. Islamic discourse is exploited to characterize enemies, to imply modes of action against them, and to define intergroup, intra-group, and out-group relations. This work suggests that once the jihadist message becomes encoded in a culturally resonant form of discourse and built on fallacious types of logic, the recipients may be unable to understand the real intentions or the full consequences of the beliefs or actions advocated by DĀ'ISH, making them “*victims* of manipulation.”¹²

Status Quæstionis

Until recently, there has been no thorough analysis of the poetry and discursive strategies of jihadist groups like DĀ'ISH. Recent developments in the Arab world have heightened the need for a serious examination of militant jihadist propaganda, which is being deployed across the Middle Eastern region and beyond with unprecedented stealth and efficacy. In the academic field, the past decade has witnessed a renewed interest in the study of modern Jihadism and jihadist literature, primarily because of the acknowledged political significance of militant jihadist organizations and the far-reaching effects these groups exert on global politics. However, the importance of jihadist poetry continues to be primarily downplayed or even neglected as a valid subject for systematic research both in Western scholarship and in the Arab world for various political and religious reasons.¹³ Except for the scholarly work mentioned in this section, there is still a general lack of meticulous study that focuses on the language-based strategies which are exploited for ideological transmission, especially in the case of contemporary jihadist movements.

Several attempts have been made to study the relationship between language and ideologies that dominate politics in the Arab world. In a study entitled *Islamist Rhetoric: Language and Culture in Contemporary Egypt*, Jacob Hoigilt examines Islamist discourse published in the form of theological books of three prominent Islamist figures

12 Teun Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” *Discourse and Society* 17, no. 3 (2006), 361.

13 David Rapoport, a renowned scholar in the field of terrorism, had made a similar claim more than three decades ago, “scholars rarely read the literature written by terrorists.” David C. Rapoport, ed., “The International World as Some Terrorists Have Seen It: A Look at a Century of Memoirs,” in *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 32.

in Egypt in light of the Arabic text linguistics.¹⁴ In contrast to Hoigilt's study, this research does not focus on the analysis of theological books; it concentrates instead on poetry as a more accessible and practical means of transmitting a specific worldview on the battlefield. The instrumentalization of the Arabic language in politics is the central point of discussion in Ofra Bengio's monograph called *Saddam's Word: Political Discourse in Iraq*, which investigates the Ba'athist discourse in Iraq under Saddam Hussein's rule. Bengio's work analyses political terms, concepts, and idioms as disseminated through the official Iraqi mouthpieces as expressions that have both reflected and shaped Iraq's political culture and events. This seminal work illustrates how language and politics are interdependent and that regimes or specific political cultures are built on public discourse.¹⁵

The concept of using language and symbolism to enforce domination in the Arab world is also discussed in Lisa Wedeen's work *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. This work treats rhetoric and symbols as central elements of politics. The study analyses the symbolic world, including the orchestrated spectacles and strategized language that emerged during the thirty-year rule of Syria's ex-President Hāfīz al-Asad's regime.¹⁶ Additionally, the official discourse of the Egyptian ex-president Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir and the Iraqi ex-President Saddam Hussein is thoroughly examined for its emotional and manipulative effect in the work of Kristina Stock entitled *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht: Strategien der Arabischen Politischen Rhetorik im 20. Jahrhundert*.¹⁷ In light of these works, the aim behind this study is to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring the centrality of discursive strategies in the jihadist political discourse.

More recent discussions and analyses about the symbolic world of modern jihadist organizations are characterized by different perspectives and theories, including the literary, cultural, musical, religious, and historical aspects. These areas of research are by no means distinct or categorized. Quite often, these studies entail a combination of multiple aspects and theories. Perhaps one of the first scholars to have highlighted the importance of militant jihadist chants and poetry in the jihadist groups was Tilman Seidensticker, who drew attention to the presence of both poetry and chants in jihadist circles. The scholar concludes the study by analyzing a praise poem dedicated to Osama bin Laden.¹⁸ In another work, Seidensticker claims that chants "represent a genre of

14 See also Jacob Høigilt, *Islamist Rhetoric: Language and Culture in Contemporary Egypt* (London: Routledge, 2011).

15 See also Ofra Bengio, *Saddam's Word: Political Discourse in Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

16 Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*.

17 Kristina Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht: Strategien der Arabischen Politischen Rhetorik im 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999).

18 Tilman Seidensticker, "Lieder und Gedichte als Mittel zur Mobilisierung von Religion bei Jihadisten," in *Religionsproduktivität in Europa: Markierungen im religiösen Feld*, eds. Jamal Malik, and Juergen Manemann (Muenster: Aschendorff, 2009), 145–54.

religiously imbued music that apparently plays an enormous role in Jihadist circles.”¹⁹ Another study that deals with primary jihadist sources is conducted by Ruediger Lohlker, which also touches upon the topic of jihadist chants, albeit very briefly.²⁰ The study of Jihadism is discussed in more detail in a book series edited by Rüdiger Lohlker entitled *Studying Jihadism*. To date, this series comprises three volumes entitled *New Approaches to the Analysis of Jihadism: Online and Offline*, *Jihadism: Online Discourses and Representations*, and *World Wide Warriors: How Jihadis Operate Online*. The second volume is especially noteworthy because it investigates the symbolic world of militant jihadist organizations, devoting a book chapter to the poetry of al-Qa‘ida’s chief theologian.²¹

Other studies that have focused on the cultural products and practices of the jihadist culture include a volume edited by Thomas Hegghammer entitled *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, which focuses on poetry, jihadi chants, and non-military practices in jihadist circles among others.²² From a musicological perspective, Jonathan Pieslak discusses the role of music in the Iraq war, comparing jihadi chants to the music employed by US soldiers.²³ In more recent publications, Jonathan Pieslak and Nelly Lahoud focus on the musical element of DĀ‘ISH chants, by providing a historical overview of jihadist chants and several common themes within the vast array of chants.²⁴ Similarly, Henrik Gråtrud’s article entitled “Islamic State Nasheeds as Messaging Tools” bridges the relationship between DĀ‘ISH chants and the literary aspect related to DĀ‘ISH, outlining several recurring themes and characteristics of chants.²⁵ Likewise, Robyn Creswell and Bernard Haykel provide an insight into DĀ‘ISH and al-Qa‘ida poetry by discussing aspects of innovation and traditionalism,

19 Tilman Seidensticker, “Jihad Hymns (*nashīds*) as a Means of Self-Motivation in the Hamburg Group,” in *9/11 Handbook*, eds. Hans G. Kippenberg, and Tilman Seidensticker (London: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 73.

20 See also Ruediger Lohlker, *Dschihadismus–Materialien* (Wien: Facultas Verlags- und Buchhandel, 2009), 133–41.

21 Ruediger Lohlker, ed. *New Approaches to the Analysis of Jihadism: Online and Offline*, vol. 1 (Vienna: V and R Unipress GmbH, 2011); *Jihadism: Online Discourses and Representations*, vol. 2 (Vienna: V and R Unipress GmbH, 2013); *World Wide Warriors: How Jihadis Operate Online*, vol. 3 (Vienna: V and R Unipress GmbH, 2020).

22 See also Thomas Hegghammer, ed., *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

23 Jonathan Pieslak, *Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 58–77.

24 See also Jonathan Pieslak, “A Musicological Perspective on Jihadi Anashid,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 63–81; Nelly Lahoud, and Jonathan Pieslak, “Music of the Islamic State,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 60, no.1 (2018): 153–68; Nelly Lahoud, “A Cappella Songs (anashid) in Jihadi Culture,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 42–62.

25 Henrik Gråtrud, “Islamic State Nasheeds as Messaging Tools,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 39, no. 12 (2016): 1050–70.

theology, jihad, and issues related to the nation-state.²⁶ From a historical perspective, Behnam Said's work entitled *Hymnen des Jihads: Naschids im Kontext Jihadistischer Mobilisierung* remains, to date, the most recent and extensive study in the field of chants in the context of militant Islamist mobilization covering a period that ranges from their inception until the pre-DĀ'ISH era.²⁷

A significant contribution to the field of jihadist poetry is the work of Elisabeth Kendall, which provides a qualitative and quantitative approach to the study of jihadist poetry.²⁸ Kendall offers inspiring examples of how the classical poetic tradition is exploited in appropriating the past and reconfiguring it to support a contemporary militant jihadist agenda, focusing mostly on al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula. By taking the leading Arabic magazine of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula called *Ṣadā al-Malāḥim* as an example, Kendall argues that the provenance of poetry featured in the magazine is overwhelmingly derived from classical tradition (52%).²⁹ To date, Kendall is the only scholar who has provided empirical data on the importance of poetry among modern-day tribal societies, substantiating the claim that poetry still plays a fundamental role in "ideological indoctrination and spiritual preparation" of contemporary jihadist groups.³⁰ Kendall's survey of Yemeni tribespeople states that an overwhelming majority of Yemeni tribespeople regard poetry either as important or very important in their daily lives.³¹ Kendall's data also indicates that poetry is more prevalent among men (82% among men and 69% among women) and that neither age nor the level of education makes any difference.³² The research presented in this book builds on the work of Elisabeth Kendall by focusing exclusively on the analysis of poetry and discursive strategies as instrumentalized by DĀ'ISH.

26 See also Robyn Creswell, and Bernard Haykel, "Poetry in Jihadi Culture," in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 22–41; "Why Jihadists Write Poetry," *The New Yorker*, June 20, 2017, accessed April 10, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/08/battle-lines-jihad-creswell-and-haykel>.

27 See also Behnam Said, *Hymnen des Jihads: Naschids im Kontext Jihadistischer Mobilisierung* (Wuerzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2016), and "Hymns (Nasheeds): A Contribution to the Study of the Jihadist Culture," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no. 12 (2012): 863–79.

28 See also Elisabeth Kendall, "Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition," in *Reclaiming Islamic Tradition: Modern Interpretations of the Classical Heritage*, ed. Elisabeth Kendall, and Ahmad Khan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 223–46. For further reading, see also Elisabeth Kendall, "Yemen's Al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad," in *Twenty-first Century Jihad: Law, Society and Military Action*, eds. Elisabeth Kendall, and Ewan Stein (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 247–69.

29 Kendall, "Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition," 227–8.

30 Kendall, "Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition," 262.

31 Kendall, "Yemen's Al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad," 251.

32 Elisabeth Kendall, "Al-Qa'ida, Islamic State and the Re-claiming of the Arab Poetic Tradition," *YouTube* video, 7:25–13:20, accessed April 9, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtsPEskYhrs&t=2156s>.

Primary Sources

This study has fixed points of reference in space and time. It takes into consideration poetry produced after the announcement of the establishment of the organization known as the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) in 2006 under the leadership of Abū ‘Umar al-Qurashī al-Baghdādī until early 2018. In geographical terms, the scope of the present study is limited to productions that emerged from areas that were under DĀ‘ISH territory in the Middle East, effectively Iraq, Syria and North Africa (mostly Libya). Determining the geographical location is essential for the context of this study involving multiple in-text references to prominent figures, specific local events, and warfare developments. The focus is centred almost exclusively on sources in the Arabic language because it is the unofficial language of DĀ‘ISH.³³

The primary sources of this study vary from audio productions to written material. Transcription of the chants investigated in this work is provided in the appendix. The main corpus was retrieved from two primary internet sources: Firstly, the website *jihadology.net* which is a clearinghouse for Sunni jihadist primary source material that is run by Aaron Y. Zelin, a researcher at the Richard Borrow Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and Sami David Fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. Zelin’s website is perhaps one of the few running websites that publish DĀ‘ISH related material for research purposes. An overwhelming majority of chants were downloaded from *jihadology.net* as an audio file. This archive for jihadist content supports the expansion of the field of Jihadism by providing controlled access to the source material. The second internet source is Internet Archive (*archive.org*), which was founded and is managed by the digital librarian Brewster Kahle. Several propaganda materials such as chants, pamphlets, speeches, and videos have remained accessible for the general public on this platform.

The corpus that is taken into consideration was published through DĀ‘ISH media outlets between 2006 and 2018. At the time of writing, there existed no thorough analysis of this corpus of literature.³⁴ The corpus of poetry may be divided into three main groups consisting of DĀ‘ISH chants (*anāshīd*), Aḥlām al-Naṣr’s collection of poetry, and poetry which is circulated on social media and published on DĀ‘ISH related pamphlets or magazines. This study takes into consideration the collection attributed to Aḥlām al-Naṣr, who is a leading propagandist for DĀ‘ISH. In the introductory section of the collection, it is said that the poetess deserves to be given the title of “the poetess of the State of Islam.”³⁵ This first collection of poetry called *The Blaze of Truth* (*uwāru l-ḥaqqi*) consists of 107 poems mostly in monorhyme and published by DĀ‘ISH media

33 There are few instances when other DĀ‘ISH related non-Arabic sources such as Dabīq are mentioned briefly in this study.

34 As of August 20, 2020.

35 In Arabic, “...tastahīququ ‘an tazfara bi-laqab shā‘ira dawlat al-islām.” See DAN, 11.

outlet called Fursān al-balāgh media in 2014.³⁶ Poems in this collection are not titled according to the end-rhyme as was customary in the poetic convention but are given a title extracted from a verse or hemistich in the poem. The collection of poetry is of significant importance because it was written in the earlier years of the Islamic State organization. Thus, this collection sheds light on the socio-political dimension in which DĀ'ISH was founded.³⁷ This collection is also symbolic because it illustrates a different dimension to the stereotypical role attributed to women in a jihadist culture. Although one could argue that Aḥlām al-Naṣr's poetry may reflect her personal experience rather than that of DĀ'ISH, one must take into consideration that her narrative has been published and subjected to some kind of harmonizing, editing, and reshaping at the hands of the editors.

The corpus is based on two significant restrictions. Firstly, it deals exclusively with material produced in Classical Arabic. The chants selected for analysis are composed in Classical Arabic and vocalized in transcription for the sake of accuracy. Especially in the case of poetry, vowels are essential in determining the rhythm and the metre. An insignificant number of chants that were produced in dialectal Arabic are intentionally left out. The official DĀ'ISH affiliated media arms that are under investigation are identified on a DĀ'ISH-affiliated video entitled *the Structure of the Caliphate* which outlines the main media productions under its control.³⁸ Among the most prominent outlets are al-battār media production, fursān al-balāgh media, ajnād media foundation, aṣḍā' media foundation, and al-ḥayāt media centre. Al-battār media production produces poems in the written form; fursān al-balāgh media often publishes translations of critical speeches by DĀ'ISH leaders. Fursān al-balāgh media has also published the first collection of poetry in Arabic, which is attributed to Aḥlām al-Naṣr. Ajnād media foundation and aṣḍā' media foundation are media units specialized in jihadist audio chants. Concerning graphic productions, al-ḥayāt media centre, which was formed in May 2014 and is based in Syria,³⁹ has also produced an overwhelming number of films for DĀ'ISH including feature-length series such as “Clanging of the Swords, Parts I, II,

36 Aḥlām al-Naṣr, *Uwāru al-ḥaqqī: al-dīwān al-shi'rī al-awwal li-shā'irati al-jihādi al-adība al-fāḍila Aḥlām al-naṣr*, e-book, accessed May 30, 2018, <https://jihadology.net/2014/07/19/fursan-al-balagh-media-presents-a-new-release-from-a%e1%b8%a5lam-al-na%e1%b9%a3r-flames-of-the-truth/>.

37 In her collection of poetry, Aḥlām al-Naṣr identifies herself as a Syrian who had lived in the Gulf countries until the establishment of the so-called DĀ'ISH caliphate. Al-Naṣr is reported to have married in the Syrian courthouse of Raqqā to a Vienna-born jihadi Abū Usāma al-Gharīb. Her poetry is often disseminated through other DĀ'ISH media arms and social media accounts, especially on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram.

38 Aaron Y. Zelin, “The Structure of the Caliphate,” *Jihadology* (blog), July 7, 2016, accessed May 5, 2018, <http://jihadology.net/2016/07/06/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-the-structure-of-the-caliphate/>.

39 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 15.

III and IV” and “Flames of War: Fighting Has Just Begun.”⁴⁰ An overwhelming number of films and short clips entail poetry that is, at times, either chanted or recited.

This study is not concerned with the analysis of all poetry produced by DĀ'ISH, but it is mostly aimed to tread an analytical middle ground between an analysis that uses traditional and modern theories to state universal hypotheses about DĀ'ISH discourse. In this way, this research is intended to contribute to a critical understanding of how ideologically and politically salient discourses in the jihadist sphere reach their intended audience. Ultimately, the overarching aim is to increase and refine our knowledge about Jihadism in general by decoding specific discursive strategies deployed as practical tools to achieve domination.

Methods of Research

The corpus of this study is limited to ‘the Islamic State Organization.’ The decision to restrict the corpus to this jihadist group over other groups is two-fold. Firstly, the digitalization of the group’s propagandistic material makes access to this closed community easier in comparison to the more limited use of the internet among other jihadist groups. Secondly, DĀ'ISH has garnered international attention as one of the most recent facets of Jihadism. Decoding its message and strategies may serve as an opportunity to advance our knowledge of the phenomenon of Jihadism as manifested in modern times. Another limitation is based on the type of discourse being examined.

Due to practical constraints, this work cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of all forms of discourse produced by DĀ'ISH; it focuses instead on two key components that require a thorough discussion, namely, repetitive names of affiliated institutions and poetry. The analysis of names is especially critical because it contributes directly to the image of the organization’s self-representation. The creation of specific names for media outlets, female brigades, and fighters indicate how cultural artefacts and genealogical links borrowed from the past are retooled to conform with the group’s hegemonic project. The second discursive component that is analyzed thoroughly is poetry. In the jihadist milieu, poetry dominates other forms of discourse, and its circulation appears in different propaganda material. The importance of poetry in the process of ideological transmission lies in the significance of this form of discourse in the Arabic-Islamic tradition. The classical Arabic ode deployed by DĀ'ISH resonates culturally because of its long-standing tradition dating back to the pre-Islamic times.

The methodological approach taken in the analysis of poetry is qualitative and discusses poetic exemplars in their entirety. The corpus is collected by gleaning a substantial number of poems and poetic verses from a varied range of propaganda material published in Arabic online, including speeches, pamphlets, magazines, videos, and

40 Lauren Williams, *Islamic State Propaganda and the Mainstream Media*, Lowy Institute for International Policy (LIIP), 2016, accessed May 30, 2018, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196198/islamic-state-propaganda-western-media_0.pdf.

audio files. After collecting poetic verses in the *qaṣīda* form, several exemplars were chosen and analyzed thoroughly in order to unravel various literary devices adopted by DĀ'ISH. Subsequently, a literary-cum-discursive analysis is carried out to unpack the cultural and literary notions to understand the content as well as the form of this discourse. Various literary devices adopted in this type of discourse are discussed as potential strategies of mobilization and domination. The analytical approach which is adopted in this study combines theories derived from literary criticism and 'Critical Discourse Analysis.' That way, poetic exemplars are thoroughly examined in light of the poetic tradition which influences the form and content, and also vis-à-vis the ideological intentions underlining this cultural product. The selective reconstruction of intertextualities, religious citations, and historical references are thus examined as language-based instruments by which DĀ'ISH legitimates its existence and *modus operandi*.

Poetic exemplars are translated into English for the sake of being more accessible. However, translation of Arabic poetry as a perpetual process of encoding and decoding inevitably poses two significant challenges. Firstly, the notion of full equivalence between Arabic and English is hard to achieve because the 'significance' and the 'meaning' are always culture-bound. The intercultural translation of the images borrowed from the Arabic-Islamic culture is often unintelligible in the Western world. In such cases, the multiplicity of meaning and not just one meaning is often the case. The importance of translating the context tends to be even gain more prominence higher when dealing with propagandistic and ideological poetry because its essence centres on motivating and mobilizing its audience.

Secondly, translation fails to render the poeticity of the poems in Arabic because its quality rests fundamentally on the Arabic linguistic structure, particular forms of language, and the insertion of archaic diction. Classical Arabic prosody, for instance, depends on an alternation of syllabic weights between a light (CV) and heavy one (CVC) that is entirely different from the syllabic stress as a predominant metrical pattern in English poetry. The rigid structure of the *qaṣīda* is relatively challenging to render in translation. The precise regularity in the Arabic metrical pattern may be apprehended as dull and monotonous in the West. In contrast, it is positively valued in the Arabic-Islamic tradition. To limit this loss, the original texts in Arabic are provided together with their English translation. Besides, the source language (Arabic) is prioritized over the target language (English), and translations are rendered in modern English. As a basis for the interpretation of vital poetic texts and passages of the literary lore, these texts are situated in terms of the cultural and political environment that generated them. The intention is to bring jihadist poetry into the purview of contemporary literary interpretation in a way that makes it culturally relevant and poetically understood for the modern reader. Finally, Qur'anic translations in English follow the Sahih International version, which is available online under quran.com.

Challenges and Limitations

This research faces several challenges connected to the accessibility of primary sources, the issue of plagiarism, and the oversimplification of the jihadist phenomenon. The first

issue concerning the difficulty in obtaining jihadist material consists of two major components. Firstly, jihadist communities are inherently closed communities, which means that the operation of institutions affiliated with DĀ'ISH is often shrouded in secrecy and is also inaccessible to the outside world. As a result of this inaccessibility, it is challenging to verify specific details such as the date of production. Considering the political nature of jihadist discourse, which often makes explicit reference to the socio-political events happening at a particular point in time, such details are crucial. When the date of production is essential to the analysis, the date of online publication is taken as an indicative date of the latest possible date of production.

Access to jihadist material has been the subject of intense controversy within the international community. One major issue that has dominated the field in recent years is concerned with jihadist sources being made available online and their possible contribution to inciting individuals into becoming radicalized. As a result, online jihadist sources, in general, are continually placed under the scrutiny of European authorities. In part, this may have contributed to the lack of a systematic study of jihadist material among the academic community. Since this research is based on jihadist content as its primary sources, poetic exemplars taken into consideration are annexed to this study. The appendix is divided into two sections: Appendix A is made up of vocalized verses that are quoted in this work. Sources described as being derived from jihadist online sources, and social media are collected and archived from the primary source at the time of posting and classified in Appendix B. The rendition of the poems in their original form are included in this work for a more secure rendition of the sources and also for a more precise illustration of the aesthetical features related to DĀ'ISH poetry.

The second issue that arises in our discussion is the oversimplification of a complex phenomenon commonly referred to as Jihadism. Referring to the society in which modern jihadist poetry is composed as a 'jihadist community' or 'jihadist culture' is only a generic assessment of the multi-ethnic and multilingual jihadist scene on the ground that is composed of multiple organizations which are geographically located from North Africa to South East Asia and beyond. Even if the research were to focus on one organization such as DĀ'ISH as a case study, one would discover that within itself, DĀ'ISH consists of various sub-cultures that may vary depending on whether the study deals with the affiliates in Libya (province of Tarāblus/Barqa/Fezzan), Yemen (province of Yemen, San'ā'/al-Bayḍā'/Aden-Abyan/Shabwa/Ḥaḍramūt), Nigeria (province of Gharb Afriqiyya in West Africa province) or Afghanistan (province Khurasān). The issue tends to become more complicated because DĀ'ISH affiliates that are outside the Iraq–Syria region mostly consist of an amalgamation of smaller militant jihadist organizations that had pledged allegiance to DĀ'ISH, such as the affiliate in Nigeria formerly known as Boko Haram.⁴¹ However, these multiple affiliates should not hinder the analysis of DĀ'ISH because the discourse belonging to these DĀ'ISH affiliates is delimited by the organization's overarching ideological goals and motivations.

41 The molecular aspect of DĀ'ISH is discussed in detail in section 1.2 of this study.

The third challenge is connected to the jihadist chants, which have become an insignia of DĀ'ISH and its propaganda. One issue that arises from these discussions is the originality of an insignificant number of chants used by DĀ'ISH. Researchers draw attention to the fact that some chants are also used by other outlaw Salafī organizations.⁴² However, provided that most of the jihadist material is subject to policing by Western authorities, and there is, as yet, no well-established archive or repository documenting jihadist content of different Salafī-jihadist organizations, it is practically impossible to verify the authenticity of the vast number of chants unless one happens to have heard the chants before. DĀ'ISH chants, which are believed to have been 'plagiarized' are purposely not taken as exemplars in this study. In the process of choosing chants for analysis, the focus is set on the ones published through DĀ'ISH affiliated publishing centres, which are identified by a reference to the publishing centre at the beginning of the audio file. This is usually indicated by a signatory message stating *mu'assasāt ajnād* or *mu'assasāt aṣḍā'*. Even in the unlikely event that some of the poetic exemplars happen to be borrowed from other jihadist organizations, the fact that DĀ'ISH accepted to publish them under its name indicates that the content is aligned with its ideology.

Key Terminology

This study makes use of several terms and restrains from using others that need further clarification. Firstly, the terms DĀ'ISH or 'Islamic State organization' (ISO), which are used interchangeably in this work, refer to what started as *jam'at al-tawḥīd wa-l-jihād* in 1999, which then pledged allegiance to al-Qa'ida and later developed into 'the Islamic State of Iraq' in October 2006 led by Abū 'Umār al-Qurashī al-Baghdādī. Ayman al-Zawāhirī, who is the current leader of al-Qa'ida central, severed ties with 'the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria' in February 2014 leading to the proclamation of the re-establishment of the caliphate by the current leader of the Islamic state organization Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī renaming the organization 'the Islamic State.'⁴³ The organization under question is referred to as 'the Islamic State organization' and abbreviated as 'ISO.' Associating the terms 'organization' or 'movement' with the group's name is essential on two accounts. Firstly, it regards DĀ'ISH for what it truly is, namely as 'an organization' that calls itself 'the Islamic State.' Referring to DĀ'ISH by its self-appointed name, that is, 'the Islamic State,' would legitimate its declaration of an Islamic caliphate,⁴⁴ because the notions of 'Islamic' and 'state' trigger the exact kind of se-

42 Lahoud, and Pieslak argue that especially during its early years, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) used to rely on borrowed chants sometimes even by reproducing them. It started producing its chants once it began to gain military momentum on the battlefield. See Lahoud, and Pieslak, "Music of the Islamic State," in *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 60, no. 1 (2018), 157.

43 Jessica Stern, and J. M. Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror* (New York: Ecco Press, 2016), xx–xxi.

44 See also Adam Taylor, "France Is Ditching the 'Islamic State' Name – and Replacing it with a Label the Group Hates," *The Washington Post*, September 17, 2014, accessed August 28, 2018,

mantic framing that the movement itself is so cunningly trying to propagate among its predominantly Muslim audience. The association of ‘Islamic’ with ‘state’ suggest that the creation of the organization is somehow connected to the past Islamic caliphates of the Islamic Golden Age.⁴⁵ By claiming that the organization is ‘Islamic,’ DĀ‘ISH bridges Islam, which is in itself a broadly contested concept, alongside other terms like ‘Muslims’ and ‘Islamists.’ This particularly ambiguous and dangerous naming of the organization seems to erroneously suggest that it is representative of Islam, Muslims, and Islamists alike. Additionally, the term ‘the Islamic State’ is strictly related to the creation of a caliphate, which is the political goal of DĀ‘ISH. The movement’s choice of name is merely a projection of its ideology and its expanding policy, an image that it has attempted to propagate to the outside world. It is for this reason that the current name ‘the Islamic State’ has been developing concurrently to the political and military achievements of the organization, changing from ISI (‘Islamic State in Iraq,’ Ar. *al-dawla al-islāmiyya fī l-‘irāq*) in 2006 to ISIS (‘Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant,’ Ar. *al-dawla al-islāmiyya fī l-‘irāq wa-l-shām*).

This study takes into consideration DĀ‘ISH sources from 2014 onwards when DĀ‘ISH started calling itself ‘the Islamic State.’ The study intentionally avoids referring to the Islamic State movement as a ‘terrorist’ organization principally because ‘terror’ is a contested concept denoting political subjectivity and ambiguity. This does not imply, however, that this book is sympathetic in any way toward the jihadist ideology or that this work is insensitive to the horrible acts practised by this movement. Nevertheless, the study is aimed to keep away from terms with heavy political overtones for the benefit of objective research. The term ‘ideological force’ is repeatedly used in this work to define DĀ‘ISH. It stresses that ideology – and not religion – is the *modus operandi* and the root of the group’s violence. In this context, ideology is understood to be a system of beliefs, social constructs, ways of understanding life, and a political credo disguised in Islamic terms. The importance of ideology in defining DĀ‘ISH does not allude that this work engages with thorough analyses and debates of the Salafi-jihadist ideology. Instead, it focuses mostly on how DĀ‘ISH communicates its ideology as a coveted *Weltanschauung* for its audience. The term ‘force’ also indicates that the ideology adopted by DĀ‘ISH is not confined to the movement, but should be understood as a radical undercurrent that has been gaining momentum in politically troubled countries. The analysis of strategies that this study offers is not limited to DĀ‘ISH *per se*, but it may also be relevant to other similar jihadist organizations that have been actively engaging in the symbolic world for the past decades.

In this study, the term *nāshid* (pl. *anāshīd*) is rendered as ‘chant’ rather than ‘hymn’ in translation. Oxford dictionary defines the notion of chant as ‘a repeated rhythmic phrase, typically one shouted or sung in unison by a crowd’ as opposed to a hymn,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/09/17/france-is-ditching-the-islamic-state-name-and-replacing-it-with-a-label-the-group-hates/>.

45 See also Elisabeth Wehling, *Politisches Framing: Wie eine Nation sich Ihr Denken Einredet – und daraus Politik Macht* (Cologne: Halem, 2016), 159–63.

which is defined as ‘a religious song or poem of praise to God or a god.’ Since this study revolves around ideological rather than religious poetry and it involves multiple genres rather than solely praising God, referring to *anāshīd* as ‘hymns’ may be slightly misleading.

Division of Book

This book is divided into three parts. Part one is called ‘Setting the Scene,’ and its primary purpose is to provide a generic overview of the most critical elements that are discussed throughout this work. Chapter one sets the scene by establishing a working definition of ‘the Islamic State Organization,’ which is, by definition, challenging due to the multiple vectors involved in the process. This chapter contextualizes DĀ‘ISH vis-à-vis current political events, including the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. It also discusses DĀ‘ISH in terms of its ideological dimension and its intricate connections to Islam. These discussions scratch the surface of the complexity encountered in identifying organizations like DĀ‘ISH within their historical and socio-political context. With this background definition in mind, it is the purpose of the second chapter to introduce and outline the theoretical components contributing to the discussions stimulated at a later stage in this study. For a conceptual and theoretical orientation, this study borrows discussions related to domination, tradition, and orality. This chapter draws some of its inspiration from modern theories of hegemony and orality and discussions related to classical Arabic poetry by classical and modern scholars. Among the most intriguing discussions dealt with in this chapter is the dichotomous relationship between the past and the present, tradition and modernity, advanced technology, and ancient modes of mobilization, all of which contribute towards creating the group’s uniqueness in the symbolic world.

Part two deals with different functions of DĀ‘ISH discourse. Chapter three analyses the role of symbolism and discursive strategies in the jihadist milieu. This chapter is concerned with iconographies, such as the black flag and the currency created by DĀ‘ISH, and its historical significance in the Arabic-Islamic tradition. It also establishes the importance of Classical Arabic as a medium of ideological transmission. As a practical way of understanding the instrumentalization of the Arabic language, the chapter develops into a thorough examination of naming strategies by analyzing the names of media outlets and nomenclature as adopted and adapted by DĀ‘ISH fighters. Naming strategies are discussed vis-à-vis identity creation and how this newly formed identity is accompanied by a specific behaviour marketed by DĀ‘ISH. In chapter four, the focus shifts on the function of poetry in the jihadist milieu. By building on the established functions that classical Arabic poetry has enjoyed since the pre-Islamic times, this chapter depicts the significance of this cultural artefact as the primary source of communication in the jihadist group. The functions of DĀ‘ISH poetry are analyzed in the framework of the pre-Islamic and Islamic function of poetry, also taking into consideration the socio-political conditions taking place on the modern-day battlefield.

Part three provides a thematic analysis of poetic exemplars and investigates how specific themes contribute extensively to the overarching theories of domination. These

chapters intend to offer a closer thematic analysis of DĀ'ISH poetry by taking into consideration the long-standing literary tradition and criticism on the one hand, and the current discussions of poetic criticism on the other hand. These two dimensions are especially helpful in decoding the poetic exemplars of a modern organization that composes poetry in the classical form. The thematic analysis is divided into two major parts, namely poetry of blood vengeance and poetry of ideological transmission. Chapter five deals with poetry motivated by blood vengeance whereby ancient themes and motifs are exploited to heighten emotions, galvanize support, and evoke the ferocity of the pre-Islamic ethos of blood vengeance. Chapter six is concerned with the ideological transmission of poetry, which is deployed to spread the jihadist paradigm and worldview. Even in this case, traditional themes, poetic motifs, and morphological patterning are mobilized to connect with the audience and, at the same time, install a shared vision manipulated to suit the group's ideology.

PART I

Chapter One

The Emergence of DĀ'ISH as Part of the Jihadist Milieu

1.1. Defining 'the Islamic State Organization': The Achilles Heel

DĀ'ISH is considered as a radical, anti-establishment movement that operates on the sustained basis of exerting external influence on behalf of a specific cause. One of the major issues that arises in our definition of militant jihadist organizations such as DĀ'ISH is the lack of a central institution governing jihadist groups. In this sense, Jihadism lacks the conformity of theological interpretations and overall pan-jihadist leadership for consultation. This chapter eschews the problem of definition by discussing key terms that help to discern the meanings of terms rather than to define these terms in an essentialist manner. These terms are to be defined according to the socio-political and historical factors that have influenced DĀ'ISH. Political belief systems, including Jihadism, "are historically contingent and, therefore, must be analysed with reference to a particular context that connects their origins and developments to specific times and spaces."¹ The historical circumstances of people have primacy and "not the generic abstractions that would claim them...every aspect of their religions and cultures will come forward only to the degree that they can help restore a sense of pride of place and historical agency in shaping their new world."²

From the outset, this work considers Jihadism to be starkly influenced by two major intersecting dimensions. These dimensions, however, are neither reducible to their constituent factors and forces nor fixed and stagnant in history. Diachronically, the jihadist ideology as interpreted by DĀ'ISH links itself to Islam. It is a subset of a particularly violent, conservative, and uncompromising Sunni group, often referred to as Salafi Jihadism. Contemporary Salafi-jihadist aligned groups are based on a foetal relationship with the traditionalist past. Modern-day adherents of Salafism claim to emulate exclusively and meticulously the example of "the pious predecessors" (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*), namely the first three generations of Muslims after the Prophet's death.³ The radicalization of Islam advocates the restoration of a previous state of social affairs by seeking to return to the status quo ante that is regarded as absent from the contemporary status quo of a society. The Salafi-jihadist component consists of a transnational outlook, the rejec-

1 Manfred B. Steger, *The Rise of the Global Imaginary: Political Ideologies from the French Revolution to the Global War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5.

2 Hamid Dabashi, *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 137.

3 See also Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (London: Hurst, 2009), 33–57.

tion of electoral politics, the reluctance to make truces or engage in political discussions and compromises, and an exclusive focus on armed struggle.

On a synchronic level, DĀ'ISH is shaped by the political events taking place in the Arab world in general and the Iraq–Syria region in particular. DĀ'ISH is an 'ideological force' geographically connected to Iraq and Syria. The definition of DĀ'ISH as an 'ideological force' is vital on two accounts; Firstly, because DĀ'ISH needs to be understood in terms of its ideology rather than its religious factors.⁴ Secondly, the term 'force' represents a physically violent organization. It refers to a type of power that has gathered momentum by setting itself against other similar ideologies connected to Jihadism. Until early 2017, DĀ'ISH managed entire regions in Iraq and Syria politically, socio-logically, militarily, and ideologically. To date, however, DĀ'ISH has lost most of its power in the region and been relocating itself in neighbouring countries in South East Asia, which makes it challenging to identify the organization in terms of its present location.⁵

1.2. Contextualizing the Relationship between Islam, Islamism, and Jihadism

Jihadism is anchored in Islamic theology by means of a much intertwined and closely connected lineage of religio-historical figures, events, and conquests as well as other theological doctrines and specific radical ideologies that have developed throughout the centuries.⁶ Gradually, Jihadism transformed itself into a global insurgency consisting of a diversity of backgrounds of supporters of radicalism, and a multitude of languages and diverse ethnic backgrounds within its ranks. For the sake of clarity, there are two significant vectors that need to be mentioned at this stage, namely the historicity of Islamism and Jihadism, on the one hand, and the relationship between DĀ'ISH and Jihadism on the other hand. The difference between Islamism and Jihadism is not clear-cut, and it is often challenging to categorize points of distinction between

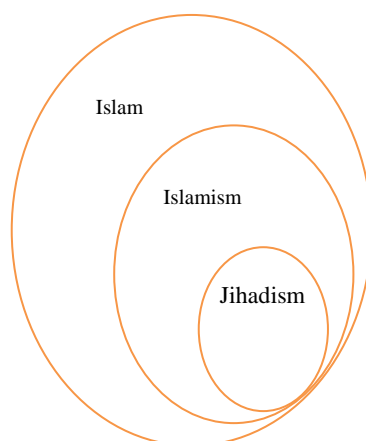


Figure 1 The Representation of Islam, Islamism, and Jihadism

4 The centrality of ideology to DĀ'ISH is also discussed in Peter R. Neumann, *Radicalized: New Jihadists and the Threat to the West* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016), xvii.

5 As of December 2018, the presence of DĀ'ISH in Iraq and Syria has reduced drastically.

6 There is only a minority of supporters of Islamism and Jihadism in Islamic countries. Statistically, Islamists make up around three to ten percent of the population in Islamic countries. Jihadists, on the other hand, make up one percent of the Muslim population worldwide. See also Kai Hirschmann, *Terrorismus* (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 2003), 42; Wilhelm Dietl, Kai Hirschmann, and Rolf Tophoven, *Das Terrorismus – Lexikon: Täter, Opfer, Hintergründe* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 2006), 24.

these categories. As the graph illustrates, the complex relationship between Islam and the Salafi-jihadist ideology can be conceptualized by defining points of similarity.

Among the most critical factors are the historicity of Islam vis-à-vis Jihadism and Islamism. Unlike Islam, which appeared during the seventh century CE in the Arabian Peninsula, Islamism and Jihadism are, in essence, modern because both ideologies can be traced to the nineteenth century. One way of defining Islamism is by considering it as “a socio-political ideology which strives to institute governments under Allah’s authority, not man-made constitutions, and administration of society according to sharia (Islamic law), not Western law.”⁷ A significant political event occurred in 1978, which provided an unprecedented impetus to the voices of both Islamists and modern jihadists. During this time, the Iranian revolution sought the removal of the US-backed Pahlavi Shah, whose dynasty was ultimately replaced by the new Islamic Republic of Iran. This revolution inspired the formation of a Shi‘a Islamist resistance movement called *Hizbullah*, which came to existence within a few months following the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. Mehdi Mozaffari argues that the term ‘Islamism’ acquired political and ideological connotations with the outbreak of the Islamic revolution under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who propagated ‘political Islam’ and established “the first Islamist government in the twentieth century.”⁸ This unprecedented historical event brought about the need to create new terms to describe this phenomenon, such as ‘Islamic fundamentalism,’ ‘radicalism,’ ‘Islamic revival,’ and ‘political Islam.’⁹

In modern times, an overwhelming majority of Islamist movements and Islamic republics in favour of Islamic states are based on the work of ideologues such as Abū al-A‘lā Mawdūdī (Jamāt-e-Islami or ‘Islamic Society’),¹⁰ Ḥassan al-Bannā (the Muslim Brotherhood),¹¹ and Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (Saudi Arabia).¹² The works of these

7 Andrew Harvey, Ian Sullivan, and Ralph Groves, “A Clash of Systems: An Analytical Framework to Demystify the Radical Islamist Threat,” *Parameters* 35:3 (Autumn 2005), 76.

8 Mehdi Mozaffari, “What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 1 (2007), 18.

9 For a thorough analysis of these concepts, see also Bassam Tibi, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe: Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam Versus Global Jihad* (London: Routledge, 2008); Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), xii; James Piscatori, “Accounting for Islamic Fundamentalism,” in *Accounting for Fundamentalism: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, eds. Martin E. Marty, and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, John Obert Voll, and John L. Esposito, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

10 Sayyid Qutb and Abū al-A‘lā Mawdūdī expressed themselves against nationalism. They considered nationalism as a European invention that was transported into the Middle East and south-east Asia. Qutb believed that moral rearmament could only take place if Muslims perform an all-out offensive (jihad) against modernity. See also Michael Whine, “Islamism and Totalitarianism: Similarities and Differences,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 2, no. 2 (2001), 59–60.

11 Tarek Fatah, *Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State* (Mississauga: John Wiley and Sons Canada, 2008), 13.

12 The Wahhabi school is also one of the most influential ideological schools founded on the work of Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792 CE) who was a direct spiritual descendent of the thirteenth-century Islamic scholar Taqī d-Dīn b. Taymiyya (d. 1328 CE) and the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence. Al-Wahhāb

Islamist ideologues lay the foundation of doctrines we now associate with modern Islamic states and militant Islamist and jihadist movements such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, DĀ'ISH, al-Qa'ida. One of the most relevant debates that arose among the Islamist trio in the early twentieth century is based on the concept of jihad against the non-Muslim 'enemy,' which interpretation came to play an essential part in the ideological set up of later militant jihadist movements. This new form of jihad "was patterned on the tradition of the underground communist parties of Europe and at time resembling the anarchists of the 19th century."¹³ The work of Muhammad 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792 CE), who was a direct spiritual descendent of the Islamic scholar Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328 CE) and the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence has developed into Saudi Arabia's state ideology.¹⁴ In modern-day, the jihadist ideology is thought to form part of a broader Islamist ideology and is considered as a militarized form of Islamism.¹⁵ Published material such as the DĀ'ISH associated Arabic newspaper called al-Naba', which deals with provincial military activities and regional events carried out by the organization, is replete with explicit references to Ibn al-Wahhab's ideology.¹⁶ The DĀ'ISH affiliated publishing house known as *maktabat al-himma* has published a book entitled *Clarification of Doubts* based on the ideology of al-Wahhab.¹⁷

Our discussion about contextualizing Islamism and Jihadism should take place vis-à-vis the phenomenon of modernization and colonialization in the Arab-Islamic world because this radical fundamentalist form of patriarchal reaction to European imperialism and modernization took place in the twentieth century.¹⁸ 'Organic movements,' whether Salafi-jihadist, Islamist or otherwise, were fuelled by their resentment against the current values in their society, mostly functioning as a form of insurgency against colonial intrusion and Western powers in the region.¹⁹ The historian Hisham Sharabi claims that radical fundamentalist ideologies have accompanied the process of 'modernization' in

launched a revival of Islam and called for the example of the Prophet and his companions to clear Arabia from different forms of Islam.

13 Fatah, *Chasing a Mirage*, 272.

14 Ibn Taymiyya is the most prominent precursor of present-day (Sunni) revivalism, and his resolute fundamentalism has left an indelible mark upon later generations of jihadists. He was perceived both as a militant theoretician and as an activist defender of Islam. See Hassan Hassan, "The Sectarianism of the Islamic State: Ideological Roots and Political Context," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, last accessed January 20, 2018, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/13/sectarianism-of-islamic-state-ideological-roots-and-political-context-pub-63746>; Michael Whine, "Islamism and Totalitarianism: Similarities and Differences," 57–8.

15 See also Marwan Abou-Taam, and Ruth Bigalke, *Die Reden des Osama bin Laden* (Munich: Diederichs, 2006), 107.

16 See also al-Naba', 69:13, and 10:10.

17 *Kashf al-shubhāt li-l-shaykh muḥammad bin 'abd al-wahhāb* (Islamic State: Maktabat al-himma, 2016).

18 For a discussion about ideological patterns of ideological phases of the Neopatriarchal age, see also Hisham Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 92ff.

19 For practical purposes, the term 'organic' refers to local movements that were created by locals and not supported by Western powers.

the Islamic world to the extent that they took shape “under European domination and in direct reaction to it.”²⁰ On a similar note, Hamid Dabashi argues that these radical ideologies were invented “in combative conversation and contestation with and against a colonial modernity, a colonizing interlocutor, that coded itself, and was thus called ‘the West’.”²¹ Dabashi deliberates that anticolonial Islamism, like anti-colonial nationalism and socialism, are ideological formations “that historically have confronted European colonialism and shaped the modern nation-states that emerged in the former colonial territories.” These anti-colonial ideologies may have won short-term battles but have produced “catastrophic postcolonial state formations.”²²

These arguments support the claim that DĀ'ISH should be defined according to the recent events taking place in the Arab-Islamic world rather than its links to Islam. The movement of Islamic radicalization reacted strongly to the process of modernization and colonialization by continually rejecting foreign values and ideas. At the same time, the movement also engaged in creating a source of identification that would distance itself ideologically from the ‘West’ and ‘Westernization.’ Jihadism thereby exploits religion as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Islam is instrumentalized as an authoritative source of identification against the ‘other’ to gain political power, acting as the primary idiom of the jihadist milieu.

The exploitation of Islam as a source of identification in the jihadist stream is reinstated by the political scientist Robert Pape who studied more than three hundred cases of suicide terrorism. The scholar claims that the goal of such movements has mostly been politically driven such as the overthrowing of a country’s ruler and the creation of a theocratic state, rather than pursuing a religious way of life.²³ This source of identification sought to give “a new Islamic content to the meaning of self and society by reformulating a redemptive Islamic dogma.”²⁴ Militant jihadist recruiters find non-religious individuals or religious people with little knowledge of Islam to be the most preferred target for recruitment. In a jihadist publication entitled *A Course in the Art of Recruitment*, Abū ‘Amr al-Qā‘idī, a member of al-Qa‘ida, lists ‘non-religious Muslims’ as the most desirable group for recruitment, arguing that non-religious Muslims are more prone to radicalization than religious Muslims. Citing the same recruitment manual, a report published by the Combating Terrorism Centre concludes that the preference of jihadist groups to recruit individuals with limited religious education stems from the

20 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 92ff.

21 Dabashi, *The Arab Spring*, 159.

22 Dabashi, *The Arab Spring*, 140.

23 Robert Pape argues that “there is little connection between suicide terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, or any one of the world’s religions... Rather, what nearly all suicide terrorist attacks have in common is a specific secular and strategic goal: to compel modern democracies to withdraw military forces from territory that the terrorists consider to be their homeland.” See Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2006), 4.

24 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 94.

fact that they “are less capable of critically scrutinizing the jihadi narrative and ideology, in addition to being less familiar with contrasting Islamic schools of thought.”²⁵

On the political level, one significant event that gave rise to radical ideological currents across the Arab and Muslim world was the advent of the Soviet-backed communist coup in Afghanistan, leading to the Soviet invasion of the country in the following year (1979–1989). Al-Qa'ida, a Sunni militant Islamist movement, which is considered to be the first jihadist organization of modern times, stemmed from a decade-long conflict that plagued Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. Al-Qa'ida inspired other Salafi-oriented organizations in the Muslim world that responded to the struggle of modernization.²⁶ In 2004, an al-Qa'ida member and a jihadi ideologue Abū Muṣ'ab al-Sūrī penned a seminal book about Jihadism entitled *A Call to the Global Islamic Resistance*.²⁷ Al-Sūrī introduced the concept of decentralization, while also advocating 'leaderless resistance.' More recently, the US-led invasion of Iraq triggered the resurrection of a local offshoot of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI), which served as an insurgency against US troops in Iraq in 2007 and later against al-Mālikī's Shi'ite-led government. AQI later evolved into what became known as the Islamic State organization.

Another critical dimension is centred around the relationship between DĀ'ISH and other jihadist groups. Different Islam-based ideologies that are now gaining currency in the Middle East and beyond are far from monolithic, and every movement must be examined as a distinctive part of the jihadist whole. The jihadist ideology is made up of various movements that are united by a broad set of shared ideological beliefs but divided organizationally, geographically, and even doctrinally. While it is fair to argue that every militant jihadist organization deserves its own analysis due to intrinsic idiosyncrasies, the existing similarities in the religious-cum-ideological dimension have resurfaced in an overwhelming number of militant jihadist movements for the past decades.²⁸ Ideological principles shared among militant jihadist organizations include the 'ruling by the laws of God' (*taḥkīm bi-shar' allāh*), 'the foundation of Islamic' ruling that is repre-

25 See Abū 'Amrū al-Qā'idī, *Dawra fī fann al-tajnūd* (n.a.), 13, accessed January 20, 2018, https://ia800404.us.archive.org/15/items/amaaryasir0_gmail_201605/فن%20التجنيد.pdf; Arie Perliger, and Daniel Milton, *From Cradle to Grave: The Lifecycle of Foreign Fighters in Iraq and Syria* (West Point: United States Military Academy, 2016), 25, available on <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Cradle-to-Grave2.pdf>.

26 See also Stern, and Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror*, 242.

27 Abū muṣ'ab al-sūrī, *Da'wat al-muqāwama al-islāmiyya al-'alāmiyya* (n.a., 2004), <https://ia802700.us.archive.org/23/items/The-call-for-a-global-Islamic-resistance/The-call-for-a-global-Islamic-resistance.pdf>.

28 The list of militant Salafi-jihadist organizations in the Arab-Islamic world comprises an overwhelming number of groups, of which DĀ'ISH and al-Qa'ida are only two examples. For a list of Salafi-jihadist organizations, see also Seth G. Jones, *A Persistent Threat: The Evolution of al-Qa'ida and Other Salafi Jihadists* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2014), 63–5.

sented by the existence of a caliphate or a state (*iqāmatu l-ḥukmī l-islāmī*) and the creation of a caliphate of a state can only be brought into fruition by means of 'jihad.'²⁹

Apart from the similarities shared among jihadist organizations, there are also several fundamental differences. By way of example, the difference between DĀ'ISH and al-Qa'ida is entirely built upon ideological dissonance.³⁰ DĀ'ISH managed to gain its strength and identity as a fully-fledged, independent organization by setting itself off against other similar ideologies as a sort of surrogate or even underground self until its official proclamation by Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī in 2014. Whereas al-Qa'ida's vision is more nihilistic, DĀ'ISH is more pragmatic and utopian. Whereas ideologically al-Qa'ida was never overly concerned with the immediate formation of an Islamic caliphate, DĀ'ISH attempted to build a theocratic caliphate for all Muslims immediately. The slogan used by DĀ'ISH, namely, 'remaining and expanding' (*bāqiya wa-tatamaddad*), is indicative of the group's aggressive, expansionist outlook. Also, al-Qa'ida accepts the existence of a secular democratic state as a secularist project on the one hand, and the creation of local nationalist states called "Islamic" on the other.³¹ Another considerable ideological difference between DĀ'ISH and al-Qa'ida lies in the projection of the 'Other.' Whereas al-Qa'ida's primary enemy was the 'far enemy' mainly the US,³² the enemies of DĀ'ISH are more widespread and even include 'near' enemies, including pan-Arabist regimes in the Arab world (Asad's regime in Syria and Abadi's regime in Iraq), Iraqi Shi'a, the Turkish president Erdogan, the Lebanese *Hizbullah* and the Yazidis amongst many others.³³ These ideological differences serve as a reinstatement that, in contrast to religions, ideologies are alive and dependent on socio-political factors.

In addition to the similarities and differences between DĀ'ISH and other jihadist movements, our definition of DĀ'ISH should also focus on its organizational aspect. DĀ'ISH should not be conceptualized as one uniform body but in terms of its molecular particularities. The jihadist currents are made up of smaller groups around the Arab and Islamic world that are continuously competing for power against each other. Once a bigger group becomes powerful and 'popular' in the jihadist milieu, smaller jihadist groups that are equally fighting over public space and influence tend to pledge allegiance to the bigger group. Pledging allegiance known as *bay'a*, which denotes submis-

29 Mu'tazz al-Khaṭīb, "Tanẓīm al-dawla al-islāmiyya: al-binya al-fikriyya wa-ta'qīdāt al-wāqī'ī," in *Tanẓīm al-dawla al-islāmiyya: al-nash'a, wa-l-ta'thīr wa-l-mustaqbal*, ed. Fāṭima al-Ṣamādī (Beirut: Arab Scientific Publishers, 2016), 25.

30 Al-Qa'ida formally disavowed DĀ'ISH on February 2, 2014.

31 Al-Khaṭīb, "Tanẓīm al-dawla al-islāmiyya: al-binya al-fikriyya wa-ta'qīdāt al-wāqī'ī," in *Tanẓīm al-dawla al-islāmiyya: al-nash'a, wa-l-ta'thīr wa-l-mustaqbal*, 25.

32 Daniel L. Byman, "Comparing Al Qaeda and ISIS: Different Goals, Different Targets," *Brookings*, July 28, 2016, accessed January 20, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/comparing-Al-Qa'ida-and-isis-different-goals-different-targets/>.

33 Ulf Brueggemann, "Al-Qaida and the Islamic State: Objectives, Threat, Countermeasures," *Federal Academy of Security Policy*: Security working Paper no. 9/2016, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working_paper_2016_09.pdf.

sion to a recognized authority, consists of an appropriation of religiously charged diction to signify new group identities in the jihadist milieu. Smaller groups benefit significantly from their amalgamation with a bigger jihadist current because sub-groups become more visible once they join a bigger and more popular entity. This *modus operandi* among the jihadist groups also benefits bigger organizations like DĀ'ISH because it enables the possibility of expansion within a short time. The more a bigger group advances militarily, the more these smaller groups would want to pledge allegiance. However, the opposite is also true. When a larger jihadist group starts losing its ground geographically and militarily, its members would either leave the bigger group and revert to their prior group identity or else form new jihadist groups. At times, they pledge allegiance to other 'bigger' jihadist groups. Hence, the rapidity with which organizations like DĀ'ISH expand is equally balanced by the rapidity it dissipates once it starts losing power. This molecular peculiarity that characterizes jihadist movements explains the rapid advancement and dissipation of militant jihadist groups. More importantly, it explains why the structural destruction of organizations such as Al-Qa'ida does not bring an end to the jihadist groups. On the contrary, it opens up the battlefield for newer militant groups to be formulated.

When DĀ'ISH rose to power, it did not emerge out of a vacuum, but it was created by members who had been part of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) and other ideological streams. When DĀ'ISH started gaining momentum, other smaller jihadist groups offered their allegiance to central DĀ'ISH. Once groups proclaimed their adherence to DĀ'ISH, this allegiance became reflected in the change of their name. The Sinai province (*wilāyat Sinā'*) for instance, which was the local affiliate of DĀ'ISH in the northern Sinai Peninsula, was a group formerly known as Jam'at Anṣār Bayt al-Maqdis ('Supporters of Jerusalem') which emerged after the Egyptian revolution of 2011 and pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in 2014.³⁴ Likewise, West Africa Province (*wilāyat Gharb Ifrīqiyya*) was a northeast Nigeria-based Sunni insurgent group widely known as Boko Haram and was formerly known as Jama'at Ahl al-Sunna li-da'wa wa-l-jihad ('People committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad') and pledged allegiance to DĀ'ISH in 2015.

Likewise, the branch of DĀ'ISH in Libya, namely the three provinces *wilāyat Barqa* (eastern Libya), *wilāyat Fizān* (desert south), *wilāyat Ṭarābulus* (western Libya), pledged loyalty to DĀ'ISH central in 2014. These provinces included the amalgamation of smaller insurgent groups from the region and neighbouring countries. One of the most apparent advantages gained by DĀ'ISH upon these pledges of loyalty is networking. Most of these insurgent groups spread out in Arab and Islamic countries are made up of radicalized indigenous Bedouin Arabs that are well-connected in their location. These local groups are experienced in military tactics after years of fighting in their location.

34 See also Daniel Milton, and Muhammad al-Ubaydi, "Pledging Bay'a: A Benefit or Burden to the Islamic State?" *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2015).

1.3. The Impact of the US-led Invasion of Iraq in 2003 on Jihadist Groups

More recent events that took place in Iraq starting from the years leading to the US-led invasion of Iraq culminating into Saddam Hussein's execution and the aftermath have shaped the foundation of DĀ'ISH into an organization. As in the case of other dramatic historical events, the rise of a militant insurgency in unstable Iraq was all but inevitable.³⁵ Iraq became a perfect training ground and a fertile territory for jihadists, leading to a flow of foreign recruits joining the insurgency mostly via the Iraq–Syria border from overwhelmingly Sunni neighbouring countries, namely, Syria, Turkey, and Jordan.³⁶ Peter Neumann argues that the “Iraq War contributed to the radicalisation of European Muslims, creating a more supportive environment which Salafi jihadists could draw on for finance and recruits.”³⁷ Additionally, Neumann states that “[a]nother consequence of the Iraq War was to prompt the rise of new terrorist structures.”³⁸

This does not mean, however, that the jihadist ideological currents did not exist in Iraq before 2003. The presence of jihadists in Iraq before the US-led invasion consisted of a small jihadist enclave close to the borders with Iran. This group was led by a jihadist movement called Anṣār al-Islām (‘the Helpers of Islam’), which controlled an area made up of ten enclaves by imposing a strict Salafi lifestyle.³⁹ Unbeknown to Saddam, Anṣār al-Islām gradually promoted several al-Qa‘ida operatives within its ranks who were instructed by al-Qa‘ida leaders to make valuable connections with the army commanders from Saddam’s brigades. These connections become especially important immediately after Saddam’s fall from power, due to their experience of the front line and their practical and strategic expertise.⁴⁰

In December 2001, as the US bombed al-Qa‘ida’s mountain stronghold in Tora Bora in Afghanistan as retribution for the 9/11 tragedy, al-Qa‘ida fighters and Afghan-Arabs who fought with Taliban crossed Iran and found refuge with Anṣār al-Islām. Apart from these migrants, al-Qa‘ida had sent a group made up of 300 fighters that established themselves between Baghdad and Mosul. Eventually, Anṣār al-Islām received a prominent figure known as Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Zarqāwī. Al-Zarqāwī was first expelled from Iran, then he became the emir of al-Qa‘ida in Iraq but still acting independently of Osama bin

35 Scholars agree that the West “bears considerable responsibility for the rise of extremist forces, given the role of the 2003 Iraq war in triggering a cycle of violent state collapse and sectarianism.” Julien Barnes-Dacey, Daniel Levy, and Ellie Geranmayeh, eds., “Encouraging Regional Ownership of the fight against the Islamic State,” in *The Islamic State through the Regional Lens* (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2015), 9.

36 Until 2014, more than half of the estimated 15,000 foreign fighters in the Islamic State come from just five countries: Tunisia (3,000), Saudi Arabia (2,500), Morocco (1,500), Jordan (1,300), Turkey (1,000). See also Richard Barrett, “The Islamic State,” *The Soufan Group* (November 2014), 16, accessed <http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/TSG-The-Islamic-State-Nov14.pdf>.

37 Peter R. Neumann, “Europe’s Jihadist Dilemma,” *Survival* 48, no. 2 (2006), 74.

38 Neumann, “Europe’s Jihadist Dilemma,” *Survival* 48, no. 2 (2006), 76.

39 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 28.

40 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 28.

Laden's organization.⁴¹ Only in December 2004, al-Zarqāwī allied his group with al-Qa'ida central and started a campaign of 'psychological warfare' which included the recording of gruesome acts of war on short videos. This public display of violence became a milestone in the history of global jihad and eventually was developed even further by the group's strategists.⁴² DĀ'ISH celebrated al-Zarqāwī as an icon of its generation and recognized him as its first emir.⁴³ The US-led invasion, followed by the removal of Saddam Hussein from power and the installation of a Shi'a-led government in Iraq, provided perfect conditions for jihadist groups like DĀ'ISH to operate.⁴⁴

It is axiomatic that as the state recedes in power and control, non-state anti-establishment actors such as militant jihadist movements gain more prominence in a country's domestic politics. The spectacular advance of DĀ'ISH in Iraq in June of 2014 as a revolt against the Nūrī al-Mālikī's government was partly made possible by the political and security vacuum that existed at the time. The coalition led by al-Mālikī failed to bring the "new era of freedom and democracy" it had promised, because the "political process was dominated by a Shi'i majority, with Sunnis being increasingly marginalized."⁴⁵ The tension among the Sunni-Shi'a divide heightened as the US-led coalition adopted a process known as *de-ba'athification*. The process sought to remove any political structures linked to the Ba'ath Party. It was aimed to "ensure that representative government in Iraq is not threatened by Ba'athist elements returning to power."⁴⁶ *De-ba'athification* was popular with several Iraqi groups such as the Shi'a and Kurds, but it was opposed by the Sunnis and political minorities linked to Sunnis, especially after 30,000 Ba'athists were made redundant from public-sector.⁴⁷ Although the Arab Sunnis in Iraq consisted only of a small minority, they have traditionally dominated the political and social life of Iraq, "originally owing to Ottoman support but later the result of the ability of Sunnis to maintain command posts of power."⁴⁸

Dabashi argues that the European colonial domination of the Arab and Muslim world has "systematically abused and instrumentalized" the Sunni-Shi'a sectarian strife

41 Al-Zarqāwī travelled to multiple countries, and he had contacts from different jihadist circles. Additionally, he knew the best entry points for jihadists arriving from abroad. By autumn 2003, he established himself as the emir of foreign fighters in Iraq. See also Atwan, *Islamic State*, 34–5.

42 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 41.

43 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 42.

44 Saddam's execution during *'id al-aghā* was regarded as the ultimate offence by the Shi'ite led government against the Sunnis, leading to the creation of the Jaysh al-rijāl al-Naqshabandiyya (JRTN). JRTN is one of the underground Ba'athist insurgency groups in Iraq. See also Theodore Karasik, "The Erratic ISIS and Baath Party Connection," *Al Arabiya English*, April 18, 2015, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2015/04/18/The-erratic-ISIS-and-Baath-party-connection.html>.

45 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 36.

46 Patrick E. Tyler, "In Reversal, Plan for Iraq Self-Rule Has Been Put Off," *Global Policy*, May 17, 2003, accessed August 19, 2018, <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/168/36769>.

47 Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder Oxford: Westview, 2012), 267.

48 Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 15.

“for the benefit of imperial domination.”⁴⁹ This Sunni-Shi'a sectarian strife resulting from the US-led invasion is also reflected in the ideology of DĀ'ISH because it “feeds off a powerful narrative of Sunni resentment against a perceived Shi'a-dominated regional order.”⁵⁰ Al-Zarqāwī and al-Qa'ida leaders proposed a sectarian agenda themselves, believing that the fermenting sectarian and ethnic violence in Iraq would allow militant jihadist organizations to expand its influence and power in the country.⁵¹ Hence when the insurgency in Iraq began on first May 2003, Osama bin Laden was swift to mobilize his men and urge jihadists already in Iraq to perform suicide bombings. This insurgency started with the “indigenous, secular rebels” consisting of “up to 50,000 Ba'athists, ex-Iraqi Army officers and men, ex-members of Saddam's security forces and citizens,” as well as “seven major Sunni Islamist groups.”⁵² Some of these insurgents who had lost their privileges upon Saddam's execution and were fighting al-Mālikī's government from neighbouring countries returned to join the anti-establishment movement calling itself ‘the Islamic State.’⁵³

While officially DĀ'ISH distanced itself from the former Iraqi regime due to the Ba'athist secular-nationalist political orientation,⁵⁴ at the same time it became dependent on the knowledge and skills of former Ba'athists. Non-radicalized Sunnis and Ba'athist sympathizers, who were discriminated against in the *de-ba'athification* process, joined DĀ'ISH because it made it possible for a disgruntled Sunni minority to take revenge on Iraq's Shi'ite-led government. By pledging allegiance to DĀ'ISH, several redundant ex-Ba'athists were willing to engage themselves in fighting against a government they came to loathe. Even though radicalized recruits poured in from around the Arab and Muslim world into Iraq to fight its American ‘enemy,’ DĀ'ISH has kept its commanders “indigenous,”⁵⁵ ensuring that the group's operations are facilitated by “social and tribal networks on both sides of the border.”⁵⁶ In return, DĀ'ISH also benefited greatly from their military expertise and know-how of the geographical landscape of Iraq. Familial and tribal interconnectedness is considered as one of the many reasons that led to the expanding success of DĀ'ISH. Leading figures in the group had

49 Dabashi, *The Arab Spring*, 136.

50 Barnes-Dacey, Levy, and Geranmayeh, eds., “Encouraging Regional Ownership of the fight against the Islamic State,” in *The Islamic State through the Regional Lens* (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2015), 11.

51 Al-Zarqāwī ignited a sectarian conflict against the Shi'a Muslims by organizing the March 2004 Ashura massacre. 185 Shi'i pilgrims were killed by suicide bombing and a car bomb in Baghdad and Karbala. Al-Zarqāwī also claimed the assassination of the Shi'ite leader Ayatollah Mohammed al-Hakim.

52 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 40; Barrett, “The Islamic State,” *The Soufan Group* (November 2014), 16.

53 Hans Krech, “Has Al-Qaeda in Iraq been destroyed? Reasons for the Power Struggles in Iraq after the Withdrawal of US Forces,” *Saumets, Andres* (2014), 28.

54 Christoph Guenther, *Ein zweiter Staat im Zweistromland? Genese und Ideologie des „Islamischen Staates Irak“* (Wuerzburg: Ergon, 2014), 141–2.

55 Abū 'Alī al-Anbārī was a major general in the army hailing from Mosul, and he headed the military council of DĀ'ISH; Abū Muslim al-Turkmānī, a top deputy for Iraq, also served as a lieutenant colonel in Saddam Hussein's military intelligence.

56 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 44.

worked in the security apparatus of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's government. One of the prominent figures dubbed as 'the architect of the Islamic State' was Samīr 'Abd Muḥammad al-Khīlfāwī known as Hajī Bakr,⁵⁷ who was a former colonel in the intelligence service of Saddam Hussein's air defence force.⁵⁸

The political vacuum which existed in post-invaded Iraq opened the field for fierce competition for authority, legitimacy, and prestige, and thus a market for the skills of propagandists and orators who could galvanize ancient modes of mobilization to frame the group's militant political agenda in the myth and ideology of a legitimate rule. The socio-political factors leading to the invasion of Iraq empowered the jihadist discourse over other discourses permeating the public sphere. In light of this widespread political chaos dictated by sectarian violence and discrimination, jihadist propaganda gained more currency because it was strategic by indicating to its followers how they had to behave and act.⁵⁹ Its effective strategies to galvanize support and to mobilize citizens is partly owing to the decades-long experience of the jihadist stream.

It is against this politically-troubled background that DĀ'ISH was founded. Although one cannot infer that there has ever been a direct Ba'athi-DĀ'ISH connection or some sort of alliance, one can safely argue that the post-invasion violence, which expanded by disbanding most of the former regime's security forces, resulted in the emergence of different militias filling immediate security and political void. The political vacuum coupled with economic instability, high rates of unemployment, and the lack of security in Iraq following the US-led invasion provided jihadists with a favourable environment to gain recruits and to create new structures that would eventually replace the old network. The group's polarizing ideology backed up with brutal acts of violence found a receptive audience that was waiting to get out of its miserable condition.⁶⁰

1.4. Conflating Violence with Religious Mores

DĀ'ISH is one of the most recent facets of Jihadism, and it is by far, one of the most brutal and violent movements of our times. As a movement, however, DĀ'ISH neither

57 Hajī Bakr penned the blueprint of the organization's structure. Like other former high-ranking officers from Saddam's time, Hajī Bakr became one of the military leaders in Iraq and spent two years (2006-2008) in Camp Būkā and Abū Ghurayb prisons in Iraq. These prisons were managed by the US. Interpersonal ties between jihadists and former Ba'athist leaders were knit in detention centres, such as Camp Būkā, where Sunnis accounted for the majority of detainees. See Barrett, "The Islamic State," *The Soufan Group* (November 2014), 20; Christoph Guenther, and Tom Kaden, *The Authority of the Islamic State* (Halle/Saale: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 2016), 5-8.

58 Christoph Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State," *Spiegel.de*, April 18, 2015, accessed May 12, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html>.

59 The French philosopher Jacques Ellul argues that the individual "who burns with desire for action but does not know what to do is a common type in our society. He wants to act for the sake of justice, peace, progress but does not know how. If propaganda can show him this 'how' then it has won the game; action will surely follow." See Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, trans. Konrad Kellen, and Jean Lerner (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 209.

60 See also Neumann, "Europe's Jihadist Dilemma," *Survival* 48, no. 2 (2006), 81.

represents a new phenomenon, nor is it the first of its kind. The logic and mindset of its jihadi ideology – including the justification of the extreme brutality and killings – has been experienced before under the aegis of other, non-Islamic, and also non-religious campaigns led by the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Anti-Jewish pogroms, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda (LRA), the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Red Army Faction (RAF),⁶¹ the Croatian Ustasha movement, and the anti-abortion organization called 'the Army of God' in America.⁶² Other examples include the American apocalyptic cult known as 'Heaven's Gate' which was a suicidal cult and the 'Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God' (MRTC), which was a religious movement connected to the Roman Catholic Church founded in the late 1980s in Uganda. In comparison to the jihadist groups, the lifespan of these movements has been relatively short, and their power geographically limited to one country. Modern jihadist organizations, however, benefit from more than forty years of experience in managing, creating, and reshaping the jihadist group transnationally. This experience spanning over multiple decades is reflected in the sophisticated deployment of various vectors of mobilization, which stem from old logics of the Arab and Islamic cultures.

As in the case of other ideologically driven movements, DĀ'ISH is cause-oriented. The cause is identified by the ideology that the group propagated and a program of action that is adopted. Violence is probably one of the most noticeable and effective political strategies of fearmongering that asserts absolute obedience to those in power. By deliberately using extreme ideas and symbols in its propaganda, DĀ'ISH manages to influence the public's opinion precipitated primarily by an emotional response to uncertainty, instability, and insecurity in social discourses rather than rational facts.

Jihadist organizations such as DĀ'ISH employ religious mores to justify the use of violence and excessive demands in exchange for a promising salvific message. Public displays of beheadings in public squares and recorded videos of people burnt alive and shared online are instrumentalized in the struggle as a useful incentive to hide political motives, to evoke irrationality and emotions, and to galvanize support for the organization's cause. The rise of social media and its exploitation in the jihadist milieu has amplified the rippling effect of such videos, reaching audiences beyond the Iraq–Syria region in short periods of time. The jihadist group's extreme violence, which is recorded by tech-savvy cadres on highly edited videos and disseminated online, is deliberately and strategically exploited to instil fear in both the group's enemies and the people it seeks to subjugate.

The spectacular and orchestrated violence adduced to DĀ'ISH propaganda material remains unprecedented. Although the long history of Arabic-Islamic culture is shaped by wars and conquests, the ritualized brutality in front of cameras is a modern phenomenon in the region. The messages transmitted subtly through the semiotic sphere, including the notorious orange jumpsuits worn by the victims of DĀ'ISH hint towards the

61 Neumann, *Radicalized: New Jihadists and the Threat to the West*, xvii–xviii.

62 Neumann, *Radicalized: New Jihadists and the Threat to the West*, 32.

influence of modern politics in the region. The iconic orange colour serves as a visual proof and a timely reminder of the uniform worn by the detainees in Guantanamo and Abū Ghayb prisons. The Guantanamo Bay detention camp located in Cuba is a US-led military prison which created military commissions during the Bush administration in 2001 to try foreign terrorism suspects. Abū Ghayb facility consisted of the US and British-run jails in Iraq. Both facilities in Cuba and Iraq, which remain known for the degrading conditions of the detainees, were promoted as part of the American strategy of “War on Terror” which initiated after the 9/11 attack in 2001.

In 2003, images on social media showing torture and suffering of detainees in the US and British-run jails such as Abū Ghayb facility went viral in the Arab world,⁶³ stroking rage and hatred towards the perceived West in general and the US and the UK in particular.⁶⁴ The images showed “graphic pictures of hooded victims being given electric shocks, naked prisoners being hounded by barking dogs.” Also, “first-hand accounts of rape and sexual humiliation were posted online.”⁶⁵ In December 2014, a Senate report confirmed some of the worst practices of CIA’s torture machine, including a ‘rectal re-hydration,’ in which detainees were anally raped with a water hose, often causing prolapse and lasting internal damage. Baha Mousa was one of the victims killed because of inhumane treatment by UK soldiers in September 2003, while another prisoner was allegedly kicked to death in an RAF helicopter. Other Iraqi citizens died after being held for questioning.⁶⁶

The spectacle of officially sanctioned torture at Abū Ghayb and elsewhere, which is known as the ‘Abū Ghayb effect,’⁶⁷ has influenced starkly the violent practices that followed in the region. By using technological advancements to amplify the brutality and humiliation of the barbaric act, the group’s videos replicate the brutality endured by the Iraqis serving under the Western powers including the US because, “[p]aradoxically, the occupying forces were behaving exactly in the manner they had castigated the former dictator for adopting.”⁶⁸ The importance of the political context in which DĀ'ISH videos started being circulated is also relevant to understanding how violence is politically rather than religiously motivated.

The vision of DĀ'ISH is determined by and connected to its ideological pursuits. Political violence is a powerful strategy to implement the group’s vision and narrative. Acts of brutality, including beheadings, and burnings of soldiers alive, operate as a

63 For an analysis of the images at Abū Ghayb prison, see also Avinoam Shalem, “Abu Ghraib, die Medien und die Entstehung einer Ikone,” in *Tinte und Blut: Politik, Erotik und Poetik des Martyriums* (Frankfurt: Fischer-Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008), 118–39; Matti Hyvaerinen, and Lisa Muszynski, eds., *Terror and the Arts: Artistic, Literary, and Political Interpretations of Violence from Dostoyevsky to Abu Ghraib* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

64 See also Atwan, *Islamic State*, 39.

65 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 38.

66 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 39.

67 For a detailed description of the Abū Ghayb effect, see also Stephen Eisenman, *The Abu Ghraib Effect* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007).

68 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 38.

disciplinary device of coercive control. Although physical violence is probably the most explicit form of coercive control exploited by DĀ'ISH, this study shall demonstrate that this is not the only form of control that is important as these are never the exclusive forms of control upon which deadly cults like DĀ'ISH rely. On the symbolic and semi-otic level, these strategies are noted in the discourse DĀ'ISH deploys and other features it appropriates from the Arabic tradition, including Arabic nomenclature, names of geographical locations, its flag, and its currency.

Provided that DĀ'ISH is a twenty-first-century phenomenon, the thematic analysis of discursive strategies needs to account for the recent political factors in Iraq that led to its establishment. The political element needs to be included in the analysis of discourse because the language in use does not only shape reality, but it is also shaped by the socio-political events happening at a particular time and place. DĀ'ISH discourse relies on narratives, metaphors, and myths that persuade, praise, condemn, lampoon, convince and separate the 'good' from the 'bad,' claiming to be based on Islamic texts and tradition. The intertextual references to Islamic texts and the Scripture are meant to serve as behavioural constraints, a moral code embedded more deeply in the soul that helps cement a specific identity that addresses both the spiritual and the temporal worlds. Although DĀ'ISH is remotely linked to Islam, its ideology is rooted in modern-day political issues that have affected the Arab-Islamic world. Its adaptation of novel techniques of violence coupled with modern technology justified by traditional forms of argumentation represents a dichotomous relationship between the past and the present, tradition, and modernity. This dichotomy serves as a guiding discussion in this work and is debated thoroughly in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

Trajectories of Domination, Tradition, and Orality

2.1. Conceptualizing Discursive Strategies of Domination in the Symbolic World of DĀ'ISH

Discursive strategies of domination are defined as an unjust or morally illegitimate form of social power. In the case of this study, we are mostly concerned about how militant jihadist groups use this illegitimate form of social control over their subordinates discursively. Jihadist leaders invest money and scarce material resources to perpetuate the cult of DĀ'ISH and to ensure that others become part of it. Excessive symbolism that cluttered public space in some parts of the Iraq–Syria region between 2006 and 2018 has become a hallmark of DĀ'ISH, regularly depicting the organization as being omnipresent and omniscient. Incessant chants, names of media outlets loaded with Islamic connotations, and laudatory slogans such as ‘remaining and expanding’ (*bāqiya wa-tatamaddad*) attesting to the group’s immortality bedecked the walls of buildings, online propaganda videos, and lorries carrying DĀ'ISH fighters. While it may be the case that the values adduced to Jihadism are a social construct produced symbolically over time by agents for political power, if what motivates the members of DĀ'ISH is their own belief in the principles of Jihadism, it makes sense to think that they might be dominated by ideology rather than other agents. For this reason, by specifying the nature of and the rationale behind strategic ideological discourse exploited by DĀ'ISH help to clarify more general concepts related to asymmetries of power between the dominating and the dominated or, in more simplistic terms, between DĀ'ISH and its populace.

The power relations between the dominating and the dominated are conceptualized in terms of domination and obedience. The type of domination that features in our study is domination by virtue of authority, namely, the power to command and duty to obey. This is the purest type of domination because it is “patriarchal, magisterial, or princely power,” which rests upon “alleged absolute duty to obey, regardless of personal motives or interests.”¹ The renowned sociologist Max Weber equated domination with authoritarian power of command. Weber clarifies the relationship between the agents involved in domination as follows:

[D]omination will thus mean the situation in which the manifested will (*command*) of the ruler or rulers is meant to influence the conduct of one or more others (*the ruled*) and actually does influence it in such a way that their conduct to a socially relevant degree occurs as if

1 Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretative Sociology*, eds. Guenther Roth, and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 943.

the ruled had made the content of the command the maxim of their conduct for its very own sake. Looked upon from the other end, this situation will be called obedience.²

More recently, the concept of domination has received scholarly attention among scholars of ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ (CDA), including Teun van Dijk who argues that social domination is multi-dimensional and it is extensively linked to ideology or systems of beliefs which serve as the foundation of a group’s worldview and perception of reality and consciousness.³ These ideas structure what people believe about others and the world. Discursively, the jihadist ideology is transmitted to its subordinates through ideological practices. Theorists like Louis Althusser claimed that ideological practices are constituted by an assortment of institutions referred to as ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ such as religious systems, political systems, trade unions, and communications (the media).⁴ ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ are utilized in the jihadist milieu to facilitate domination by generating compliance among the populace. By strategically circulating a specific kind of ideological discourse in the symbolic world, DĀ‘ISH also subtly controls the minds of its people and their social practices.

The jihadist ideology propagated by DĀ‘ISH is characterized by dominant discourses and discursive practices of socio-political and cultural nature, which resonate with the Arab-Islamic societies. This does not mean that there are no alternative discourses or ideologies to DĀ‘ISH, but that through the deployment in language, DĀ‘ISH discourse is made to appear as the dominating discourse for a group of people residing in a particular geographic location at a specific time. Hence, the organization’s Ideological State Apparatuses produce structures of domination, which, in turn, result in cultural hegemony. The hegemonic project of DĀ‘ISH consists of the organization’s overall attempt to control the symbolic world by manipulating and managing systems of signification to propagate the group’s own agenda. Van Dijk argues that “[i]f controlling discourse is a first major form of power, controlling people’s minds is the other fundamental way to reproduce dominance and hegemony.”⁵ By manipulating the symbolic world, DĀ‘ISH controls the mind of its subscribers and, consequently, coerces their behaviour.

In Marxist terms, cultural hegemony is associated with the concept that the ruling class can manipulate the value system and mores of society so that their view becomes the worldview (*Weltanschauung*). In the case of DĀ‘ISH, hegemony happens when one group such as DĀ‘ISH and its set of ideas become privileged over others, often through subversion of the officially recognized government, co-optation of smaller jihadist groups and ultimately, through coercion of the populace living under DĀ‘ISH. The dimensions of hegemony that we are mostly interested in are those which work in subtlety by virtue of authority rather than in direct coercion such as those expressed in

2 Weber, *Economy and Society*, 946.

3 The term ‘social domination’ is adopted from the work of Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” 359–83.

4 See also Louis Althusser, “Ideology and State Ideological Apparatuses,” *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (1971): 121–76.

5 Teun Van Dijk, *Discourse and Power* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 91.

public displays of executions. Subtle dimensions of hegemony include social and cultural practices and norms appropriated from the pre-Islamic, Islamic, and poetic traditions through which DĀ'ISH wields control over the personal and public sphere of its subordinates. The group's symbolic sphere operates as a form of power in its own right, helping to enforce obedience and sustain conditions under which DĀ'ISH rules. The symbolic world entails significant powers based on its communicative versatility and its broad range of communicative, emotional, social, and identity functions engaged in meaning-making and social coercion. In the political sphere, symbolism maintains existing dominance of the jihadist discourse and worldview, its immense impact on strengthening in-group unity, and ultimately, the ability of power to influence behaviour through single words, literary tools, and repetition strategies as exhibited in DĀ'ISH discourse.

The relationship between DĀ'ISH and its subscribers consists of vertical relations, whereby the group's will is the absolute will, and it mediates by a forced consensus based on coercion. Coercion can be defined as "an intention to affect the beliefs, emotions, and behaviours of others in such a way that suits one's own interests."⁶ In political discourse, coercion is a proposed strategy that involves power relations.⁷ DĀ'ISH discourse achieves coercion by presenting manipulated forms of information, thus influencing the representation of reality that its subscribers hold. By doing so, DĀ'ISH gives its audience a specific understanding of the events and wars, while also dictating the responses of the audience to those representations. Coercion is connected to two distinct concepts, namely, obedience and conformity.⁸ The pressure to conform tends to be implicit, whereas the order to obey is typically rather explicit. Obedience serves as an active form of influence that is usually directly initiated by an authority and is typically external in that overt behaviours are generally the focus of command. While both obedience and conformity are forms of social influence, people most often tend to conform to their peers, whereas they obey those in positions of authority.

The concept of conformity may be further sub-divided into three categories, namely, compliance, identification, and internalization. Firstly, compliance involves individuals who act in accordance with social pressure publicly while they disagree privately. This is usually the behaviour of a person who is motivated to follow the group's implicit orders only to avoid being punished by DĀ'ISH. Secondly, identification signifies that individuals adopt a particular behaviour because it places them in a satisfying relation-

6 See also Christopher Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science: New Perspectives on Immigration Discourse* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 63.

7 See also Paul Chilton, and Christina Schaeffner, "Discourse and Politics," in *Discourse as Social Interaction*, ed. Teun Van Dijk (London: Sage, 1997); Paul Chilton, *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2004).

8 In the field of social psychology, the powerful ability of authoritative people or institutions to control others was demonstrated in a remarkable set of studies performed by Stanley Milgram, who was interested in how an authority produced obedience, even to the extent of leading people to cause harm to others. See Stanley Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1963): 371–8.

ship with the organization with which they identify. Thirdly, internalization takes the form of behaving under social pressure by acting and believing in the specific worldview. This is the most effective and most permanent response to social influence because it is motivated by a desire to be right. This type of conformity takes the form of one's willingness to perform acts of martyrdom and die for an organization like DĀ'ISH.

The concepts of obedience and conformity that are manifested in the symbolic world of DĀ'ISH work dependently on each other by taking over the personal and public sphere of the populace under the organization's control. That DĀ'ISH members are capable of reproducing the organization's formulaic slogans and chants tell us mainly that DĀ'ISH is capable of enforcing obedience on the level of outward behaviour. Additionally, demanding its adherents to adopt a new identity accompanied by a specific kind of behaviour is a strategic exercise to internalize a specific worldview. That way, the new identity permeates the private sphere of individuals, who, by incessant repetitions of behavioural codes, both act and believe in accordance with social pressure. This is the most permanent, deeply-rooted response to social influence.

Discursively, coercion manifests itself in various strategies that are explored throughout this work, including naming or referential strategies, predicational strategies, the appropriation of elements borrowed from the Arabic-Islamic tradition, and the ancient poetic ritual.⁹ Naming strategies, namely, strategies that exploit the human capacity for categorizing coalitional groups in terms of a dichotomous in-group and out-group, are a fundamental move in prejudiced discourse whereby specific references to institutions or the out-group would subtly generate emotive coercion.

Similarly, predicational strategies, which include the analysis of the traits, characteristics, features, and qualities attributed to the in-group and out-group through synecdoche and negative and positive qualities, regularly associate the out-group with threat-connoting cues. Predicational strategies are another "essential aspect of self- and other-presentation" because they involve the positive presentation of the in-group and the negative presentation of the constructed out-group.¹⁰ Additionally, predicational strategies are empowered by their intimate link to the Arabic-Islamic tradition because they resort to ancient tribal codes of honour to connect with the audience on an emotional level.

DĀ'ISH ensures coercion by permeating the private and public spheres of its citizens and by ensuring the adherents' participation in cultural rituals. By adopting strategies of coercion, DĀ'ISH produces guidelines for acceptable speech and behaviour, it defines the jihadist membership, it occasions the enforcement of obedience, and it even induces popular beliefs through culturally authentic artefacts. Especially in the case of DĀ'ISH poetry, this literary artefact should not be understood as *art for art's sake*, but

9 These concepts are adopted and adapted from the work of Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*.

10 Martin Reisiġl, and Ruth Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2005), 54.

more effectively as a strategic tool devised to inculcate the group's worldview. Poetry does not merely serve as a means of conveying texts or a channel through which a cultural artefact is expressed and transmitted to others, but it is also a critical factor in the selective reconstruction of the collective memory of the jihadist milieu. Poetic verses blend consensual understandings and ancient wisdom with false statements or unrelatable contexts, appropriating means and converting heroic acts into acts committed for DĀ'ISH. In the case of militant jihadist discourse, there is a marked emphasis on the core thematic coherence of traditional values including altruism, courage, esotericism as well as timely political events, including the establishment of the caliphate, the disillusionment with post-revolution politics, the dominance of capitalism, the failure of nation-state ideology, the Arab Spring uprisings,¹¹ the pursuit of economic opportunity, anticolonialism, and sectarianism. DĀ'ISH propaganda is structured around exploiting personal tragedies, inequality, violence, and oppression. The thematic aspect thereby reflects and is also inspired by actual events and situations.¹² By resurrecting traditions to interpret modern-day reality, DĀ'ISH discourse manipulates individuals adhering to a shared worldview unconsciously by culturally resonant symbols.

In brief, the strategic vision of domination as exhibited in the symbolic world of DĀ'ISH is devised around a series of objectives that are listed as follows:

- to spread ideology and beliefs
- to indoctrinate a specific worldview
- to reclaim tradition and collective memory
- to build a collective historical mind
- to propagate a positive image of the organization
- to shape memory and condition behaviour
- to facilitate ideological change
- to announce news including events, battles, and death
- to foster *communitas*
- to foster myths
- to generate compliance and obedience
- to create, maintain and consolidate group identity
- to strengthen in-group cohesion
- to control inter- and intra-group relations
- to raise out-group aggression
- to create prototypes
- to radicalize members

11 Historically, the term 'Arab Spring' echoed what happened in Europe in 1848 and in Prague in 1968. The term 'Spring' in itself is also highly controversial because several events took a dark turn as conservative right-wing extremist transnational movements took over. See Kurt Weyland, "The Arab Spring: Why the Surprising Similarities with the Revolutionary Wave of 1848?" *Perspectives of Politics* 4 (December 2012), 917–34.

12 The notion of timeliness is considered as a critical factor for effective propaganda. See also Ellul, *Propaganda*, 43.

to inspire acts of martyrdom
 to deactivate self-inhibiting norms against murder and mayhem
 to goad the opponent into fighting

Discourse analysis gains particular importance because DĀ'ISH not only exercises absolute control over its territory, but more importantly, over any written, oral, or visual messages constructed within its territory.¹³ In the group's quest for domination, the two fundamental enablers of power abuse and manipulation are tradition and orality. The jihadist stream draws upon Islam and its history – a period that predates Western colonization and hegemony – to provoke emotions by promising to recover the dignity of all Arabs and Muslims. This symbolic representation of a glorious Islamic past calls upon an overwhelming number of authentic elements that resonate with the Arabic-Islamic culture. Tradition is exploited for its rhetorical and mobilizing power among its recipients. Subtle appropriations of tradition are ingeniously adapted to suffice the new purpose of social coercion and to convey a sense of authority and religious righteousness. The innate call for authenticity is achieved by the projection of words, images, metaphors, and values that resonate with the Arab tribal culture.

2.2. Tradition as a Mobilizing Force

The transmission of customs and beliefs from one generation to another assumes special significance for modern jihadist movements like DĀ'ISH. Tradition is understood in its original sense of *traditum*, namely anything that is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present.¹⁴ The jihadist stream purports to support the revival of traditions rooted in a remoter past, which have been obliterated in the more recent past. Tradition is thus mobilized as a springboard for the present and future action and its aspiration is accorded with an authoritative value.¹⁵ In the case of DĀ'ISH, tradition is instrumentalized as a discursive form of legitimation. Elements borrowed from tradition are retooled to lend validity to the claims of the group's pedigree and to restore a sense of pride of place and historical agency. The invocation of culturally and historically resonant symbols, particularly those encoded in the Arabic language, can help legitimate a particular cult such as DĀ'ISH and coerce its subordinates.¹⁶

13 The jihadist milieu is physically cut off from the outside world. Gaining access to reality on the ground is a challenging and risky task. In more technical terms, the jihadist sub-culture functions akin to what social scientists call a 'total institution,' which is defined as "a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life." See Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 13.

14 See also Shils, *Tradition*, 12.

15 Gustave E. von Grunebaum refers to organizations aspiring for lineal descendancy as 'orthogenetic connection' whereby the remote and mediated past is turned into an authoritative model. See Gustave E. von Grunebaum, *Modern Islam: The Search for Cultural Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), 112 and 116ff.

16 For a discussion about the various definitions and possible interpretations of the term 'legitimacy,' see also Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 5–12.

From a hegemonic point of view, the tradition of belief is deployed for its normative power, which intends to produce affirmation and unthinking acceptance from the audience.¹⁷ The tradition of belief reinforces its role in the process of legitimation because it becomes “a function of a system’s ability to persuade members of its appropriateness...Leaders lay down rules, promulgate policies, and disseminate symbols which tell followers how they should feel and what they should do.”¹⁸ The historian George Mosse argues that political ideas are moulded and projected through a symbolic process that provides an additional means of social control over the masses and instils a sense of community.¹⁹ Exercising total control over the sites of symbolic action provides DĀ’ISH with a mechanism that communicates its goals and strategic objectives effectively and unilaterally across the organization.

The process of legitimation involves an element of appropriation which is obtained by associating the organization with culturally resonant symbols that are already meaningful to the populace in a favourable way. These symbols resonate with the audience subliminally on a spiritual level. The political theorist John Schaar notes that “a claim to political power is legitimate only when the claimant can invoke some source of authority beyond or above himself.”²⁰ DĀ’ISH adopts and adapts culturally resonant symbols that have been subjected to competing interpretations by other ideologies, including Islamist groups and pan-Arab nationalists in the Arab world. The strategy of revising resonant symbols widely used in the Arabic-Islamic culture is devised as a propagandistic mechanism to manipulate discourse and achieve social coercion.²¹ Explicit references to the Qur’an, Prophetic Traditions, Islamic history, and ancient knowledge become retooled as ‘manipulative prototypes’ which are instrumentalized to influence the conduct of the populace beyond the limits of assent to their factual correctness and, ultimately, to engender a culture of militancy.²²

The reconstruction of these symbols in modern society seems to suggest that DĀ’ISH is solely reproducing Islamic heritage that has been an integral part of the Muslim community and the Islamic ethos in the early centuries of Islam. By using these symbols, DĀ’ISH claims to be adhering to divine right and upholding common good without the need for widespread approval. Discursive strategies based on the religious tradition are manipulated to drive home the group’s jihadist vision. By exploiting religious references to legitimate the existence and operation of DĀ’ISH, jihadist organizations back up their demand for certain behaviour and actions from their populace. It is plausible to argue that coercion depends on legitimation because discourse may only

17 Edward Albert Shils, *Tradition*, 24.

18 John T. Schaar, *Legitimacy in the Modern State* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 20.

19 George L. Mosse, *The Nationalizations of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: H. Fertig, 1975), 6–7.

20 Schaar, *Legitimacy in the Modern State*, 20.

21 Harold Laswell states that propaganda deals with the “management of collective attitudes” and “control over opinions” through “manipulation of significant symbols.” See Harold D. Lasswell, “The Theory of Political Propaganda,” *American Political Science Review* 21, no. 3 (1927), 627.

22 See also Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” 375.

“achieve coercion when the representations realizing these strategies are accepted by text-consumers as true. Text-producers use legitimizing strategies for precisely this end.”²³ The critical point here consists of having it all emanate from a pivotal source and providing each person with a clear and consistent goal so that every member understands how their efforts contribute to the organization’s success. Deriving the moral right to rule from appropriated elements belonging to the Islamic tradition becomes more effective in the context of recipients who are part of a culture that has laid special importance on the Islamic history, the Qur’an and the Prophetic Traditions.

The worldview of DĀ’ISH is expressed in a language encoded in symbols, which becomes in the minds of the followers, condensations of the practices and intentions of the rulers. ‘Official’ jihadist discourse is prescriptive, and it works as a mechanism of political control. Its primary function is not to communicate or clarify, but, more importantly, to impose meaning upon the jihadist milieu. It sets the rules for the group’s membership and identity by establishing usages, prohibitions, norms, and constraints that work to specify the form of politically acceptable public conduct. The method of thinking itself is disarmed by rigid restriction to the traditional mode. It reinforces an effective, non-critical state rooted in external dependence and inner submission.²⁴ That way, people’s reality is perceived through symbolism and myths, without which individuals have no identity.

Discursively, the jihadist transmission of appropriated traditions thrives on ‘social memory,’ that is, socially shared mental structures and representations.²⁵ These structures are thus “shared as presupposed by group members.”²⁶ The formation of these mental structures and representations is affected by cognitive and emotional factors, and it takes place in the context of human interactions with other humans or with cultural artefacts. By referring to a line of past cultural achievement, DĀ’ISH ascertains its cultural authenticity and Islamic legitimacy in the socio-political sphere of the Islamic world. Historical heroic personalities and battles that have become part of the collective memory purport to serve as factual evidence and as a guarantee for future success. In its weekly magazine called *al-Naba’*, DĀ’ISH assigns special sections to recall historical events and battles from the glorious Islamic past.²⁷ The last part of this magazine usually includes a strident use of Qur’anic quotes denoting apocalyptic events. Every page in *al-Naba’* which contains Qur’anic verses or passages from the Sunna is accompanied by

23 Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 89.

24 For a thorough discussion on the role of language and ideology, see also Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 95ff; Yasir Suleiman, *Arabic in the Fray: Language, Ideology and Cultural Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 235ff.

25 See also Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 6–40; Teun Van Dijk, “Ideology: Political Discourse and Cognition,” in *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse*, eds. Paul Chilton, and Christina Schaeffner (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), 203–38.

26 Teun Van Dijk, “Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Discourse and Society* 4, no. 2 (1993), 257.

27 These sections are entitled *From history (min al-tārīkh)*. For examples, see also *al-Naba’*, 120:10, and 124:10.

a footnote declaring that “this page contains words related to God, verses from the Qur’an and hadith, beware of leaving it in a humiliating place.”²⁸ Likewise, the classical Arabic language is an inherited symbolic medium that has played a seminal role in the transmission of the Islamic tradition and its civilization, mainly because of its direct connection to God’s revelation. Classical Arabic is believed to be derived from an authoritative origin or text, on which it bases its claim to authenticity, truth, and validity. Through habituated practice and the power of its forebearers, Classical Arabic mediates the relationship between thought and reality. It “mediates reality through a double ideology: the ideology inherent in the ‘trance of language’ – produced and reproduced by the magic of catchwords, incantations, verbal stereotypes and internal referent – and the ideology supplied by the ‘enclitic’ language – produced and disseminated under the protection of political or religious orthodoxy.”²⁹

One of the most pervasive strategies that is used in jihadist discourse to consolidate group identity is the Arabic nomenclature. The archaic genealogical lineage is based on a patriarchal filiation that is exploited by jihadists to link the organization’s existence with a lineage of prior possessors of Islam. The Arabic nomenclature also bolsters the credibility of the jihadist leaders. This type of filiation implants continuity by “being ‘connected’ with an unbroken chain of generations that have some important quality in common.”³⁰ Jihadist organizations like DĀ’ISH appropriate this archaic Arabic naming system by re-engineering it to include non-Arabs who join the organization. This is one clear example of how DĀ’ISH manipulates a culturally authentic product of the Arab and Islamic world to suit its political agenda and to legitimate its message.

The process of appropriation is also exhibited in poetry. DĀ’ISH poetry based on the classical Arabic *qaṣīda* is an effective medium through which the jihadist logic and mindset are channelled. Composed in classical language and following prosodic and rhythmic rules, DĀ’ISH poetry represents – in form and structure – a long-standing tradition that has played an integral part in the Arabic and Islamic culture. In modern literary scholarship, the *qaṣīda* is not the only existing genre of poetry. Modern Arabic literature is characterized by poetic forms influenced mainly by European literature such as the free verse (*shi’r ḥurr*) and prose poems (*al-shi’r al-manthūr*). The choice of re-tooling the *qaṣīda* in the jihadist milieu is a strategic decision probably because of the imminent role that the *qaṣīda* plays to prop up its authority, to bolster its legitimacy and to strengthen resolve on the battlefield. The transmission of the jihadist worldview through orally based cultural artefacts tends to be effective among tribal societies living in war-stricken regions and with poor accessibility to books or the internet. Tribal societies are inherently characterized by low levels of literacy, which means that these socie-

28 “Hadhihi al-ṣaḥīfa taḥtawī ‘alā alfāz al-jalāla wa-āyāt qurāniyya wa-aḥādīth iḥdharu min tarkihā fī makānin mahīn.” See for example *al-Naba’*, 119:1.

29 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 120.

30 Shils, *Tradition*, 15.

ties rely solely on oral sources in their day-to-day life.³¹ In the context of these socio-political factors, the verbal transmission of poetry gains popularity for practical reasons. Theological books tend to be challenging to memorize, inaccessible to the populace, and impractical to carry around on the battlefield.

In our discussion about the mobilization of tradition as a source of legitimation, we should acknowledge the ambiguity that is attributed to the term ‘tradition’ and the identity of its variants. The first issue deals with the generic interpretation of tradition that is open to different realizations. The definition of tradition does not place any criteria on what may be handed down from one generation to the next. There is no indication of what is “acceptable evidence for the truth of tradition.”³² The variants engaged in transmission vary from the classical Arabic language, formulaic expressions, ancient wisdom, poetic form and structure, nomenclature, religious allusions, Islamic figures and warriors, ancient Bedouin values, and iconography. In the process of transmission, traditions change because the circumstance to which they refer changes. Alternatively, cultural variants are modified by the recipients deliberately.

In the case of jihadist groups, historical elements borrowed from tradition are turned into “a battleground for aspirations,”³³ however different, to justify massacres, blood vengeance, and suicide-bombings. By means of an imaginary temporal chain, traditional elements become combined with ‘other’ elements that reflect modernity. The essential elements in the ‘new’ variant remain recognizable and identifiable with the original variant of tradition. One example of this would be the case of jihadist chants known as *anāshīd*, which are composed on the blueprint of the Classical Arabic ode known as *qaṣīda*. The chants are an original artefact developed in the twentieth century to reflect the currency of modern times and the reality of its recipients.

Secondly, the past bears many different messages that are selective and, at times, also contradictory. The varied historical tradition of the caliphal experience during the Islamic Golden Age (8th–14th century CE) for instance, allows for different interpretations of this period, to the extent that “if you want a caliphate which is aggressive and fiercely controlling of the Muslim population, you can find precedents in the vast historical records. If you want a caliphate which is generous and open to different ideas and customs while, of course, remaining true to its vision of God’s will and purpose, then you can find that in the historical tradition too.”³⁴ The jihadist group’s appeal to tradition is deemed to be logically fallacious because it is selective and self-serving, and it also assumes that past justifications for the tradition are still valid at present. Newly published textbooks used for teaching Arabic literature in schools run by DĀ’ISH have deliberately selected poetry from the pre-Islamic and Abbasid periods, as well as poems by specific poets ranging from al-Mutanabbī (d. 965 CE) to Badī’ al-Zamān al-

31 Elisabeth Kendall surveyed the importance of poetry in al-Qa’ida’s heartlands in eastern Yemen. See Kendall, “Yemen’s al-Qa’ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad,” 251.

32 Shils, *Tradition*, 13.

33 Von Grunebaum, *Modern Islam*, 158.

34 Hugh Kennedy, *Caliphate: The History of an Idea* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), xvi.

Hamadhānī (d. 1007 CE), and Ibn al-Amīd (d. 940 CE).³⁵ By deliberately selecting specific verses and poems that are connected to particular battles in the Arab history, DĀ'ISH portrays these verses from the Islamic past as though they are the sole and united narrative of a long-standing Islamic tradition.

Thirdly, the process of reconstructing the symbolic world “may entail creating ‘traditions’ that are in fact quite new, but supposedly have time-honored, commonly recognized history.”³⁶ Over time, if the rulers manipulate symbols skillfully, symbolic awards alone may suffice to maintain supportive attitudes.³⁷ Even if the cult of DĀ'ISH fails to produce inner conviction and belief in its outlandish claims and violent chores, its appropriation of tradition may nevertheless manage to create an emotional connection between the organization and its followers, which is enough to support its claim to legitimacy. The reinstatement of past glories heartens DĀ'ISH followers for the struggle and makes them feel worthy of the status which they claim for themselves. DĀ'ISH appeals to people on an emotional level to coerce their behaviour and action on a functional level.

The creation of a unique worldview enshrined in a distorted interpretation of tradition cannot be conceptualized in isolation from the socio-political context that gave rise to the jihadist ideology transnationally. The appearance of Jihadism in the late 1970s in the Arab and Islamic world appeared as a direct reaction to other ideological streams like Westernization and modernization, which took form under European domination. For this reason, the jihadist emphasis on tradition “ought to be interpreted not simply as a rejection of foreign values and ideas but rather as an attempt to give new Islamic content to the meaning of self and society by reformulating a redemptive Islamic dogma.”³⁸ At the national level, our understanding of DĀ'ISH discourse needs to account for the strategic and propagandistic mechanisms in the Iraqi political discourse during Saddam Hussein’s rule. Discursive strategies that were deliberately devised by Saddam’s Ba’ath party to ensure absolute loyalty and obedience of the citizens towards the cult may have facilitated the transmission of the jihadist ideology through similar mechanisms.

2.2.1. Political Mobilization based on Images of the Past in the Iraq–Syria Region

Arab nationalist and jihadist mobilization have a firm foundation in images of the past, which are typically embellished to produce a tendentious image of the community’s own history. Exploiting the past as a mobilizing force has taken place under the aegis of different politicians, such as the pan-Arab nationalist leaders in the Iraq–Syria region. Given that the local political discourse before DĀ'ISH may have exerted considerable

35 Jacob Olidort, *Inside the Caliphate’s Classroom: Textbooks, Guidance Literature, and Indoctrination Methods of the Islamic State*, Washington Institute for Near East Policy (2016), 21–2, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus147-Olidort-5.pdf>.

36 Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 13.

37 Schaar, *Legitimacy in the Modern State*, 21.

38 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 64.

influence on the social memory of the citizens living in the Iraq–Syria region, a brief discussion about the *topos* of history is adequate at this stage.

Saddam Hussein's discourse is distinguished by the exploitation of the glorious Arab and Islamic history to appeal to his audience on an emotional level.³⁹ Ofra Bengio claims that Saddam's discourse is underpinned by a discursive shift in rhetoric. Islamic imagery and phraseology, which were barely used at the beginning, became used stridently during his final years.⁴⁰ Bengio argues that Saddam's starkly-noted shift in rhetoric happened roughly around the time when the religiously motivated Shi'ite riots started growing fast leading to the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and eventually in the war against Iran (1980–1988). Saddam's secular ideology performed poorly when compared to Iran's Islamic ideology.⁴¹ Therefore Iraq's central role in Arab and Islamic history was emphasized to counter the penetration of Khomeini's religious propaganda from Iran.⁴²

Gradually, the party had to drop the political discourse with which it had come to power and replace it with, or at least range alongside it, a different kind of public language. The latter drew on themes of historical, above all Islamic, provenance. In some measure, this process was intentional and guided from above; in part it was forced on the regime by specific circumstances; and in part it sprang spontaneously from deep layers of the Iraqi collective experience.⁴³

It was at this point that the "Islamization of public discourse" started taking place. Saddam began employing Islamic symbols and historical events to motivate his audience and to evoke deeply felt religious sentiment for political propaganda.⁴⁴ The Islamization of public discourse became a tool of power to extricate his party from severe crises and as an attempt to preserve his legacy as Iraq's leader. By using the idealized ancient Iraqi ruins and Arab-Islamic images, Saddam reconstructed his narrative of past greatness lost to modern decadence.⁴⁵ The former Iraqi president also recalled religious personalities and battles in a bid to bolster his credentials as an Islamic leader even though the Ba'ath party initially followed a secular ideology.⁴⁶ On thirteenth November 1982, Saddam organized a ceremony known as the oath of allegiance (*bay'a*) to be performed by his followers. The *bay'a* was one of the pillars of Islamic polity and

39 See also Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 172–5.

40 Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 176.

41 Bengio, *Saddam's Word*, 184.

42 Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 208.

43 Bengio, *Saddam's Word*, 159.

44 Bengio, *Saddam's Word*, 160.

45 Paul Cooper, "Culture–Saddam's 'Disney for a Despot': How Dictators Exploit Ruins," *BBC*, April 20, 2018, accessed April 27, 2018, <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20180419-saddam-disney-for-a-despot-how-dictators-exploit-ruins>.

46 When the Ba'ath party seized power in 1968 with Saddam at its head, it imposed a mixture of Arab-centred socialism, anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism, and Arab nationalism. Ba'athism was a secular movement, formed initially to rescue Arab states from the legacy of colonialism.

served as an ancient covenant made between the ruler and the community of Muslim believers.⁴⁷ On several occasions, Saddam compared himself to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (1137–1193 CE),⁴⁸ the twelfth century Sultan, whose Ayyubid dynasty extended geographically from Egypt to Syria, Upper-Mesopotamia, the Ḥijāz, Yemen and other parts of North Africa. Historically, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is known for wresting Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187 CE. On the eve of the Gulf War (1990–1991) Saddam equated the role of Iraqi soldiers with the battle of Qādisiyya (636 CE)⁴⁹ among other key terms with Islamic overtones,⁵⁰ reviving the past successes of the Arab Muslim army over the Sassanid Persian army which eventually led to the conquest of Iraq from the Persian army.⁵¹ Eventually, Saddam started signing messages and letters with the phrase ‘God’s believing servant’ (*‘abd allāh al-mu’minīn*)⁵² and ordered the words *allāhu akbar* to be inscribed on the Iraqi flag.⁵³

In the field of education, Saddam also engaged in the discussion about how to write history textbooks for pupils, arguing that the writing “must ‘directly permeate’ young brains in an ‘absolute fashion,’ without theoretical or philosophical explanations or analyses that might confuse them.”⁵⁴ Saddam’s explicit willingness to interfere in the writing of Iraq’s history resurfaced in a political speech that he delivered in 1978. This speech was consequently followed by public discussions and events that were thematically labelled ‘rewriting Arab history.’⁵⁵ Aware of the power language plays in spreading ideology, the Ba’ath party published ‘Saddam Hussayn Political Dictionary’ (*Qāmūs Saddām Ḥusayn al-Sīyyāsī*) in 1988, which contained 500 entries of Saddam’s political words, expressions, and memorable quotes collected and interpreted by the poet Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ‘Abd al-Riḍā.⁵⁶

In Saddam Hussein’s discourse, the past is devised as a strategy of manipulation beyond the symbolic world. The shift in public political discourse also manifested itself in the creation of symbolic artefacts such as the completion of ‘Mother of All Battles’ mosque (*umm al-ma’ārik*) in 2001, the latest in a string of similar religious edifices. The ‘Mother of All Battles’ mosque consisted of eight minarets shaped like weapons; four minarets stood for the barrels of AK–47 assault rifles, whereas the other four minarets represented Scud missiles. It was also reported that the Qur’an in this particular mosque was written out by hand in three pints of Saddam’s own blood extracted by his doctor

47 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 74–8.

48 Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 173.

49 Battle of Qādisiyya refers to the historical battlefield in which Arab Muslim warriors overcame a larger Sassanian army, the Persians, in 636/7 CE. The Iraq–Iran War was often referred to in the Ba’athist propaganda as Qādisiyyat Ṣaddām.

50 See also Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 140–52.

51 Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 174.

52 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 183.

53 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 191.

54 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 164.

55 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 163–4.

56 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 78.

over two years.⁵⁷ The ‘Islamization of public discourse’ was taken to a higher level at the beginning of the twenty-first century, to the extent that by 2003 Islam was firmly embedded in the regime’s ideology and symbolism. Abdel Atwan recalls how a message sent by Saddam to the newspaper *al-Quds al-‘arabī* in April 2003 was “full of Qur’anic quotations and references as well as jihadist rhetoric,” probably because “Saddam’s intuition had told him that political, radical Islam would provide the cohesion necessary for the insurgency to be effective.”⁵⁸ By then, Saddam realized that “with the decline of pan-Arabism, political Islam was emerging as a new, radical, unifying force across the region. As the threat of a further US invasion loomed, Saddam saw in Islam a key to the formation of a cohesive resistance. Clerics went on the public payroll; he ordered his army commanders to become practising Muslims.”⁵⁹

Like Saddam, Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad, who served both in the role of a president (1971–2000) and a Prime Minister (1970–1971) of Syria among other official high-ranking roles, was often portrayed as Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in the production of various ideological artefacts. One famous portrait which compared Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was accompanied by the caption “from Hittin to Tishrin,”⁶⁰ equating the historic military victory of Ḥaṭṭīn fought by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn to the October 1973 war. More recently, the former Prime Minister of Iraq Nūrī al-Mālikī (2006–2014) also attempted to exploit Iraq’s history and its leading role in the Arab civilization by portraying the country as a blueprint upon which he intended to build a modern and united Iraq.⁶¹ Attempting to reconcile the disunited Iraqi nation under the banner of its shared Arab history was inevitable, especially because al-Mālikī’s Shi‘ite government did not resonate well with other significant minorities in Iraq. It is evident from the examples mentioned above that the Iraqi-Syrian populace had already been exposed to political ideologies encoded in the images of the past prior to the emergence of DĀ’ISH. Thus the discursive strategies which feature in the jihadist discourse have been sharpened by decades of technique in other regional political movements.

The similarities of appropriating the past as manifested in pan-Arab nationalist and jihadist movements in Iraq may have been influenced by other socio-political undercurrents, including the Sunni-based roots of the Ba‘ath party and Jihadism. Although the Arab Sunnis in Iraq consisted only of a small minority, they have traditionally dominated the political and social life of Iraq. At a time when the Iraqi Sunni community was disgruntled due to the discriminatory policies following the US-led invasion, Sunni-leaning groups perceived the jihadist stream as an opportunity to regain political power

57 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 27.

58 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 26.

59 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 28.

60 Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 3.

61 Kurstin Gatt, “Reconciling the Iraqi Nation: A Rhetorical Analysis of Nūrī al-Mālikī’s Political Discourse,” in *Arabische Sprache im Kontext: Festschrift zu Ehren von Eckehard Schulz*, eds. Beate Backe, Thoralf Hanstein, and Kristina Stock, *Leipziger Beiträge zur Orientforschung*, vol. 37 (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2018), 161–7.

and to bring justice. Numerous vital figures which helped create the so-called ‘Islamic State’ had held key positions in Saddam’s government. In addition to Hajī Bakr,⁶² who was dubbed as ‘the architect of the Islamic State’ and worked as a colonel in the intelligence service of Saddam Hussein’s air defence force,⁶³ a high-ranking official called ‘Abd Allāh Qardāsh (d. unknown) was also a former military intelligence member under Saddam Hussein.⁶⁴ DĀ‘ISH discourse should thereby be acknowledged as a continual and also radical progression of the ‘Islamization of public discourse’ originally initiated by the Ba‘ath party in Iraq. The strategic appropriation of history, which is mentioned repeatedly in this work, is not a novel aspect of the jihadist ideology, but it is a mechanism that had already been recurrent in the modern political discourse of Iraq and Syria.

2.2.2. Different Facets of Modernity in the Jihadist Milieu

DĀ‘ISH discourse fluctuates between tradition and innovation, heritage and contemporaneity, and authenticity and renovation. DĀ‘ISH consumes the pathos of cultural authenticity, and at the same time, it situates itself into broader notions of modernity to remain relevant to modern society. The foundations of jihadist discourse are built on an old emotional narrative of history yet reassemble on state-of-the-art techno-cultural possibilities. Although cultural authenticity and modernity seem – by definition – to be linked dialectically, their coexistence in DĀ‘ISH discourse is both prevalent and pervasive. Cultural authenticity in all its different discursive manifestations remains a rhetorically powerful emotional practice that appeals to a populace beyond the jihadist groups. Tradition represents familiar shared images and meaning, and it asserts an ongoing continuity of values. In contrast, modernity confronts us with a new perception or meaning, which we have not realized before.⁶⁵ Hence the power of tradition is only rendered effective if it is reformulated with the lens of modernity. Historical allusions culled from the past are part of a large sphere of discursive practices meant to recover and reconstruct an imaginary identity, and through this, reconstruct the image of a ‘modern’ caliphate.

DĀ‘ISH distinguished itself from past militant jihadist organizations in the sophistication and scale of its use of technological advances, including social media networks in

62 Hajī Bakr penned the blueprint for the organization’s structure. Like other former high-ranking officers from Saddam’s time, Hajī Bakr became one of the military leaders in Iraq and spent two years (2006–2008) in Camp Būkā and Abū Ghurayb prisons in Iraq. These prisons were managed by the US. Interpersonal ties between jihadists and former Ba‘athist leaders were knit in detention centres, such as Camp Būkā, where Sunnis accounted for the majority of detainees. See Barrett, “The Islamic State,” *The Soufan Group* (November 2014), 20; Guenther, and Kaden, *The Authority of the Islamic State*, 5–8.

63 Christoph Reuter, “The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State,” *Spiegel.de*, April 18, 2015, accessed May 12, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html>.

64 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 131.

65 See also John G. Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique* (Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1971), 99–101.

such a brazen and overt way.⁶⁶ Modern technology is exploited by DĀ'ISH to spread its vision and permeate the private and public spheres of the populace living under its control. Technology plays an essential role in the day-to-day running of jihadist groups. Thomas Elkjer Nissen maintains that “we can see the contours of a very calculated and professional social media information campaign which resembles modern cross-media marketing or political PR campaigns.”⁶⁷ Abdel Bari Atwan, who dubs the so-called caliphate as the ‘digital caliphate,’ stresses that without the mastery of digital technology, DĀ'ISH could “never have achieved its territorial ambitions, nor could it have recruited such a large army in so short a time.”⁶⁸ Most of the group’s business, such as its recruitment, its propaganda, and its battlefield strategies is conducted online.

The European Union clarified that “the use of the Internet to incite people into becoming violently radical, or a vehicle for terrorist recruitment, is extremely worrying in view of its global reach, real-time nature and effectiveness.”⁶⁹ Recruitment usually takes place via unpoliced and unregulated messaging platforms such as Skype, Kik, and Whatsapp.⁷⁰ Its recruits are mostly tech-savvy and regularly engage in ‘Twitter storms.’⁷¹ DĀ'ISH manages to guide potential recruits that it cannot be reached directly via computer-mediated communication into a process of self-radicalization. One example of self-radicalized individuals is the head of the group’s media department identified as Aḥmad Abū Samra, who was a French-born IT expert with work experience in telecommunications. Upon relocating to Aleppo in 2011 to join DĀ'ISH, he was entrusted with several media organizations within DĀ'ISH including al-ḥayāt, al-furqān, and al-i'tiṣām.⁷²

The clash between the Salafi-Jihadist ideology based on the traditional values of life in the seventh century CE and modern technology has been a topic of debate among jihadist ideologues since the twentieth century. Al-Qa'ida was the first jihadist network in 1995 to sense the potential of the worldwide web in the dissemination of information through the internet and in the orchestration of attacks on its enemies. Eventually, ‘cyber jihad’ became one of al-Qa'ida’s widely circulated *Thirty-nine Principles of Jihad*.⁷³ Prior to technology, only jihadist leaders used to produce and release jihadist content. Nowadays, every jihadist “is his or her own media outlet, reporting live from

66 See also Maeghin Alarid, “Recruitment and Radicalization: The Role of Social Media and New Technology,” *Impunity: Countering Illicit Power in War and Transition* (2016): 313–29.

67 Thomas Elkjer Nissen, *The Weaponization of Social Media* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015), 49–50.

68 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 1.

69 Union Européenne, “Addressing the Factors Contributing to Violent Radicalization (rapport no COM-2005 313),” Bruxelles (Belgique), *Conseil de l’Union Européenne sur le Recrutement de Terroriste et Commission, Parlement européen* (2005), 4.

70 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 12–3.

71 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 12.

72 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 12–5.

73 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 10.

the frontline in tweets, offering enticing visions of domestic bliss via short films and images.”⁷⁴

In the field of literature, modern technology acts both as an aid and a stimulus to poetic production. Technological advancements enable jihadist movements to bend the conventions of Salafism that forbid the use of musical instruments by using other sound effects (such as gunshots or the marching of soldiers) instead.⁷⁵ On the battlefield, the *qaṣīda* has been revitalized in the form of chants that follow the metre, rhythm, and rhyme as dictated in pre-Islamic poetry. As a critical element in the technological scaffolding of DĀ’ISH, chants have become an omnipresent background of militant jihadist propaganda videos. Additionally, they have had a profound impact in ideological transmission. The eclectic blend of pop culture and Islamic ethos connect with the younger cadres of DĀ’ISH on an emotional level. The online dissemination of chants has served as an effective instrument in foreign recruitment.⁷⁶ Jonathan Pieslak argues that chants are “dynamic cultural catalysts in recruitment, membership retention, morale, and motivation for action.”⁷⁷ These chants are usually composed in simple language and are usually exploited to indoctrinate and mobilize sympathizers to the extent that an overwhelming number of recruits “seem to indulge in jihadi music and videos long before they see any fighting and before they sit down to learn the finer points of doctrine.”⁷⁸

The advent of the internet facilitated the preservation of propagandistic jihadist material. The digital preservation of poetry, chants, and sermon-like speeches stems from an older tradition of cassettes.⁷⁹ The recording of performed poetry – whether in the form of recitation or chant – is more apt and effective presumably because it captures poetry in its emotional state.⁸⁰ Technological advancement has enhanced the effective-

74 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 11.

75 See also Behnam Said, “Hymns (Nasheeds): A Contribution to the Study of the Jihadist Culture,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no. 12 (2012), 869; Jonathan Pieslak, “A Musicological Perspective on Jihadi Anashid,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 63–5.

76 See also Inna Naroditskaya, “The Religious Chants the Islamic State is Using to Woo Recruits,” *The Washington Post*, January 14, 2015, accessed April 23, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/01/14/the-religious-chants-the-islamic-state-is-using-to-woo-recruits/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.13b6de96833d.

77 Pieslak, “A Musicological Perspective on Jihadi Anashid,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 73.

78 Hegghammer, “Introduction: Why is Jihadi Culture and Why Should We Study it?” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 2.

79 On the contrary to the cassette tradition, the modern-day digital world has contributed towards spreading the jihadist ideological propaganda beyond geographical borders. DĀ’ISH sympathizers post statuses on Twitter and upload photos on Instagram in real-time, often circulating poetic verses and photos linked to speeches delivered by DĀ’ISH leaders. Websites, blogs, and groups on encrypted social media applications such as Telegram were created by DĀ’ISH to circulate the organization’s ideology by making videos, chants, pamphlets, and other cultural products available for download.

80 Caton asserts that “[t]he tape recorder is more suitable than writing to the production of the textual-utterance of the qasida.” The tradition of the tape recorder in Yemen and large parts of the Arabian Peninsula still feeds on the performing characteristic of the classical Arabic ode. See Steven Charles

ness of DĀ'ISH propaganda on two accounts. Firstly, the transmission of ideological messages through word of mouth used to take a longer time to reach far-away countries. Although the production of the cassette was a potent tool to preserve poetry, it was relatively limited because it could only be transferred from one hand to another. In the times of modern technology, DĀ'ISH material is made accessible for everyone online at the click of a button. Once posted on the internet, DĀ'ISH material finds itself in circulation among jihadist followers globally on the Darkweb, making the group's archives impossible to delete completely. The immediate availability of public oratory, poetry, and other jihadist material, which is typically mediated to distal audiences by textual or electronic means of communication, minimizes the distance between the followers and the jihadist group, resulting in the personalization of jihadist discourse. Secondly, technological advancement serves as an instrument to preserve the artefact by lengthening its lifespan. Although Western authorities and institutions such as the European Council have created a strategy for combating radicalization and recruitment online, the complete removal of jihadist content online has proven to be challenging.⁸¹

Modern technology has contributed substantially towards an easier and faster diffusion of the jihadist message transnationally. Modern variants of the *qaṣīda* help transmit the jihadist worldview to the younger generation through upbeat melodies. It must be ascertained, however, that technology is not the reason behind the widespread use of poetry in the jihadist groups. The essence of poetry's success and effectiveness in the political space originates from the innate characteristics of the *qaṣīda* which have functioned as an ancient mode of communication, mobilization, and diffusion of propaganda since the pre-Islamic times. The *qaṣīda* has been exploited as a platform through which different ideologies and denominations convey their message by winning over the hearts and minds of their Arabic-speaking audiences. Its in-built structures and orally based techniques are the prime motivators of its natural diffusion on the battlefield. Among the most effective in-built rhetorical tools of the *qaṣīda* are repetition and rephrasing, rhyme and rhythm, and other literary devices that have been thoroughly explored by both classical and modern poets. Rhyme schemes and specific rhythms conjure a feeling of the highly emotional and struggling atmosphere often seen through the viewpoint of life's trajectories.

2.3. Orality and the Psychodynamics of Orally Based Thought

Jihadist groups latch onto the Arabic-Islamic tradition to legitimate their existence. The Arab world has an oral tradition based on the transmission of culture, ancient knowledge, and customs. The primary transmitters of the oral tradition are Classical Arabic and the vibrant *qaṣīda*. The issue of orality is central to our understanding of

Caton, *Peaks of Yemen I Summon: Poetry as Cultural Practice in a North Yemeni Tribe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 219.

81 See also "Fight Against Terrorism," *EU Counter-terrorism Strategy – Consilium*, October 23, 2017, accessed April 23, 2018, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fight-against-terrorism/eu-strategy/>.

DĀ'ISH discourse because the group feeds on structures and artefacts that are deeply seated in orality.

Since pre-Islamic times, Classical Arabic has played a central role in the socio-religious spheres of the Arabic-Islamic culture:

Classical Arabic is, for the most part, an oral language. The prayers are recited and not read from any text, children are taught to memorize (chapters) of the Qur'an and often when people read the text, they are reciting from memory. Moreover, the art of the recitation of the Qur'an is highly developed and people buy cassettes of their favorite reciters to listen to.⁸²

To date, Classical Arabic has retained its relevance as the exclusive medium of Revelation of the Qur'an. The Islamic tradition and the Qur'an itself were birthed within the culture of orality.⁸³ Angelika Neuwirth speaks of the Qur'an's "oral prehistory" and how oral communications build themselves on earlier ones, developing "oral intertextuality."⁸⁴ The esteemed classical Arabic ode was also founded in an oral culture as its refined structures, and its formulaic expressions can attest. In medieval times, memorization and transmission of poetry were primarily facilitated by the rigid form of the *qaṣīda*, with its end-rhymes and fixed metre.⁸⁵

The diffusion of DĀ'ISH poetry on the battlefield is modelled on and facilitated by its oral-formulaic character. Scholarship in orality theory published over the past several decades suggests that the poetic text is, through its rhyme, metre, formulaic construction, and literary devices, essentially mnemonic and thus more memorable and stable than any other type of text or speech. Since the seminal contributions of Milman Parry and Albert Lord to the Oral Literary theory, studies about orality have gained more prominence in the work of contemporary scholars, including Walter Ong's publication *Orality and Literacy*. Ong distinguishes between 'primary orality,' which refers to a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print, and 'secondary orality' which is affected by present-day high technology culture, whereby the existence of orality is sustained by electronic devices and is heavily reliant upon writing and the print.⁸⁶ In the twenty-first century, examples of 'primary' oral cultures are generally sporadic.

Neither the Arab-Islamic community in general nor the jihadist organizations in particular are considered as cases of 'primary orality.' In the Arab-Islamic world, the book culture and the culture of orality have developed concurrently since the beginning of the ninth century CE.⁸⁷ For this reason, it would be incorrect to refer to the jihadist milieu

82 Niloofar Haeri, *Sacred Language and Ordinary People* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 43.

83 See also Andrew G. Bannister, *An Oral-formulaic Study of the Qur'an* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 48ff.

84 Angelika Neuwirth, "Structure and the Emergence of the Community," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 140–6.

85 See also Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 13–25.

86 Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London: Routledge, 2013), 11.

87 For a discussion about the development of the script and the oral tradition in the Arab world, see also Gruendler, Klemm, and Winckler, "Arabische Literatur," in *Islam: Einheit und Vielfalt einer Weltreligion*.

as untouched by any knowledge of writing, primarily due to the imminent use of technology in its communication. However, DĀ'ISH forms part of a word-oriented milieu that has remained strongly connected to its oral roots in its daily lifestyle. Additionally, its poetic composition still bears striking resemblances to the old in its participation mystique, the fostering of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment, and even in its use of formulas.⁸⁸

The type of orality identified in the jihadist groups is more deliberate and self-conscious. Ong refers to milieux with courses of action depending significantly on the effective use of words, and thus on human activity as following a 'verbomotor lifestyle.'⁸⁹ These cultures retain enough "oral residue to remain significantly word-attentive in a person-interactive context (the oral type of context) rather than object-attentive."⁹⁰ Organizations like DĀ'ISH preserve and exploit much of the mind-set of orality even if with the adoption of high-technology ambience.

Albert Lord outlines marked characteristics which determine the likelihood of the poem's rootedness in orality. The significant sets of identification include the presence of formulaic techniques on the verbal level, the infrequent occurrence of necessary enjambment, and traditional themes. Formulas and traditional themes indicate a poem's origin in an oral tradition because the poet "needs well-established themes for rapid composition."⁹¹ In a more recent study, Walter Ong draws up the characteristics of orally based thought that highlight a residual formulary essential of oral thought processes.⁹² The three dimensions that permeate the psychodynamics of orally based thought characterized the discourse of DĀ'ISH. These dimensions consist of incessant repetition, the here-and-now, and the communal experience.

2.3.1. Repetition

The verbal memory skill which identifies verbomotor cultures is based on hammering repetition. DĀ'ISH discourse is characterized by elaborate and pervasive patterns of lexical, morphological, and syntactic repetition and paraphrasing. The repetition of particular images and old logics is prevalent on the groups' media channels, and it is intended to produce a specific worldview meant to be persuasive in the arena of political conflict. By repeating key terminology with religious and cultural associations, DĀ'ISH subtly dictates a specific discursive frame or a way of thinking. Initially, repetition gained significance in oral cultures for its mnemonic effect. Protracted orally based thought tends to be highly rhythmic because rhythm aids recall even physiologically.⁹³

gion, 352ff; Michael Zwettler, *The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry: Its Character and Implications* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1978).

88 See also Walter J. Ong, *Interfaces of the Word* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 16–49.

89 See also Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 67.

90 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 67.

91 Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York: Atheneum, 1965), 131.

92 See also Ong, *Orality and Literacy*.

93 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 34.

The audience who witnessed the recitation of a poem or the delivery of speech could not go back to the just-said. Repetition was thus instrumentalized by the speaker as a recall strategy to help the listener understand and memorize the message of the delivery. In the case of Arabic poetry, repetition is not only manifested in the reiteration of diction, but it is also supported by other poetic devices such as rhythm, rhyme, and metre. The sonority created by the rhythm and rhyme contributes to the effectiveness of the underlying message because it appeals more to the emotional rather than to the cognitive aspect.

Protracted orally based thought tends to be additive rather than subordinate. Oral compositions are characterized by a large number of grammatical structures that are placed repetitively throughout the discourse. Anaphoric techniques of essential diction bound with intertextual references also contribute to the additive element by creating a rhythmic discourse that is euphonious. To establish continuity in mind, cultures with high oral residue tend to entail copious aspects or the repetition of the just-said as a system of 'backlooping.' Redundancy ascertains continuity by keeping the speaker and the audience on track.⁹⁴ Backlooping in DĀ'ISH discourse is especially evident in the repetition of key verses of chants, serving as a reminder of the underlying ideological message of the composition. Similar to the case of redundancy and backlooping, orally based thought requires incessant repetition to be drilled in the audience's memory and to avoid being forgotten.

The innate capacity to memorize a message and transmit it to other interlocutors stems from the formalism of ritual language. Discourse is considered as formalized when it is "systemically composed so as to restrict the range of available linguistic choices."⁹⁵ Oral formulaic analysis laid out by Milman Parry defined the oral formula as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."⁹⁶ In the jihadist milieu, old formulas and themes are not supplanted with new materials but reshuffled. Past themes and motifs are exploited to interact with new and often complicated political situations. Formulas fulfil several functions, but most importantly, they help implement "rhythmic discourse and also act as mnemonic aids in their own right, as set expressions circulating through the mouths and ears of all."⁹⁷ The repetition of themes and structures borrowed from the poetic tradition is thus not monotonous, but they act as a mnemonic device that ensures longer durability of the message. Additionally, repetition helps to crystallize specific formulas that dictate a particular worldview.

94 See also Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 40ff.

95 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 59.

96 Milman Parry, "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making. I. Homer and Homeric Style," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 41 (1930), 80.

97 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 35.

2.3.2. Here-and-Now

Ideological propagation needs to be verbalized with more or less close reference to the human lifeworld, “assimilating the alien, objective world to the more immediate, familiar interaction of human beings.”⁹⁸ Oral societies base their interactions on real-life situations of the here-and-now.⁹⁹ Oral milieux conserve their limited capacity to store information and retain its relevance to the interest of their present members by shedding memories that have lost their past significance. Word meanings are continuously expressed in accordance with their synchronic definition, without taking into consideration past meanings that have shaped the present meaning. In some cases, the link between the past and present meaning is no longer recognized. Even if the archaic diction borrowed from tradition is retained, the original meaning is often altered semantically.

DĀ'ISH discourse is situational rather than abstract because it uses concepts in operational frames of reference that are minimally abstract to remain relevant to the human world. The group's orally-based mechanisms are deliberately exploited to allocate for new word meanings, which interpretation is guided by the group's ideology. The oral mode “allows for inconvenient parts of the past to be forgotten” because of “the exigencies of the continuing present.”¹⁰⁰ Parts of the past that are either no longer relevant or that do not support the group's political agenda are cast aside. Especially in the case of politically unstable and war-stricken locations, situational discourse is critical in ideological propagation. DĀ'ISH latches onto a collective memory based on the Islamic tradition to justify its message and legitimate its existence and its modus operandi. The pervasive metaphors and intertextualities borrowed from Islamic sources connect the jihadist message to the shared collective memory of the audience.

2.3.3. The Communal Experience

Jihadist discourse is crafted to give shape and structure to the ecstatic collective experience. Recreating a communal experience is strategic for jihadist groups to strengthen in-group cohesion and to control inter- and intra-group relations. Orally based mechanisms and recitations suit particular social situations that recall the collective actions familiar to the participating group. In discursive terms, the communal experience is often created by inclining towards aggregative rather than analytic discourse; that is, discourse is formed by the collection of units or particles into a coherent whole. Ong argues that the preference of aggregative over analytical discourse in predominantly oral cultures is closely linked to the “reliance on formulas to implement memory.”¹⁰¹ DĀ'ISH dis-

98 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 42.

99 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 46.

100 David Henige, “The Disease of Writing: Ganda and Nyoro Kinglists in a Newly Literate World,” ed. Joseph C. Miller in *The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition and History* (London: Archon., 1980), 255.

101 Walter Ong argues that “Oral folk prefer, especially in formal discourse, not the soldier, but the brave soldier; not the princess, but the beautiful princess’ not the oak, but the sturdy oak...An oral culture may

course consists of a high proportion of epithets, mnemonic formulas, and other formulaary baggage, which may be rejected as cumbersome and tiresomely redundant in high literacy because of its aggregative weight.¹⁰² Orally-based DĀ'ISH discourse also encourages triumphalism by resorting to excessive exultation over the group's success and achievements.¹⁰³ By drawing upon a heritage of Arabic-Islamic traditions, DĀ'ISH crafts an image of 'authentic Muslims' who manage to commit themselves to traditions and social duties with virtues of nobility, gallantry, piety, honour, pride, and steadfastness. The group's ideology and social system are depicted as superior to the rest of the world.

Orally based communication draws on the communal experience by being empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced. In part, DĀ'ISH discourse is participatory because it is communicated in Classical Arabic, which has held a central function in the socio-cultural environment since pre-Islamic times. Classical Arabic "socializes people into the rituals and ceremonies of Islam, a language that affirms their identities as Muslims, that marks certain activities as belonging to the realm of purity, morality, and God. A language, furthermore, whose aesthetic and musical qualities move its listeners, creating feelings of spirituality, nostalgia and community."¹⁰⁴ Likewise, poetry creates a collective consciousness and a collective dramatic tension that continues to voice political comment. It engages in a complex process of shaping and modifying the audience's *Weltanschauung*. Heir to an ancient tradition, the recitation of Arabic poetry is meant to engage the audience collectively by triggering communal identification:

The recitation of pre-Islamic poetry was strangely reminiscent of a ritual; the officiating poet, who did not create poetry for himself, but for others, encouraged active participation on the part of his public as a means of appealing to the hearts of his hearers. Poetic engagement derived in this case from the limpidity of the verse and the familiarity of experienced listeners with the wording and the thematic sequence of the *qaṣīda*.¹⁰⁵

In the case of DĀ'ISH poetry, the emphasis is also laid on group participation, either through a collective performance or through the integration in a complex collective activity. DĀ'ISH poetry and its focus on the authoritarian power of metre, rhythm, and rhyme are imposed upon an artificially-constructed and maintained collective. Rhetorical traces of this collectivist approach include pronominal utterances in plural form. The deliberate use of 'we' and 'us' in DĀ'ISH discourse "indicates that there are a number of speakers but that they are acting collectively, as if they were only one speaker, a kind

well ask in a riddle why oaks are sturdy, but it does so to assure you that they are, to keep the aggregate intact, not really to question or cast doubt on the attribution." Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 38.

102 See also Ong, *Interfaces of the Word*, 188–212.

103 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 49.

104 Haeri, *Sacred Language and Ordinary People*, 43.

105 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 450.

of corporate personality.”¹⁰⁶ By declaring these pronominal utterances of solidarity repeatedly, DĀ‘ISH members become part of a community that is led by a specific credo, namely, “[i]n pronouncing the ‘we’ the participants meet not only in an externally definable space but in a kind of ideal space determined by their speech acts.”¹⁰⁷

The communal experience regenerated in DĀ‘ISH discourse consolidates the group identity and raises the out-group aggression through polarized rhetoric. Discourse simplifies a complex socio-political reality and political complex by polarizing a world agonistically into good and evil, virtue and vice, and villains and heroes. Ong argues that physical violence often marks oral narrative, and in the celebration of physical behaviour, “oral cultures reveal themselves as agonistically programmed.”¹⁰⁸ The agonistic dynamics of DĀ‘ISH discourse in verbal performance often demand a specific target to engage in verbal combat. Repetitions of verses serve as a reinforcement of this engagement, whereby the audience takes part by participating in the chant collectively. This collective experience is reinforced by the overwhelming ‘anonymous’ composition of chants and poetry, with the underlying intention to reassert collective sentiments.¹⁰⁹

2.4. The Popular Appeal of the *Qaṣīda* in Contemporary Times

The poetic form known as *qaṣīda* remains one of the most popular artefacts steeped in the Arabic-Islamic culture. In the jihadist milieu, the *qaṣīda* is an integral part of the ‘popular jihadi culture’ (*al-thaqāfa al-sha‘biyya al-jihadiyya*). In the context of jihadism, ‘culture’ expresses specific meanings and values derived from lived cultures or practices and may be defined in social terms as “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group.”¹¹⁰ For the purpose of the study, culture refers to “products and practices that do something other than fill the basic military needs of jihadi groups.”¹¹¹

From the outset, the term ‘popular’ is connected to the likeability factor within specific groups. In this sense, ‘popular’ is understood as “work deliberately setting out to win favour with the people.”¹¹² It enjoys the support of a broad audience within specific

106 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 59.

107 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58.

108 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 44.

109 Aḥlām al-Naṣr’s poetry is among the few poets who are given credit for their poetry. There are also other individuals whose work is published on pamphlets. Chants, however, are attributed to a production centre rather than to their composer or reciter. The notion of producing poetry collectively or anonymously is not a customary practice in the medieval Islamic literary heritage.

110 Raymond Williams gives several possibilities of how to define culture, namely (i) the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development; (ii) the independent noun, whether used generally or specifically, which indicates a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general; (iii) the independent and abstract noun which describes the work and practices of intellectual and artistic activity. See also Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University, 1983), 90.

111 Hegghammer, “Introduction: Why is Jihadi Culture and Why Should We Study it?” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 3.

112 Williams, *Keywords*, 237.

circles or sub-cultures and is not limited solely to the intellectual or creative elitists. Popular literary artefacts, which are “compositions produced by the common people, the under-represented lower classes of society,”¹¹³ would include the behaviour, values, entertainment, worldview of the group. In the jihadi culture, popular cultural artefacts include religious rituals, poetry, videos, films, sports, and jokes.¹¹⁴ As an ancient mode of mobilization, the classical ode has retained its widespread popular appeal in the Arab world until modern times. The *qaṣīda* is ‘popular’ in the jihadist milieu because of the group’s association with the mainstream Arabic and Islamic culture. Outside the jihadist compounds, there are multiple examples of the *qaṣīda* exploited in mainstream Arabic cultures.

In the field of entertainment, the past decade has experienced an increase in the number of popular talent shows in Europe and America, such as the ‘American Idol,’ ‘X Factor,’ or the ‘Britain’s Got Talent.’ The Arab world has translated this phenomenon into its own culture by producing shows such as ‘The Million’s Poet’ (*shā’ir al-milyūn*), which is a reality television show on the United Arab Emirates television network showcasing poets and their talent in composing verses.¹¹⁵ Another similar talent show in the Arab world is ‘Prince of Poets’ (*amīr al-shu‘arā*) which encourages poets to recite and to compose their own poetry on topics that are chosen by the judges spontaneously. These talent shows are intended to emulate the tribal poetic competitions of pre-Islamic Arabia, culminating in prizing the best poet among them. The judges examine the poet’s ability in two distinct talents, that is, recitation and composition. In a similar manner to pre-Islamic tribal poetic competitions, competitors participating in these talent shows must “demonstrate to have a correct diction and to be able to engage the audience.”¹¹⁶

In the political scene, the relationship between politics and poetry in the Arab world reflects a holistic character of Arabic culture as well as the long-standing embodiment of poetry in the socio-political life of the Arabs. Modern political movements, including the Pan-Arabist, Pan-Islamist, and Arab nationalist parties, have also resorted to the popular appeal of the *qaṣīda* and its profound classical heritage to rally for support and to spread particular ideologies.¹¹⁷ In the realm of literary movements, the neo-classical poets sought to restore the Arabic heritage and its glorious past by rejecting foreign influences and, at the same time, assimilating the spirit of classical Arabic poetry. In some cases, when modern Arab critics and poets criticized neo-classical poetry, espe-

113 Margaret Larkin, “Popular Poetry in the Post-Classical Period 1150–1850,” in CHALPCP, 193.

114 For a discussion about the jihadist sub-culture and its cultural artefacts, see also Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*.

115 Samuel Spenser, “Million’s Poet: Abu Dhabi’s Prestigious Poetry Programme,” accessed January 22, 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/united-arab-emirates/articles/million-s-poet-abu-dhabi-s-prestigious-poetry-program/>.

116 Marina Eskandar, “The Arabic Talent Show That Reawakens Poetry,” accessed January 22, 2018, <http://www.oasiscenter.eu/articles/peoples-of-islam/2017/08/30/talent-show-poetry-arabic>.

117 Shmuel Moreh, “The Neoclassical *Qasida*: Modern Poets and Critics,” in *Arabic Poetry: Theory and Development*, ed. Gustave E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1973), 156.

cially by applying European principles of criticism, this was generally perceived as an attack against Islam.¹¹⁸ An overwhelming majority of national or official anthems (*anāshīd waṭaniyya*) representing Arab countries and Arab organizations also follow the structure of the classical ode. The poetic verse *idhā al-sha'bu yawman arāda al-ḥayā, fa-lā budda 'an yastajīb al-qadar* ('when the people will to live, destiny must surely respond'), which was chanted during the Arab Spring uprisings, is borrowed from the Tunisian national anthem. It is presented in the *qaṣīda* form and it follows the *mutaqārib* metre and the monorhyme. The Jordanian national, which was anthem written in praise of the Jordanian king, also follows the monorhythmic rules of Arabic ode. The Syrian and the Lebanese national anthems are also constructed in the *qaṣīda* form but tend to be more experimental because they deviate from the strict monorhyme. Both national anthems extol their citizens' bravery, praising them for their fighting and follow the Arabic metre. The Syrian anthem is versed in the *mutaqārib*, whereas the Lebanese hymn follows the *mutadārik*.

Islamist organizations such as the Lebanese Hizbullah have also recognized the power of poetry in the political scene. In a manuscript entitled 'The Poetry of Hizbullah,' Atef Alshaer underscores the multi-layered functions of poetry, ranging from making oaths and sacrifices, spreading its ideology, recording history and hailing Hizbullah fighters.¹¹⁹ The Palestinian Islamic resistance movement known as Hamas has, at multiple times, adopted the classical *qaṣīda* form to portray the organization's engagement in the Palestinian struggle and its outlook on the issue.¹²⁰ One example is Mushīr al-Maṣrī, a powerful Hamas speaker and leader, who is known to compose his own poetry and to perform it to his audience, sometimes during his own political speeches.¹²¹ His poetry, often calling supporters to take up arms, glorifies suicide bombing against the Israeli state. In one of the poems, he instructs:

Tighten my belt which is filled with bitter death
 Add ten bombs to it, for today is the day of revenge
 I will grill with its fire those who have built (the Knesset) from my bones
 With this belt, the sun dawns from the deepest dark
 This is my able horse... I pat its forehead with love
 A hero who rid the earth of *jinni* before he was weaned
 He speaks hell when he neighs amidst the herd...without a bridle
 I will remain a ghost for *Izz ad-dīn*...for he has been moulded from granite
 Like a mountain, standing on the bloodsucker, the illegitimate son.¹²²

118 Moreh, "The Neoclassical *Qasida*: Modern Poets and Critics," 156.

119 Atef Alshaer, "The Poetry of Hizbullah," eds. Lina Khatib, Dina Matar, and Atef Alshaer, *The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication* (London: Hurst and Company, 2013), 121–5.

120 Atef Alshaer, *Poetry and Politics in the Modern Arab World* (London: Hurst and Company, 2016), 169–92.

121 Alshaer, *Poetry and Politics in the Modern Arab World*, 188.

122 Alshaer, *Poetry and Politics in the Modern Arab World*, 190.

Such an excerpt abounds with several aspects of a typical *qaṣīda*, including the natural imagery of pre-Islamic Arabia. Apart from its martial content framed around the discursive rhetoric of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ the poet resorts to frame his underlying ideological message in verses coated with natural imagery including the horse, its neighing, its bridle, the herd, the sun, and the mountain. The horse imagery is commonly depicted in pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry due to its religious, cultural, and political significance. During the Muslim conquests, horses were used as the main riding beasts that could cover ground quickly in battle. Similarly, poetry was instrumentalized by several religious ideologues like Ḥassan al-Bannā (d. 1928), the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, who composed his own poetry.¹²³ The Muslim Brotherhood leader Marwān Ḥadīd (d. 1976), also composed short poems praising jihad and self-sacrifice, dictating, “an obligatory ethical code for the members of the movement.”¹²⁴

In the jihadist compounds, al-Qa‘ida members have also engaged actively in the composition of poetry.¹²⁵ In a poem published in a magazine associated with al-Qa‘ida in the Arabian Peninsula called *Ṣadā al-Malāḥim* (‘the Echo of Epic Battles’), a jihadist poet captures in poetic words the moment of wearing an explosive belt and preparing oneself for suicide bombing. Elements of nature play a central part in sensationalizing self-destruction (‘lightning bolt,’ ‘torrential stream,’ ‘stormy thunder,’ ‘volcano,’ and ‘flood’). Additionally, several religious references are borrowed to capture this moment:¹²⁶

I will fasten my explosive belt,
I will shudder like a lightning bolt,
and rush by like a torrential stream,
and resound like stormy thunder.
In my heart is the heart of a volcano.
I will sweep through the land like a flood.
For I live by the Qur’an,
as I remember the Merciful.¹²⁷

The jihadist poet frames his experience in pre-Islamic imagery with references to the Holy Scripture, while also maintaining the strict rules of metre, rhythm, and rhyme. Due to its inherently popular appeal, poetry is not exclusively restricted to the professional poets, but it is composed by everyone on the battlefield, including militant jihadist leaders. Jihadist key figures who have engaged in poetry include al-Qa‘ida leaders Osama

123 Alshaer, *Poetry and Politics in the Modern Arab World*, 169.

124 Meir Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam: Piety, Power, and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 77.

125 Robyn Creswell and Bernard Haykel, “Battle Lines: Want to Understand the Jihadis? Read their Poetry,” accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/08/battle-lines-jihad-creswell-and-haykel>.

126 The Qur’an and God are implied by ‘the Merciful.’

127 Kendall, “Yemen’s Al-Qa‘ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad,” 254–5.

bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawāhirī. The former al-Qaʿida leader came from a secular professional background in the construction industry, whereas the current leader studied surgery.¹²⁸ Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, the leader of DĀʿISH, is claimed to have earned a bachelors and masters degree from the Islamic University of Baghdad. He purportedly wrote a doctoral dissertation about Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic culture, which also touched upon classical Arabic poetry.¹²⁹ Like other jihadist leaders of the Taliban, al-Qaʿida, and Boko Haram, al-Baghdādī has been the subject of tributes by the poets of the jihadist world.

These examples illustrate that the modern variants of the *qaṣīda* have always been a privileged means of expression in Arabic. Poetry is culturally authentic, and decoding its messages can help its readers to have a deep understanding of modern politics, as well as to understand better the intricate relationship between politics and poetry in the Arab world. Poetry in the jihadist milieu is an ideologically-motivated art form derived from the oral poetic tradition in the Arabic cultures. The functions of DĀʿISH discourse, especially the use of poetry on the modern-day battlefield, are the central points of investigation in the following chapter.

128 Atwan, *Islamic State*, 105.

129 See also Atwan, *Islamic State*, 105; Alex Marshall, "Why I became a Jihadist Poetry Critic," *BBC News*, August 29, 2017, accessed June 11, 2018, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-40954948>; William McCants, "Who is Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi?" *BBC News*, March 8, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-35694311>.

PART II

Chapter Three

Discursive Strategies of Domination

3.1. Ideologization of the Arabic Language

For over a millennium, Classical Arabic has undergone a diachronic evolution that could be traced back to the pre-Islamic period. Classical Arabic has captivated the livelihoods of Bedouin tribes with its power of expression, wealth of allusions, synonyms, metaphors, and analogies. With the advent of Islam, the Arabic language became a divine medium of mystic transmission, God's revelation to humankind. During the Islamic Golden Age and beyond, Classical Arabic was the mode of expression for intellectual and philosophical pursuits of historical figures. Its literary force stimulated poets to compose a vast array of genres, including descriptive (*wasf*), love (*ghazal*), hunting (*tardiyya*), and wine (*khamriyya*) poetry. On a linguistic level, Arab and non-Arab grammarians engaged in demystifying the sonorous and morphological elements of the Arabic language. Its influence after the advent of Islam spread from the Arabian Peninsula as far as modern-day Spain and its traces outside the Arab-Islamic world are still strongly present in modern European languages such as Maltese – the national language of Malta – and Sanna, a mix of Arabic and ancient Aramaic spoken in the Cypriot village called Kormakitis. To date, Classical Arabic has served as a medium of entertainment (recitation competitions) and has also functioned integrally in ceremonial and devotional life (the recitation of the Qur'an and Islamic prayers)

In the political sphere, language is universally recognized as a site of symbolic action which accommodates the intentions of its interlocutors.¹ Language plays a significant role in the ideological process and the creation of the symbolic political world, often acting as an ideological fingerprint of power and control. The famous Arab historian Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406 CE) remarks that “both ‘the sword’ and ‘the pen’ are instruments for the ruler to use in his affairs.”² Language can realize actions and influence people's behaviour:

1 One of Kennedy Burke's earliest ideas dealt with the concept of symbolic action. Burke argued that through language, art, and other symbolic systems, we interpret the world, harness the environment, and even reconfigure nature. See also Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991).

2 Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, and Nessim J. Dawood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 213.

With words... we influence and to an enormous extent *control future events*. It is for this reason that writers write; preachers preach; employers, parents, and teachers scold; propagandists send out new releases; statesmen give speeches. All of them, for various reasons, are trying to influence our conduct – sometimes for our good, sometimes for their own.³

To date, language is considered as the most effective tool to spread propaganda. Language is the primary tool of communication used by contemporary political entities, including Islamist and jihadist groups. Controlling the symbolic world involves the use of the communicative functions of language that help achieve specifiable goals. In the nineteenth century, a general movement across a broad spectrum of ideologies sought to revitalize the Arabic language as part of reform and change. Classical Arabic thus became instrumentalized by different political institutions and anti-establishment movements in the Arab world as the ultimate and symbolic embodiment of cultural hegemony. Among the most famous Arab politicians who resorted to the literary effectiveness and emotional potential of the Arabic language was the former Iraqi president Saddam Ḥussein (1979–2003), the former Syrian president Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad (1971–2000), and the former Egyptian president Gamal ‘Abd al-Nāṣir (1954–1970).⁴ The pan-Arab ideology considered Classical Arabic as a source of identification and cultural affiliation for the Arabs around the world. The renowned Arab nationalist thinker Sāṭi‘ al-Ḥusrī (d. 1968) outlines the centrality of Classical Arabic for pan-Arabism:

Every individual who belongs to the Arab countries and speaks Arabic is an Arab. He is so, regardless of the name of the country whose citizenship he officially holds. He is so, regardless of the religion he professes or the sect he belongs to. He is so, regardless of his ancestry, lineage or the roots of the family to which he belongs. He is an Arab, [full stop]. Arabness is not restricted to those who can trace their origin back to the Arabian Peninsula; nor is it restricted to Muslims alone. It encompasses every individual who belongs to the Arab countries: whether he is Egyptian, Kuwaiti or Moroccan; whether he is Muslim or Christian; whether he is Sunni, Twelver Shi‘ite or Druze; and whether he is Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant. [Regardless of what he is,] he is a son of the Arab nation as long as he belongs to the Arab lands and speaks Arabic.⁵

Although Classical Arabic fulfils different purposes among different ideologies, its strategic use as a *lingua franca* serves as a power-wielding exercise and as a primary transmitter of ideology. Classical Arabic is deliberately chosen as the medium of transmission to surpass modern human-made borders. The universality of Classical Arabic “enables ideas to travel quickly, imperceptibly, cheaply and, once absorbed into the

3 Samuel I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action*, 2nd ed. (New South Wales: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1965), 101.

4 These are only three examples of Arab politicians who received scholarly attention. For a thorough analysis of political discourse, see also Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*; Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*; Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*.

5 Sāṭi‘ al-Ḥusrī quoted in Yasir Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 133.

collective memory, permanently.”⁶ Additionally, DĀ‘ISH gains its power by using imagery that is reinforced by the Islamic tradition and has now become naturalized as part of the collective memory. DĀ‘ISH plays on the sensitivity and emotions linked to Classical Arabic because it is the language of the sacred texts, and the merest references to the Qur’anic text strikes up extraordinary reverberations. According to the historian Hisham Sharabi, traditionalist or Islamic discourse derives its power from “an authoritative origin or text, on which it bases its claim to truth and validity.”⁷ Messages seemingly based on religious texts tend to disarm the method of thinking by rigid restriction to the traditional modes. The exploitation of traditionalist discourse by jihadist groups aims “to reinforce an affective, noncritical state rooted in external dependence and inner submission.”⁸

The symbolic language serves as a form of ‘cultspeak’ in the jihadist compounds, which defines and influences one’s worldview and, in turn, one’s thoughts, behaviours, and actions. One manifestation of the traditionalist language in the jihadist circles features in the pervasive use of poetry. DĀ‘ISH poetry is generally composed in Classical Arabic resembling day-like speech. It also uses metaphors that are derived from a shared memory borrowed from the Arabic-Islamic culture. Poetic messages enshrined in religious symbolism are powerful because they speak directly to the sub-conscious of the listeners. Religious metaphors and idioms that have become an integral part of political metaphors fulfil a mythological potential by creating “myths by which man will live, which respond to his sense of the sacred.”⁹ Mythical belief is achieved by activating unconscious contents as well as by stimulating irrational processes.¹⁰ Poetry is retooled to assert authority and to promote conformity on a transnational level. Cast in religious diction, DĀ‘ISH poetry buttresses the ideals of modern militant jihad, rendering the group’s claims and arguments unchallengeable. Elisabeth Kendall argues that the classical poetic heritage featuring in al-Qa‘ida poetry in Yemen:

...has the effect of evoking deep cultural ties, provoking passions, clinching arguments, papering over gaps in logic, celebrating death, glorifying battle, constructing a jihadist identity, simplifying complex realities and manipulating the collective memory – all within the space of a few well-chosen verses...The poetic tradition offers jihadist propagandists a short-cut. It does not need to win over minds by spelling things out doctrinally. It simply needs to enable the primary Arab audience to make connections based on entrenched cultural sensibility and knowledge. This appeals to hearts, and hearts in turn win minds.¹¹

6 Kendall, “Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition,” 227–8.

7 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 96.

8 Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*, 96.

9 Ellul, *Propaganda*, 31.

10 Ignacy Nasalski, *Die Politische Metapher im Arabischen Untersuchungen zu Semiotik und Symbolik der Politischen Sprache am Beispiel Ägyptens* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004), 85.

11 Kendall, “Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition,” 242.

DĀ'ISH poetry latches onto the powerful associations that exist between Classical Arabic and the Qur'an to facilitate social coercion. Qur'anic themes, tropes, and idioms that feature in DĀ'ISH poetry are mobilized to sway the audience's opinion and to coerce the behaviour of its adherents. On an organizational level, Classical Arabic contributes to the group's hegemonic project in two significant ways. Firstly, it enables DĀ'ISH central to wield absolute control over its different provinces. Classical Arabic ensures that DĀ'ISH propagandistic material is made accessible to everyone, even to the affiliated groups residing outside the Iraq–Syria region. Secondly, the use of Classical Arabic as a *lingua franca* projects a positive image of stability and continuity in the jihadist milieu. The portrayal of stability is crucial for the internal and external credibility of DĀ'ISH as evidenced in the group's laudatory slogan 'remaining and expanding' (*bāqiya wa-tatamaddad*).

Since DĀ'ISH is made up of smaller insurgent groups, any signs of instability may result in DĀ'ISH members either pledging allegiance to a more successful insurgent group or formulating their insurgent group. Externally, deploying Classical Arabic as a *lingua franca* helps maintain a sense of continuity, especially in the case of relocating members. In one particular example, DĀ'ISH relocated to Southeast Asia as it had started to lose its strongholds in Iraq and Syria in 2018. Members could still maintain communication with other local jihadists by using Classical Arabic as a medium. Additionally, DĀ'ISH could still maintain a level of conformity in its discursive production.

3.1.1. Discourse as an Instrument for Manipulative Control

Jihadist discourse is ideological and propagandistic. Ideology and propaganda enjoy a symbiotic relationship because propaganda is deployed by actors to gain authority and maintain power structures.¹² In the context of this work, propaganda is defined as “the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.”¹³ Propaganda feeds on ideology, especially because ideology is not only a particular way of organizing values, concepts, and signifiers; it is also a way of formulating and selecting arguments as well as devising and deploying strategies and styles of manipulation. Propagandistic discourse cannot operate in a vacuum and must be rooted in action. Jacques Ellul argues that “the aim of modern propaganda is no longer to modify ideas but to provoke action. It is no longer to change adherence to a doctrine, but to make the individual cling irrationally to a process of action. It is no longer to transform an opinion but to arouse an active and mythical belief.”¹⁴ The propaganda machine of

12 See also Nicholas F. Burnett, “Ideology and Propaganda: Toward and Integrative Approach,” in *Propaganda: A Pluralistic Perspective*, ed. Ted J. Smith III (New York: Praeger, 1989), 127–37; Stanley B. Cunningham, *The Idea of Propaganda: A Reconstruction* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002).

13 Garth S. Jowett, and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 7.

14 Ellul, *Propaganda*, 25.

DĀ'ISH depends on the force of belief in mobilizing individuals to support the organization and inspire 'acts of martyrdom.' It is used as a sophisticated form of strategic communication,¹⁵ in which directing behaviour and demanding actions are among its primary goals.¹⁶ By claiming that DĀ'ISH discourse is propagandistic, this study also asserts that propaganda shapes perceptions implicitly through language and images often by applying laudatory slogans, rhyming verses, posters, symbolic insignias, and icons. By means of its propaganda, DĀ'ISH instructs its recipients to travel to the caliphate and join the battle of DĀ'ISH, to seek martyrdom by performing jihad, and to be active protagonists in the supposed caliphate. In the case of Arabic poetry, this strategic communication is empowered by the choice of the *qaṣīda*, which is intentional and premeditated, reflecting careful consideration of all possibilities thought out ahead of time.¹⁷ In the jihadist milieu, the classical ode serves as a platform, which interlaces the private and public sphere of communicating and dominating the worldview of an Arabic-speaking populace.

Jihadist groups are concerned with power relations such as obtaining, securing, exercising, and controlling political power in the symbolic world. By wielding control over the symbolic world, DĀ'ISH exploits discourse to construct illegitimate structures of power. These structures consist of symbols that are embedded in systems of powers and actions. DĀ'ISH invests in its workforce to manipulate and manage systems of signification to construct the jihadist ideal of a 'caliphate.' Slogans, chants, and Islamic phraseology are mobilized to exercise control over the collective memory of the populace. The relationship between discourse and domination is based on control. Critical discourse analysts argue that "[d]iscourses are systematically-organized sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension – what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally."¹⁸ Van Dijk claims that "[i]f discourse controls minds, and minds control action, it is crucial for those in power to control discourse in the first place."¹⁹ The illegitimate power attributed to the use of language implies that interlocutors of the jihadist discourse, including citizens living under

15 See also James P. Farwell, "Jihadi video in the 'War of Ideas'," *Survival* 52, no. 6 (2010): 127–50.

16 Strategic communication is defined as "the practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communicative entity to reach set goals." See also Derina R. Holtzhausen, and Ansgar Zerfass, "Strategic Communication – Pillars and Perspectives of an Alternative Paradigm," in *Organisationskommunikation und Public Relations* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 74.

17 Several scholars have already pointed out the precise, organised, and systematic approach of DĀ'ISH propaganda. See Ralf Spiller, Christof Breidenich, and Ute Hilgers-Yilmaz, "Visual Rhetoric of the Islamic State (IS): Persuasion in the Field of Terror," *Blucher Design Proceedings* 8, no. 2 (2016): 206–13; Wilbur, "Propaganda's Place in Strategic Communication: The Case of ISIL's Dabiq Magazine," 209–23.

18 Gunther R. Kress, *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice* (Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1985), 67.

19 Van Dijk, *Discourse and Power*, 10.

DĀ'ISH control, are not free to believe or act as they please. The jihadist discourse is different from legitimate mind control, for it does not engage in an exercise of persuasion whereby interlocutors may or may not accept the arguments of the persuader after being provided with objective information. On the contrary, interlocutors that are subscribed to the jihadist discourse are assigned a more passive role and hence become "victims of manipulation." Van Dijk claims that discourse becomes effectively manipulative "when recipients are unable to understand the real intentions or to see the full consequences of the beliefs or actions advocated by the manipulator."²⁰ In the case of DĀ'ISH, the group's political agenda is hidden behind a multi-layered form of discourse that combines selectively-chosen ancient knowledge with religious dogma, and contemporary socio-political manoeuvres with historical Islamic battles.²¹

Language is a powerful medium that connects the past to the present and the future, thus bestowing on the past an "aura of authority, legitimacy, and rightness to cultural beliefs and practices."²² Given the transnationality and transhistoricity of Classical Arabic, the semantic richness of the Arabic language facilitates the instrumentalization of discourse as a tool of manipulative control. Becoming a member of DĀ'ISH requires individuals to adhere to a social frame or a way of thinking with its specificities referred to as a group self-schema.²³ Van Dijk argues that discursively, ideologies "are structured by a social schema consisting of a number of categories that cognitively represent the major social dimensions of groups, such as their distinguishing properties, membership criteria, typical actions, goals, norms and values, reference groups, and basic resources or interests."²⁴ From a discursive point of view, group self-schemata consist of several basic categories that organize the evaluative proposition of the group. These categories include identity or membership which identify who is part of the in-group and the out-group, task or activities which define what one is typically expected to do in order to be part of the group, the goals of the group, and ultimately norms or values that are subjected to a group-specific selection of ideological criteria for judgment.²⁵

Strategically, hegemonic power is exercised in the jihadist milieu through a tactically constructed group self-schema. By planning ahead, jihadist communicators can control the reception of the group's message. The group self-schema assumes persuasive

20 Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," 361.

21 On a semiotic level, the US-led invasion of Iraq contributed towards the creation of "new and powerful symbols of Muslim suffering...New visual symbols, such as pictures of American soldiers torturing Iraqis, have added to the images of orange-clad prisoners in Guantanamo Bay as powerful expressions of Muslims' suffering." See Thomas Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism after the Iraq War," *The Middle East Journal* 60, no. 1 (2006), 22.

22 Manning Nash, *The Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 14.

23 The term 'group self-schema' is borrowed from Teun van Dijk, "Discourse Semantics and Ideology," *Discourse and Society* 6, no. 2 (1995), 249.

24 Van Dijk, "Politics, Ideology, and Discourse," in *Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Ruth Wodak, Volume on Politics and Language (Oxford: Elsevier, 2005), 730.

25 Van Dijk, "Discourse Semantics and Ideology," *Discourse and Society* 6, no. 2 (1995), 250.

powers by influencing personal and collective behaviours into voluntarily agreeing with the communicator. Jihadist schemata are circulated by means of special cultural artifices, ideological symbolic and rhetorical elements including field-specific lexicon.²⁶ Once a person is exposed to a schema, they have to change themselves in order to be understood and accepted. This schema accommodates all aspects of life, the private and the public, on the battlefield and beyond. On an organizational level, once smaller jihadist groups pledge allegiance to DĀ'ISH, the smaller groups represent this affiliation by adopting the group's social schema in the symbolic world. This process of acculturation is manifested symbolically in the change of the groups' names. The group formerly known as Jam'at Anṣār Bayt al-Maqdis ('Supporters of Jerusalem'), which emerged after the Egyptian revolution of 2011, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in 2014 and became known as the Sinai province (*wilāyat Sinā*).

Likewise, the northeast Nigeria-based Sunni insurgent group known as Boko Haram pledged allegiance to DĀ'ISH in 2015 and became known as West Africa Province (*wilāyat Gharb Ifrīqiyya*). The discourse circulated by the newly affiliated groups tends to be subordinate to DĀ'ISH because the dominating group exerts control over the voice of all group members. The adoption of the dominant group's symbolism is the first sign of willingness to conform. This is essential for smaller groups to gain acceptance, trust, and eventually to rise through the ranks of DĀ'ISH. The same organizational logic applies to individuals who play an active role in DĀ'ISH. Individuals that form part of an organization are, on the one hand, bound to be aligned with the organization's ideological principles in their behaviour and actions. On the other hand, it is the same type of alignment that ensures their membership in the group. The official discourse of members such as the poetess of DĀ'ISH known as Aḥm̄ al-Naṣr and the spokesperson of DĀ'ISH called Abū Muḥammad al-'Adnānī is governed by DĀ'ISH ideological principles and group self-schemata. Even when their statements seem to reflect their personal experiences, the underlying intention of their discourse is guided by the ideological values and beliefs of DĀ'ISH.

Specific expressions that have become part of a jihadist ritual and thus entered the group's social schema coordinate specific behaviour and actions. For example, the meaning of the term *allāhu akbar*, which literally means 'God is the Greatest,' is no longer defined as an expression of faith within the jihadist group self-schema.²⁷ The meaning of the term came to signify strategic signalling by jihadists before engaging in acts of killing and self-immolation. In the jihadist milieu, the phrase became an essential part of a ritualized practice common among suicide bombers, who are symbolically portrayed as turning the group's vision into reality.²⁸ Immortality by means of premedi-

26 See also Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," 365ff.

27 The Arabic term *allāhu akbar* is a commonly used Arabic-Islamic expression that features in various contexts. It is exclaimed as an expression of faith in formal prayer, in the call for prayer, in times of distress or joy, or to express resolute determination or defiance.

28 See also Jonathan Matusitz, *Symbolism in Terrorism: Motivation, Communication, and Behavior* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 189ff.

tated death – as the jihadist paradigm proposes – may only be achieved if the intention is communicated to the audience. By including this phrase in the self-schema and ritual, DĀ'ISH appropriated significant Islamic terminology and associated it with macabre acts, projecting the illusion that one's deeds will be prized in heaven by immortality in the Hereafter. In doing so, DĀ'ISH deactivates self-inhibiting norms against murder and mayhem.

Another example is the Islamic creed known as *al-shahāda*, which is strategically placed on the flag of DĀ'ISH. The declaration of one's faith in the oneness of God and Muhammad as God's Prophet is deliberately manipulated by making it an integral part of the jihadist group's visual symbols. Daily prayers and testimonies of one's beliefs become intertwined with the organization's political goals. In this manner, DĀ'ISH subtly permeates one's private sphere by unifying the beliefs of Muslims with those of DĀ'ISH. The temporal entity and the spiritual worlds become indistinguishable in the worldview of DĀ'ISH. By manoeuvring the group self-schema circulating among the jihadist milieu, DĀ'ISH manipulates people's beliefs, including their knowledge, opinions, and ideologies, and in turn, it also controls their actions.

3.1.2. The Totalizing Force of Repetition

Language-based repetition is a central process that stems from a long-standing rhetorical fashion and tradition. In Arabic, the importance of repetition is expressed in the proverb *al-tikrār yu'allim al-ḥimār*, which means that 'repetition teaches (even) the donkey.' In the Latin tradition, similar ancient wisdom narrates *repetitio mater memoriae*, which translates into 'repetition is the mother of memory.' At a time when various jihadist determinants are striving to acquire political legitimacy, repetition has proven to be one of the most potent and visible instruments for indoctrination and mass management.²⁹ The effectiveness of propaganda, which deals with the "management of collective attitudes" and "control over opinions" through "manipulation of significant symbols,"³⁰ depends primarily on hammering repetition.³¹

29 Emil Dovifat (1890–1969), who is considered as the founding pioneer of Mass Media studies in Germany, enlists hammering repetition, intellectual simplicity, and emotional escalation as the foundational rule for managing the masses. See Emil Dovifat, ed. *Handbuch der Publizistik: Praktische Publizistik*, 1. T., vol. 2. (Wiesbaden: de Gruyter, 1968), 114ff, quoted in Bussemer Thymian, *Propaganda: Konzepte und Theorien* (Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag, 2008), 218.

30 Harold D. Lasswell, "The Theory of Political Propaganda," *American Political Science Review* 21, no. 3 (1927), 627.

31 Studies related to the importance of repetition in transmitting propagandistic material are numerous, albeit referring to different political ideologies. See also Christian A. Braun, *Nationalsozialistischer Sprachstil: Theoretischer Zugang und praktische Analysen auf der Grundlage einer pragmatisch–textlinguistisch orientierten Linguistik* (Sprache–Literatur und Geschichte. Studien zur Linguistik/Germanistik 32) (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2017); Christoph Sauer, *Der aufdringliche Text: Sprachpolitik und NS-Ideologie in der „Deutschen Zeitung in den Niederlanden“* (Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag, 2013); Thymian Bussemer, *Propaganda: Konzepte und Theorien* (Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag, 2008).

The power of repetition in DĀ'ISH discourse is totalizing because it goes above and beyond its ornamental intensification or its function as a literary device. Repetition is a symbolic strategy of domination that maintains the hegemonic project of DĀ'ISH by cementing a specific worldview in both implicit and explicit ways. On the symbolic level, cultural hegemony manifests itself in ritualized non-military practices and traditions.³² Symbolic objects such as the black flag, currency, and clothing, which are loaded with intertextual historical and religious allusions, Islamic testimony of faith, and the intertextuality of the iconic orange uniforms serve as a powerful reminder of the group's presence and ideological domination.³³ Ideologically loaded terms with violent undertones culled from tradition are given new significations by being placed strategically as key names of media outlets, magazines, or publishing places. These names are reinforced by the propaganda machine of DĀ'ISH, creating a novel source of identification.³⁴ Endless repetition eventually gives DĀ'ISH currency among the populace at large while subtly, it also reinstates DĀ'ISH worldview upon its audience.

Repetition is strategic in the creation and reinforcement of the jihadist mental schema, which is based on slow and constant impregnation of reflexes and myths, of psychological environment and prejudices expressed in ideas, images, and metaphors that represent a specific worldview. Repetition is totalizing and all-embracing because it permeates the day-to-day conversations and at the same time, is interconnected with 'official' discourse; chants are played in cars and on mobile phones, verses of poetry find their way shared on social media, recited in official speeches and played in video productions. Repetition in all its forms is connected with the aesthetic and emotional perception and appraisal of the Arabic language and poetry. By deliberately prioritizing particular terms and phraseology and repeating them endlessly, DĀ'ISH relies on the power of symbolically loaded terminology with a proven capacity of identifying with the audience on an emotional level. The deliberate repetition of well-chosen diction, roots, and patterns provides ground for a more central function in the structuring of argumentative discourse. Repetition does not only express the argument but becomes the argument.³⁵ Religious phraseology also acquires moral and spiritual immunity, avoiding condemnation.

On the literary level, repetition is reinforced by the content and form of the classical ode itself. Highly patterned structures in the poetic discourse are understandably a valued asset that serves as foregrounding. All forms of repetition are intentionally patterned for retention and instant recall.³⁶ The cadence of the *qaṣīda* including its heavily

32 Thomas Hegghammer, "Non-Military Practices in Jihadi Groups," in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 171–201.

33 The multiple functions of DĀ'ISH iconography, including its flag and coinage, is discussed in section 3.2.3.

34 The functions of naming strategies are thoroughly discussed in section 3.2.1.

35 Barbara Johnstone, *Repetition in Arabic Discourse: Paradigms, Syntagms, and the Ecology of Language*, vol. 18 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1991), 75.

36 For a more detailed discussion on the use of repetition in orally based cultures, see also Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 39ff.

rhythmic patterns, including alliterations and assonances, repetitions or antitheses, proverbs, maxims, and ancient forms of wisdom, religious intertextualities, rhymes, and allusions, is mnemonic in origin and function. In the case of the elegiac genre, repetition is reinforced by the poetic ritual. By definition, all rites are “repetitive, and repetition automatically implies continuity with the past.”³⁷ Rhyme schemes and specific rhythms have an impact on aesthetic liking, emotional involvement, and affective valence attributions by conjuring a feeling of highly emotional and struggling atmosphere, the type which is propagated by jihadist organizations often seen through the highly emotional viewpoint or feeling of life’s trajectories. In this way, the poems become the intensification of the religious idiom, aura, state of being, deeply seated emotions.

The considerable reliance of the jihadist message on emotions is intended to supplement the organization’s arguments and to cut across ideological lines in order to appeal to a broader pool of supporters. Additionally, repetition is bolstered up by a limited yet recurring choice of imagery, parallelisms, field-specific lexicon, and the repetition of grammatical structures. The repetition of formulaic expressions, maxims, and ancient wisdom help implement rhythmic discourse and act as mnemonic aids.³⁸ In the case of the chanted verse, repetition even takes the form of a refrain that helps to build up a specific rhythm. This refrain recurs at regular intervals in a chant to hammer the point home. A primary audience that shares a specific collective memory that is reliant on the Arabic-Islamic cultures tends to be more susceptible to manipulation if it is exposed to the propagandistic mechanism of DĀ‘ISH. For a culture that is highly receptive to its oral poetic and religious lore, the medium itself asserts continuity that allows for certain comfort. The audience may find in the repetition of particular religious imagery not only a comforting sense of familiarity but also a reaffirmation and celebration of its collective values and histories.

Redundancy, or the repetition of words, verses, or phraseology, fulfils mnemonic functions and is necessary to help implement rhythmic discourse. It is in this labyrinth of repetitive structures that DĀ‘ISH presents modern-day reality. By combining factual evidence from its political surroundings with a series of selective ancient knowledge connected to its ideology, DĀ‘ISH presents its unique worldview in terms of tradition. Once ‘modernity’ enters a complex maze of repetition, it becomes intertwined with memory systems. In that way, the group’s novel discourse gains its strength from tradition, socio-political, and religious context.

37 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 45.

38 In the field of psychology, repetition of metre, rhyme, and other patterning frequently employed in discourse such as poetry, infant-directed speech play, social rites, and festive events has garnered attention due to the impact of metre on the aesthetic liking, the emotional involvement, and the affective valence attributions. See also Christian Obermeier, Winfried Menninghaus, Martin von Koppenfels, Tim Raettig, Maren Schmidt-Kassow, Sascha Otterbein, and Sonja A. Kotz, “Aesthetic and Emotional Effects of Meter and Rhyme in Poetry,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 4 (2013).

3.2. Identity Construction through Discursive Means

The group's identity is made up of its chosen goals, values, and beliefs in addition to the group's perspective to make sense of the world.³⁹ Sociologists conceptualize identity formation in terms of two potential outcomes: authoritarian foreclosure and aimless diffusion.⁴⁰ Authoritarian foreclosure refers to individuals who adopt commitments without considering other alternatives, whereas aimless diffusion refers to individuals being uncommitted and not active in considering alternative identity possibilities. In the latter case, individuals lack personally meaningful identity commitment and often experience confusion about how to form such commitments. In some cases, aimless-diffused individuals may affiliate themselves "intensely to some group, expressing a willingness to unquestioningly do whatever the leaders of the group ask them to do."⁴¹ Both potential outcomes share the element that "group ideals are adopted and internalized, either actively or by default, without questioning and without active consideration of alternative possibilities."⁴² In the case of societies that prioritize collectivism over individualism, social identity becomes more important than personal identity.⁴³

The jihadist identity is made up of specific cultural symbols that initially formed part of the Arabic-Islamic tradition and are currently regarded as guiding principles for behaviour such as principles of collectivism, religious absolutism, and familism.⁴⁴ Socially, the novel identity of DĀ'ISH is based on collectivism, which can only take place if individuals adopting the jihadist identity go through a gradual process of de-personalization or deindividuation. The concept of collectivism – the notion of prioritizing the group over the individual⁴⁵ – is constructed, given meaning to, and legitimated by means of identity symbols and identity tags. Identity tags are officially recognized seals that bind an individual to the organization and also to like-situated individuals. In the case of DĀ'ISH, symbolic tags of the jihadist identity appear on both the personal and institutional level. Members subscribed to DĀ'ISH are given an adoptive name, a passport, and a social position. DĀ'ISH adherents are also expected to follow a set of

39 Seth J. Schwartz, Curtis S. Dunkel, and Alan S. Waterman, "Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective," in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 6 (2009): 537–59.

40 See also James E. Marcia, "Development and Validation of Ego Identity Status," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3 (1966), 551–8.

41 Schwartz, Dunkel, and Waterman, "Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective," in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 6 (2009), 545.

42 Schwartz, Dunkel, and Waterman, "Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective," in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 6 (2009), 544.

43 See also Marwan Dwaairy, "Culturally Sensitive Education: Adapting Self-Oriented Assertiveness Training to Collective Minorities," *Journal of Social Issues* 60 (2004), 423–36.

44 Seth J. Schwartz, Marilyn J. Montgomery, and Ervin Briones, "The Role of Identity in Acculturation among Immigrant People: Theoretical Propositions, Empirical Questions, and Applied Recommendations," *Human Development* 49 (2006), 1–30.

45 Jerrold M. Post, "When Hatred is Bred in the Bone: Psycho-Cultural Foundations of Contemporary Terrorism," *Political Psychology* 26 (2005), 628–30.

interrelated attributes, including behaviour, customs, and dress code.⁴⁶ Institutionally, DĀ'ISH formulates its identity mostly by producing cultural symbols such as flags and currencies as well as by means of symbolic language manifested chiefly in the form of poetry and speeches. Only after individuals are depersonalized can individuals become part of a larger group.⁴⁷ DĀ'ISH poetry is "maximally collectivist" because it encourages individuals to cooperate in unison, and the interests of the individual become fused with those of the group.⁴⁸

Collectivism is an integral part of engaging individuals in collective action, which is the very embodiment of mass mobilization. The deindividuation theory proposes that anonymity, high arousal, and group cohesion of the crowd setting reduce the participants' sense of themselves and those around them as individuals.⁴⁹ This process enforces Arabs and non-Arabs alike to forsake their birth name, idiosyncratic characteristics, past identities, and cultural norms, and are assigned an identification tag which is accompanied by novel norms conforming to the worldview of the group. One view is that collectivism denotes anonymity, and therefore, it strips away responsibility and accountability. Accepting an adoptive name helps to conceal one's identity and to deactivate self-inhibiting norms against murder and mayhem. When individuals become identified as DĀ'ISH members by adopting a specific *nom de guerre*, members automatically lose their original identity, and their self-awareness is replaced by a social role. The *nom de guerre* becomes a source of identity in their newly formed families and other social groups. It provides more opportunities for the kind of anonymity that decreases self-awareness and leads to deindividuation.

Religiosity also forms part of the cultural identity, to the extent that the more rigid and radical one's beliefs are, the greater the possibility that one participates in terrorist attacks.⁵⁰ Religious dichotomy, which divides the worldview into believers and non-believers, such as the polarization of DĀ'ISH into the abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*) and

46 Contemporary communicative manipulation is multimodal. In a broader semiotic sense of manipulation, illegitimate influence may also be exercised with pictures, photos, movies, and other media. See Theo Van Leeuwen, *Introducing Social Semiotics* (London: Routledge, 2005).

47 The perpetrators of terrorist actors do not display signs of depression, psychoticism, or sociopathy but rather a heightened sense of purpose, group allegiance, and task focus. Also, terrorism is usually the result of widespread group poverty and not personal poverty. See also Christine C. Fair, and Bryan Shepherd, "Who Supports Terrorism? Evidence from Fourteen Muslim Countries," *Coastal Management* 29, no. 1 (2006): 51–74; David Lester, Bijou Yang, and Mark Lindsay, "Suicide bombers: Are Psychological Profiles Possible?" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (2004): 283–95; Ethan Bueno De Mesquita, "The Quality of Terror," *American Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 3 (2005): 515–30.

48 Seth J. Schwartz, "A New Identity for Identity Research: Recommendations for Expanding and Refocusing the Identity Literature," *Journal of Adolescent Research* 20 (May 2005), 304–5.

49 See also Leon Festinger, Albert Pepitone, and Theodore Newcomb, "Some Consequences of Deindividuation in a Group," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 47 (1952): 382–9; Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Human Choice: Individuation, Reason, and Order Versus Deindividuation, Impulse, and Chaos," in *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969).

50 Israela Silberman, E. Tory Higgins, and Carol S. Dweck, "Religion and World Change: Violence and Terrorism versus Peace," *Journal of Social Issues* 61 (2005), 761–84.

the abode of apostasy (*dār al-kufr*), serves as a contribution to an absolutist religious belief. DĀ'ISH discourse avails itself of religiously loaded diction recall Qur'anic verses and Prophetic Traditions, which pertain implicitly to matters such as faith, morality, and culturally appropriate behaviour. Likewise, familism is also a key concept in the creation of the jihadist identity as it refers to a social arrangement made up of a hierarchy of loyalties running inversely from the tribe, to the clan, and the extended family. In such cases, individuals are burdened with obligations to uphold family honour and avenge wrongs done to the family.⁵¹ In the case of DĀ'ISH, the familial structure is not bound together by biological ties but merely by religious affinities that transcend blood relations. Biological family ties are replaced by new relationships, which, in return, sustain one's emotional support. DĀ'ISH can categorize social relations and create a societal structure by means of a collective identity.

DĀ'ISH had no essential cultural existence prior to its mobilization by discursive means. The supposed 'caliphate' is mobilized into existence only discursively, not culturally.⁵² Discourse, which is the primary enabler of social interaction and communication, is instrumentalized by the group's leadership to invoke a set of identification symbols and, most importantly, a unique identity. Identity is attached to a physical place referred to in group self-schema as 'a state' and 'a caliphate.' For any ideology that adopts national imaginaries as part of its agenda, it often tends to consider the past as "the storehouse of old glories, common suffering, dim memories and other distant and authenticating voices which are imagined to have left their imprint on a variety of cultural products – including language."⁵³ In addition, national imaginaries also focus on:

Transcending oblivion through posterity; the restoration of collective dignity through an appeal to a golden age; the realization of fraternity through symbols, rites and ceremonies, which bind the living to the dead and fallen of the community: these are the underlying functions of national identity and nationalism in the modern world, and the basic reasons why the latter have proved so durable, protean and resilient through all vicissitudes.⁵⁴

The Arabic terms for 'state' (*al-dawla*) and 'caliphate' (*khilāfa*) evoke the memory of medieval caliphates. In modern times, the term *dawla* denotes the governing authority of a polity, or its body politic and sometimes even more broadly to include a nation-state or a country. The original roots *d-w-l* in Arabic, however, convey the meaning of 'to turn' or 'to alternate.' When the term *dawla* (pl. *duwal*) was first used to introduce the Abbasids' government, the term connoted the turn of power following that of the

51 It is argued that when a cultural group attacks another group, this could lead to aggressive action and may meet the criteria for terrorism. See also Seth J. Schwartz, Curtis S. Dunkel, and Alan S. Waterman, "Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective," in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 6 (2009), 542ff.

52 See also John S. Dryzek, *Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 34.

53 Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity*, 38.

54 Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 163.

Umayyads. Eventually, the term acquired the meaning of a dynasty.⁵⁵ The term *khilāfa* has not undergone this extensive semantic development. It refers exclusively to the rulership in Islam that emerges after the death of Prophet Muḥammad (632 CE) when the Muslim community was faced with the choice about how it wanted the politics of its community to work out. Historically, the meaning of *khilāfa* connects to the glorious Islamic past. The meaning of *khalīfa*, which is rendered in English as ‘a caliph,’ is difficult to determine and may be interpreted in at least two ways. Hugh Kennedy argues that although the verbal roots of *khalīfa* (*kh-l-f*) signify ‘to succeed or to deputize,’ *khalīfa* cannot mean ‘a successor of God’ because God is, by definition, eternal. A caliph must refer to a “deputy or representative of God on earth.”⁵⁶

There are two equally critical main streams of debate with regard to the meaning of a caliph. The first stream of thought in early Muslim debates argued that the term ‘caliph’ means the ‘deputy of God on his earth’ (*khalīfat allāh fī ardihi*). This term bestows upon the caliph a quasi-divine status and unquestionable authority. The other stream, however, reasoned that the full title was always ‘successor of the Messenger of God’ (*khalīfat rasūl allāh*). In the case of the latter meaning, however, the caliph is only perceived as an ordinary man “who fulfilled some of the secular and administrative functions”⁵⁷ rather than religious. Apart from the title of a Caliph, the first leaders of the Muslim communities were also referred to as *amīr al-mu‘minīn* (‘Commander of the Faithful’), a title which was historically given to military leaders and local rulers after the break-up of the Abbasid caliphate.⁵⁸ It is also a term conferred upon the group’s leader al-Baghdādī.

In the specific context of DĀ‘ISH propaganda, we should also examine the practices of identity construction transmitted through discourse. Discourse functions as the primary resource in the process of creating the necessary unity, loyalty, which, in return, could create and strengthen bonds of allegiance among like-minded people across a synchronic space. The ways by which high-ranking DĀ‘ISH officials and personalities overtly proclaim their affiliation and membership of Islam is instructive of how they want to convey their ideological project of hegemony. One of the main contributors to the hegemonic project and group self-schema of DĀ‘ISH is Aḥlām al-Naṣr who authored several booklets and poems for DĀ‘ISH. In a letter published by al-ghurabā’ li-l-i‘lām media,⁵⁹ the poetess reconstructs her journey to Syria in a combination of text, Qur’anic verses and poetry “hoping for the writing to arouse desire and motivate the supporters, enraging and causing them to commit suicide against the disbelievers.”⁶⁰

55 For a more detailed discussion, see also Ami Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East: The Evolution of Modern Political Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 81–2.

56 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 1.

57 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 5–6.

58 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 7.

59 Aḥlām al-Naṣr, *Akhīran rabbunā kataba al-samāḥā: bi-qalam shā‘iratu dawlati al-islām ahlām al-naṣr* (al-Ghurabā’ li-l-i‘lām, 2014), accessed May 1, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2KzBJxo>.

60 *Arjū ‘an takūna qirā‘atan mushawwiqatan wa-muḥaffiẓatan li-l-anṣār wa-mughīza wa-bā‘itha ‘alā l-intihār li-l-kuffār*.

Proclaiming that “the Islamic State has been the dream of my life since childhood,”⁶¹ and that it has nearly driven her to the point of madness,⁶² the poetess recounts her first moments in DĀ’ISH territory:

وأخيراً بَدَأْتُ أرى راياتِ الخِلافةِ تُرْفَرُفُ عالياً، وأرى لوائحَ الولاياتِ، وكان في استقبالنا في ولاية الرِّقَّةِ:
حطام طائِرةٍ أسقطها اللهُ عز وجل على يد ضياغم الخِلافةِ.

Finally, I started seeing the flags of the caliphate waving high, and [I started] seeing the signs of the provinces. And we were hosted in the Raqqa Province: the wreckage of a plane struck – by the almighty God – with the hand of the lions of the Caliphate.

The reality on the battlefield is described discursively by resorting to excessive exultation over the group’s success and achievements, that is, the omnipotence of DĀ’ISH. The message is communicated on an emotional level by invoking literary and Qur’anic imagery to portray the triumphalism of the group:

نَهْرُ الفُرَاتِ بَدَا رايِقاً عَذْباً، ساكناً في هدوء الشيخ الوقور، يهفّ عليه النسيم، وتتمايل باتجاهه الأعشاب
وأوراق الأشجار، والهواء نَظيفٌ عليل منعش، والمسجّل في الباص لا يكف عن ترديد السُورِ الفُرانيةِ
الكريمة، ويتبعها بَدْرُوسٌ مُحَفَّرَةٌ على الجهاد، الحَيَاةُ جَمِيلَةٌ يا إِخْوَتِي... جَنَّةٌ عَرَضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ والأَرْضُ.
وَصَلْنَا أخيراً، بالكاد كان يُمكنني الوقوف من صدمة الفرحَة والدَهْشَة، هل حَقًّا أنا هنا في أَرْضِ الخِلافةِ؟!
هل حَقًّا وَصَلْتُ؟! اللهم لك الحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ.

The Euphrates river appeared pure and fresh, living under the watch of the respectable sheikh. The breeze hisses slowly through him, with the pasture and leaves swaying in his direction. The air [is] clean, gentle, and refreshing. The radio on the bus does not cease to repeat noble Qur’anic chapters. It is followed by lessons simulating jihad. Life is beautiful, O brothers, a paradisiacal garden as vast as the heavens and earth. Finally, we arrived, and I could barely stand up from the shock of joy and bewilderment. Am I really in the land of the Caliphate? Have I truly arrived? O Lord, praise, and gratitude to you.

The choice of diction used to describe DĀ’ISH territory draws to a high degree upon resonant Qur’anic imagery. The term *‘adhbun* appears twice in the Qur’an, and in both cases, it is attributed to “two bodies of water” or “two seas” created by God.⁶³ In the Qur’anic verse 25:53, *‘adhbun* is one of the two adjectives used to refer to one of the two seas (*al-baḥrayn*). The other adjective used in this *sura* accompanying *‘adhbun* is *furātun* (sweet), and it is invoked in al-Naṣr’s mention of the Euphrates river. Another reference to the Qur’anic imagery is the phrase *jannatun ‘arḍuhā al-samawātu wa-l-arḍu* which echoes the Qur’anic verse “a garden as wide as the heavens and earth is prepared for the righteous.”⁶⁴

61 “Takūna al-khilāfa al-islāmiyya ḥulmun ḥayātī mundhu fajri al-ṭufūla.”

62 In *mutaqarib* verse, the poetess states, “wa-innī yukādu yujannu junūnī...urīdu al-jihāda li-arḍi wa-dīnī.”

63 Qur’an, 25:53, and 35:12.

64 Qur’an, 3:133.

Aḥlām al-Naṣr reminds her audience that jihad is a duty (*al-wājib*) incumbent on every Muslim, advising them to be steadfast and not to “shake even if mountains collapse” because “God’s commands must be fulfilled in all situations.” Additionally, Aḥlām al-Naṣr describes DĀ’ISH territory in terms of religious piety, whereby women wear the headscarf, shops close during prayer time, and people perform prayers regularly. Aḥlām al-Naṣr also reconstructs the daily life in the imagined caliphate by claiming to have seen fresh vegetables and children playing happily and joyfully, chanting enthusiastically *dawlatu al-khilāfa: bāqiyya. dawlatu al-islām: bāqiyya. takbīr! allāhu akbar!* (‘the state of the caliphate: remaining. The state of Islam: remaining. Great! God is the greatest!’). Answering God’s call to cook for the *mujāhidīn* – a request which she claims to have accepted wholeheartedly – Aḥlām al-Naṣr expresses her joy to be part of ‘the wonderful jihadist community’ (*al-mujtama’ al-jihādī al-rā’i*).

While praising the new generation being brought up in the caliphate, Aḥlām al-Naṣr refers to the children’s willingness to perform jihad by using wooden sticks as weapons to kill the infidels and apostates. The text is also embedded with several dialogues between children and fighters, giving her writing a greater sense of realism. The positive self-presentation contrasts considerably with the description of the out-group. Capitalism comes under scrutiny as a markedly Western ideology:

الطواغيت يا إخوتي جعلوا الناس عبيداً للدننيا... سلبوا الأموال، واخترقوا الموارد، وقتلوا المواهب، وصنّروا الناس لاهئين وراء لِقَمَةِ العيش التي بالكاد يُحصلون عليها.

The tyrants, my brothers, enslaved people to the temporal world. They pillaged wealth, and they wielded total control over the resources; they killed the talents and left people gasping breathlessly for a standard of living which they can barely achieve.

In an attempt to give an all-rounding experience, Aḥlām al-Naṣr exploits sensory imagery, including gustatory and the auditory images. These images combine modern-day warfare and militant activism with Islamic terminology. While reading the text, the reader can visualize the imagined caliphate including the waving flags of DĀ’ISH, the signs of DĀ’ISH provinces, the tranquillity of the paradisiacal garden, children playing with sticks, and the plane debris that serves as a stark reminder of the enemy. The writer also alludes to the children in DĀ’ISH territory chanting praise to the so-called Islamic State caliphate together with the “recitation of the noble Qur’an” (*tilāwāt al-qurān al-karīm*), “oratory of Islamic scholars and speeches of leaders” (*khuṭab al-mashāyikh wa-kalimāt al-qāda*), and “jihadist chants” (*anāshīd jihādīyya*).⁶⁵ The auditory imagery mobilized to portray DĀ’ISH territory in positive terms is also accompanied by kinesthetic images focusing on the natural elements such as the breeze that rustles the Islamic scholar, and the fresh air in the territory. After being taught how to use Russian and American weaponry, Aḥlām al-Naṣr also personifies the weapon as a man with whom she has had an everlasting friendship:

65 See also Aḥlām al-Naṣr, *Akhīran rabbunā kataba al-samāhā: bi-qalam shā’iratu dawlat al-islām aḥlām al-naṣr* (al-Ghurabā’ li-l-islām, 2014), accessed May 1, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2KzBJxo>.

لم تصافح كفي السلاح فقط، بل بات صديقي طول الوقت، لا يكاد يفارقني بفضل الله عز وجل.

Not only did my palm shake hands with the weapon, but [the weapon] also became my friend for a long time. He hardly leaves me thanks to God, the Almighty.

Al-Naṣr's description of DĀ'ISH contributes towards the creation of the organization's identity, which is based on a militant interpretation of Islam and on a polarized worldview. These characteristics are also outlined by al-Baghdādī in a speech held shortly after announcing the foundation of DĀ'ISH:⁶⁶

أَيُّهَا الْمُسْلِمُونَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ؛ أَبَشِّرُوا وَأَمَلُوا خَيْرًا، وَارْفَعُوا رُؤُوسَكُمْ عَالِيًا؛ فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ دَوْلَةً وَخِلَافَةً، تُعِيدُ كِرَامَتَكُمْ وَعِزَّتَكُمْ، وَتَسْتَرْجِعُ حُقُوقَكُمْ وَسِيَادَتَكُمْ، دَوْلَةً تَأْخِي فِيهَا الْأَعْجَمِي وَالْعَرَبِي، وَالْأَبْيَضَ وَالْأَسْوَدَ، وَالشَّرْقِي وَالْمَغْرِبِي، خِلَافَةً جَمَعَتْ الْقَوَازِي وَالْهِنْدِي وَالصِّينِي، وَالشَّامِي وَالْعِرَاقِي وَالْيَمَنِي وَالْمِصْرِي وَالْمَغْرِبِي، وَالْأَمْرِيكِي وَالْفَرَنْسِي وَالْأَلْمَانِي وَالْأَسْتْرَالِي، أَلَّفَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ، وَأَصْبَحُوا بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا مُتَحَابِّينَ فِيهِ، وَاقْفِين فِي خَنْدَقٍ وَاحِدٍ؛ يُدَافِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ عَنْ بَعْضٍ، وَيُحْمِي بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا، وَيَفْدِي بَعْضُهُمْ مُتَنَعِّمِينَ مُتَلَذِّذِينَ بِهِذِهِ بَعْضًا، امْتَنَزَجَتْ دِمَاؤُهُمْ تَحْتَ رَايَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَغَايَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، فِي فَسْطَاطٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ... النَّعْمَةُ النَّعْمَةُ الْاُخْرَةُ الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ.

O Muslims everywhere, glad tidings to you and expect good. Raise your head high, for today – by God's grace – [you have] a state and a caliphate, which will return your dignity, might, rights, and leadership. It is a state where the non-Arab and Arab, the white and black man, the Easterner and Westerner, are all brothers. It is a caliphate that gathered the Caucasian, Indian, Chinese, Levantine, Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian, North African, American, French, German, and Australian. God brought their hearts together, and thus, they became brothers by His grace, loving each other for the sake of God, standing in a single trench, defending and guarding each other, and sacrificing themselves for one another. Their blood mixed and became one, under a single flag and goal, in one pavilion, enjoying this blessing, the blessing of faithful brotherhood... The earth is God's.

Deconstructing the group's identity as proposed by the group's leader sheds light on the discursive strategies devised by DĀ'ISH to ensure obedience and conformity. Al-Baghdādī's speech consists of several principles that contribute to the group's identity. Firstly, members need to be Muslims to ensure Muslim superiority over other religions. Secondly, the jihadist membership is open to everyone. Al-Baghdādī claims it is non-discriminatory, and it provides unity among its members wherein brotherhood by affiliation transcends blood relations, irrespective of one's nationality, ethnicity, or skin

66 Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī's speech took place on July 7, 2014, and was published by al-Furqān Media. See also "Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī: Message to the *Mujāhidīn* and the Islamic Ummah in the Month of Ramaḍān," *Jihadology* (blog), July 1, 2014, accessed May 5, 2018, <https://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama/>.

colour. The jihadist identity is thereby a collective identity because it gathers everyone under one flag and a common goal. Upon joining DĀ'ISH and subscribing to the jihadist identity, individuals join an imagined family and community, where all other members are considered as brothers. The invocation of familial metaphors as part of the group's larger rhetorical sphere is one way in which DĀ'ISH represents the organization's idealized relationships of domination within its community. By employing such rhetorical devices, the organization helps to define the form and content of obedience and also operates to generalize membership by generating the shared orientation constitutive of the jihadist community.

Thirdly, the jihadist identity is based on values reflecting an Islamic ethos. DĀ'ISH promises the return to the traditional authentic values that are meaningful for a primary audience living in Arabic-Islamic cultures. These values are represented in the jihadist identity by anchoring the group's discourse in historical events connected to Islam. Their strategic recurrence evokes ancient traditions and is constructed to reflect the longevity that helps legitimate the imagined caliphate.⁶⁷ These culturally-resonant values are appropriated by DĀ'ISH to a specific context that may no longer reflect their original meaning from tradition. These values are reinforced by referring directly to "heroic figures from Islamic history, employing well-known tropes, employing hyperbole when mentioning contemporary jihadist acts, eulogizing martyrs and mythologizing their virtues."⁶⁸ Famous individuals within the jihadist organization are named after historical personages, and propagandistic magazines are named after historical places. Invoking culturally and historically resonant symbols that are meaningful to a particular society can help to legitimate DĀ'ISH. By mobilizing Islamic imagery, DĀ'ISH manages to manoeuvre the audience' opinion to its benefit.

3.2.1. Naming Strategies

One of the most visible strategies by which DĀ'ISH constructs its identity lies in the choice of names for public spaces. In the Arab world, names serve as an old vector of generating identity. Since medieval times, streets, quarters, and neighbourhoods have served as an old logic for group identity, solidarity, and mobilization.⁶⁹ Nora Lafi argues that "quarters and neighbourhoods, as well as streets, were the object of the construction of a civic identity, which had expressions in group solidarity and in the social value given to space."⁷⁰ The discursive representation of public spaces in the jihadist milieu needs to be understood as a strategy for nation-building, which is anchored in the older

67 Traditional moral values are examined as field-specific lexicon due to their frequent recurrence in DĀ'ISH poetry. See section 3.2.2.1.

68 Kendall, "Yemen's Al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad," 258.

69 See also Nora Lafi, "The 'Arab Spring' in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World (2010–2014)," in *The History of Social Movements in Global Perspective* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 684.

70 Lafi, "The 'Arab Spring' in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World (2010–2014)," 684.

forms of civic conscience. The strategy of mobilizing symbolic names that resonate culturally with a specific group of people is not a novel concept to the Arab world. A similar exercise of generating identity by the renaming of public places was carried out during the early years of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict when Israel renamed Palestinian towns and cities with Hebrew names. Yasir Suleiman argues that:

In the Israeli context, these Hebrew name changes – in their capacity as linguistic material – are particularly effective as nation-building practices because of their association with the Hebrew-based nationalist ideology of the state, in which language plays a strong, if not the strongest part. In this context, name changes can have a high-voltage emotional and ideological charge.⁷¹

In the turbulent history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, new place-names served as an ideological display, which signalled a break with the past. This reconfiguration also exhibited “the emergence of a new Hebrew-dominated identity with strong Zionist overtones.”⁷² On a similar vein, DĀ‘ISH reconstructed the geographical location of its territories by mobilizing a myriad of historical place names with strong Islamic overtones. Discursively, this mechanism is notably used to reclaim the collective memory of the populace living in the jihadist-ruled territory and provide it with a cohesive ideological narrative. The strategic position of these ideologically loaded names facilitates the transmission of the group’s worldview through incessant repetition.

Language-based repetition does not only give meaning, but it also strengthens connections in one’s mind.⁷³ According to the Hebbian Learning, the more people hear words that bring specific ideas together, the easier it becomes for such associations to become part of their daily thought and eventually part of their perception and their ‘common sense’ in the long run.⁷⁴ The longer these specific names have been entrenched in the collective psyche, the more these words and their newly formed associations recur even without conscious awareness. Once the names enter the group self-schema of DĀ‘ISH, they permeate the private and public spheres of its subscribers. By means of repetition, the audience is influenced at the preconscious and unconscious level. In the case of DĀ‘ISH, the appropriation of Islamic terms benefits the organization by consolidating the association between Islam and DĀ‘ISH in the shared memory of its populace. Additionally, the exploitation of names with Islamic overtones in areas with an overwhelmingly Muslim population makes the jihadist narrative seem part of authentic mainstream Islamic culture, broadening its appeal beyond the jihadist sub-culture.

The deliberate reconfiguration of these names serves as a restorative function: a vague but useful reminder of Islam’s glorious past. The ideological renaming of geo-

71 Yasir Suleiman, *Arabic, Self and Identity: A Study in Conflict and Displacement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 164.

72 Suleiman, *Arabic, Self and Identity*, 164.

73 Wehling, *Politisches Framing*, 59.

74 Wehling, *Politisches Framing*, 58.

graphical locations is instrumentalized to re-write and reshape modern history by resorting to a period and system that is *a priori* to the Western concept of nation-states. This is exemplified in the division of DĀ'ISH territory into different provinces referred to as *wilāyat*⁷⁵ rather than countries.⁷⁶ One of the provinces belonging to DĀ'ISH is known as Khurāsān province, which, in pre-Islamic and early Islamic times was a very strategic location which used to cover modern-day northern/northwestern Afghanistan, north-eastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In the early Islamic period, Khurāsān was politically one of the most important provinces of the eastern Islamic world, and it included all territories under Muslim rule in addition to the east of the deserts of central Iran.⁷⁷ According to the Islamic traditions, it is believed that people coming from the East (meaning the Khurāsān) will pave the way for 'the guided One' known as *al-Mahdi*.⁷⁸ According to hadith sources, the coming of 'the guided One' is indicated with black banners that emerge from Khurāsān.⁷⁹ This term finds recurrence not only in DĀ'ISH discourse but also in the propaganda of other militant jihadist circles.⁸⁰

Another geographic term that DĀ'ISH affiliated media arms use to refer to western Europe is 'al-Andalus.' Initially, the historical term 'al-Andalus' denoted a medieval Muslim territory and cultural domain occupying most of what is today known as Spain and Portugal. The Muslim presence in al-Andalus reached its peak during the Islamic Golden Age, and it spanned over seven centuries lasting from 711 to 1492 CE. Apart from the multiple references made to al-Andalus by DĀ'ISH media wings, the organization issued several videos in which DĀ'ISH militants are purportedly heard threatening to attack and to take back the region of al-Andalus.⁸¹ Shortly after the terrorist attacks that took place on La Rambla street in Spain in August 2017, DĀ'ISH claimed respon-

75 Historically speaking, the term *wilāya* was a common term used during the first caliphate of Islam (Umayyad caliphate). Later, it was reused by the Ottoman Empire (*vilayet*) to define a geographical area. The equivalent and non-Islamic term used in modern times is *muḥāfaẓa*.

76 See also Aaron Y. Zelin, "The Structure of the Caliphate," *Jihadology* (blog), July 7, 2016, accessed May 5, 2018, <http://jihadology.net/2016/07/06/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-the-structure-of-the-caliphate/>.

77 Everett K. Rowson, "Khurasan," in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, eds. Julia Scott Meisami, and Paul Starkey (London: Routledge, 1998), 445.

78 See also Book of Tribulations, Book 36, *Hadith* 163, accessed January 22, 2018, <https://sunnah.com/ibnmajah/36/163>. See also Ibn Katir, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, ed. al-Zayni M. Taha, Cairo (n.d.) vol. 1, 28.

79 *Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, Book 49, *Hadith* 4335, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://quranx.com/Hadith/Tirmidhi/In-Book/Book-49/Hadith-4335/>.

80 Mariam Karouny, "Insight—U.S.-led Strikes Pressure Al-Qa'ida's Syria Group to Join with Islamic State," Reuters, September 26, 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-syria-crisis-nusra-insight/insight-u-s-led-strikes-pressure-Al-Qa'idass-syria-group-to-join-with-islamic-state-idUKKCN0HL11520140926>.

81 Barcelona Graham Keeley, "We're Coming to Take Back Spain, Isis Video Says," *The Sunday Times*, August 25, 2017, February 20, 2018, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/we-re-coming-to-take-back-spain-isis-video-says-hphjrc9d>.

sibility for this attack, and it also linked it to its promise to bring back the historic al-Andalus.⁸² The geographic region of al-Andalus is central to the modern jihadist discourse in general because it dates back to a time when Muslim leaders were ruling parts of Europe. Explicit references to al-Andalus are exhibited in the names of jihadist media wings such as ‘al-Andalus foundation’ (*mu’assasat al-andalus*),⁸³ and nomenclatures that are given to militant jihadists such as Karīm al-Andalusī.⁸⁴

Another name that is appropriated from Islamic history is the geographic area known as *bilād al-shām*, which includes modern Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and the West Bank of Palestine. During the early Islamic period, *bilād al-shām* was at the heart of political and spiritual relevance to Muslims. Zaid b. Thābit, one of the companions of the Prophet, narrated that the region of *al-shām* is protected by the wings of the angels of God.⁸⁵ In April 2013, DĀ’ISH leader Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī announced that ISI (‘the Islamic State of Iraq’) and Jabhat al-Nusra would be merging into a united organization called the ‘Islamic State of Iraq and al-sham’ (*al-dawla al-islāmiyya fī l-‘irāq wa-l-shām*).⁸⁶ This newly merged organization was later renamed ‘the Islamic State’ (*al-dawla al-islāmiyya*) on June 29th, 2014.⁸⁷

3.2.1.1. Names of Propaganda Magazines

Ideologically permeated public spaces are not the only objects that undergo a political transformation. Media outlets, magazines, and periodicals may also carry with emotional historical charge, which contributes to the group’s ideological transmission. One of the online magazines that existed beyond its 160th edition is entitled al-Naba’ (Tidings). The title given to this magazine is identical to the seventy-eighth chapter of the Qur’an. This magazine showcases military victories of DĀ’ISH against the out-group, subtly suggesting that the group’s success is part of the divine good tidings revealed in the Qur’anic chapter. The choice of this chapter is symbolic because its title refers to the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter. The explicit reference to this Qur’anic chapter serves as a stark reminder of Hell for those who disbelieve or transgress God’s commandments.

Additionally, this Qur’anic chapter reminds the populace living in the jihadist milieu of God’s paradisiacal gift for the righteous ones. By framing its militant activism on the battlefield and its worldview into God’s divine message, DĀ’ISH subtly influences the

82 See also *Rumiyah* no 13 (September 2017), 38, accessed February 25, 2018, <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/rome-magazine-13.pdf>.

83 ‘Al-Andalus Foundation’ is a media outlet that publishes material for Al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb.

84 Karīm al-Andalusī: “They Ask You ... What are Their Initiatives Breeding? They have not Removed the ‘Terrorist Embryo’ Yet,” *Jihadology* (blog), accessed January 20, 2018, <http://jihadology.net/?s=Kari%CC%84m%2Bal-Andalusi%CC%84%2B>.

85 See also *Jami’ al-Tirmidhi*, Book 49, *Hadith* 4335, Chapters on Virtues, accessed January 20, 2018, accessible on <https://sunnah.com/urn/638490>.

86 Rohan Gunaratna, and Aviv Oreg, *The Global Jihad Movement* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), 365.

87 Gunaratna, and Oreg, *The Global Jihad Movement*, 366.

opinion of its audience by interpreting its political activities in terms of Islamic eschatology. This interpretation also consolidates the link between Islam and DĀ'ISH. Militant jihadists fighting on the battlefield for DĀ'ISH are thus not perceived as fighting for their ideological beliefs, but their religious convictions.

Similar examples of magazine titles that are associated with Islamic eschatology include *Dabiq*, which is an English language periodical affiliated with DĀ'ISH. *Dabiq* is the name of a city in Syria and also features in Islamic apocalyptic prophecies as the city of an end-of-times. It was used by DĀ'ISH for propagandistic and recruitment purposes between mid-2014 until mid-2016. In the first issue of the periodical *Dabiq*, DĀ'ISH makes explicit references to the Islamic traditions:

As for the name of the magazine, then it is taken from the area named *Dabiq* in the northern countryside of Halab (Aleppo) in Sham. This place was mentioned in a hadith describing some of the events of the *Malahim* (what is sometimes referred to as Armageddon in English). One of the greatest battles between the Muslims and the crusaders will take place near *Dabiq*.⁸⁸

These explanatory remarks of the title are corroborated with a hadith citation discussing the conquest of Constantinople,⁸⁹ followed by a quote from the prominent jihadist ideologue al-Zarqāwī:⁹⁰

Shaykh Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi (rahimahullah) anticipated the expansion of the blessed jihad from Iraq into Sham and linked it to this hadith saying, "The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify – by Allah's permission – until it burns the crusader armies in *Dabiq*."⁹¹

This citation clarifies the choice of the title and connects the group's operations with Islam's historical warfare. Historical events that are selectively extracted from religious texts are mobilized to legitimate the jihadist narrative. Medieval battles and events are reignited to fit modern jihadist warfare, turning Islamic history into an ideological warfare tool. Jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH latch onto the ambiguity that characterizes the Islamic tradition to create a unique worldview that may still entail recognizable and identifiable elements selected from the Islamic tradition. Islamic history that spans over several centuries transnationally is turned to the jihadists' advantage by allowing these groups to sift through history to justify their novel ideology.⁹²

88 "The Return of Khilafah," in *Dabiq* no. 1 (July 2014), 3, accessed July 30, 2015,

<http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq#>.

89 See also *The Conquest of Constantinople, the Emergence of the Dajjal and the Descent of 'Eisa bin Mariam*, book 54, *Hadith* 44, accessed January 20, 2018, <https://sunnah.com/muslim/54/44>.

90 Abū Mus'ab al-Zarqāwī (1966–2006) a Jordanian national who founded *al-Tawhīd wa-l-jihād* in the 1990s and later on joined al-Qa'ida (in 2004).

91 "The Return of Khilafah," in *Dabiq* no. 1 (July 2014), 3, accessed July 30, 2015,

<http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq#>.

92 For a thorough analysis about the manipulation of tradition in the jihadist milieu, see section 2.2.

The manipulation of tradition in the symbolic world of DĀ'ISH is displayed in the renaming of Dabiq magazine to Rumiyya. Upon losing the town of Dabiq to Turkish-backed forces, DĀ'ISH changed the title of the periodical Dabiq to Rumiyya.⁹³ Like Dabiq, Rumiyya also features in Islamic texts. It serves as an allusion to the hadith in which Mohammad is believed to have claimed that Muslims would conquer both Constantinople and Rome. According to Mahmoud Zaki, the change from Dabiq to Rumiyya also represents a change in political objectives from “achieving a caliphate that represented the end times to function as an army of crusaders aiming to rebuild it.”⁹⁴ The shift in the group’s narratorial paradigm is a deliberate attempt to reconstruct its loss of Dabiq within a broader anachronistic narrative. By mitigating its losses, DĀ'ISH maintains its consistency, the credibility of its narrative, and, by extension, its immortality.

On a similar vein, two geographical locations that are linked to Rome in the Prophetic traditions are Constantinople (*al-Qusṭanṭīniyya*) and ‘the Abode of Islam’ (*dār al-islām*).⁹⁵ *Al-Qusṭanṭīniyya* is the title of an online magazine published by al-Ḥayat media centre targeting Turkish-speaking audience.⁹⁶ Historically, Constantinople has always held a special place in the Arabs’ perception of the Byzantine Empire. Constantinople is referred to as “the greatest city of the *Rūm* and their refuge,”⁹⁷ possibly due to its unique place as the political and administrative centre, the focus of the religious and economic life of the Byzantine Empire, as well as the source of literature and arts.⁹⁸ It is commonly agreed among historians that the knowledge preserved by Arab authors about Constantinople was, at times, accurate and, at other times, legendary.⁹⁹ Like Dabiq, Constantinople carries emotional Islamic overtones related to the Islamic eschatology. Likewise, *dār al-islām* is an online periodical that targets a French-speaking

93 Wilbur, “Propaganda’s Place in Strategic Communication: The Case of ISIL’s Dabiq Magazine,” 209–23.

94 Mahmoud Zaki, “From ISIS’s Dabiq to Rumiyyah: Parameter to the Future and an Indication of Loss,” *Blasting News*, accessed February 20, 2018, <http://uk.blastingnews.com/opinion/2017/07/from-isiss-dabiq-to-rumiyyah-parameter-to-the-future-and-an-indication-of-loss-001820761.html>.

95 “Diwan of Media. [online] Online-propagandaforschung.uni-mainz.de,” ed. Bernd Zywiets, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.online-propagandaforschung.uni-mainz.de/files/2016/07/IS-Propagandastellen_Screenshot-mit-Anmerkungen.pdf.

96 *Al-Ḥayat* media centre is a media wing affiliated with DĀ'ISH that produces visual audio and written material in different languages. The name *al-Ḥayat* meaning ‘life’ originates from the Qur’anic chapter 8:24, “O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life [*yuhayyikum*].” DĀ'ISH explains the meaning *yuhayyikum* in light of Ibn Kathīr’s Qur’anic exegesis, who claimed that “Urwah Ibn az-Zubayr (rahimahullāh) said, ‘[That which gives you life] means war, by which Allah honoured you after humiliation, strengthened you after weakness, and defended you from your enemy after their subjugation of you’ [Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr].” See also “a Call to Hijrah” in *Dabiq* no. 3 (August 2014), 31, accessed July 30, 2018, <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/the-islamic-state-e2809cdacc84biq-magazine-322.pdf>.

97 Ibn Khursādhba, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. Michael Jan de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1889), 109.

98 Nadia M. El-Cheikh, “Constantinople Through Arab Eyes: A Mythology,” in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature*, eds. Angelika Neuwirth, Birgit Embaló, Sebastian Guenther, and Maher Jarrar (Stuttgart: Franz Verlag, 1999), 522.

99 El-Cheikh, “Constantinople Through Arab Eyes: A Mythology,” in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature*, 521.

audience.¹⁰⁰ Historically, the title refers to the region of Muslim sovereignty where Islamic law (Shari‘a) is believed to prevail as opposed to *dār al-ḥarb* (‘the territory of warfare’), which is home to the enemies often described as apostates. The title *dār al-islām* subtly reminds its readers that DĀ‘ISH territory is the only legitimate homeland for Muslims, reinforcing the need to join the group’s call by migrating to the Iraq–Syria region.

3.2.1.2. Names of Media Outlets

The names of media outlets are also mobilized as a manipulation technique to coerce a populace that shares a collective Arabic-Islamic memory. By giving historical names to media arms, geographic locations, and prominent individuals, DĀ‘ISH and other militant jihadist organizations activate the religious, cultural, and ideological frames of reference that had been previously internalized through repetition.

These specific names construct culturally guided interpretations, which fulfil two primary functions: first, to restore a sense of pride of place and historical agency in shaping their new world. Authentic diction serves as a powerful tool to win over the hearts and minds of a primarily traditional public. Secondly, the strategic naming of crucial media outlets helps to propagate the group’s worldview based on distorted Islamic narratives. The frequent occurrence of these names on propagandistic material produced by DĀ‘ISH including magazines, videos, pamphlets, and booklets, reinforce the group’s novel interpretation by drumming home the group’s newly formed associations. In this way, DĀ‘ISH penetrates and orchestrates the social and collective memory of its subscribers. Multiple names of media outlets deliberately bring up a variety of associations from the field of Islam and warfare as the list below demonstrates:¹⁰¹

al-mu’assasāt al-ra’iyya

mu’assasat al-furqān

mu’assasat al-i’tiṣām

mu’assasat al-ajnad al-i’lāmiyya

markaz al-ḥayā li-l-i’lām

al-mu’assasāt al-munāshira

mu’assasat al-battār

mu’assasat al-khilāfa

qanāt al-khilāfa

i’lām al-wilāyāt

Main Institutes

The Criterion Institute

Institute for Seeking Protection

the Soldiers’ Institute

The Existence Media Centre

Assisting Institutes

The Cutter Institute

The Caliphate’s Institute

The Caliphate’s Channel

The Provinces’ Media Foundation

100 “Diwan of Media. [online] Online-propagandaforschung.uni-mainz.de,” ed. Bernd Zywiets, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.online-propagandaforschung.uni-mainz.de/files/2016/07/IS-Propagandastellen_Screenshot-mit-Anmerkungen.pdf.

101 The list was adapted from Sahīb al-Fallāhī, “I’lām tanzīm al-dawla: mu’assasāt dā‘ish al-i’lāmiyya,” February 28, 2015, accessed January 22, 2018, <https://www.noonpost.org/content/5637>.

al-muntadiyāt al-jihādiyya	Jihadi Forums
idā'at al-bayān	Declaration Radio Broadcast
mu'assasat tarjīmān al-asāwirati	Translation of Bracelets Institute

The choice of names given to media outlets contributes towards the group's cohesive ideological narrative. The name *al-furqān*, which means 'evidence' or 'proof,' is the name of the twenty-fifth *sura* of the Qur'an. The term is also an attribute of the Qur'an meaning 'the book that distinguishes [right from wrong].' Mu'assasat al-furqān was announced on October 30, 2006, when DĀ'ISH was known as 'the Islamic State in Iraq' (ISI). It is one of the oldest media branches belonging to DĀ'ISH. By the same token, *al-bayān* ('clarity') is one of the synonyms used to refer to the Qur'an.¹⁰²

Other terms with Islamic overtones include *asāwirati* that features four times in the Qur'an, meaning 'bracelets' and serves as a subtle reminder of the paradisiacal promise.¹⁰³ The term *asāwir* appears in the Qur'anic depiction of the garden in the Hereafter, whereby heavenly dwellers are described as wearing bracelets of gold. Additionally, there is an allusion in the Qur'an, which depicts bracelets of gold as being among the insignia of earthly sovereignty and honesty.¹⁰⁴ Likewise, *al-i'ūṣām* connotes seeking the protection of God. Other terms are more explicitly connected to the battlefield, such as *al-ajnād*, which means 'soldiers.' Since its foundation in January 2014, *mu'assasat al-ajnād al-i'lāmiyya* has been producing jihadist chants and voice recordings of DĀ'ISH militants. Similarly, the term *al-battār* refers to the person who uses the sword to sever something.¹⁰⁵ The term *al-battār* is considered to have been taken by Prophet Muhammad as booty from the Banū Qaynuqa' and is often called the 'sword of the prophets.' In these examples, the organization creates strong associations between Islamic symbols with militant warfare to help reinforce its narrative and legitimate its militant activism.

3.2.1.3. Al-Khansā' Brigade

The construction of identity does not always rely on anachronistic references to geographical locations. At times, DĀ'ISH culls specific figures from the past whose personality came to have special significance within the Islamic tradition. Among these medieval figures were famous female poets who were the spokespersons of their communities. In the Islamic period, female-poets, including slaves, had been among the most educated people in their society because they were taught Classical Arabic that was different than their vernacular dialects.¹⁰⁶ Female poets in the Islamic period not

102 See Qur'an, 3:138.

103 See Qur'an, 18:31, 22:33, 33:35, and 43:53.

104 See also EQ, s.v. "Gold."

105 Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) published a magazine entitled *mu'askar al-battār* (the military camp of al-Battār). *Al-battār* was the *kunya* of an AQAP-Emir Yūsuf al-'Ayyirī, killed in 2003 by Saudi security.

106 Terry DeYoung, "Love, Death and the Ghost of Al-Khansa: The Modern Female Poetic Voice in Fadwa Tuqan's Elegies for her Brother Ibrahim," in *Modernity and Post-Modernity in Arabic Literature: Essays*

only “had access to a voice, but to a learned voice which guaranteed them a certain level of cultural respect.”¹⁰⁷ The Kharijite movement, for instance, allowed women to compose poetry beside men and, by doing so, to “participate in the intellectual and cultural history of early Islam.”¹⁰⁸

In DĀ‘ISH propaganda, women feature noticeably more than in the earlier material of previous Salafi-cum-jihadist oriented organizations.¹⁰⁹ Powerful female voices borrowed from the Arabic-Islamic tradition are appropriated in the symbolic mechanism of jihadist propaganda to propagate a positive image of the female role in the jihadist milieu. The recurrence of female poets and propagators of Islam in DĀ‘ISH discourse is intended to galvanize support from among the female audience. From a functional point of view, a jihadist group that is continuously losing its male fighters in battle benefits from populating its territory with women to give birth and thus ensure the group’s future generation. In the jihadist milieu, ‘al-Khansā’ brigade’ is one example of a name that rekindles positive memories historically linked to the Arabic-Islamic tradition. Al-Khansā’ brigade is an all-female morality policing brigade affiliated to DĀ‘ISH which serves as a recruitment organization run by women to monitor the female populace in the jihadist milieu.¹¹⁰

The name of this brigade is based on the mythical figure of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetess from the Banū Sulayma tribe in northern Medina, known by her pseudonym al-Khansā’ (d. 646 CE).¹¹¹ The poetess was often referred to as ‘the mother of martyrs’ (*umm al-shuhadā’*). A contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad, al-Khansā’ was a promoter and propagandist for the Islamic empire and the Muslim conquests taking place at the time. She remains mostly remembered for her elegies about her brothers Sakhr and Mu‘awiyya, and for inciting her audience to go to war. Not obliterated by death, al-Khansā’ became famous mostly for finding a higher glory through it in her elegiac poetry (*marāthī*). Her poems – written in praise over dead persons, especially those fallen in battle – focus on the themes of war and the pain experienced by the mothers of martyrs.¹¹² She is best known for a famous incident which narrates that upon receiving news that her sons had died in the battle of *Qādisiyya* (636 CE),¹¹³ al-Khansā’

in Honor of Professor Issa J. Boullata, eds. Kamal Abdel-Malek, and Wael Hallaq (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 48.

107 DeYoung, “Love, Death and the Ghost of Al-Khansa: The Modern Female Poetic Voice in Fadwa Tuqan’s Elegies for her Brother Ibrahim,” 48–9.

108 Hussam S. Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 90.

109 Mah-Rukh Ali, “ISIS and Propaganda: How ISIS Exploits Women,” *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism* (2015), 5.

110 See also “How the Islamic State uses Women to Control Women,” *Syria Direct*, March 25, 2015, January 20, 2018, <http://syriadirect.org/news/how-the-islamic-state-uses-women-to-control-women/>.

111 Al-Khansā’ belongs to the group of poets known as *mukhaḍramīn* who were born in the Pre-Islamic period and then converted to Islam. Al-Khansā’ was a contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad.

112 Francesco Gabrieli, “Al-Khansā’,” April 24, 2012, accessed January 22, 2018, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-khansa-SIM_4192.

113 The battle of *Qādisiyya* was a decisive battle between Muslims and Romans during the first period of Muslim expansion.

exclaimed, “praise be to Allah who honoured me with their martyrdom. I pray to my Lord to let me join them in heaven [lit. endless mercy].”¹¹⁴

In the context of DĀ‘ISH, the socio-political figure played by al-Khansā’ is performed by Aḥlām al-Naṣr, who is similarly a female poet playing an active role in composing warfare propaganda for the jihadist group. Al-Naṣr’s poetry pervades DĀ‘ISH magazines and periodicals.¹¹⁵ Additionally, the name of al-Khansā’ is not only employed by DĀ‘ISH, but it is pervasive in the jihadist circles. In 2004, for instance, a jihadi magazine was issued for the first time called al-Khansā’, and it was dedicated entirely to women.¹¹⁶ Another all-female brigade co-existing with al-Khansā’ brigade is ‘Umm al-Rayyan brigade’ which focused on exposing male activists who were disguised in women’s clothing to avoid detention when stopping at DĀ‘ISH checkpoints.¹¹⁷ In the Islamic tradition, the name al-Rayyan signifies the gate of paradise dedicated to those who fasted in their lives.

On the modern-day battlefield, the mythical figure of al-Khansā’ may appear to bring back “a typical flourish of militant medievalism.”¹¹⁸ The appropriation of al-Khansā’ in the name of a jihadist policing brigade is essential to help DĀ‘ISH reconstruct the identity of a novel and modern institution. By means of manipulating elements from tradition, the Khansā’ brigade is not conceived for what it truly is, that is, a novel and oppressive institution within DĀ‘ISH whose intention is to coerce its female populace, but it becomes portrayed as an institution linked to the Islamic tradition. The deliberate choice of the name gives the impression that the Khansā’ brigade is “an institution with deep roots in the past” when in reality, “there has never been anything like the Brigades in Islamic history, nor do they have an equivalent anywhere in the Arab world.”¹¹⁹ The image of al-Khansā’ is propagated as a role model for women living in jihadist territories who find themselves grieving the loss of their beloved ones.¹²⁰ Since

114 In Arabic: “Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi alladhī sharrāfani bi-istishhādihim wa-arju min rabbi ‘an yajma’anī bihim fī mustaqirri raḥmatihī,” in Faṭḥī al-Kawāmīla, *Fī riḥāb al-khansā’* (Damascus: Dār al-jalīl, 1988), 10.

115 Verses composed by al-Khansā’ are quoted in DĀ‘ISH affiliated propaganda magazines. See also *Tadmīr kammiyya kabīra min al-zakhā’iri wa-l-’aslaḥati li-l-jayshi l-nuṣayrī fī wilāyat al-khayrī* in al-Naba’, 103:9.

116 See also Aaron Y. Zelin, “Al-Fajr Media Releases Issue one of a New Women’s Magazine: *al-Shāmikhah*,” *Jihadology* (blog), accessed February 3, 2012, <http://jihadology.net/2011/03/05/al-fajr-media-presents-a-issue-one-of-a-new-womens-magazine-al-shamikhah/>.

117 See also Nur Irfani Binte Saripi, “Female Members of ISIS: A Greater Need for Rehabilitation,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 7, no. 3 (2015): 26–31.

118 Creswell, and Haykel, “Poetry in Jihadi Culture,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 40.

119 Creswell, and Haykel, “Poetry in Jihadi Culture,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 40–1.

120 As a potent image for the Arab-Islamic woman, the model of al-Khansā’ has been criticised among contemporary researchers and activists. Young feminists in the Arab world considered the lack of activism among Arab women during the 1991 Gulf War as a form of “protest against the hegemonic power of al-Khansā’ as a discursive and practical model for Arab women,” claiming that the medieval poetess is “a negative model whose practice is to be avoided.” See also DeYoung, “Love, Death and the Ghost of Al-Khansa: The Modern Female Poetic Voice in Fadwa Tuqān’s Elegies for her Brother Ibrahim,” 51.

al-Khansā' was a Muslim convert, the name plays a vital publicity stance for the jihadist group to encourage non-Muslim women to convert to Islam and become themselves part of the brigade.¹²¹ The brigade thus becomes a source of creating a group identity. By placing newly converted foreign women in this group, DĀ'ISH fosters sisterhood among the jihadist populace. Newly converted female recruits are given esteemed positions within the jihadist milieu to avoid feeling excluded from the rest of the Arabic-speaking jihadist community. By providing this group of women extraordinary power over the rest of the female populace, the message of the group markets a broader audience, including non-Muslim women.

Jihadist institutions like al-Khansā' brigade reproduce structures of social coercion. Assigning roles to a group of women to act on behalf of DĀ'ISH is one of the many examples of how such organizations create hierarchical systems for a small group to wield control over a substantial part of the jihadist populace, in this case, the female part. Additionally, submission and obedience are essential traits in this asymmetrical power structure. These asymmetries are two-fold: on the one hand, members of the brigade feel empowered over the rest of the female populace. On the other hand, however, they are themselves dominated by a specific ideology, and they have to live up to its expectations. This is a prime example of how discursive strategies reveal abuse of power, through which DĀ'ISH can control people's minds and, in turn, reproduce social coercion.

The example of 'al-Khansā' brigade' illustrates how the symbolic world of DĀ'ISH is realized in the material world by the creation of physical institutions. This intersection between the symbolic and material world is akin to Saddam Hussein's creation of the 'Mother of All Battles' mosque (*umm al-ma'ārik*) in 2001, which construction was based on his political worldview.¹²² In this context, 'tradition' and 'modernity' are not considered to be at the far ends of the spectrum, as is often understood through the paradigmatic lens of modernist ideology, but merely the coexistence of both the past and the present. Tradition is not seen as a crystallized, distant knowledge but a fluid one that regenerates itself. The naming strategy devised for geographical locations, media outlets, periodicals, and female brigades manipulatively reconstructs novel institutions – that have no counterpart in tradition – as culturally authentic and Islamic. Once the Islamic references are reconfigured, the novel meaning is presented to the audience in the form of a culturally guided interpretation. Novel meanings that juxtapose religiously charged terms with warfare and violence create a unique political worldview and a new identity for the group. The appropriation of historical battles to modern-day conquests and losses conforms to a grand narrative anchored in tradition, which ensures the organ-

121 It was reported that a vast majority of the women making part of al-Khansā' brigade are foreigners who converted to Islam upon joining DĀ'ISH. See also Natasha Culzac, "Isis: British Women led by Aqsa Mahmood 'Running Sharia Police Unit for Islamic State in Syria'," *The Independent*, September 8, 2014, accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-british-women-running-sharia-police-unit-for-islamic-state-in-syria-9717510.html>.

122 See section 2.2.1.

ization's consistency and immortality. Culling Islamic references from a shared memory give the illusion that the jihadist ideology is rooted in Islam and is thus part of mainstream Islamic culture. Self-serving historical narratives and personalities become a credible source of legitimation, giving the illusion that the narrative of DĀ'ISH is inevitable and preordained.

3.2.1.4. *Nom de Guerre*

A commonly used discursive mechanism that constructs identities of DĀ'ISH fighters is the *nom de guerre*, which is an authoritative source of identification based on a refined system of Arabic nomenclature predating Islam. This system of identification is based on the patriarchal kinship structures characterized by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family. The representation of the family bond evolved from the patriarchal one as the model of political authority. The Arabic nomenclature consists of different compounds, the first of which refers to an allusive name known as *kunya*. The *kunya* presumably refers to their son often introduced by *abū* ('father of') or *umm* ('mother of'), followed by either an *ism* or a word describing some prominent characteristic of the bearer. Since the *kunya* was conferred on individuals at an early age, it later developed into a pure convention, and hence, *abū* did not indicate that the person had a son. *Kunya* gained particular importance from the second century of Islam onwards when one was obliged to address equals or superiors by their *kunya* and not their *ism*.¹²³

Two other compounds succeeding the *kunya* are known as *nasab* and *nisba*, respectively. A typical *nasab* chain would enlist the kinship indicated by the term *ibn*, meaning 'son of' or *bint* 'daughter of' ending with the real or legendary ancestor of the tribe.¹²⁴ The *nisba*, on the other hand, indicates the different sorts of affiliations, including geographical, tribal, or legal such as one's ancestral tribe, place of origin (city or country), or profession. In tribal culture, ancestral ties to religious men of renown were offered as proof of a tribesman's social standing, producing a chain linking oneself to a glorious past.¹²⁵ Arab nomenclature, which is strictly agnatic (descent from a male ancestor through the male line), indicates one's social identity because of the tribal genealogy (*nasab*) that forms part of it.¹²⁶ The function of employing a *nisba* in one's naming is more associated with political reasons rather than geographical ones. It is often argued that tribes often have no historical base, and the tribal relationship has to be understood within the context of group formation and political alliance, of a quest for power and influence rather than a relationship built on blood alliance.¹²⁷

123 Beeston, "Background Topics," in CHALUP, 19.

124 Beeston, "Background Topics," in CHALUP, 18.

125 Andrew Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 14.

126 Beeston, "Background Topics," in CHALUP, 19.

127 Eva Orthmann, *Stamm und Macht: Die Arabischen Stämme im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert der Hidschra (Nomaden und Sesshafte. SFB Differenz und Integration, Band 1)* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2002), 414–6.

The nomenclature system that has developed over many generations in the Arab world is an equally vivid example of how Arabic cultural heritage is manipulated for ulterior political motives. By adopting this type of identity, DĀ'ISH leaders link themselves to the era of the Prophet, to its values and its luminary figures. The jihadist paradigm latches onto the extended clan family model that is based on the traditional kinship structure of patriarchal society to reinforce its hegemonic control and assure social order within its territories. DĀ'ISH redistributes its power by basing its social relations on an 'imagined' genealogical lineage, namely a patrilineal kinship structure of several generations that encompasses an extensive network of blood relations descended through the male line. It is an 'imaginary' social network because the concept of family in DĀ'ISH paradigm transcends blood. The imaginary lineage that DĀ'ISH creates serves as a powerful strategy that can categorize social relations and create a societal structure that resembles the Arab kinship structure.

The *nom de guerre* is acquired by all male and female members, including DĀ'ISH leaders and cadres irrespective of their hierarchical role or their origin. The Arabic nomenclature is exploited by jihadist figures to strengthen their religious credentials to claim military, political, and religious legitimacy. The first leader of DĀ'ISH was known among his followers with his *kunya* followed by *nisba* Abū 'Umār al-Qurashī al-Baghdādī (d. April 18, 2010).¹²⁸ His successor was also referred to by his *nom de guerre* Abū Bakrī al-Baghdādī al-Ḥussaynī al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī. The *nisba* of both leaders identifies their affiliation with their hometown Baghdad and the most prestigious tribe of al-Qurashī, to which Prophet Muhammad's family belonged. Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī does not use the name of *al-Bu Badri* tribe – his real tribal group – but uses al-Qurashī to justify his appointment in the position of a caliph of the 'Islamic State' organization. The leader's *nisba* also legitimates the leader's appointment within the prophetic tradition, in which it is narrated that "[t]he Caliphate will remain among al-Qurashī even if only two persons are left (on the earth)."¹²⁹

Likewise, the jihadist leaders' names Abū 'Umār and Abū Bakr are also significant historically because these are the names of the first two caliphs that took over the political and administrative functions of the Islamic community and ultimately becoming both civil and religious heads of the Muslim state. Abū Bakr is also the putative ancestor of one of the most prominent Arabian tribes.¹³⁰ Since Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī was declared caliph, he has been referred to as the 'Commander of the Faithful' (*amīr al-mu'minīn*),¹³¹ a title which was reserved mostly for the early Islamic caliphs and was

128 Kyle Orton, "Governing the Caliphate: Profiles of Islamic State Leaders," *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2016, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/IS-leaders-report.pdf>.

129 See also *The Book on Government*, Book 33, *Hadīth* 4, accessed January 22, 2018, <https://sunnah.com/muslim/33/4>.

130 Beeston, "Background Topics," in CHALUP, 18.

131 "Kalimatu sawtiyya li mawlinā amīr al mu'minīn Abī Bakr al-Baghdādī al-qurashī al-ḥussaynī bi-'unwān: wa-llah ya'lam wa-antum lā ta'lamūna," July 14, 2015, *Dailymotion*, accessed January 27, 2018, <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2y12em>.

first used by Caliph ‘Umar. Similarly, the official chief spokesman of DĀ‘ISH known as Abū Muḥammad al-‘Adnānī al-Shāmī¹³² is linked through his *nisba* to the ‘Adnanite Arabs of Northern, Western and Central Arabia, whereas ‘the delegate leader of the Libyan provinces’ named Abū al-Mughīra al-Qaḥṭānī is connected to the Qaḥṭānī group of tribes.¹³³ The inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula who were generally called Arabs were divided into two main groups, Qaḥṭānī Arabs and ‘Adnānī Arabs originating from two eponymous and prestigious Arab ancestors called ‘Adnān and Qaḥṭān. The ‘Adnānī Arabs were centred around the Najd and Hejaz around Mecca, stretching as far as the Hejaz desert.

Alternatively, the Arabic nomenclature is exploited by high ranking officials within the organization who had formerly played an essential role in other ideologies and political institutions. The appropriation of the nomenclature gives these figures the possibility to rebrand their image and their skills under a new ideological worldview and disassociate themselves from past ideologies. For instance, Abū Mu‘tazz al-Qurashī (d. August 2015), whose real name was Fāḍil Aḥmad ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥiyālī, was a former lieutenant colonel in the Iraqi Army and a former officer in the Iraqi Special Forces. He later became second in command and a governor for DĀ‘ISH territories. Al-Mu‘tazz was the title of the Abbasid caliph ruling Baghdad between 866–869 CE.

Non-Arab members of DĀ‘ISH are given a name that is purposely meant to resonate with the Arabic nomenclature. Following the same structure, one’s country of origin is usually placed at the end of the nomenclature as part of the *nisba*. Instances of this include the chief of Syria military operations ‘Umār al-Shishānī who is of Chechen Georgian origin.¹³⁴ Likewise, the German ex-rapper Denis Cuspert, who was mostly known by his stage name Deso Dogg, was given the name Abū Talḥa al-Almānī upon joining DĀ‘ISH.¹³⁵ Similar cases of foreigners joining DĀ‘ISH include Abū Māliḥa Al-Kanadī (the Canadian), Abū Zakariyya al-Briṭānī (the British), Abū Hamza al-Amrīkī (the American), Abū Jihād al-Rūsī (the Russian), and Abū Dujāna al-Baljīkī (the Belgian).¹³⁶ Abū Muslim al-Kanadī (the Canadian) has also had a propaganda video dedicated to

132 Charles Lister, “Islamic State Senior Leadership: Who’s Who,” *Brookings*, October 20, 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/en_whos_who.pdf.

133 “From the Battle of al-Ahzāb to the War of Coalitions,” in *Dabiq* no. 11 (September 2015), 60, accessed July 30, 2015, <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/the-islamic-state-e2809cdc481biq-magazine-11e280b3.pdf>.

134 Lister, “Islamic State Senior Leadership: Who’s Who,” *Brookings*, October 20, 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/en_whos_who.pdf.

135 Michail Logvinov, “Von ‘Deso Dogg’ zu ‘Abu Talha al-Almani’: Die dschihadistische Karriere von Denis Cuspert,” *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, accessed June 13, 2018, <http://www.kas.de/wf/de/71.15469/>; “Neue Botschaft von IS-Terrorist Denis Cuspert Aufgetaucht,” March 1, 2017, accessed January 20, 2018, *Stern.de*, <https://www.stern.de/politik/ausland/denis-cuspert--neue-botschaft-des-berliner-is-terroristen-aufgetaucht-7348906.html>.

136 “ISIS Video Features American, Canadian, British, Russian, Belgian Fighters Urging Muslims To Carry Out Attacks in West, Shows Landmarks In NYC, DC, Baltimore, Las Vegas,” *MEMRI: Middle East Media Research Institute*, May 18, 2017, accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.memri.org/reports/isis-video-features-american-canadian-british-russian-belgian-fighters-urging-muslims-carry>.

him, commemorating his life leading to the ultimate act of ‘martyrdom.’¹³⁷ This discursive mechanism that is acquired by non-Arab recruits upon joining the jihadist group may help them conceal their true identity and their past life as in the case of ‘Umār al-Shishānī, or to detach themselves from the previous lifestyles like the case of the German ex-rapper Denis Cuspert.

The appropriation of the Arabic nomenclature is used overwhelmingly among male fighters and prominent male figures. Female members of DĀ‘ISH do not adopt an Arabic nomenclature but are given a *laqab*. Historically, it was a customary practice to develop professional pseudonyms or honorific titles referred to as *laqab*. The poet Tābit b. aws al-azdi (d. 525 CE), for instance, is universally referred to by his title al-Shanfarā’. At times, some figures rose to fame with their nickname to the extent that the real name had gone unnoticed. Al-Khansā’ (d. 646 CE) was a nickname for the seventh-century poetess called Tumāḍir b. ‘Amr b. al-ḥārith b. al-sharīd al-sulamiyya. This tradition has been passed on through generations, and it is still widespread in contemporary Arabic-Islamic cultures and not only customary practice in militant Jihadism. The poetess of DĀ‘ISH is known by her pseudonym Aḥlām al-Naṣr (‘The Dreams of Victory’). Women joining DĀ‘ISH and its brigades are also identified by a *laqab* which they use on social media and in the DĀ‘ISH territories.

Women play a significant role online, primarily because of their function in luring, radicalizing, and guiding newly recruited individuals step-by-step to the Iraq–Syria region. One of the most active female DĀ‘ISH figures online who sought to attract recruits was a blogger from the north of Britain living in Syria called Aqsa Mahmood, who adopted the pseudonym Umm Layth (‘The Mother of the Lion’). She used social media to guide young women through the process of joining DĀ‘ISH, including advice on the daily practicalities of living in the Iraq–Syria region. Umm Layth also took on a counselling role to prepare and support young women in the emotional upheaval of leaving home.¹³⁸ Likewise, Hoda Muthana, a young American from Alabama, became known by her pseudonym Umm Jihād. After joining DĀ‘ISH in Syria, she was married to a man identified as Abu Jihād.¹³⁹ Likewise, Umm ‘Ubayda, who identifies herself online as coming from Northern Europe, has also played an essential role in encouraging Western women to join DĀ‘ISH.¹⁴⁰ The pseudonyms circulated in the jihadist groups are intended to resonate with the Arabic-Islamic tradition. Layth, for instance, is

137 Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ghurabā’: The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abū Muslim from Canada,” *Jihadology* (blog), August 2, 2014, accessed June 13, 2018, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/12/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-al-ghuraba-the-chosen-few-of-different-lands-abu-muslim-from-canada/>.

138 See also Mah-Rukh Ali, “ISIS and Propaganda: How ISIS Exploits Women,” *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism* (2015).

139 The story of Hoda Muthana is reported in Rukmini Callimachi, and Catherine Porter, “2 American Wives of ISIS Militants Want to Return Home,” *The New York Times*, February 20, 2019, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/19/us/islamic-state-american-women.html>.

140 Katie Zavadski, “Meet the Female Recruiters of ISIS,” *Intelligencer*, September 4, 2014, accessed March 21, 2019, <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2014/09/meet-the-female-recruiters-of-isis.html>.

one of the names of the lion, and 'Ubayda echoes 'Ubayda b. al-Hārith (d. 624 CE), who was a cousin and companion of the Prophet. More importantly, however, the historical figure of 'Ubayda is known for being the first Muslim to die on the battlefield in defence of Islam.

These examples demonstrate how DĀ'ISH instrumentalizes the well-established Arabic nomenclature as an ideological tool to manage its members under its controlled areas. By resorting to a naming system that gives the illusion of tracing the genealogical linkage to notable figures, DĀ'ISH legitimates its existence. For non-Arab men and women joining DĀ'ISH, the pseudonyms and genealogical linkage serve as part of the acculturation process in the jihadist milieu. Upon accepting the Arabic nomenclature and pseudonyms, DĀ'ISH members are subtly expected to give up their name and surname that in the past used to identify them as individuals, and instead take on a title rooted in Arabic and Islamic tradition. The structure of Arabic nomenclature that is adopted by DĀ'ISH fighters upon joining the movement is also strategic. The act of accepting to give up one's name for a new identity is, in itself, an initial sign of obedience. It demonstrates absolute loyalty and also complete willingness to submit oneself both privately and publicly to the hegemonic project of DĀ'ISH. The new name identifies new responsibilities and a new identity in private life and the social sphere of the jihadist milieu. Every time one's name is called, there is a subtle reminder of one's new identity, which is accompanied by a specific code of conduct and the groups' self-schema.

3.2.2. Promoting a Jihadist Identity through Lexicalization

Discursively, identities are reinforced by the selection of specific word meanings in a process known as lexicalization,¹⁴¹ whereby an ecological ideology is assumed to control a lexical item. The language deployed by DĀ'ISH is transported from the past, by which certain words have an aura as a resultant effect of their history. In other words, a lexical item is never static; it is all the time gathering a kind of halo in its symbolic ramifications and its expressions in its conventions and rhetoric. Clusters of lexical items, in this way, cannot be taken into isolation, but make sense in the context of the historical and religious references. These recurring clusters of field-specific lexicon date back to ancient texts such as the Qur'an, the Prophetic Traditions, and pre-Islamic poetry. The fact that specific phraseology is collocated in past texts, listening to these lexical items becomes an exercise of listening to a plethora of deeply hidden, and even submerged kinds of emotions and moral codes enshrined in a specific language.

Van Dijk considers ideologies as systems of social cognition that are evaluative because "they provide the basis for judgments about what is good or bad, right or wrong, and thus also provide basic guidelines for social perception and interaction."¹⁴² The jihadist identity works in the realm of groups, that is, the adherents' sense of who they

141 See also Van Dijk, "Discourse Semantics and Ideology," *Discourse and Society* 6, no. 2 (1995), 259.

142 Van Dijk, "Discourse Semantics and Ideology," *Discourse and Society* 6, no. 2 (1995), 248.

are, depends on the group to which they belong.¹⁴³ DĀ'ISH provides a false sense of group identity, that is, a jihadist identity that is seemingly part of a broader Islamic identity. Individuals who become part of DĀ'ISH take on a shared social identity that prescribes and evaluates who they are, what they should believe, and how they should behave. In this way, the jihadist identity is reinforced by normative behaviour. An individual's behaviour changes according to the underlying ideology of the affiliated group. Being part of DĀ'ISH transforms one's self-conception, and it also produces a kind of behaviour that conforms to the in-group norms. Once a member identifies with the group, then they automatically adopt the group's self-schema, including its ideology, worldview, and discourse, positioning themselves subconsciously against the organization's out-group. The group's self-schema consists of a system that categorizes social groups, distinguishing among different groups, especially between the dichotomized in-group and out-group.

Normative behaviour furnishes group prototypes and archetypes that describe how people will and ought to behave even in times of uncertainty, pain, or death. In the symbolic world of DĀ'ISH, normative behaviour is maintained by culling archetypical examples from the Islamic past and prototypes from modern times. Prototypes represent attributes that maximize the extent to which a group appears to be a distinct and clearly defined entity.¹⁴⁴ Examples of archetypical figures chosen from the past include the female poet al-Khansā', the Islamic warrior 'Ubayda, and the Prophet Muhammed. DĀ'ISH mobilizes its literary force to create prototypes by dedicating elegiac verses to fallen members. The death of these individuals is exploited to highlight archetypical values and central ideological principles of the organization. Furthermore, the circulation of these prototypes subtly describes and prescribes ways of how members of the group must think, feel, and behave. Hence, members would no longer consider themselves as individuals but are perceived through the comparative lens of these prototypes.

Normative behaviour is not only created and constructed, but it is also strictly monitored by DĀ'ISH. Regular spectacular portrayals of public executions by hanging, stoning, decapitating, stabbing, and crucifying individuals in public squares serve as a psychological reminder of one's fate if one decides not to adhere to the norms enforced by DĀ'ISH. The strategy of fearmongering is indirectly reinforced in the group's discourse, especially in poetry. Poetry operates as an essential disciplinary device of identification. Poetry serves as the linchpin in the process of producing and reinforcing guidelines for acceptable speech and behaviour. It also defines and generalizes a specific type of membership through identity, induces complicity by creating practices in which citizens become accomplices, and it upholds norms constitutive of DĀ'ISH beliefs. The inside world is distinguished from the outside world by means of scheduled patrolling

143 Henri Tajfel, ed. *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

144 Michael A. Hogg, "Social Identity Theory," in *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory: Contemporary Global Perspectives*, eds. Shelley McKeown, Reeshma Haji, and Neil Ferguson (Switzerland: Springer, 2016), 8.

and the setting up of fixed checkpoints. DĀ'ISH operates in the form of a highly hierarchical system, and its personnel performs surveillance on the rest of the community. Special groups within DĀ'ISH, including the al-Khansā' brigade, are in charge of monitoring women's compliance to dress code and behaviour. Other DĀ'ISH officials patrol DĀ'ISH territories to monitor the products that are being sold on the market and to observe whether civilians living inside its territory are fulfilling their religious duties, especially in times of prayer.

Loyalties to social groups in the jihadist milieu tend to be intense and specific. In the process of monitoring people's commitment, obedience plays a vital role in wielding power. The social identification factor attributed to the jihadist identity is based on a sharp contrast between the in-group and the out-group. Firstly, one's loyalty is connected to the self-ascribed social groups to which one belongs, and with which one interacts directly,¹⁴⁵ along with the feelings arising from the participation in these groups' activities.¹⁴⁶ By engaging in a code of conduct propagated by DĀ'ISH, individuals are rewarded by the organization. Members complying with the orders of DĀ'ISH move closer to achieving affiliation-oriented goals, abiding by norms of social exchange with others. One's loyalty is also related to beliefs and feelings about the out-group, which is made up of groups perceived as standing in opposition to the in-group.¹⁴⁷

The parochial view of DĀ'ISH simplifies reality into the binary opposition of right and wrong, jihadists against infidels, and brothers against enemies. The dichotomization of a radicalized worldview into the abode of Islam and the abode of apostasy is starkly differentiated by the use of virtues and vices to refer to the in-group and the out-group respectively. These recurring values, which are peppered with absolutist religious discourse, promote these dichotomous structures. In return, the deliberate influence makes it less likely for DĀ'ISH members to view the world from the perspective of the 'other.'¹⁴⁸ The ideological simplification characterizes the enemies, implies modes of action against them, and at the same time, it makes the message of DĀ'ISH more accessible to everyone. By characterizing the enemy, the jihadist group does not only clarify who the enemy is, but it also simplifies a complex political landscape in something easy to understand, creating, "a good conscience among its partisans and a bad conscience among its enemies."¹⁴⁹ A simplified 'us' and 'them' justifies and rationalizes violence, reduces the uncertainty that exists in the outside world, and eventually helps the jihadist group to manoeuvre action among the group's subscribers.

145 Henri Tajfel, and John C. Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," in *The Psychology of Intergroup Behavior*, eds. Stephen Worchel, and William G. Austin (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1986): 7–24.

146 Rupert Brown, "Social Identity Theory: Past Achievements, Current Problems, and Future Challenges," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30 (2000): 745–78.

147 Tajfel, and Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," in *The Psychology of Intergroup Behavior*, 7–24.

148 Erik Erikson refers to this concept as "pseudospeciation." See Erik H. Erikson, "Pseudospeciation in the Nuclear Age," *Political Psychology* 6 (1985): 213–7.

149 Ellul, *Propaganda*, 189.

3.2.2.1. Traditional Moral Values

The past encapsulates in itself and, in its many ancient motifs and Islamic symbols, a wealth of values that are expected to be honoured and followed truly and scrupulously. Inherently pervasive in DĀʿISH discourse are notions rooted in ancient values connected to the Bedouin ethic. Socio-cultural values are the basic building blocks of ideologies that are not limited to the jihadist groups but have broader cultural relevance, making them culturally specific and culturally variable at the same time. These values are part of the cognitive representations typically associated with our social memory that organize our actions and evaluations; they “basically define what is good or bad, permitted or prohibited, and the fundamental aims to be striven after by individuals, groups and societies alike.”¹⁵⁰

Culturally driven values, embedded in the very soul of past narratives, wield their authoritative power and establish credibility from tradition because these traits stem from Arab and Islamic heritage and hence should – at least in the worldview of DĀʿISH – be blindly imitated. The dominant force that lies behind traditional moral values stems from a dynamic development and reshaping of the terms from the shared collective memory due to cultural, religious, and historical advancement. The meaning of these ancient values has evolved concurrently from the pre-Islamic to the Islamic period and to contemporary times. During the Islamic period, these cultural traits were frequently embedded in official ceremonial poetry that made part of the ʿAbbāsīd court life.¹⁵¹ One contribution that focuses on these values dates back to the time of the Prophet, and it is recorded by a Sunni-Shāfiʿī jurist and a scholar of hadith and history known as al-Qaḍī al-Quḍāʿī (d. 1062 CE). In a compilation entitled *A Compendium of Signposts of Wisdom and a Documentation of Qualities of Virtue*, the Fatimid judge collects several sayings, sermons, and teachings attributed to the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad called ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 661 CE).¹⁵² Due to the lack of diachronic studies in the meaning of traditional moral values, al-Quḍāʿī’s work is taken as a point of reference because it conceptualizes and contextualizes value words during the Islamic period which are continually being manipulated in DĀʿISH discourse.

In pre-Islamic Arabia, *murʿuwwa* (honour code) was the morale *par excellence* of the Bedouin tribes, which conjoined the notions of manliness and virtuous behaviour in the Bedouin culture. Honour is closely linked to group survival because it determines social status, underpins relations between lineages and tribes. It also forms the basis of social etiquette and honourable behaviour which demands tribal or clan cohesion. *Murʿuwwa* served as a kind of social contract between the individuals and the tribe and

150 Teun Van Dijk, *Ideology and Discourse: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (London: Sage, 1998), 15.

151 See also Stefan Sperl, “Islamic Kingship and Arabic Panegyric Poetry in the Early 9th Century,” in *Journal of Arabic Literature* 8, no. 1 (1977): 20–35.

152 ʿAlī was an acknowledged master of Arabic eloquence and was named as the “father of Arabic prose.” For a more detailed biography, see Tahera Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues: Sayings, Sermons, and Teachings of ʿAlī, with the One Hundred Proverbs, Attributed to al-Jahiz* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), xiii–xxiv.

contained several interdependent virtues that reflected a closely-knit relationship between the individual and the tribal collective.¹⁵³ Values adduced to *mur'uwwa* comprise virtues such as virility, courage, and bravery. Honour is bestowed upon a man who fathers many sons, whereas courage and bravery (*hamāsa*) are closely linked concepts. The term *hams* in early and present-day Arabic covers the semantic fields of force, anger, rage, constancy, bravery, and courage in combat, and implies, above all, war-like violence.¹⁵⁴ In tribal culture, the well-being and the survival of the tribe supersede the importance of the individual. Individualism was tempered by the interactions of a universally observed inter-tribal code of behaviour based on concepts such as honour (*al-sharaf*), forbearance (*al-ṣabr*), moral strength (*al-'azīma*), strength and greatness (*al-'izz*).¹⁵⁵ Young males are prepared to die in battle to protect the honour of the tribe and were expected to defend their group, engage in combat, and show endurance, especially in hardship and in action. In Islamic times, the signification of *sharaf* was reconfigured in terms of Islam in phrases like 'there is no honour higher than Islam' (*lā sharaf a' lā min al-islām*).¹⁵⁶ In DĀ'ISH poetic enterprise, the values of courage, valour, and bravery tend to be expressed additionally by extolling military virtues through other near-synonyms, namely *al-miqdām*, *al-buṭūla*, *al-shahāma*, *al-furūsiyya*, *al-nakhwa*, *al-ghayra*, and *al-shajā'a*. Another term that is connected to courage is *ṣabr*, a quality which may be rendered in translation as patience, forbearance, endurance, and equanimity, and is considered as "one of the cardinal virtues which make up *muruwwa*."

In Islamic terms, the virtues of forbearance (*ṣabr*) and gratitude (*shukr*) are defined as the two parts of faith. The two dimensions accommodate the conditions and circumstances experienced by humans, whether voluntary or involuntary, pleasing or displeasing. Forbearance is promoted in displeasing and challenging situations, and it features as a strategy against negligence in ritual prayers and other religious services.¹⁵⁷ Forbearance also surfaces in ancient wisdom, which includes phrases such as 'forbearance is a form of courage' (*al-ṣabr shujā'a*), 'patience is a shield against destitution' (*al-ṣabr junna min al-fāqa*).¹⁵⁸ In DĀ'ISH poetry, this virtue is expressed in other synonymous terms which denote endurance, mainly *al-thabāt* and *al-ṣumūd*.

Classical Arabic poetry was the primary injector and circulator of ethical values in the society, and its usefulness was foremost of moral-ethical utility. Gregor Schoeler argues that poetry has "a lofty ethical goal: it keeps ideals alive in the consciousness of

153 See also Gert Borg, "Ṣa'ālīk," in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, eds. Julia Scott Meisami, and Paul Starkey (London: Routledge, 1998), 670–1.

154 The etymological roots of *hamāsa* are absent in the Qur'anic corpus. See also EQ, s.v. "Violence."

155 These concepts are commonly employed in the political scene. One example can be found in the Ba'thist discourse. See also Bengio, *Saddam's Word*, 153–8; Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 99–101.

156 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 38–9.

157 See Qur'an, 2:45, and 2:153.

158 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 11.

people.”¹⁵⁹ As a powerful communicative tool for the expression of societal and religious ideals, poetry was enacted honour code as a central concept of Arab society and was even regarded as a unifying principle of poetic themes in Pre-Islamic poetry.¹⁶⁰ The poet’s expression should not be understood as an individual experience but as a more collective one in which he portrayed a shared heroic ideal.¹⁶¹ When the ancient Arab ethical system and Bedouin ethos is channelled into poetry, these values reverberate emotions and are understood as contributing to one’s honour. These virtues are often contrasted with vices attributed to the out-group such as ‘abjectness’ (*al-madhalla* and *al-waṣma*), ‘disgrace’ (*al-hawān*), ‘humiliation’ (*al-dhull*), ‘lowly’ (*al-la’īm*), ‘shame’ (*al-ḍalūl*), and ‘weakness’ (*al-wahn*).

The Bedouin ethos grounded in the Arabic cultures and traditions has never laid dormant but still permeates modern-day Arab societies. It resurfaces in modern Arabic poetry and contemporary Arabic discourse by different ideological persuasions. The Arabic-Islamic tradition in all its forms is a significant factor that mobilizes the polarization of the ‘West’ and ‘East’ divide. The reinterpretation of contemporary circumstances through the lenses of tradition should be interpreted as a discursive mechanism to reinstate traditional values against the global forces of the ‘other’ and also to create and maintain the jihadist identity in terms of the preservation of traditional authentic values. In the twentieth century, poets and politicians dedicated to Arab nationalist ideology considered a rebirth of authentic Arab values and pride in the glorious past as another means of attaining authenticity, and more importantly, as a weapon against the colonial occupier.¹⁶²

In the case of anti-establishment insurgencies like DĀ’ISH, traditional moral values that have been part of the Arabic poetic tradition, including the extolling of military virtues celebrated in pre-Islamic poetry, are retooled in the jihadist milieu to communicate and spread ideological values of jihadist groups. The adherence to tradition in DĀ’ISH discourse should be understood as a form of attempted social control over DĀ’ISH sympathizers. This control takes place by projecting a set of values held in high esteem by DĀ’ISH insurgents. Eventually, these values transform one’s social reality into the group’s worldview through incessant repetition. By linking the DĀ’ISH milieu to an esteemed Islamic past, the group’s identity is consolidated and legitimated. Strategically, these value systems consisting of virtues and vices, are carefully tailored to send signals both to the in-group and the out-group.

DĀ’ISH poetry is the primary medium to circulate the group’s trajectory among the listeners. The interest in appealing to the tribal values and affinities that were central in

159 Gregor Schoeler, “The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Diwāns,” *Quaderni Di Studi Arabi* 5/6 (2010), 22–3.

160 See also James E. Montgomery, “Dichotomy in Jāhili Poetry,” in *Journal of Arabic Literature* 17 (1986), 1–20.

161 See also Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 10.

162 Mona Mikhail, “Iltizam: Commitment and Arabic Poetry,” *World Literature Today* 53, no. 4 (1979): 595–600.

patrilineal and patriarchal societies helps to generate pressure for conformity to the extent that the rights of the individual become secondary to the moral code of the group. The values ascribed to DĀ'ISH fighters and the opponents correspond to a more or less standardized set that may alternate between philosophical, spiritual, transcendental, meta-physical, ascetic values. These value systems contribute to a schema that makes sense in the way it comes together in its entirety as a cohesive, coherent whole. Generally, characters mentioned in DĀ'ISH poetry appear to be stereotyped and depersonalized, and their particular traits are concealed under a huge equalizing mask of absolutes.

By embellishing poetic verses with ancient virtues, DĀ'ISH communicates an archetypal behaviour based on individuals who incorporate virtues in their value systems. Classical literary themes and motifs, whether in the form of praise, lament, military zeal, or incitement, become an exercise of role modelling to foster the cultivation of virtues and to serve as a means conducive to acquiring these virtues. This cultivation takes the view of interconnectedness derived from shared communally constituted identities. Virtues are instrumentalized as a source of identification. Once these virtues become part of the individual, the 'self' comes to possess a sense of a unified, trans-situational identity, wherein values become enacted and articulated situationally though one's group identity.

In a poem composed in *kāmil* metre entitled 'I still Remember [the time] when I Left my University as a Medical Doctor,'¹⁶³ the group's poetess Aḥlām al-Naṣr resorts to the ancient moral values to express her anger towards the inaction by Arab politicians vis-à-vis the unfolding events at that time. The female poet praises the courage of jihadist fighters described as 'pure men' (*al-rijālu al-tāhirūna*) who were dissatisfied with the humiliation and decided to take action:

1. سَيِّمُوا الْمَذَلَّةَ وَالْخُضُوعَ كَذَا الرِّزَايَا وَالنَّعْيَا
2. وَمَضُوا بِعَزْمٍ ثَائِرِينَ لِيُرْسُمُوا الْحُلْمَ الْخَصِيْبَا

1. They were unable to tolerate the abjectness and humiliation, likewise, the disasters and the death announcements,
2. They moved forward with determination by rebelling, to paint the fertile dream.¹⁶⁴

The emphasis in this poem is laid on the resilience of DĀ'ISH fighters who sought to fight against abjectness and humiliation by revolting against their leaders. The terms *tha'irīn* and *madhalla* are symbolic of the current events happening in the Iraq–Syria region at the time of composition. The former term is reminiscent of the transnational revolutions taking place in the Arab world before 2014. The latter term resonates with a popular slogan linked to the Syrian uprising in 2011, which stated *al-mawt wa-lā al-*

163 See DAN, 17–9.

164 See DAN, 18.

madhalla ('death [instead of] abjectness').¹⁶⁵ Both terms frequently feature in DĀ'ISH discourse and are linked to the famous revolutionary maxims of the Arab uprisings. Versified field-specific diction creates novel formulas and slogans for the jihadist group, which gains currency by mechanical repetition in other forms of discourse until the signification becomes part of the shared collective memory within the jihadist group. In doing so, DĀ'ISH stimulates the process of normalization, whereby novel ideas and actions represented in the form of collocations come to be taken for granted or 'natural' by its followers.

Male members who escaped from DĀ'ISH territory are humiliated and reminded of the values they once owned:

1. كُنْتُ حُرّاً شَامِخَ الرَّأْسِ أَيْبَانًا فِي بِلَادٍ زَادَهَا الْمَوْلَى مَزَايَا¹⁶⁶

1. You were free, with a lofty head, defiant,
in lands which the Lord increased with excellence.

In ancient Arabic customs, literal uprightness was an expression of moral uprightness and masculinity. In DĀ'ISH discourse, it often manifests itself in synonymous terms like *al-shāmikh*, *al-'ulā*, and *al-mā'ālī*. The orientational metaphors of 'up' and 'down' frequently recur in DĀ'ISH discourse.¹⁶⁷ The societal fields that are considered prestigious in the Arabic-Islamic tradition include social and physical features. Status and virtue, for instance, are correlated with social power and physical power, and are both represented as being 'up.' Being virtuous is to act in accordance with the standards set by the society. Contrarily, low status, and depravity are regarded as 'down.' Goodness or well-being is also considered as 'up,' and its antagonistic binary such as depravity is 'down.' Islam and its derivatives such as 'truth' (*al-ḥaqq*) and 'jihad' are also represented as 'up,' whereas any other form of religious or political allegiances is considered as 'down.'

In DĀ'ISH discourse, individuals of morally correct character tend to be portrayed as being 'high' or 'upright.' On the contrary, the out-group takes on metaphors that infer lowliness. One example is versified as follows:

1. أَمْتِي كَانَتْ لَا تَرْضَى الْوَهْنِ أُمَّةٌ كَانَتْ مِنْ خَيْرِ الْأُمَمِ
2. هَمُّهَا دِينٌ لَا هَمَّ النَّعَمِ هَمُّهَا يَبْسُمُو وَيَعْلُو لِلْقَمَمِ
3. يَوْمَ كَانَ الصَّحْبُ يَرْجُونَ لِلْجَنَانِ كَانَتْ الدُّنْيَا لَهُمْ تَحْتَ الْقَدَمِ¹⁶⁸

165 This term even occurred as a keyword in a chant. See also "ughniyatu al-mawti wa-lā-l-madhalla,"

YouTube video, 2:21, September 1, 2011, accessed April 30, 2018,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUK6f3luKmw>.

166 For the complete chant, see Appendix A.12.

167 The term 'orientational metaphors' and its 'up' and 'down' dimensions is derived from the seminal work by George Lakoff, and Mark Johnson. See George Lakoff, and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 14ff.

168 For the complete chant, see Appendix A.8.

1. My Muslim community was not satisfied with the weakness,
the community was among the best communities,
2. It cared about religion and not luxuries,
it cared about being exalted and rising to the top,
3. When the companions [of the Prophet] were looking for paradise,
the whole world was under their feet.

The Islamic polity is described as being engaged in rising higher, especially when the world was at a low place. Diction such as ‘jihad,’ ‘Islam,’ ‘truth,’ and imagery attributed to it, including ‘light,’ ‘up,’ ‘life,’ and ‘death’ resonate among a Muslim populace due to their reverberations with the Islamic ethos. Among the teachings attributed to the son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad called ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 661CE), there is a passage which encapsulates these themes:

Islam is the foundation of truth (*al-ḥaqq*), and truth is the road of right guidance (*al-hudā*). Clasp its hand results in a beautiful reward, and its brilliance bestows nobility (*al-majd*). Its path is pit, its sun bright, its road illuminated, its lamp burning, its goal high (*raḥī‘ al-ghāya*), its course true, its jewels countless. It is ancient in the counting of years, an arena where the prize can be won, or a painful chastisement received. It is the objective of the truthful. Its proof is clear, its eminence great, and its champions noble (*karīm al-fursān*). Its path is faith (*al-imān*), its provision piety (*al-taqwā*), its road good deeds, its lamp chastity, its champions the pious, its end death (*wa-l-mawt ghāyatihi*), its racecourse this world, its arena the day of resurrection, its prize paradise, and its punishment hellfire (*wa-l-nār naq-matihi*). The wretched are debased (*khidhlān*) by their continued disobedience to God... Faith guides you to deeds, deeds guide you to piety, piety makes you heed death, and death will end this world... Faith, Ibn Qays, stands on four pillars: forbearance (*al-ṣabr*), conviction (*al-yaqīn*), justice (*al-‘adl*), and struggle against the evil (*jihād*).¹⁶⁹

In DĀ‘ISH discourse, ancient values are exploited to generate obedience from the in-group, especially because culturally embedded lexicon deeply seated in the Bedouin and Islamic ethos delineates the distinction between the past and the present. Jihadist groups do not create new terminology to disseminate their political goals, but they present their political worldview in culturally resonant symbols that are already meaningful to a predominantly Muslim audience in a favourable way. Frequently used terms such as Islam, Shari‘a, jihad, and truth, which are valued dearly in DĀ‘ISH discourse due to their religious overtones, are semantically flexible and allocate space for different symbolic associations. Although these terms are derived from an Islamic repertoire and also feature in Islamic texts, their meaning is manufactured and controlled by DĀ‘ISH. Controlling the signification of strategic words is crucial for a jihadist organization like DĀ‘ISH to claim control over Islamic public discourse. The degree of self-identification, self-naming, and self-representation has been reshaped by jihadist groups, which removed terms like jihad from their multi-dimensional location and gave them a

169 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 132–5.

restrictive meaning. In this process, the signification of these terms is also redefined by the group. DĀ'ISH recontextualized and simulated the generic meaning behind these values on the modern-day battlefield, whereby titles of nobility are attributed to jihadist members who die in battle or exhibit complete obedience to the ideology of DĀ'ISH.

Appropriated terms from the tradition convey multiple meanings, which lead to ambiguity. On the one hand, ambiguity results from the diachronic evolution of the terms. On the other hand, it is partly due to their appearance in Islamic texts, which conferred upon these terms divine and mythic power.¹⁷⁰ For this reason, the flexible meaning allows organizations like DĀ'ISH to orchestrate a culturally guided interpretation by resorting to a farrago of self-serving facts and selective religious allusions aligned with the group's political goals. By invoking culturally and historically resonant lexicon, the ideology of DĀ'ISH becomes considered as supposedly authentic because it is assumed to be time-honoured and stimulated by religious and historical immunity. This immunity, in turn, helps to legitimate its political motives.

Jihad is one of the core terms that has been manipulated by different ideologies. The original religious signification of jihad is located with the Prophet Muhammad, who reminded his followers to engage in the *jihād al-naḥs* or the conscious engagement to bring a positive change, which was regarded as the more significant form of jihad (*jihād al-akbar*).¹⁷¹ The 'jihad of the sword' (*jihād al-sayf*), which allowed – in certain limited situations – the physical combat with the sword, was considered as the lesser jihad (*jihād al-aṣghar*) or a "battle...holy war against the infidels as a religious duty."¹⁷² The dimension of spiritual exertion, as prioritized by the Prophet in the Islamic tradition, lost its usage among jihadists. Jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH latch onto the narrow meaning of the lesser jihad, and in doing so, these groups also set their own reinterpret jihad in militant terms, which came to mean the killing of oneself or the out-group for the grand narrative of the jihadist group. The apparent process of semantic and theological narrowing of the lesser jihad as the only means of jihad has not only become part of the jihadist rhetoric and ideology, but its usage also holds sway in international media. In contemporary times, the term jihad and its derivatives have become irrecoverably linked to violence because the jihadist ideological stream has succeeded in dominating its reconfigured meaning globally.

Poetry plays a fundamental role in disseminating the novel meaning of vital Islamic terms such as jihad. In the following example, jihad is adduced to the concept of life and death. On the one hand, jihad is depicted as life, and it is equated with God. On the other hand, the ultimate act attributed to jihad is to be fulfilled by death, transferring the performers of jihad from the temporal world to paradise. The notion of performing and

170 This strategic vagueness is also made possible through other rhetorical devices, including the generic simplification of the world into 'us' and 'them,' the in-group and out-group. See also the poem *Burn Them!* in section 5.2.2.

171 Lisān al-'Arab defines the roots of jihad as making "an effort or investing one's energy, whether in speech or action." See LISĀN, *j-h-d*.

172 WEHR, *j-h-d*.

dying for the sake of jihad subtly reinforces the jihadist meaning over the term. An example of this appears versified in *kāmil* metre:

أُبغِي الجِهَادَ هُوَ الحَيَاةُ هُوَ الهِنَا
أُبغِي الجِهَادَ وَشَعَلْتِي فِيهِ السَّنَا

1. أُبغِي الجِهَادَ هُوَ السَّبِيلُ الجَنَّتِي
2.¹⁷³ أُبغِي الجِهَادَ وَخَيْلُ رَبِّي صَهَوْتِي

1. I yearn to perform jihad; it is the way to my paradise,
I yearn to perform jihad; it is life, it is our God,
2. I yearn to perform jihad, and the horse of my Lord is my horseback,
I yearn to perform jihad, and my torch enlightens it.

The repetition of the phrase *abghiy l-jihād* in the first-person singular serves as a mantra, which portrays the reciter's absolute determination to obey the commands of DĀ'ISH.

Affiliation with the Arabic-Islamic tradition is facilitated by projecting jihad in terms of imagery that has long been connected to Islam, including metaphors depicting Islam as high-standing and light-bearing, as epitomized in the following poem versified in *kāmil* metre:

نورٌ تَأَلَّقَ كالجُمانِ
نارٌ عَلَى جُنْدِ الهَوَانِ
عَنْ حَالِ شَبَلٍ كَكَيْفَ كَانُ
حَمْرَاءَ تُهْمِي فِي جِنَانُ

1. يَا شَبَلُ إِنَّ جِهَادَكُمْ
2. هُوَ فِي المَسَارِ مَنَارَةٌ
3. وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَ جِهَادَنَا
4.¹⁷⁴ فَسَتَسْتَدِرُّ دُمُوعَهُ

1. O cub, indeed, your jihad
is light that illuminates like the pearl,
2. He is a minaret on the path,
fire over the soldiers of humiliation,
3. As if you asked our jihad
about the situation of the cub,
4. Then you will evoke his blood tears
flowing in sincere sympathy.

Another attribution of jihad in jihadist discourse is jihad as a source of light. Jihad serves as a guiding light for the in-group and punishment in the form of fire for the out-group. The out-group is identified by an ambiguous value word attributed to a noun (*jund al-hawān*). The light-bearing metaphors are extended to Islam, Shari'a, and DĀ'ISH, subtly reinforcing the idea that these terms are synonymous:

وَمِشكَاةُ الهِدَايَةِ وَالْكَمَالِ
وَبَاءٌ بِخِزْبِهِ الكُفْرُ المُنْذَالِ

1. شَرِيْعَتُنَا المَنَارَةُ وَالمِثَالُ
2.¹⁷⁵ هِيَ الحَقُّ الَّذِي رَهَقَ الدِّيَابِجِي

173 See DAN, 16.

174 See DAN, 60.

175 For the full chant, see Appendix A.5.

1. Our Shari‘a is the minaret and the model,
the lantern of guidance and perfection,
2. It is the truth which has made darkness perish,
and win over the shameful disbelief and disgrace.

The vagueness attributed to the term jihad is strategic because it allocates for distortion and misrepresentation; it permits contradictory, counterfactual, and incompatible statements to exist concurrently. At the same time, it also omits details that differ from the true tenets of Islam. In return, this vagueness helps the jihadist group to seek popularity, and to incorporate disparate groups in the in-group, to promote internal solidarity, to generate compliance, and to garner support against a shared out-group. The selective interpretation and reconstruction of resonant symbols from the past hailed as ‘traditions’ to convey current political messages and commands may help jihadists like DĀ‘ISH to create their own jihadist paradigm that may be novel. The reinterpreted signification of these values becomes entrenched in the jihadist code of behaviour and identity among the jihadist social fabric by permeating both the private and public discourse.

3.2.3. The Ideological Function of Iconography

DĀ‘ISH discourse permeates the private livelihoods and the public functions of a populace living in the jihadist territories. The symbolic discourse of DĀ‘ISH is equally evident in the semiotic representation of the group’s iconography. Jean Gottmann considers iconography as the sum of beliefs, symbols, images, ideas that are inherited by a community, and to which its members show a profound attachment.¹⁷⁶ Unique iconographic representations for the jihadist group contribute towards the construction of a collective identity that identifies DĀ‘ISH from among other jihadist groups. Iconographic artefacts created by DĀ‘ISH serve as a robust framework to reinforce the group’s identity, its political beliefs, and its foundation of an alleged ‘Islamic caliphate,’ rallying people to its cause. The underlying political statement of creating a caliphate is similar to the pledge made by the pan-Arab nationalism of a united Arab world.

Although the geographical location of the supposed caliphate is neither delimited to a specific area nor is it restricted to the Arabic-speaking countries, the jihadist quest for the creation of territory requires propagandistic mechanisms in the symbolic world akin to the strategies employed by pan-Arab nationalist politicians in the creation of a nation. Subsequently, an Arabic-speaking community would have already been exposed to the discursive and semiotic strategies exploited by jihadist groups through other more mainstream ideologies. Eszter Salgó argues that the process of creating a nation requires the nation to be “personified, symbolized, materialized, and performed through various aesthetic artefacts like national anthems, flags, memorials, museums, visual art, literature, songs, dance, poetry, films, landscapes, etc...”¹⁷⁷ The repetitive occurrence of

176 Sergei Matjunin, “The New State Flags as the Iconographic Symbols of the Post-Soviet Space,” *GeoJournal*, Iconographies 52, no. 4 (2000), 311.

177 Eszter Salgó, *Images from Paradise: The Visual Communication of the European Union’s Federalist Utopia* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 92.

semiotic symbolism in propaganda material contributes to the creation of the organization's 'external face.'¹⁷⁸ In return, these verbal, visual, and acoustic aesthetic tools aid in legitimating the notion of a nation-state by indoctrinating its subscribers through its channels. In the case of DĀ'ISH, the aesthetic artefacts are not only instrumentalized to create a novel nation under the pretence of an 'Islamic caliphate,' but also to gain currency among the Arabic-speaking audience which still shares the belief of uniting people by creating a territory which represents the Arabic-cum-Islamic cultures and traditions.

Semiotic symbolism underlying DĀ'ISH iconography is an epitome of the totalizing force of the group's strategic discourse. Similar to the group's discourse, iconography is also wrapped up with past messages which are reinterpreted to fit a modern jihadist worldview. Flags, for instance, are central because they provide the viewers with "a view of an organization's self-conception" and are generally used by movements "to distil politics and ideology into a visual expression of identity."¹⁷⁹ In the case of DĀ'ISH, the symbolic representation of the black flag, which has become the insignia of the group, is meant to evoke past battles fought by Islam's earliest generations that transformed the Islamic community in a powerful and expansive empire.¹⁸⁰ The symbolic representation of a flag is modelled on the notion of creating a transnational Islamic community in the footsteps of the Abbasid caliphate. In a Prophetic Tradition narrated by Anas b. Mālik, it is said that upon the death of the flag bearer, another warrior was obliged to take charge of the flag, moving from Zaid to Ja'far to 'Abdallah b. Rawāha to Khālid b. al-Walīd until the flag bearer was eventually victorious.¹⁸¹ Historically, the black flag was the battle flag used by the Prophet.

Consequently, after the Prophet's death, the black flag gained currency on the battlefield and in military expeditions; it became intimately linked with the Abbasid dynasty.¹⁸² It was used by the eighth-century leader of the Abbasid revolution known as Abū Muslim as an iconographic representation of his revolt and battle against the Umayyad caliphate.¹⁸³ The black colour symbolized mourning for the martyrs, and of their family,

178 See also Alan Finlayson, "Ideology and Political Rhetoric," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, eds. Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent, and Marc Stears (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 197.

179 Afshon Ostovar, "The Visual Culture of Jihad," in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 87.

180 Ostovar, "The Visual Culture of Jihad," 88.

181 See also *Book of Fighting for the Cause of Allah (Jihād)*, book Bukhari, *Hadith* 56, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/56#>.

182 Classical Arab writers narrate that the flag of the prophet was black, referred to as *al-'uqāb*. *Al-'uqāb* is a type of bird similar to an eagle that lives on the mountains and is said to eat only the meat caught by itself. This bird is also known to be a 'bone breaker' with very sharp sight and strong claws. It is also narrated that the flag was in the form of a square, made from wool. The Muslim profession of faith (*al-shahāda*) was written on it. See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (Cairo: Dār al-kutub wa-l-wathā'iq al-qawmiyya, 2002), 2132.

183 Lianne Kennedy Boudali, Afshon Ostavar, and Jarret Brachman, *Islamic Imagery Project: Visual Motifs in Jihadi Internet Propaganda* (West Point: Combating Terrorism Centre, 2006), 95.

the Hashamites, as a sign of reproach directed against the Umayyads who had killed them. It was for this reason that the Abbasids were called ‘the black ones’ (*al-musawwida*).¹⁸⁴ The Abbasids’ choice of black banners and black costumes as the official symbol of the caliphate created an unprecedented battleground that engendered a new kind of warfare propaganda. At that time, opposing camps started adopting banners and symbols that were pretentiously based on Islamic foundations for the sake of legitimacy, but ultimately in the service of their respective political beliefs.¹⁸⁵

The usage of black banners in the history of Islam was linked to the dissemination of prophetic traditions (hadith) of a messianic nature.¹⁸⁶ In contemporary warfare, it has come to represent righteous and legitimate jihad.¹⁸⁷ In modern mainstream ideologies, the blackness of the flag is often employed “as a colour of protest, both within the Islamic world and more globally.”¹⁸⁸ Outside the jihadist context, the black flag has resonated with popular protest and Islamic authenticity:

Its distinctive design might be seen as capturing a certain Islamic cultural authenticity, and its stark black and white colouring corresponds well to conceptions of protests and revolt, both within Islamic history and more globally. The flag appeared as a symbol of Islamist resistance and protest across parts of the Middle East during the Arab Spring...As such, the flag has served not only as an official marker of the Islamic State and al-Qaida affiliates, but also as a symbol of revolutionary Islamist protest in the Middle East and North Africa.¹⁸⁹

The black flag is used by multiple jihadist organizations such as Taliban, al-Qa‘ida, and Jabhat al-Nusra.¹⁹⁰ Notwithstanding the similarities between Salafi-cum-jihadist flags, DĀ‘ISH flag is distinctive in its design, facilitating the group’s identification in jihadist propaganda videos, on the battlefield, and the news. The choice of a black banner by the self-ascribed emir of DĀ‘ISH is outlined in an essay entitled ‘The Significance of the Banner in Islam’ (*mashrū‘iyyat al-rāya fī l-islām*).¹⁹¹ This document alludes to religious and historical texts to substantiate the organization’s image. The same

184 See also Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, vol. II, 48–52.

185 Khalil Athamina, “The Black Banners and the Socio-Political Significance of Flags and Slogans in Medieval Islam,” *Arabica* 36, no. 3 (1989), 307.

186 Athamina, “The Black Banners and the Socio-Political Significance of Flags and Slogans in Medieval Islam,” 307.

187 Ostovar, “The Visual Culture of Jihad,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 88.

188 Ostovar, “The Visual Culture of Jihad,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 91.

189 Ostovar, “The Visual Culture of Jihad,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 91.

190 Mustazah Bahari, and Muhammad Haniff Hassan, “The Black Flag Myth: An Analysis from Hadith Studies,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 6:8, September 2014, accessed January 24, 2018, <https://counterideology2.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/article-the-black-flag-myth-ctta-2014.pdf>.

191 “A Religious Essay Explaining the Significance of the Banner in Islam” (West Point: Combating Terrorism Centre, 2006), accessed April 10, 2017, <https://ctc.usma.edu/harmony-program/a-religious-essay-explaining-the-significance-of-the-banner-in-islam-original-language-2/>.

jihadist report even includes a poetic citation from a highly influential work called ‘The Book of Clarity and Clarification’ (*Kitāb al-bayān wa-l-tabyīn*), in which the medieval Arab litterateur makes references to *al-‘uqāb* following the *khafīf* metre:

1. هَوْنَةٌ فِي الْعَنَانِ تَهْتَرُ فِيهِ
كَاهْتِرَازِ الْقَنَاةِ تَحْتَ الْمُقَابِ¹⁹²

1. The easiness by which clouds shudder in the sky
is like the shaking of the spear under the banner.

The Islamic ethos is additionally transmitted by adding the Islamic testimony known as *al-shahāda* on the group’s black flag. The testimony which states that ‘there is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God’ reinstates the group’s attempt to seek legitimacy by exploiting Islamic symbols. Pledging allegiance to DĀ’ISH is thereby portrayed in the symbolic world of the jihadist group as pledging allegiance to Islam. The group’s political undercurrent is masked behind Islamic symbolism, making it difficult for the audience to distinguish between joining DĀ’ISH and converting to Islam. Especially in the case of recruits, joining DĀ’ISH is advertized as joining Islam. Alternatively, the Muslim population is subtly coerced to acknowledge and join DĀ’ISH by reminding them to uphold their Islamic testimony in front of God. References to the flag of DĀ’ISH do not feature exclusively on propagandistic videos, but also appear in poetry. One of the chants, entitled *The Banner of Monotheism*, is dedicated to the banner of DĀ’ISH:

1. رَايَةُ التَّوْحِيدِ شَقِيءٌ الْعَيْبَا
وَأَنْشَرِي الْحَقَّ بِأَرْجَاءِ الدُّنَى¹⁹³
وَأُخْرِي اللَّيْلِ وَشُعِي كَوْكَبَا
أَبْقِضِي الشَّرْقَ وَأُحِي الْمَغْرِبَا

1. O banner of monotheism, slit open the darkness,
rout the night, and shine like a star,
2. Spread truth in the expanse of the world,
Wake up the east and give new life to the west.

Another aesthetic element that contributes to the jihadist identity propagated by DĀ’ISH is the creation of a new currency based on Islamic coins. Throughout the ages, numismatic iconography has featured in the construction and branding of a nation as well as in the creation of imagined communities. In medieval times, the minting of coins tended to emphasize the religious and political character of the Islamic caliphate. Hugh Kennedy argues that the currency was witness to the caliph’s authority. The ability to mint coins and inscribe the ruler’s name on them (known as *sikka*) became one of the critical indicators of sovereignty and Islamic leadership.¹⁹⁴ The process of minting

192 Al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, 7th edition, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, vol. 3 (Cairo: Maktabat al-khānjī, 1998), 69.

193 See Appendix A.14.

194 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 48.

currencies is a power-wielding exercise, and the engraving often portrays the ideological underpinning of the movement governing the country.¹⁹⁵

The functions of coinage are multi-fold and include constructing a particular identity, seeking legitimacy, propagating the organization's ideology, and celebrating religious and historical events. Identity is reinforced in the semiotic world of Arabic-cum-Islamic organizations by resorting to ancient symbolism associated with Islam. Past caliphates in the Arabic-Islamic culture used coinage to strengthen the collective identity. This is often created by depicting commonly accepted symbols connected to shared Islamic values and historical heritage such as courage, piety, justice, military prowess, and the knowledge of the Qur'an. In modern scholarship, Islamic coins had also served as a source of reconstructing history, especially when other primary sources were unavailable.¹⁹⁶

The minting of coinage symbolizes power and thus is tightly connected to the ability to reign effectively. References to the currency of DĀ'ISH are made in the fifth issue of the English online magazine known as *Dabiq* published in December 2014. The article entitled *The Currency of the Khilafah* revolves around the organization's intention to mint the first series of coins to be used in the territory under its control;¹⁹⁷ the metals and weights chosen in accordance with the Qur'an¹⁹⁸ and the hadith.¹⁹⁹ The article is accompanied by a detailed video explaining the reasons behind the introduction of a new currency thoroughly.²⁰⁰ The currency, which is purportedly based on the original dinar coins used during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān in 634 CE, serves as an attempt to bring back the gold dinar, silver dirham, and copper *fals* that were in circulation during the medieval Islamic empire. In the case of DĀ'ISH, the minting of a novel currency system dictates a complete break from Western monetary systems. It contributes to the group's hegemonic project based on the continual actualization of the past. The creation of a new currency system bolsters the organization's legitimacy and its position among the Salafi-cum-jihadist power relations. An independent currency also realizes and supports the group's claim to sovereignty. No other militant jihadist organization has thus far undertaken the initiative to create its own currency.

The images minted on the coins are of religious, historical, and political relevance. The images depict various ideological facets related to the re-establishment of an alleged global caliphate modelled on previous Islamic caliphates that flourished during

195 See also Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, vol. II, 54ff.

196 See also Stefan Heidemann, "Numismatics," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Volume 1, The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 648–63.

197 "Remaining and Expanding," in *Dabiq* no. 5 (November 2014): 18–9, accessed July 30, 2018, <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/the-islamic-state-e2809cdc481biq-magazine-522.pdf>.

198 See Qur'an, 17:35.

199 "Remaining and Expanding," 18.

200 See also "The Rise of the Caliphate and the Return of the Gold Dinar," accessed February 26, 2018, <https://ia801305.us.archive.org/3/items/TheRiseOfTheKhilafahAndTheReturnOfTheGoldDinar/The%20Rise%20of%20the%20Khilafah%20and%20the%20Return%20of%20the%20Gold%20Dinar%20.mp4>.

the Islamic Golden Age.²⁰¹ The magazine *Dabiq* reports that the monetary system is based on the coinage created by the ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 685–705 CE)²⁰² – the fifth caliph of the Umayyad caliphate.²⁰³ Historically, ‘Abd al-Malik remains known as the founder of the first Islamic state. The process of Arabicization took place under the ruling of ‘Abd al-Malik and al-Walīd, whereby Arabic became the language of the public registers, and Arabic coinage was minted for the first time.²⁰⁴ During his time in power, ‘Abd al-Malik instituted a purely Islamic coinage and Arabized the administration of the empire in Damascus (965 CE).²⁰⁵

In many ways the caliphates of Abd al-Malik and his son Walīd I represent the high-water mark of caliphal power and prestige. He was deputy of God on earth, commander of the army, leader of the Muslims in *jihād* and *hajj*, minter of coins, chief judge and law-maker. Only his obligations to God and his deference to the stipulations of the Qur’ān meant that his powers were more restricted than those of the most absolute Roman emperor.²⁰⁶

‘Abd al-Mālik’s Islamic figure is vital because he ruled a caliphate that functioned as a theocratic state, deriving its legitimacy from God. At the heart of ‘Abd al-Mālik’s theocratic state was a religious office, which made him one of the divinely guided rulers. The lineage of divinely guided caliphs could be traced back to Adam, who is the first person to be named Caliph according to the Qur’an.²⁰⁷ ‘Abd al-Mālik’s legacy crystallized the notion that ideas about rulership and belief should not be restricted to conventional media but should be broadcast widely using other non-conventional media such as coins, passports, and tax documents to reach varied audiences. One of his still-standing and most significant achievements is the architectural site known as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.²⁰⁸ This notion functioned as dynastic propaganda, playing a significant role in projecting several interlocking more significant ideas about the state, dynasty, order, and God.²⁰⁹

Numismatics are mobilized by DĀ‘ISH propagandists to project the group’s novel ideological worldview. The five-dinar coin visualizes a map of the globe that outlines the territory belonging to the self-proclaimed *umma*, including Constantinople, Rome, and America. The copper ten-fils coin portrays the Muslim crescent representing the *hijri* calendar that is visible on the flags of Muslim countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia. The ten-dirham coin shows al-Aqsa mosque, which is the third holiest site for Muslims. The jihadist message is intended to reach the global Islamic community. The portrayal of al-Aqsa mosque illustrates the transnational political

201 “Remaining and Expanding,” 19.

202 “Remaining and Expanding,” 18.

203 See also Chase F. Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2012).

204 Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 217.

205 Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 217.

206 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 52.

207 Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik*, 73.

208 Kennedy, *Caliphate*, 49.

209 Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik*, 73.

ambitions of DĀ'ISH, namely to engage in the struggle to liberate Jerusalem from the perceived infidels. The exploitation of these culturally resonant icons reinforces the group's continual attempt to associate itself with mainstream Islamic culture.

In addition to the coins which explicitly allude to the Islamic tradition, there are also coins that have an Iraqi-Syrian local character. According to DĀ'ISH, these coins depict "an image of seven stalks of wheat, symbolising the blessings of sadaqah, a spear, and shield, symbolising the Muslim's provisions from jihad, and date palm trees, symbolising the Muslim's deep-rooted faith, firm patience, and fruitful deeds."²¹⁰ The engraved palm trees on the twenty-*fiils* copper coin represent the national symbol of Iraq. The wheat stalks on the one-dinar gold coin serve as a traditional symbol of economic growth also used by the regimes in Iraq and Syria. The Damascene lighthouse that appears on the five-dirham silver coin is also symbolic of a Prophetic Tradition, which claims that Jesus will return to Earth to defeat the Antichrist (*dajjāl*).²¹¹ The symbolic references linked to the Iraq-Syria region reasserts this geographical area as the chosen homeland for the group.

By exerting full control over the symbolic world of the jihadist group, DĀ'ISH maintains control over the external face of the organization. Iconographic and language-based examples epitomize the tactful manipulation of Islamic symbols by DĀ'ISH to coerce the behaviour and action of its populace. In its reinterpretation of symbols borrowed from the Islamic tradition, DĀ'ISH presents an anachronistic worldview that equates past Islamic battles with modern-day warfare. The mobilization of strategic discourse and iconographic symbolism ensures that the private life and public sphere of its audience are dominated in their entirety by the organization's constant messaging.

210 "Remaining and Expanding," 18.

211 Ofir Winter, "The Currency of the Islamic State: The Political and Symbolic Significance of an Economic Move," *INSS Insight* 639, December 7, 2014, accessed January 26, 2018, <http://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/systemfiles/No.%20639%20-%20Ofir%20for%20web.pdf>.

Chapter Four

The Hallmarks of DĀ'ISH Poetry in the Jihadist Milieu

4.1. Retooling the Classical Arabic Ode

From the offset, our discussion about Arabic poetry must take into consideration the etymological significance of two dominating terms, that is, *shi'r* and *qaṣīda*. Firstly, the roots *sh- 'r* signify 'to learn or understand intuitively...to perceive, feel, sense,' highlighting two crucial concepts of Arabic poetry, namely, intuition and feeling or perception. By definition, *shi'r* seems to be driven by the spontaneous and free-flowing energy of emotions. The Tunisian poet and literary critic Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. 1063 CE) argues in his seminal work *al-Umda* that a poet is called a *shā'ir* because he perceives what others do not.¹ Historically speaking, poets in Arab societies are known to be endowed with unique abilities. Poets were considered as:

those who are knowledgeable (*shā'ir*), first of all about the traditions of their tribe which are to be used in war. They possessed a supernatural, magical knowledge and, because of their faculty, were held to be a kind of oracle of the tribe and, in the pre-Islamic period, were sometimes accorded to the institutional dignity of *kāhin*, "seer," "diviner" or "soothsayer."²

The title of a *shā'ir* only suits the poet in the real and not in the figurative sense if the poet manages to conceive a concept or invents one, or to embellish an expression, or to give it an original twist, or to expand the concepts others treated wrongly, or to shorten the expressions others made excessively long, or to use an idea in a different way than it had been used before.³ Secondly, the term *qaṣīda* is derived from the verb *qaṣada* meaning 'to aspire...to intend, to have in mind...to purpose,' connoting that its derivative *qaṣīda* is more linear, intentional and purposeful.⁴ Unlike the free verse (*shi'r ḥurr*), the well-defined *qaṣīda* does not deal with individuality. It does not enter the realm of each particular person, and it does not give vent to one's feelings and emotions as an individual, but it serves as a communal expression of the tribe, group, or society. The term *shi'r* seems to be connected with the realm of irrationality and emotions, while the *qaṣīda* appears to be driven by rationality and strategy.

For the purpose of this work, modern variants of the *qaṣīda* in the jihadist milieu are understood in light of Qudāma b. Ja'far's definition, that is, "metrical rhymed speech

1 Vincente Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age: Selection of Texts Accompanied by a Preliminary Study*, vol. 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 148–9.

2 Zwettler, *The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry: Its Character and Implications*, 201.

3 See also Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age*, 148–9.

4 LANE, WEHR, *q-ṣ-d*.

expressing a certain meaning.”⁵ This mechanical definition sheds light on the relationship between form (*lafẓ*) and content (*ma'nā*) in classical Arabic poetry, which was extensively discussed among medieval literary critics.⁶ Ibn Rashīq compares the relationship between form (*lafẓ*) and content (*ma'nā*) to the relationship between the body and the soul (*al-lafẓu jismun wa-rūḥuhū al-ma'nā wa-irtibāṭuhu bihi ka-irtibāṭu al-rūḥi bi-l-jismi*).⁷ Medieval poets were thus required to master a complicated set of “interlocking practices, including rhyme, metre, alliteration metaphor, formulas, speech acts, strophes, poetic exchanges, chants, and a host of performance routines.”⁸ The *qaṣīda* makes use of a rigid structure and fixed thematic schemata consisting of a fixed metre, rhyme schemes, poetic genres, and motifs that date back to pre-Islamic times. This shows that the feelings and emotions have been sanctioned by time, religion, tradition, and past generations. In this manner, form and content from the past are amalgamated to reflect and influence the social reality of its modern times.

For over a millennium, the *qaṣīda* has served as a cultural artefact representing and influencing society's norms, emotions, ideas, and behaviour. In the Arabic-Islamic culture, poetry held a revered position because it has ever since resonated with cultural heritage, giving the poetic message an instant flavour of authenticity.⁹ Abū Firās al-Ḥamdḥānī (d. 968 CE) considered poetry as the foundation upon which literature is built. He versifies this claim by contending that:

الشَّعْرُ دِيْوَانُ الْعَرَبِ أَبْدَاءُ وَعُنْوَانُ الْأَكْثَبِ¹⁰

Poetry is always the repertoire of the Arabs,
and the emblem of culture.

This claim is reinstated by Ibn Sallām's timeless assertion that “during pre-Islamic times, poetry was the repository of the knowledge of the Arabs and the ultimate manifestation of their wisdom. They learnt from it and abided by it in their deeds.”¹¹ 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, the second caliph of the Islamic period, also reinstated that:

5 Qudāma b. Ja'far, Abū al-Faraj, *Kitāb naqd al-shi'r*, ed. M. 'A. al-Khafājī (Cairo: Maktabat al-kullīyya al-azhariyya, 1979), 2.

6 For a discussion on form and content among medieval critics, see also KANAZI, 73ff.

7 Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsin al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihi*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), 124.

8 Caton, *Peaks of Yemen I Summon: Poetry as Cultural Practice in a North Yemeni Tribe*, 2.

9 The functional role of poetry in the medieval Arabic-Islamic society has already been investigated among contemporary Arabists. For a discussion on the functions of classical Arabic poetry in medieval times, See also Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*; Gruendler, Klemm, and Winckler, “Arabische Literatur,” in *Islam: Einheit und Vielfalt einer Weltreligion*, 360; Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 3–76; Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 55–88; Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode*, 180–282.

10 Abū Firās al-Ḥamdḥānī, *Dīwān*, 169.

11 “kāna l-shi'r fī l-jāhiliyya 'ind al-'arab dīwān 'ilmihim wa-muntahā ḥikmihim bihi ya'khudūn wa-'alayhi yasīrū.” See Muḥammad b. Sallām al-Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā': ta'līf muḥammad ibn sallām al-jumāhī. Qara'ahu wa-sharāḥahu maḥmūd muḥammad shākīr* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-madanī, 1974), I, 4; Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 57.

كَانَ الشُّعْرُ عِلْمٌ قَوْمٌ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ عِلْمٌ أَصَحَّ مِنْهُ.¹²

Poetry is the science of a people who had no [other] science more veracious.

These claims are seconded by modern scholars of Arabic literature who stress the importance of classical poetry as an integral artefact inextricably linked to the Arabic-Islamic cultures and traditions.¹³

DĀ'ISH poetry makes pervasive references to the Islamic tradition. One of the most intricate issues in our understanding of DĀ'ISH poetry deals with the intersection of the pre-Islamic poetic tradition and Islam.¹⁴ The importance which the *qaṣīda* exerted on the religious and cultural community of the Muslims throughout the Middle Ages and which it continues to exert in modern times is immeasurable. The controversy arising over poetry manifests itself in the Qur'an, which denies categorically that Prophet Muhammad was a poet or that his revelations were some "knowledge of poetry."¹⁵ Critics often argue that 'the Chapter of the Poets' (*surat al-shu'arā*'), especially its last four conflicting verses, speak against the role of poets in Islam. One verse claims that "And the poets - [only] the deviators follow them," whereas another verse states, "Except those [poets] who believe and do righteous deeds and remember Allah often and defend [the Muslims] after they were wronged."¹⁶

Traditions of Muslim scholarship lay equal emphasis on pre-Islamic poetry because it uses the same language in which the Qur'an was revealed.¹⁷ The pre-Islamic poetry was primarily used as a source of reference to explain ambiguous words or concepts (*shawāhīd*) in Islamic texts.¹⁸ Ibn al-Rashīq asserts that Ibn Abbās, a scholar of the Prophet, said: "If you read anything in the book of God and you do not know it [its meaning], then seek its meaning in the poetry of the Arabs, for poetry is the register (*dīwān*) of the Arabs."¹⁹ Qur'anic themes and formulae entered religious poetry as early as the mid-seventh century with Ḥassan b. Thābit (d. before 661 CE).²⁰ Additionally, Prophet Muhammad utilized poetry as a propaganda tool to spread the new religion of

12 Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā*, I, 24.

13 See also Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 3–12; Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 61.

14 The relationship between the classical Arabic ode and Islam has received serious attention from both classical and modern scholars. See also EQ, s.v. "Poetry and Poets."

15 See Qur'an, 36:69.

16 See Qur'an, 26:224, and 26:227. A fruitful discussion can be found in Michael Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto: the Sura of 'The Poets' and the Qur'anic Foundations of Prophetic Authority," in *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition* ed. James L. Kugel (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), 81–2.

17 See also Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 58–60.

18 Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 62–3.

19 Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 61.

20 Beatrice Gruendler, "Abbasid Poets and the Qur'an," in *The Qur'an and Adab: The Shaping of Literary Traditions in Classical Islam*, ed. Nuha Alshaar (London: Oxford University Press, 2017), 137.

Islam,²¹ and he also “enjoyed poetry, cultivated his own poets, and encouraged the Muslims to recite poetry.”²² Ibn al-Rashīq (d. 1063 CE) in *al-'Umda* elucidates the power of poetry, stating that the Prophet used to say “Indeed this group inflicts more damage on the people of Mecca than a hail of arrows could do!” with reference to the poets who supported him and parried against the polytheists on his behalf, like Ḥassān b. Thābit, Ka'b b. Malik and 'Abd Allāh b. Rawāḥa.²³

Modern critics of the *qaṣīda* have argued that during the post-classical era, the importance of the *qaṣīda* began to lose its former zest and spirit after the eleventh century CE due to the changing context of poetry and the unstable world that was brought about by Islam's capacity to maintain an a-racial attitude. The fact that newly converted Muslims were accepted into the community of believers irrespective of their origin of race or colour was not conducive to a continuation of the old stability.²⁴ However, this does not mean that poetry lost its functionality among Arab societies, as the case of DĀ'ISH poetry demonstrates. During the transitional period between classical and modern times, poets resorted to the *qaṣīda* to fulfil different purposes. The Arab grammarian Ibn al-Mālik (d. 1274 CE) compressed the entire Arabic grammar in a poem entitled *al-Alfiyya* (‘the Thousand [verses]’). Likewise, the Moroccan Berber grammarian Ibn Ajarrum (d. 1324 CE) versified the Arabic syntax using Arabic metre in his compendium entitled *al-Ajrumiyya*. To date, these two poems have served as the primary sources of grammar reference in several parts of the Arabic world. In both cases, the ingenuity of poetry lies not in the content which was known to many, but in the artistic expression in which it was constructed. For Arab grammarians, the form of the *qaṣīda* was perceived as a tool with which they could preserve knowledge for future generations.

The influence of poetry and the power of poets should not be underestimated in contemporary warfare propaganda because poetry served as a medium of political propaganda since the pre-Islamic and early Islamic times.²⁵ For over a millennium, poetry has succeeded in “moving [sic.] Arab listeners and readers emotionally, infiltrating [sic.] the psyche and creating [sic.] an aura of tradition, authenticity and legitimacy around the ideologies it enshrines.”²⁶ Historically informed, the notion of using ideological poetry for propagandistic purposes existed in the Arabo-Islamic traditions for multiple centu-

21 See also Johann Christoph Buerger, “Qasīda as Discourse on Power and its Islamization: Some Reflections,” in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, eds. Stefan Sperl, and Christopher Shackle (Leiden: Brill, 1996): 451–74.

22 Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic–Islamic Culture*, 59.

23 Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsīn al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihī*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), 40. Also quoted in Buerger, “Qasida as Discourse on Power and its Islamization: Some Reflections,” in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, 453; Kendall, “Yemen's al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad,” 249.

24 Salma Khadra Jayyusi, “Arabic Poetry in the Post-Classical Age,” in CHALPCP, 27.

25 Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 3–12; Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic–Islamic Culture*, 10.

26 “Poetry ‘Perfect Weapon’ for Recruiting Jihadists—Oxford Study,” *RT International*, December 29, 2015, accessed January 22, 2018, <https://www.rt.com/news/327351-jihadist-poetry-study-oxford/>.

ries. The pre-Islamic poet 'Amr b. Kulthūm (d. 584 CE), for instance, was a fierce propagandist who used to motivate his audience to participate in wars against his tribe. During the Umayyad period, apart from the poetry composed in support of the Umayyad regime, there was another stream of political poetry that dealt with religious and political factions such as the Shi'a, Khawārij, Zubayrids, and others. These movements differed in their ideologies as their poetic compositions can attest. In light of these examples, the instrumentalization of poetry in warfare is not a 'modern' invention limited to militant jihadist movements but stems from a well-established tradition.

In the twenty-first century, the classical ode is still being actively composed and circulated as an ancient mode of mobilization in the jihadist milieu to heighten the emotional impact on a primarily Arabic-speaking audience. The reasons behind the survival of the Arabic ode on the modern-day battlefield are multiple. Firstly, modern *qaṣīda* connects with its recipients because it is deeply linked to the socio-political situation of its time. Hence, DĀ'ISH poetry is not composed purely as *art for art's sake*, but in response to an actual situation often as a result of the stormy socio-historical and political issues at the time of composition. Secondly, DĀ'ISH poetry is not a reflection of how Arabic speakers in the jihadist milieu perceive the world, but it has a more active role in influencing how the world is viewed. Poetry unites people in groups and fosters personality structures that are more communal and externalized. Thirdly, the culture of orality in which the classical ode is birthed also plays a prominent role in its survival on the battlefield. DĀ'ISH poetry is dictated by pre-Islamic orality, whereby the rigid form, which is governed by incessant repetition, contributes towards its practicality on the battlefield. Kendall argues that the classical Arabic ode is an "easy, inexpensive and powerful propagation of ideas through oral transmission."²⁷

By focusing on the function of poetry and poets among jihadists, I do not tend to imply that militant DĀ'ISH poetry should be considered as a historical artefact that represents the multi-ethnic arabophone societies around the world. However, if such importance was laid on classical Arabic poetry in pre-Islamic and Islamic times, DĀ'ISH poetry should, by way of extension, help us decode subtle and strategic messaging based on a long-standing poetic tradition that resonates with an overwhelming majority of the jihadist populace. Our primary concern in outlining the hallmarks of DĀ'ISH poetry is to present an overview of the functionality of this genre of poetry on the modern-day battlefield, indicating the extent of its use. Moreover, the functions of the modern *qaṣīda* in the jihadist milieu need to be contextualized in light of the public function that poetry has always held since pre-Islamic times.

4.2. Classifying DĀ'ISH Poetry as 'Modern,' 'Ideological,' and 'Jihadist'

Stefan Sperl and Christopher Shackle outline four distinct normative sets which represent the evolution of the *qaṣīda*, namely, "the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, rooted in the ancient Arab tribal code; the panegyric *qaṣīda*, expressing an ideal vision of just Islamic gov-

27 Kendall, "Yemen's Al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad," 255.

ernment; the religious *qaṣīda*, imparting different types of commendable religious conduct; and the modern *qaṣīda*, influenced by secular, nationalist, or humanist ideals.”²⁸ These normative sets of poetry, which are composed according to conventional rules and thematic schemata established by medieval Arab poets and critics, have contributed to the development of public discourse in the Arab and Islamic societies.

Of particular interest for our analysis is the modern *qaṣīda* which is characterized by distinct ideological genres, including the neo-classical poetry that dominated the formative years of modern Arabic literature.²⁹ Ideological genres that have become part of the modern *qaṣīda* are conceptualized as “the organizing system that links, in stability, particular ideological and thematic contents with specific expressive structures.”³⁰ Examples of ideological genres include Pan-Arab nationalist poets like Fakhṛī al-Barūdī (d. 1966) and Ibrahīm Tūqān (d. 1941). Arab nationalist poets mobilized poetry to rebuild the Arab civilization by idealizing the concept of an Arab homeland and by pushing forward the Arab legacy and traditions. National anthems of an overwhelming number of Arab countries belong to this category.³¹

The term ‘ideological’ implies that discourse is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the social reality in the jihadist territory. On the contrary, ideological poetry represents the permanent attempt to visualize the organization in light of its political vision, dictating what reality should look like.³² DĀ'ISH poetry cannot be considered as neutral because it outlines, regulates, and strengthens the recipients’ understanding of the social world.³³ Additionally, the choice of poetic language is ideologically and sociologically driven because poets opt for vocabulary and grammar choices, which are consciously or unconsciously “principled and systematic.”³⁴ Thus, the underlying ideology in the poem dictates how people should think, behave, and act.³⁵ In this case, what matters most is

28 Sperl, and Shackle, *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, 4–5.

29 The neo-classical *qaṣīda* was termed *al-qaṣīda al-taqlīdiyya* or *al-qaṣīda al-'amūdiyya* by modern Arab critics. These terms were initially introduced in a monograph by Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Marzūqī (d. 1030), *Sharḥ diwān al-ḥamāsa*, eds. Aḥmad Amīn, and 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn (Cairo, 1951), 9–11.

30 Gian Biagio Conte, *The Rhetoric of Imitation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Virgil and Other Latin Poets* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 147.

31 See section 2.4.

32 Alan Finlayson suggests that political theory of ideologies is not only concerned with its “internal organization of political thinking” but also with its “external face,” namely “with the ways in which political ideas are presented in public, communicated to varied constituencies and made ‘persuasive’.” Finlayson also claims that ideology is not only concerned with its content but also in the form in which propositions are presented and justified. This external face is “not secondary or subordinate to the core propositions of an ideology but is an intrinsic part of the whole.” See Finlayson, “Ideology and Political Rhetoric,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, 197.

33 Frans Wijzen, “‘There are radical Muslims and normal Muslims’: An Analysis of the Discourse on Islamic Extremism,” *Religion* 43, no. 1 (May 2012), 77.

34 Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress, and Tony Trew, *Language and Control* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1979), 185–213.

35 Joseph Daher, *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of the Party of God* (London: Pluto Press, 2016), 1.

not the series of veridical events, but what the organization wants to be recorded and passed on in the collective memory of its audience. In the political sphere, modern cognitive scientists refer to this subjective visualization of reality as 'political framing,'³⁶ arguing that ideological organizations and their propaganda machine speak in frames instead of facts. Poetry is built upon social, political, or historical events (considered as 'factual') and realized in subjective frames reflecting the organization's ideological worldview.

The element of subjectivity has characterized Arabic poetry since the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. For over a millennium, the excellence of Arabic poetry did not depend on the poet's ability to render facts accurately, but on the aesthetic presentation of a specific worldview. The Syrian poet 'Alī Aḥmad Sa'īd Isbir known as Adūnīs (1930–2011) argues that the poet's individuality manifested itself in the manner of expression for the art of poetry lays not in what was said, but in how it was said.³⁷ This statement should be understood in light of the fact that often the pre-Islamic poet spoke about matters that were known to his audience, including their customs and traditions, wars and heroic exploits, victories, and defeats. Poetry in the jihadist milieu is not adopted to implant innovative theological ideas but merely to compound, crystallize and circulate a specific worldview. It is mostly useful in reinforcing and developing ideas that are already known to the audience.

After the 1967 Arab defeat, the *qaṣīda* lost its significance among the Pan-Arab nationalist poets and propagandists. Concurrently, it started gaining currency among anti-establishment groups, which were propagating a radical form of Islam.³⁸ Modern variants of the *qaṣīda* became increasingly militant in tone. These Islam-based ideologies resorted to the public function of the *qaṣīda* as an insignia to legitimate their political authority. Similar to the paradigm of the pan-Arab nationalist ideology, the modern *qaṣīda* became instrumentalized by Islamist and jihadist groups to interpret contemporary events and absorb them into a larger myth of cultural identity based on the Arabic-Islamic traditions. Modern jihadist poetry is a sub-set of the modern *qaṣīda* which distinguishes itself because it is governed by its specific ideology or worldview. Its foundational principles consist of ruling under the laws of God (*taḥkīm bi-shar' allāh*) and the foundation of an Islamic state or caliphate by performing an appropriated form of jihad. In modern parlance, contemporary examples of militant jihadist movements composing poetry include organizations such as al-Qa'ida, Boko Haram, and Anṣār al-Shari'a. This means that ascetic verses composed by jihadist organizations are not intended to celebrate one's faith or to remind oneself of religious duties. On the contrary, religious concepts are appropriated through a jihadist ideological lens.

36 See also Wehling, *Politisches Framing*, 42.

37 Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, 14.

38 The difference between Islamism and Jihadism is discussed in section 1.2. Additionally, examples of modern ideological poetry are given in section 2.4.

4.3. DĀ'ISH poetry as Platform Poetry

In its declamatory structure and overtly political message, DĀ'ISH poetry is defined as 'platform' poetry.³⁹ 'Platform' poetry denotes a simple and straightforward integration of elements drawn from the human lifeworld. The neo-classical form and style of DĀ'ISH poetry are eminently suited for public themes where the poet-composer is continuously aware of the presence of an audience to exhort, instruct, or derive comfort and reassurance from the audience. Two detrimental characteristics that define the success of 'platform' poetry are natural diffusion and the closeness to the human lifeworld. DĀ'ISH poetry engages with discussions about current socio-political phenomena, including recent invasions in the region and the Arab uprisings. Hence, 'platform' signifies that it deals with a current political situation and demands political action. It is considered as contemporary because it is an expression of modern-time warfare, mobilizing the audience to take an active role in the fighting. Although the term 'contemporary' assumes marginal importance, it is crucial to point out that DĀ'ISH poetry is a product emerging out of the current politico-religious cut and thrust of our times.

Like in pre-Islamic and Islamic times, the poetic vision of DĀ'ISH poetry is reduced to the type of expression and formulation able to achieve the fundamental aim of poetry, namely, easy diffusion. This aspect is referred to in the well-known proverbial phrase "as-shi'r asyār, 'poetry goes very far'."⁴⁰ Van Gelder argues that in medieval times, verses of poetry were often injected in society by being deliberately taught to children (*ṣibyān*) known as 'street-Arabs' who would, in return, spread these verses by chanting them repeatedly.⁴¹ Additionally, epigrams were at times written on the walls of the inns to spread a particular message, such as ridiculing an individual.⁴² The circulation of poetry among the populace living in the jihadist milieu pervades the public arena. In the modern context of DĀ'ISH, poetry is injected in the jihadist milieu by its circulation on USB devices, CDs, in group performances, and on social media. It appears on videos accompanying beheadings, speeches by DĀ'ISH leaders, in weekly newspapers and magazines, and on pamphlets. The tradition of producing leaflets, which include poetic verses for circulation, is a conventionalized practice that dates back to medieval times. Van Gelder claims that while "the last Abbasid caliph, al-Musta'ṣim, was idling away his precious time with frivolous entertainment and listening to music rather than trying to save his crumbling little realm from destruction by the Mongols, anonymous pamphlets were slipped through the palace doors with admonishing poetry."⁴³ In the twenty-

39 The term 'platform poetry' is explained in multiple contemporary works about modern Arabic literature. See Marilyn Booth, "Poetry in the Vernacular," in CHALMAL, 481; Paul Starkey, *Modern Arabic Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 45.

40 Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age*, 24.

41 See also Geert Jan Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly: Attitudes Towards Invective Poetry (Hijā') in Classical Arabic Literature*, no. 26 (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 38.

42 Aghānī xviii, 265–9, quoted in Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly*, 29.

43 Geert Jan Van Gelder, "Poetry in Historiography: The Case of *al-Fakhrī* by Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā," in *Poetry and History: The Value of Poetry in Reconstructing Arab History*, eds. Ramzī Ba'labakkī, Ṣāliḥ Sa'īd, Āghā, and Tarif Khalidi (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2011), 64.

first century Jihadism, well-chosen verses, and short poems are regularly posted on social media. In contrast, more concise verses are produced in the form of chants and played on the battlefield. In this sense, DĀ'ISH poetry gains its popularity by being widespread among a mass of like-minded people. Thematically, poetry is often concerned with the daily challenges of ordinary people as opposed to those of a more privileged elite. By claiming that DĀ'ISH poetry is popular, we acknowledge its socio-cultural currency, its resonance with new generations, and a populace that cuts across class, gender, nationalities, ethnicity, and socioeconomic groupings.

Poetry can only be diffused quickly if it is formulated in a structure that resonates with the audience, and it is composed in a language that is understood by everyone. Ideological poetry of modern times, including DĀ'ISH poetry, manifests itself in speech-like language, daily usage, and popular sentiments with no effort to court the classical language and imagery of the *qaṣīda*.⁴⁴ In the case of DĀ'ISH, poetry is culturally appropriated by maintaining the architecture of the traditional poem. However, its language is toned down to be easily understood by a broader populace. This poetry also feeds on lexicon and imagery that have become part of shared collective memory, including the Qur'an and Islamic history. The Qur'an is exploited for its rhetorical and mobilizing power among the recipients, which in turn provides validation and religious immunity akin to the poetic tradition in Islamic times. Historically, medieval poets exploited the rhetorical power of the Qur'an "to argue with and satirise others, or evoked the Qur'an to protect themselves against satire. When poets chose to be offensive, they enhanced the force of their attacks by using the Qur'an as a rhetorical weapon, against which there could be no response."⁴⁵

The target audience is another equally valid criterion for assigning the designation of platform poetry. DĀ'ISH poetry serves as a propagandistic tool, and it is thus oriented in terms of its public. It must be used in a concerted fashion to reach the highest possible number of individuals. The recipients of DĀ'ISH poetry consist of a predominantly youth sub-culture. DĀ'ISH poetry enjoys a broad appeal within a youth audience because it is catchy, it captivates the emotions, passions, and interests of the youth populace, and its soundscape echoes other existing popular artefacts in different cultures.⁴⁶ For this reason, the importance is also laid on the role of aesthetics in perpetuating the jihadist ideology.

44 Muhsin J. Al-Musawi, *Arabic Poetry: Trajectories of Modernity and Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2006), 47.

45 Gruendler, "Abbasid Poets and the Qur'an," 155.

46 Scholars have drawn comparisons between jihadi chants and popular music. See also Claudia Dantschke, "Pop-Jihad: History and Structure of Salafism and Jihadism in Germany," *ISRM working paper series 2* (2013).

4.4. The Musical Component of DĀ'ISH Poetry

The inherent aesthetic characteristics of the *qaṣīda* are at multiple times set to music and presented in the form of a song.⁴⁷ Van Gelder argues that “Arabic poetry, classical or modern must be recited or sung.”⁴⁸ The presence of poetry set to music on the battlefield was underscored several scholars, including the historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406 CE).⁴⁹ Although poetry never depended on music, both music and poetry belong firmly and consciously within an Arab literary and cultural tradition.⁵⁰ In the Arabic and Islamic culture, poetry and music co-existed independently of each other from the outset, but both were strongly linked to their performative element.⁵¹ Although singers and musicians partook in the literary circles, “song did not compete with but complimented poetry, for a singer could make the fame of a poem by setting it beautifully to music.”⁵²

In ancient times, famous poets recited their own poems or asked others to recite their own poetry for them.⁵³ In pre-Islamic Arabia, the notion of performance practice focused on the performer that was usually a slave girl.⁵⁴ Shawqī Ḍayf argues that pre-Islamic poetry was accompanied by chanting (*ghinā'*) and music to the extent that he classifies pre-Islamic poetry as entirely chanted (*fa-huwa shi'ru ghanā'ī tām̄m*).⁵⁵ Iṣḥāq al-Mawṣilī is claimed to have said that the ancient chanting of the Arabs consists of three parts: *naṣb*, *sinād*, and *hazaj* which are usually played following the *tawīl*, *thaqīl*, and *khafīf* respectively.⁵⁶ The *naṣb* is the music played by the riders (*rubbān*) and the singing girls (*qaynāt*), and is usually used for lament. The slow ornate *sinād* consists of a heavy refrain, full of notes (*naghmāt*), and loud voices (*nabrāt*), whereas the exuberant *hazaj* is a light song accompanied by the tambourine (*duff*) and reed-pipe (*mizmar*).⁵⁷ In the case of performance genres, the *qaṣīda* form penned by the poet is not composed to music, but it is only after the production of the verbal text that the *qaṣīda* is handed over to a *mulahḥin* who fabricates tunes.⁵⁸

Anashīd are one of the elements of ‘modernity’ that find resonance with DĀ'ISH poetry. *Anashīd* consist of metred verses composed on the form and structure of the

47 As is customary, an overwhelming majority of Arabic national anthems are mostly sung rather than recited or read out loud in official ceremonies, even though they are penned on the *qaṣīda* form.

48 Jan Van Geert Gelder, *Sound and Sense in Classical Arabic Poetry* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012), 4.

49 See Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, vol. II, 48ff.

50 For a detailed explanation of how music and poetry developed, see Gelder, *Sound and Sense in Classical Arabic Poetry*, 149–62; Wright, “Music and Verse,” in CHALUP, 433–59.

51 For a historical discussion on the development of music and poetry, see also Wright, “Music and Verse,” in CHALUP, 433–59.

52 Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, 8.

53 On the topic of poets reciting their poetry and poets who did not recite poetry, see also ‘Alī al-jundi, *Al-Shu‘arā’ wa-inshād al-shi‘r* (Cairo, 1969), 56–72, and 73–87.

54 Owen Wright, “Music and Verse,” in CHALUP, 438.

55 Shawqī Ḍayf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī: al-‘aṣr al-jāhili* (Cairo: Dār al-ma‘ārif, 1995), 193.

56 Ḍayf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī: al-‘aṣr al-jāhili*, 193.

57 Ḍayf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī: al-‘aṣr al-jāhili*, 193.

58 Caton, *Peaks of Yemen I Summon*, 42.

qaṣīda and are set to battlefield sounds. Metred speech on the battlefield is significant for it imposes regular, predictable pattern that brings tranquility in an environment characterized by a commotion. Modern variants of the classical Arabic ode, especially the innate mnemonic characteristics of the *qaṣīda* including its rhyme, rhythm, metre and other devices of repetition, extend and facilitate the longevity of the message when verses are spread from one person to another. This is especially relevant in war-stricken countries where messages travel mostly by word of mouth rather than in a written form.

Historically informed, jihadist *anāshīd* are a product of the 1970s socio-political climate in the Arab world and have first emerged during the period known as 'the Islamic Awakening' (*al-ṣaḥwa al-islāmiyya*) in Egypt and Syria as a counterculture to the status quo of the time. Chants of political and religious nature were deployed as a tool to spread propaganda and ideological diffusion.⁵⁹ The Islamic Awakening was an anti-establishment movement that was, in principle, engaging in using legitimization mechanisms that could distinguish itself from the Muslim rulers against which it was rebelling. The struggle between the Islamists and the officially recognized government in the Arab and Islamic world has always manifested itself in a cultural struggle which involved its own kind of language and mechanisms of legitimization to discern it from other Islamists and members of the Islamic community.⁶⁰ Among the most famous *munshids* involved with Islamic and political chants include the Syrian nationals Abū Māzin, Abū al-Jūd, Abū Dujāna, and Abū Rātīb.⁶¹

Most scholarly attention was drawn upon Abū Māzin, probably because his chants were collected and published in the form of text in 1984.⁶² Abū Māzin, who was inspired to produce music production as a form of military mobilization, is often regarded as the pioneer in creating the 'modern Islamic chant' (*al-nashīd al-islāmī al-ḥadīth*) in Damascus in the early 1970s.⁶³ Among his famous renditions are poems by Pakistan's spiritual leader named Ibrahīm Iqbāl, the theorist of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood called Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966), and Marwan Ḥadīd (d. 1976). Abū Māzin lived in a time of at least two opposing influences to the chants; firstly, he was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood supporters such as Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī (d. 1964),⁶⁴ and Salafists such as Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1999). These two ideological streams were mostly focused on hadith and Islamic doctrine, forbidding anything that was innovative or resembled western modernity. Secondly, Abū Māzin was also influenced by the campaign launched by the rational and philosophical part of the Islamic Renaissance known as *al-nahḍa*, which was gaining prominence gradually in the Arab-Islamic world. Preachers like

59 Saïd, *Hymnen des Jihads*, 45.

60 Saïd, *Hymnen des Jihads*, 45.

61 Saïd, *Hymnen des Jihads*, 52.

62 Saïd, *Hymnen des Jihads*, 52.

63 Ma3azef, "Ṣawt al-jihād: min al-nahḍa 'ilā l-dawla," *Ma3azef.com*, April 11, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2PACEQn>.

64 Muṣṭafā l-Sibā'ī was the actual founder of the Syrian Brotherhood and took part in the 1948 war in Palestine.

Jawdat Sa'īd (1931–) were focused on establishing a contemporary liberal way of thinking that stemmed from Islamic beliefs. Whereas Salafists dismissed any kind of innovation, the Brotherhood was calling for 'innovation in Islam' by introducing aspects of modern politics. The *al-nahḍa* preachers, on the other hand, were calling for 'innovation by Islam' by extracting modern liberal values from the core of Islamic beliefs.⁶⁵

It is undeniable that the high-tech production of chants has attracted the attention of modern scholars due to their upbeat melodies and pervasive use in the jihadist circles. DĀ'ISH chants demonstrate how Islamic ethical traditions have been recalibrated to a new political and technological order, to its rhythms, noise, its forms of pleasure, and boredom, but also to its political incitements, and its call to active participation. Although chants have been employed for decades by jihadists prior to DĀ'ISH, the high-quality production and ingenious simulations of battlefield sound to compensate for the Salafī ban on musical instruments remain unprecedented. Setting poetic verses to music also popularized the group's appeal among the younger generation. Battlefield sound effects representing the battle ambience, including gun-shots, marching soldiers, and clinking of swords, are zealous, highly provocative, intensely emotional, and especially attractive for the youth culture. The emotive elements of these chants are intended to galvanize support for the group's cause not just from a narrow circle of activists, but also from the broader Muslim public. This is especially relevant because an overwhelming number of fighters joining DĀ'ISH are young adults. Jihadist chants are another manifestation of how traditions are re-interpreted to fit a modern context, whereby poetic verses are presented to the overwhelmingly young public in an aesthetically appealing manner. The cultural product that is widespread in modern-day jihadist milieu is only a new and more refined facet of the ancient *qaṣīda*.

Various components of the jihadist milieu demonstrate that organizations like DĀ'ISH propagate a sociological model of collective experience. This collective sense also depicts a consensual community, giving the impression that the jihadist milieu lacks significant political differences. Chants are a powerful tool in achieving this collective experience that lacks individuality and personal forms of expression. DĀ'ISH chants are performed by males, and the *munshids* are not identified. The anonymity created by the lack of authorship may be guided by the group's strategy to place its attention on the organization rather than individuals. It could also be motivated by the intention of creating a sense of anonymity, whereby DĀ'ISH aligned members and individuals that memorize a chant can easily make it their own. In this sense, no person is intermediating between DĀ'ISH and its followers. The pervasive use of chants played on DĀ'ISH propaganda videos, on the battlefield and online platforms is an exercise of hegemony, whereby the recipients are subtly influenced to follow a specific schema and, by extension, a particular worldview. Once citizens are exposed to chants replete with formulas and repetitive strategies, they become fluent in the symbolic imagery of

65 Ma3azef, "Ṣawt al-jihād: Min al-nahḍa 'ilā l-dawla," *Ma3azef.com*, April 11, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2PACEQn>.

the group's cult. The incessant repetitions of specific key verses appear to be an exhibition of the hegemonic control by DĀ'ISH over the audience. In turn, the chanting of verses also serves as an outward sign of allegiance to DĀ'ISH. Memorizing a chant and reciting it becomes a passive form of conformity in that members of the group do not actively attempt to influence others. Remembering chants demonstrates the willingness of individuals to adopt a particular behaviour to place themselves in a satisfying relationship with DĀ'ISH. Chants are instrumentalized to change one's behaviour subtly and unconsciously to fit the current social norms imposed by DĀ'ISH.

4.5. The Quality of DĀ'ISH Poetry

One of the most pertinent discussions about DĀ'ISH poetry centres around its quality. The classification of poetry into different categories of quality was commonly debated among medieval scholars. Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī (d. 845 CE) was among the first scholars to attribute professional knowledge (*ṣinā'a*) and skill (*thaqāfa*) to poetry.⁶⁶ He likened the skills required in distinguishing between good and great poetry to the assayer (*nāqid*) who picks out (*jahbadha*) the sound dirham. In an anecdote narrated in *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'*, Ibn Sallām claims that when Khalaf b. Ḥayyān al-Aḥmar was told, "if I hear poetry and I admire it, then I am not concerned with what you and your people say about it," Khalaf replied, "if you took a Dirham that you thought is good, and then the assayer told you it cannot be exchanged, then does your liking it do you any good?"⁶⁷ Ibn Sallām emphasized that neither its colour nor its touch, its weld, its appearance, its engraving, or its description define whether a coin is good or bad. Only an assayer may recognize and distinguish real coins from ones made of fake silver (*bah-raj*), forged (*zā'if*), coated with the silver of copper (*sattūq*) and moulded but not coined or minted (*mufragh*) through a direct examination (*mu'āyana*).⁶⁸ Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. 1063 CE) argues that the distinction between 'great poetry' and other poetry may be divided into four categories depending on the quality of their verses. Poets are categorized accordingly, namely 'the fully-fledged poet' (*shā'ir ḥindhīdh*), 'a versifier' (*shā'ir mufliq*), 'a poetaster' (*shā'ir faqat*), and 'an inferior poet' (*shī'rūr*).⁶⁹

In the case of DĀ'ISH poetry, the question of quality should be examined vis-à-vis the functional role of poetry on the battlefield. The composition of DĀ'ISH poetry should not be regarded in the light of the 'new style' of poetry constructed around "ambiguity and subtlety of meanings" of which Abū Tammām (d. 845 CE) is the foremost exponent⁷⁰ but in light of the poetic orality upon which DĀ'ISH poetry is based.⁷¹ As

66 Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'*, I, 5.

67 Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'*, I, 6–7.

68 Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'*, I, 6–7.

69 Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsīn al-shī'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihi*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), 95.

70 See also Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, 43.

71 More recently, neo-classical poetry has also benefitted from shorter verses composed for an easier diffusion. Although modern Arabic poetry echoed the classical poetic tradition and "the wordiness, the poetic diction, was a continuation of a tradition of scholasticism," modern poetry made selective use of salient features of classical literary heritage which were essential in universalizing the moment through active

was also the case in Islamic times, poetry, which developed into a significant art form, tended to lose some of its social and political importance.⁷² To this extent, even though DĀ'ISH poetry is derived in many aspects from high culture,⁷³ it should not be perceived in mannerist terms because it is not composed as *art for art's sake*, but it is intentionally toned down to target a broader audience.⁷⁴ The fact that poetry appeals to both popular and elitist does not deflect the attention from the craft of fashioning verse in the sense of *techne*. Since DĀ'ISH poetry is inherently subtle, it implies more talent than being badly propagandistic because it seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of the community in anonymity. The jihadist culture, with its religious, political, and ideological dimension, offers a revolutionary register with simplified literary devices bringing the classical language closer to popular culture. This stems from the fact that the underlying effects of domination, including compliance, coercion, and obedience, cannot take place unless poetry is constructed close to people's language and adapted in a manner that reaches a broader Arabic-speaking populace.

The issue of quality may also be determined from the length of the poems. At times, poems can be longer than sixty verses, and at other times only of two verses. Poetry shared on social media usually consists of a shorter number of verses, which is determined by the space available. The brevity, however, does not render the poetic verses ineffective. On the contrary, two concise verses may be powerful enough to convey a specific message. This power is amplified by its memorization and circulation on social media and among the populace living in the jihadist milieu. Van Gelder argues that when medieval poets – who specialized in short epigrams – were asked why they did not compose longer poems, one replied that “a collar is long enough if it fits round the neck.” The other answered that single verses were quoted more widely.⁷⁵ Al-'Askarī indicates his preference of poetry to prose because it endures longer, and “that is because its parts are mutually connected.”⁷⁶ Van Gelder claims that great poetry is deemed significant “not just because it contains deep thoughts or striking conceits and images, but also because it uses language in such a way that it pleases the ear, whether read

engagement with the local and the traditional, the political and the religious. Jabra Ibrahim Jabra argues that nationalist poetry “might be condemned as too weak a toy against guns, but in actual fact it was often as good as dynamite,” because it managed to crystallise “political positions in telling lines which, memorized by old and young stiffened popular resistance and provided rallying slogans.” See Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, “Modern Arabic literature and the West,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* (1971), 77–8.

72 Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly*, 30.

73 See Kendall, “Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition,” 223–46.

74 In Arabic, mannerism has usually been linked with the appearance of an ornate rhetorical style called *badi'* which became characteristic of poetry and prose from the ninth century CE onwards. See Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry*.

75 Jāhiz, *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, 4 vols, *ṭab'a* 3, (Cairo, 1968), I, 207; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shi'r wa-l-shu'arā'*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, *ṭab'a* 2, vol. 2 (Cairo, 1967), 76, quoted in Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly*, 36–7.

76 Geert Jan Van Gelder, *Beyond the Line: Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Poem* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 89.

aloud or sounded mentally, through rhyme, rhythm, assonance, verbal repetition, syntactical symmetry, word-play, and all other time-hallowed poetic techniques.”⁷⁷ The element of auditory aesthetic is an integral part of the traditional ode in the poetic tradition and is extensively connected to its quick diffusion, memorization, and effectiveness:

The poet knew that if he wanted to be heard and not to risk disappearance into obscurity, he was obliged to construct his discourse on the basis of an auditory aesthetic. This demanded the exclusion from his discourse of distant allusions and of hermetic or ambiguous statements; otherwise he was in danger of breaking the continuity of the contact which linked him to the public. Thus, in the pre-Islamic period, poetry declared that which the audience already knew, and poetic individualism consisted not in what was said but in the manner of its saying. Oral recitation was to leave on Arabic poetry a mark that would last for centuries; it would be, in Bencheikh's words, an art of expression and not of creation.⁷⁸

In the case of shorter verses, the quality may not necessarily be considered as striking. However, judging on its general appearance and multiple functions among the jihadist groups on the battlefield, these verses are compelling. This does not mean that DĀ'ISH poetry is void of poetic imagery and the poetic impetus. The elements of heightened emotions and entertainment have contributed to its popularity and its durability among its audience in the first place. Part of the effectiveness of DĀ'ISH poetry comes from the aesthetic appeal and heightened collective emotions of its verses, which are amplified by literary devices derived from the collective memory. In formulaic poetry, in which both the structure and imagery – in the sense of both content and expression – are largely ritually or traditionally prescribed, DĀ'ISH poetry is not markedly characterized by the individuality of expression or personal poetic vision. Contrastingly, it is identified by its power and permeance of the communal expression of a body of verse and collective voice within the jihadist milieu.

The notions of plagiarism and originality also contribute toward the issue of assessing the poetic quality. The first mention of plagiarism among medieval scholars is attributed to the tenth-century scholar Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī (d. 1005 CE) who first drew the attention on theft in poetry (*sarq al-shi'r*).⁷⁹ Whereas in modern Western scholarship, the relationship between originality and plagiarism may appear to be dichotomous, the poetic tradition linked to DĀ'ISH poetry conceptualizes plagiarism and originality using different criteria. From the outset, it should be clarified that classical literary critics believed that “mutual influence” among poets was inevitable as it was partly en-

77 Van Gelder, *Sound and Sense in Classical Arabic Poetry*, 4.

78 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 9, 450.

79 See also Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī, *Kitāb al-ṣinā'atayn* (Cairo, 1952), 146–79. For a discussion on the discussion among medieval scholars on plagiarism, see also Gustave E. von Grunebaum, “The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3, no. 4 (1944); *Kritik und Dichtkunst: Studien zur Arabischen Literaturgeschichte* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1955), 101ff; Wolfhart Heinrichs, “An Evolution of ‘Sariqa’,” *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5 (1987): 357–68.

forced by the rigidity of convention made up of a comparatively limited number of literary themes and motifs.⁸⁰ Ibn Rashīq substantiates this claim, arguing that no poet is wholly free from plagiarism.⁸¹ Plagiarism was conceived positively to the extent that the Arab audience was “highly sensitive to and extremely anxious for those modifications and embellishments of the traditional treatment that...meant for the performing poet the difference between fame and oblivion.”⁸² The concept of plagiarism in medieval Arabic literary theory manifests itself in several different dimensions expressed by terms like *sariqa* (theft),⁸³ *akhdh* (borrowing), *lā'idh bi-* (reliance), *mu'āraḍa* (emulating), *naql* (copying, transposing), *ihtidhā'* (imitating), and *ilmām* (inspiration).⁸⁴ This variety of terms that medieval literary critics linked to plagiarism is testimony to its integral function within the poetic tradition. Not only was plagiarism perceived positively, but it was also refined and reshaped throughout the literary evolution.

In our discussion about the quality of DĀ'ISH poetry, the interplay between convention and innovation is to be understood in light of its poetic compositions, including the borrowing of motifs and metaphors from religious texts and Islamic history. In the case of an oral culture rooted in its tradition, plagiarism served as a metaphorical bridge connecting the past with the present, tradition with modernity, authenticity with innovation. Originality thereby should be understood within the cultural parameters set by the Arabic-Islamic tradition. It consists “not in the introduction of new materials but in fitting the traditional materials effectively into each individual, unique situation and/or audience.”⁸⁵ Following this argument, the originality in DĀ'ISH poetry stems from ancient modes of composition, linking literary heritage with modern-day warfare. More specifically, DĀ'ISH poetry is original because it reflects how Islamic traditions and ancient knowledge have been recalibrated to a new political and technological order, to its rhythms, metres, its forms of pleasure, but also to its political incitements, its call to active participation. Aesthetically, DĀ'ISH poetry cannot be classified as innovative because it highlights its rootedness in tradition, presenting itself as an ‘authentic’ expression of Muslim identity in a world that has perverted true Islamic principles. For an organization that is concerned with the decay of modern civilization, it “cannot but establish the authority of the earlier generations and depreciate whatever achievement the contemporaries may have to offer.”⁸⁶ These elements borrowed from tradition are deployed and appropriated to fit the jihadist paradigm pushed forward by DĀ'ISH.

80 KANAZI, 112.

81 Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī mahāsīn al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihi* (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), vol. 2, 265–77.

82 Von Grunebaum, “The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory,” 234.

83 Eventually, the term *sariqa* has lost its passive connotations and had come to mean “a close agreement between two poets in the treatment of a particular theme.” See KANAZI, 113.

84 This terminology was first mentioned by al-Ḥātimī (d. 998 CE) in his work *Ḥilyat al-muḥāḍara* and adopted by Ibn Rashīq. See Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī mahāsīn al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihi* (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), Vol. 2, 265ff.

85 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 59.

86 Von Grunebaum, “The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory,” 253.

4.6. A False Sense of *Iltizām*

Since its inception during the second half of the twentieth century, Jihadism has existed parallel to the mainstream political systems, albeit at a distance. Jihadist enclaves occupied their own territories that were often on the fringes of mainstream societies. Historically speaking, modern Jihadism that emerged in the late 1970s was originally triggered by socio-political concerns in the Arab and Islamic world, especially with regard to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979–1981) and the subsequent US-led invasion of Iraq (2003). More recent facets of Jihadism, such as DĀ'ISH were also fuelled by recent socio-political phenomena. The political instability created by the recent US-led invasion of Iraq followed by the Arab uprisings provided the ideal circumstances under which jihadist groups could actively engage with mainstream society. Discursively, the borrowed elements from the Arabic-Islamic tradition in jihadist discourse bestow on the group's message an aura of cultural authenticity, which resonates with mainstream culture.

On the literary level, the poetic voice of DĀ'ISH appears to be socially and politically committed because it engages with contemporary socio-political events. The apparent political engagement of jihadists in the socio-political context of the Arab uprisings and the political events of the time necessitates the re-examination of the notion of *iltizām*. This concept was initially appropriated from Jean-Paul Sartre's idea of literary engagement (*littérature engagée*)⁸⁷ that was popularized in the fifties in socialist circles.⁸⁸ Since then, *iltizām* has been attributed to socialist, Marxist, or Arab nationalist writers and movements in the Arabic-speaking world. For this reason, a brief overview of the development of the concept of *iltizām* is appropriate at this stage.

The call for modern Arabic literature to be engaged in the socio-political sphere developed concomitantly with the prevailing actual political endeavours in the Arab world during the twentieth century.⁸⁹ The worth of literary manifestations produced during the 1950s and 1960s was determined according to the level of political commitment.⁹⁰ Especially after the 1950s, prominent critics such as Salāma Mūsā (1887–1958),⁹¹ Luwīs 'Awād (1915–1990), and Ra'if Khūrī (1913–1967) advocated the idea that literature should be socially and politically engaged, adding that the composition of any artistic activity should take into consideration the society in which it was written.⁹² Poets and

87 Sartre's concept was appropriated because originally, Sartre exempted poetry, music, and painting from literary commitment. Marxist and socialist realist Arab writers disagreed with Sartre's exemption of poetry from commitment and challenged Sartre's own commitment. See Waed Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry: Revolution and Conflict* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017), 21.

88 Verena Klemm, "Different Notions of Commitment (*Iltizam*) and Committed Literature (*al-adab al-multazim*) in the Literary Circles of the Mashriq," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literature* 3, no. 1 (2000), 51.

89 Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry*, 19.

90 Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry*, 21.

91 The scholar Salāma Mūsā advocated a socialist realist model in committed literature demanding writers to identify with their readers by writing about social ills. See Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry*, 22.

92 See also Joseph Andoni Massad, *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 18.

writers from different political persuasions became committed to a specific revolution or cause by engaging in different ways of self-expression. Arab writers of the 1950s adopted Sartre's message of engagement because they believed that speaking meant acting.⁹³ Sartre assured frustrated writers that their words were action and that the socially engaged writer plays an essential role in bringing about change to the status quo.⁹⁴

During this time, poets became committed to the Arab nationalist ideology and the question of Palestine. Momentous historical events that shook the Arab and Islamic world after the 1940s, such as the establishment of Israel in 1948, the 1952 Egyptian Revolution, and the Arab defeat in June 1967, have contributed significantly to the spread of *iltizām* around the Arab world. The 1967 Arab-Israeli confrontation radicalized the scope of criticism to the extent that distinguished prose writers such as Suhayl Idrīs (1925–2008) advocated for radical *iltizām* and propagated 'revolutionary literature' (*al-adab al-thawrī*).⁹⁵ Maḥmūd Darwīsh, the renowned Palestinian national poet, also propagated a militant form of *iltizām* especially at the beginning of his career when his poetry was charged with emotion and anger.⁹⁶ Alternatively, several poets sought new voices and directions in Western modernism, answering Verena Klemm's question on how their literary writing could be significant in the present world.⁹⁷

Literature produced by anti-establishment movements, including jihadist poetry, needs to be understood at the backdrop of these literary-cum-political developments. In the jihadist circles, poetry is the linchpin of an ongoing effort to claim authority and to present the jihadist culture as a revolutionary political space. The jihadist practice of engaging in memorization and recitation of chants is in itself a political struggle, an action, or art of *iltizām* par excellence. However, the degree, direction, and expression of *iltizām* may not necessarily be matched to the commonly accepted meaning of *iltizām* in modern Arabic literature. DĀ'ISH poetry exists in a parallel dimension to mainstream *iltizām* literature. Although DĀ'ISH poetry may seem to be politically committed on some accounts, it contrasts the core values and foundations of committed literature, thus providing a false sense of *iltizām* based on old logics and networks of mobilization and civic action.

One argument in favour of proposing DĀ'ISH poetry as a form of 'false *iltizām*' is concerned with the conceptualization of the terms 'revolution' and 'freedom.' In committed literature, the meaning of 'revolution' is adduced to a process "related to, shaped by and expressed in new aesthetic and political practices as well as new channels of

93 Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, "The Rebels, the Committed, and Others: Transitions in Arabic Poetry Today," in *Critical Perspectives on Modern Arabic Literature*, ed. Issa J. Boullata (Washington: Three Continents, 1980), 23.

94 See also Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mu'ī Hijazi, *Al-a'mal al-kāmila* (Kuwait: Dār su'ād al-ṣabāh, 1993), 411.

95 Klemm, "Different Notions of Commitment (*Ilīzām*) and Committed Literature (*al-adab al-multazim*) in the Literary Circles of the Mashriq," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literature* 3, no. 1 (2000), 57.

96 Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry*, 190.

97 See also Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry*, 25.

communication.”⁹⁸ In the jihadist paradigm, ‘revolution’ and ‘innovation’ are interpreted by referring to past literary formulae and political structures derived from the Arabic-Islamic cultures and traditions. Akin to the neo-classical stream, the primary trend of jihadist groups is to go back to an old, venerable model, and to relive the memorable experience of ancient poets. Economic progress and social development of civic societies are interpreted in terms of going back to past ways of managing the cultural, social, and political systems.

The notion of freedom is conceptualized differently in the two literary-cum-ideological streams. According to Sartre, two crucial dimensions of commitment are the relationship between the reader and the writer and the significance of freedom “as a basis and message of committed literature.”⁹⁹ Not only does DĀ'ISH poetry lack the necessary freedom required for its composition, but poetry is produced strategically to orchestrate the relationships of the organization and to wield absolute control over the worldview and the behaviour of its adherents. Additionally, whereas committed contemporary poetry tends to be more spontaneous and captures reality in its form, jihadist poetry is a highly standardized commodity exploited to restrict freedom of thought among the populace. It dictates a specific jihadist mental schema that is meant to permeate the private and public life. By mobilizing elements from tradition, DĀ'ISH articulates a false sense of group identity within a specific space and society. In the jihadist circles, poetry does not engage in the discussions related to the modern socio-political phenomena, but it is instrumentalized to compel prospective recruits to assume their duty in lieu of being shamed before an expectant community, to exploit contemporary politics to win favour with the populace, to exploit emotions which circumvent logic and ultimately, to generate coercion and induce loyalty.

4.7. Functions of DĀ'ISH Poetry

Poetry permeates all spheres of the jihadist milieu, including the battlefield, its propaganda material, and its educational training. For this reason, the analysis of DĀ'ISH poetry must take into consideration how poetry is employed in the jihadist milieu, including the habitual practice or customary exercise of poetry either as a product in itself or in conjunction with other activities. For the scope of this chapter, we shall analyze the functions of DĀ'ISH poetry as an integral part of militant Jihadism in light of three functions it performs, namely, the function of communication, the social function, and the function of emotional expression. By examining these functions prevalent in militant jihadist poetry, one could understand how anti-establishment jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH manage to consolidate their ideological catchment with unprecedented stealth and efficiency.

98 Georges Khalil, and Friederike Pannewick, “Introduction: Tracks and Traces of Literary Commitment—On Iltizām as an Ongoing Intellectual Project,” in *Commitment and Beyond: Reflections on/of the Political in Arabic Literature since the 1940s* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2015), 9.

99 Mohammed Mustafa Badawi, “Commitment in Contemporary Arabic Literature,” in *Critical Perspectives on Modern Arabic Literature*, ed. Issa J. Boullata (Washington, DC: Three Continents, 1980), 33.

4.7.1. The Function of Communication

The primary function of DĀ'ISH poetry is to circulate its worldview and political pursuits among an Arabic-speaking populace. The public purpose of the *qaṣīda* as a communicative vehicle is derived from the function that this artefact has held since the pre-Islamic times. Quoting Ibn Alfaḥ (d. 1150 CE), Van Gelder states that poetry fulfils “a communicative role; it is a form of social intercourse.”¹⁰⁰ Communication is not perceived simply as fulfilling an informative function, but rather as a subjective form of ‘biased communication,’¹⁰¹ which is underscored by the propagandistic elements of DĀ'ISH discourse. The organization’s ideology provides a coherent and comprehensive set of ideas for its subscribers. Communication is guided by a particular worldview and is selectively reconstructed and manipulated to reinforce a militant agenda.¹⁰² The message transmitted in verse is governed by the group’s self-schema.

Poetry serves as a powerful channel to communicate events on the battlefield, including the death of prominent DĀ'ISH figures. A significant example is an elegiac poem celebrating the death of the group’s spokesperson called al-‘Adnānī.¹⁰³ Shared in the form of a tweet under the hashtag name ‘istishhād al-shaykh al-‘Adnānī,’¹⁰⁴ the verses glorify al-‘Adnānī as a ‘fallen hero’ and the death of others like him who did not only hold the battles of their Islamic ancestors in high esteem but wanted to be protagonists in writing history with their own blood. The deeds of al-‘Adnānī and others like him who performed jihad are perceived as a continuation in the path of the companions of the Prophet. The appropriated meaning of jihad is reinforced in these verses. Composed in *kāmil* metre, the verses read:

<p>مَثَلًا لَنَا أَضْوَاءٌ عَزِ تَطَهَّرُوا بِدِمَائِهِمْ صَفَحَاتٍ مَجْدٍ سَطَّرُوا سُحِبَ أَظْلَمَتْ بَعْدَ قَطْرِ تَمَطَّرُ بِسُيُوفِهِمْ سَيَّرَ الصَّحَابَةَ كَرَّرُوا</p>	<p>1. فِي أُمَّتِي أَسَدٌ كَمَاةٌ أَصْبَحُوا 2. لَمْ يَرْكَنُوا لِمَفَاخِرِ الْأَجْدَادِ بَلْ 3. بِدِمَائِهِمْ يَخَيَا الْجِهَادَ كَأَنَّهُمْ 4. بَكْتَابِهِمْ ظَلَمَاتٍ عَصَّرِي بَدَّدُوا</p>
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1. In my *umma* the lions in armour became an example,
to us, they appeared as the light of pride,
2. They did not rest on the boasting of their [Islamic] ancestors,
but with their blood, they inscribed pages of glory,
3. With their blood, jihad lives on,
as if they are clouds that continued to rain after a drought,

100 Geert Jan Van Gelder, *Two Arabic Treatises on Stylistics: Al-Marghinani's Al-mahasin ft l-nazm wa-l-nathr, and Ibn Aflah's Muqqadima, Formerly Ascribed to Al-Marghinani* (Nederlands: Historisch-Archaeologisch Istanbul, 1987), 37.

101 See also Karin Dovring, *The Road of Propaganda: The Semantics of Biased Communication* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).

102 For a discussion on the subjectivity and selective manipulation of language, see section 3.1.

103 *Fī ummati asadu kumātu, Minhajmedia*, accessed September 25, 2018, <http://minhajmedia.blogspot.com/>.

104 See Appendix B.14.

4. With their books, they scattered the darkness of my era,
with their swords, they repeated the vitae of the Companions [of the Prophet].

These poetic verses sanctify death by considering it as a succession to the death of the companions of the Prophet. The verses conceptualize death by mobilizing religious idiom for cultural immunity. Diction with Islamic overtones projects death by the sword as a moral duty incumbent upon every practising Muslim who wants to follow the Qur'an. The reference to the sword is symbolic because it connects the jihadists' struggle to the Islamic period and the first generation of warriors.¹⁰⁵ In Islamic symbolism, the sword is regarded "as a noble weapon, the sword personified the purity, nobility, and overall uprightness that are connected to Prophet Muhammad, his companions, other early Islamic heroes, and their successful military campaigns."¹⁰⁶

During the formative years of the organization, leading DĀ'ISH propagandists mobilized poetry to announce the establishment of DĀ'ISH and to invite others to join. In a tweet composed in *wāfir* metre, the group's poetess Aḥlām al-Naṣr communicated her experience in the caliphate to her followers:¹⁰⁷

وَقَدْ صَافَحْتُ يَا صَاحِبِي السَّلَاحَا	1. أَخِيرًا رَبُّنَا كَتَبَ السَّمَا حَا
وَأَحْسَسْتُ الْهِنَاءَ وَالْإِنْتِشْرَا حَا	2. وَقَدْ عَشْتُ الْخِلَافَةَ وَالْمَعَالِي
بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ تَمْتَشِقُ النَّجَاحَا	3. سَتَبْقَى دَوْلَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ دَوْمًا
وَتَسْحَقُ كُفْرَ مُرْتَدِّ بَوَا حَا	4. وَتَحْكُمُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَفَقَّ دِينِي
وَكَمْ نَشَرْتُ بِدُنْيَانَا الصَّلَا حَا!	5. فَيَا لِلَّهِ كَمْ رَعَتْ الرَّعَايَا
ضَرَاغِمَهَا لَكُمْ صَالَتْ ذِبَا حَا!	6. وَكَمْ فَهَرَّتْ كَفُورًا بِانْتِصَارِ
وَلَيْسَ تُبِيدُ أَوْ تَهْوِي انْبِطَا حَا	7. وَلَيْسَ تَخَافُ أَوْ تَنْهَارُ دُلَا
كَرِيهًا خَاسِرًا وَالطَّمَّ نُوَا حَا	8. فَيَا كُفْرَ الرِّزَايَا مَتَّ وَضِبَعًا

1. Finally, our Lord has written permission,
I shook hands, O friend of mine, with the weapon,
2. I lived [to see] the caliphate and the great deeds,
I experienced happiness and euphoria,
3. The state of Islam will remain forever,
by God's grace it seizes success,
4. It will govern every inch according to my religion,
it crushes the open disbelief of apostates,
5. O God, how you protected the religious congregation!
How it spread righteousness in our world!
6. How apostasy was overcome with success!
How much its lions were attacked for your sake as blood sacrifice!

105 True to the jihadist ideology, DĀ'ISH militants seek to emulate the companions of the Prophet, which are referred to as the predecessors (*salaf*).

106 Matusitz, *Symbolism in Terrorism: Motivation, Communication, and Behavior*, 213.

107 See Appendix B.11.

7. It is not afraid, and it is not demolished because of humiliation,
it will neither be exterminated nor will it collapse prostrating.
8. O apostasy of the calamity, may you die beggarly,
in an abhorrent state, as a loser, slapping the cheeks in mourning.

These verses illustrate how DĀ'ISH is projected to the outside world as a seemingly thriving theocratic state. Direct Islamic diction referring to God and Islam is interwoven with martial diction such as *ṣāla* ('to attack,' v. 6), *inhāra* ('to demolish,' v. 7), *abāda* ('to exterminate,' v. 7), and *hawā* ('to collapse,' v. 7) to legitimate the ideological underpinnings of the organization. The term *dhibāḥā* in verse 6 is derived from the verb *dhabaḥa*, which means 'to kill by slitting the throat.'¹⁰⁸ In this case, the term *dhibḥ* denotes 'sacrificial victim or blood sacrifice,' a concept which is explored thoroughly elsewhere in this work.¹⁰⁹

Additionally, the ideological underpinnings of DĀ'ISH are reinstated in two instances wherein diction with positive connotations is reinterpreted in terms of violence and attacks. The first example is located strategically as part of the monorhyme of the poem, namely *al-silāḥā* ('the weapon,' v. 1) and *al-ṣalāḥā* ('righteousness,' 'piety,' 'faithfulness,' or 'moral correctness,' v. 5). Apart from their positioning as an integral part of the poem's monorhyme, these two terms share phonological and morphological resemblances, differing only by the emphatic consonant *ṣ* in verse 5. These resemblances create associations that reinvent the martial meaning behind 'weaponry' by associating it with a positive term denoting 'piety' or 'righteousness.' The action of using a weapon becomes reconfigured as an act of moral correctness and duty.

The second example is the ambiguous collocation *tamtashiqu al-najāḥā* ('it seizes success,' v. 3). The verb *imtashaqa*, which means 'to unsheathe' or 'pull out,' is usually collocated with the sword and not with success. On a subliminal level, the success of DĀ'ISH is conceptualized in terms of violence, which is symbolized by the subtle associations of unsheathing the sword. The militant success of DĀ'ISH is further underscored by deploying the exclamatory *wa-kam* and *la-kam* meaning 'how much' or 'how many' in succession (v. 5–6), followed by several deeds carried out by DĀ'ISH. The poetess mobilizes contrasting morphological structures made up of several affirmative verbs (v. 1–4) followed by the formation of negation *laysa...aw* in verse 7, both of which reinforce the power and success of DĀ'ISH. The repetition of grammatical structures is also the residue of protracted orally based thought.

Poetic verses are aptly deployed in sermon-like speeches held by jihadist leaders to circulate news about the events on the battlefield. In one of the most critical speeches announcing the foundation of the 'Islamic State' in late June 2014, Abū Muḥammad al-'Adnānī (d. 2016), who was the group's spokesman, ends the speech by reciting the following verses composed in *wāfir* metre, presumably produced by himself:¹¹⁰

108 See LANE, *dh-b-ḥ*.

109 The concept of blood sacrifice and blood vengeance is explored in chapter five of this study.

110 See Appendix A.22.

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|--|--|
| <p>أَعَدْنَاهَا مُغَالِبَةً وَعَصَبًا
وَقَدْ ضَرَبْتَ رِقَابُ الْقَوْمِ ضَرْبًا
وَجُنْدٌ لَا يَرَوْنَ الصَّعْبَ صَعْبًا
وَقَدْ شَرَبُوا دِمَاءَ الْكُفْرِ شُرْبًا
وَدَوَّلْنَا بِصُرُخِ بَاتٍ صَلْبًا
وَقَدْ مَلَأْتَ قُلُوبَ الْكُفْرِ رُعبًا¹¹¹</p> | <p>1. أَخَذْنَاهَا بِحَدِّ السَّيْفِ قَهْرًا
2. أَقَمْنَاهَا وَقَدْ رُغِمَتْ أَنْوْفُ
3. بِنَفْحِخٍ وَتَفْجِيرٍ وَتَسْفِ
4. وَأَسَدٍ فِي الْمَعَامِعِ ظَامِنِينَا
5. لَقَدْ عَادَتْ خِلَافَتُنَا يَقِينَا
6. وَقَدْ شَفِيَتْ صُدُورُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَا</p> |
|--|--|

1. We took the sword's edge with force,
again and again, to conquer and plunder,
2. We established it in defiance of many,
the people's necks were struck off,
3. With bombings, explosions, and destruction,
soldiers that do not see hardship to be hard,
4. Lions that are thirsty in battle,
having drunk greedily the blood of apostasy,
5. Our caliphate has indeed returned with certainty,
likewise, our state is becoming a firm structure,
6. The bosoms of the believers have been healed,
while the hearts of apostasy have been filled with terror.¹¹²

The announcement of the supposed caliphate is communicated in metred verses with *bā* as its monorhyme. Its message is drilled home through repetitive morphological structures such as successive verbal forms of causative nature (*akhadnāhā* and *a'adnāhā* in v. 1, *aqamnāhā* in 2), verbs in the passive form (*ruḡhimat*, *ḡuribat*, *shuḡfiyat*, *muli'at*), marked perfect tense indicated by the conjunction *qad*, cacophonous elements (*bi-tafkhiḡhin wa-taffīrin*) and cognate derivation known as *jinās al-ishtiḡāq* (*ḡuribat...ḡarbā* in v. 2, *al-sa' bā...sa' bā* in v. 3, *sharibū...shurbā* in v. 4). The literary device of *jinās al-ishtiḡāq* is reinforced by positioning these lexical items in the end-rhyme. Justification of violence is also framed through Qur'anic intertextualities.

In literary terms, these intertextual references serve as examples of borrowing known as *iqtibās*. In the second hemistich of the second verse, the phrase *ḡuribat riḡābu l-qawmi ḡarbā* ('people's necks were violently struck') echoes the Qur'anic phrase *fa-ḡarba al-riḡābi* ('strike the necks') stating "when you meet those who disbelieve [in battle], strike [their] necks."¹¹³ Another Qur'anic intertextuality appears in the second hemistich of the last verse. The poetic phrase *qulūbu al-kufri ru' bā* echoes the Qur'anic

111 Jarīr al-Ḥusnī, "kalima wa-tafriḡh-hadhā wa'ad allāh-i'lān qiyyām al-khilāfa al-islamiyya li-l-shaykh al-muḡāhid Abī Muḡammad al-'adnānī ḡafīḡahu llāh," thabat111, *Wordpress*, June 29, 2014, <https://bit.ly/2qV0uZD>.

112 A translation of the speech and the poetic verses is provided by the media outlet affiliated with DĀ'ISH called Alhayat Media Center. See also "This is the Promise of Allah," Alhayat Media Center, accessed September 20, 2018, <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/shaykh-abc5ab-mue1b8a5ammad-al-e28098adnc481nc4ab-al-shc481mc4ab-22this-is-the-promise-of-god22-en.pdf>.

113 Qur'an, 47:4.

verse which states that “we will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve” (*sanulqī fī qulūbi alladhīna kafarū al-ru'ba*).¹¹⁴ Through these intertextualities, the jihadist verses frame violence in terms of the Islamic tradition. In turn, by deploying subtle references, the organization claims religious immunity, even if these intertextual references are made from a vantage point beneath the Qur'an's transcendental status.

Poetry also communicates its course of action, which is rooted in the here-and-now, by framing its brutality and revenge within an argumentative framework based on revenge. An example elucidating this communicative function features in a poem entitled *Take a Lesson from al-Mu'adh's Killing* written in the form of a threat (*tawa'ud, wa'id* or *i'ad*) by Aḥlām al-Naṣr.¹¹⁵ Composed in *kāmil* metre, the poem makes references to Mu'adh Ṣāfī Yūsuf al-Kasāsiba (1988–2015) who was a Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot burnt to death by DĀ'ISH while trapped inside a cage. He was captured on 24th December 2014 after his fighter aircraft crashed near Raqqa in Syria while taking part in a military intervention against DĀ'ISH.¹¹⁶

<p>وَأُنْتَسَنَ يَا مُسْكِينُ أَيَّ مَلَاذٍ وَدِيمَاكَ أَرَخَّصَ مِنْ قَلِيلِ رَذَاذٍ أَعْنَتَتْ وَلَا تَسْطِيعُ مِنْ إِنْقَاذٍ بِنَعِيمِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا الْإِخَاذِ!! سَيَكُونُ رَدُّ الْأُسْدِ كَالْفُولَاذِ وَصَنْيَعُهُ إِنْ قَامَ لِالْإِنْفَاذِ أَنْتُمْ لَهُ كَالْعُلْجِ وَالشُّحَاذِ فَخُذُوا لَكُمْ دَرُسًا بِقَتْلِ <مَعَاذِ></p>	<p>1. أُبَشِّرُ أَيَا عِلْجٍ بِحَدِّ جَرَابِنَا 2. فِدِمَاءُ أَطْفَالِ الْعَقِيدَةِ جَوْهَرٌ 3. تَعُدُّوا بِإِجْرَامِ لِأَمْرِيكَمَا فَمَا 4. أَحْسَبُنْتُمْ أَنَّ الْجَرَائِمَ لِعُجْبَةٌ 5. كَلَّا أَيَا جَمْعِ الْأَرَادِلِ إِنَّمَا 6. مَا زِلْتُمْ لَا تَعْرِفُونَ زُنَيْرَنَا 7. يَا وَيْلَكُمْ بَا وَيْلَ جِلْفِ كَافِرٍ 8. بَعْتُمْ عَقِيدَتَكُمْ وَبِعْتُمْ أَهْلَكُمْ</p>
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1. Rejoice O infidel at the edge of our lance points,
forget O miserable any shelter,
2. The blood of the children of creed is a jewel,
your blood is cheaper than an inconsiderable drizzle,¹¹⁷
3. You committed crimes for America,
she is of no avail, and you cannot be saved,
4. Did you think that the crimes were a game,
charming with its bliss and beauty?
5. No way, O despicable group,
the response of the lions is like steel,

114 Qur'an, 3:151.

115 Aḥlām al-Naṣr, *Fa-khudhū lakum darsan bi-qatli l-mu'adh* (al-Jabha al-i'lāmiyya, n.d.), accessed April 1, 2019, https://archive.org/details/pdf_collections_1.

116 See Appendix B.9.

117 The term *dimāka*, which I chose to translate as 'your blood,' is ambiguous. In the context of this verse, its meaning is assumed to mean blood, contrasting the blood of Mu'adh to the blood of the children mentioned in the first hemistich. However, the Arabic term for blood is *dam* (pl. *dimā*), and hence the Arabic term should be rendered either as *damuka* or *dimā'uka*.

6. You still have not recognized our roaring,
it is a good deed when it accomplishes protection,
7. O woe to you! O woe to the allies of disbelievers,
for him, you behaved like the unbeliever and the beggar,
8. You sold your creed, and you sold your people,
so take the killing of Mu'ādh as a lesson.

The primary function of these verses is to legitimate the group's assassination of the Jordanian pilot Mu'ādh. The verses associate the military attack initiated by the Jordanian forces with 'the alliance of disbelievers,' implying that Mu'ādh was working for America. By connecting Mu'ādh with America, these verses simplify a complex political landscape that is agonistically toned into 'us' against 'them.' In doing so, these verses communicate the prowess of the in-group, which is described in terms like 'lions,' 'roaring,' and 'like steel,'¹¹⁸ as opposed to the out-group which is portrayed in terms such as 'despicable,' 'beggars,' and 'unbelievers.' The parochial, black-and-white worldview of the events on the battlefield simplifies the complexity of the political environment in which one lives. This projected view is also intended to influence the recipients' judgment on how the killing of Mu'ādh should be conceived.

In addition to the simplified worldview, poetry is instrumentalized to legitimate and justify violent acts. Legitimation often takes place by exploiting Qur'anic references. The argument takes the form of 'analogical reasoning,' which, in Islamic law terms, is known as *qiyās*. Analogical reasoning is the fourth source of Shari'a, which means that in case of the lack of direct text from the Qur'an or hadith on contemporary issues, it becomes permissible to make a judgment based on analogy. Very often, this form of judgment was used to deduce new beliefs and practices based on an analogy with past practices and beliefs.

In the poem, which tackles Mu'ādh's killing, specific phraseology evokes specific Qur'anic chapters as a mode of justification. In the third verse, the verb *ta'dū* ('you cross over') recurs three times in the Qur'an, and it addresses 'the People of the Scripture' in chapter 4:154, commanding them not to transgress on the sabbath (*lā tad'ū fī l-sabti*). Secondly, the expression *fa-mā aghnat* in the second hemistich of verse 3 echoes another significant Qur'anic verse 11:101. The eleventh Qur'anic chapter dedicated to the prophet Hūd narrates a series of stories of prophets who warned their people to follow God. The people, however, persisted in defying God, and as a consequence, God punished and killed them. This punishment is expressed in the Qur'an verse 101 with the famous expression "we did not wrong them, they wronged themselves." This punishment is followed by the expression *fa-mā aghnat* claiming that "they were not availed at all [*fa-mā aghnat 'anhum*] by their gods which they invoked other than Allah when there came the command of your Lord." Diction with Islamic overtones evokes

118 The description of the response of DĀ'ISH members "like steel" is a metaphor depicting DĀ'ISH fighters as powerful. It could also be a pun to the steel cage in which Mu'ādh was burnt alive.

Qur'anic references is appropriated to legitimate violence, giving the illusion that the justification enjoys religious blessing.

Poetry also circulates specific commands among DĀ'ISH fighters and subscribers. Chants are often characterized by providing explicit instructions to be followed on the battlefield. These commands intend to coerce the fighters' behaviour to act. In a chant entitled *Kindle the Fire with the Iron* and composed in *mujtathth* metre, imagery from the realm of nature and weaponry is mobilized to enthuse DĀ'ISH members to take revenge on the out-group:¹¹⁹

وَأَشْفِي الْمَدَى بِالْوَرِيدِ	1. أَوْرِ اللَّظَى بِالْحَدِيدِ
مِنْ فَاطِسَاتِ الْخُشُودِ	2. أَشْبِعْ وَخُوشَ الصَّعِيدِ
بِبَارِقَاتِ الرُّعُودِ	3. زَلْزِلْ جَمِيعَ الْخُشُودِ
وَلَأَهْبَاتِ الْكُبُودِ	4. بِقَازِفَاتِ الْوَقُودِ
وَصَائِدَاتِ الْجُنُودِ	5. بِنَاسِيفَاتِ الْخُودِ
بِزُمُجَرَاتِ الْأَسْوَدِ	6. هَيَّا ائْتَقِمِ بِالرُّدُودِ
وَ أَكْبِرْ جَمِيعَ الْقَيْودِ	7. أَشْعِلْ لَهَيْبِ الْوَعِيدِ
مُسْتَمْتَعًا بِالصَّادِدِ	8. يَا ذَلَّ سَيْفِ الْعُمُودِ
فِي ظِلِّ حُكْمِ الْقُرُودِ	9. يَا بُوسَ عَيْشِ الْعَبِيدِ
فِي ظِلِّ عَيْشِ رَغِيدِ	10. يَا نَعْمَ عَيْشِ الْأَسُودِ

1. Kindle the fire with the iron,
heal the knives with the neck vein,
2. Satisfy the beasts of the [battle]field,¹²⁰
with the carcasses of the massing of troops,
3. Make all the massing of troops tremble,
with the lightning of the thunder,
4. With bombers of fuel,
with fires that burn the livers,
5. With the explosives of the borders,
and the hunters of the armies,
6. Haste! Take revenge as repulsion,
with the roars of the lions,
7. Alight the flame of threat,
break all the fetters,
8. What a humiliation is the sword [placed] in its scabbards,
enjoying the rust!
9. How miserable is the servants' life,
under the shadow of the apes' ruling,
10. O excellent life of the lions,
under the shadow of a life of happiness!

119 See Appendix A.24, and B.8.

120 The term *wuḥūsh al-sa'īd*, which I translate as 'the beasts of the highland' may also refer to militant jihadist groups in Upper Egypt (*sa'īd maṣr*).

These verses are rife with imagery of burning which evokes a description of hellfire, including *awri l-lazā* ('kindle the fire,' v. 1), *ash'il lahīb* ('alight the flame of,' v. 7), and *lāhibāt* ('people setting sth. to flame,' v. 4). Burning imagery is accompanied by nature imagery for rhetorical emphasis. Examples include *bāriqāt al-ru'ūd* ('the lightning of thunder,' v. 3) and *zamjarāt al-usūd* ('the roars of the lions,' v. 6). In addition to the explicit commands to kill the opponent, DĀ'ISH also issues a warning to those who are neither fighting nor using the sword, choosing instead to let it rust (v. 8–10). Its criticism is transmitted in verses of reproach (*taqrī*) against individuals living in territories or countries governed by the out-group instead of becoming DĀ'ISH warriors. Name-calling such as 'apes' is also legitimated by its recurrence in the Qur'an.¹²¹

Additionally, the term *ṣadīd* ('rust' or 'pus,' v. 8) may also serve as Qur'anic intertextuality. The exact term appears in the fourteenth chapter dedicated to Ibrahim where-in it states, "[b]efore him is Hell, and he will be given a drink of purulent water [*mā'in ṣadīdin*]."¹²² This Qur'anic chapter entails a description of Hell, and it also serves as an admonition to the 'People of the Fire' (*ahl al-nār*), which are made up of unbelievers. According to the Qur'anic scripture, the term *ṣadīd* is known to be one of the drinks provided in Hell. Coincidentally, the rhyming *ūdī* or *īdī* that determines the internal and end-rhyme of the poem also appears in the Qur'anic verses where the term *ṣadīd* features as the end-word.¹²³ Other rhyming end-words that appear in these Qur'anic verses include the term *wa'īd* meaning 'threat' which also features in verse 7 of this poem.

In the jihadist circles, poetry performs a communicative function by organizing social relations that control inter- and intra-group relations. Poetry is circulated among the jihadist populace to encourage people to pay their taxes to DĀ'ISH. The chant entitled *Our Shari'a*¹²⁴ refers to one of the pillars of Islam known as *zakat*. In Islam, the term *zakat* is a form of alms-giving that is treated as a religious obligation. This sacred duty is called upon, promising the audience that their deeds will be doubled by God:

وَقَامَ الْعَدْلُ وَانْتَضَمَ الْمَجَالُ	1. أُصُولُ الدِّينِ تُزْهِرُ بَعْدَ يَبْسٍ
بِهَا الْأَمْوَالُ تَزْكُو وَالْغِلَالُ	2. فَبَادِرْ يَا أَخِي وَادْفَعْ زَكَاةً
وَتُسْتَلُّ الصَّغَائِرُ وَالْكِلَالُ	3. يُضَاعَفُهَا لَكَ الْمَوْلَى وَيُرْبِي

1. The pillars of religion flourish after dryness,
justice has risen, and the fields are taken care of properly,
2. So hurry up, O brother, and pay the *zakat*,
by dint of [the *zakat*], wealth and yields are purified,

121 Qur'anic references to the transformation of Christians and Jews into apes and pigs such as verses 2:65, 5:60, and 7:166 served as Qur'anic models of Israelite punishment and "as a warning against various phenomena of assimilation into Jewish and Christian beliefs and practices for which some heretical trends in Islam were held particularly responsible." See EQ, s.v. "Children of Israel."

122 See Qur'an, 14:16.

123 See Qur'an, 14:14–14:16.

124 See Appendix A.5.

3. The Lord doubles and increases it for you,
grudges and fatigue shall be removed.

Alternatively, one common way of ensuring stable inter- and even intra-group relations is the pledge of allegiance to DĀ'ISH known as *bay'a*. The *bay'a* is of historical significance because it resonates with the Qur'anic passage in 48:18 that speaks of believers pledging allegiance to Prophet Muhammad. In another verse, the Qur'an makes it clear that an oath involves a ritual acceptance of God's representative as one's patron.¹²⁵ Additionally, the *bay'a* or *mubāya'a* mentioned in the Prophetic Traditions constitutes an important milestone in the institutionalization of obedience to the Prophet in his lifetime, and it was equally used for caliphs.¹²⁶

Loyalties expressed to DĀ'ISH tend to be intense and specific. Controlling people's commitment is the key to controlling the group's power. The act of pledging allegiance to DĀ'ISH is based on coercion, which mandates participation in the production of a culture that advertises allegiance. Allegiance can be sworn by individuals or by other jihadist groups, serving DĀ'ISH as different strategies of domination. On a personal level, the pledge of allegiance can either be based on compliance or internalization. In the case of compliance, individuals publicly act in accordance with social pressure but may privately disagree. These individuals are often motivated by gaining an award or avoiding the jihadist group's severe punishments.

Alternatively, individuals may internalize the group's message, both acting and believing in accord with social pressure. This is the most permanent, deeply rooted response to social influence. Internalization is often motivated by a desire to do right. Individuals like Ahlām al-Naṣr, who became key figures in the organization, have most likely internalized the organization's ideology. In a tweet composed in *kāmīl* metre, the poetess swears loyalty to DĀ'ISH:¹²⁷

<p>وَلَجُرْمُ كُفْرِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ الرَّادِعَا وَالْقَوْلُ مِنْهُ لَقَدْ يَفُوقُ مَدَافِعَا جَعَلَ الْأَمَانِيَّ النَّوَاصِرَ وَاقِعَا حَمَلْتُ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّ الْمَكَارِمَ رَاتِعَا أَوْ مَنْ سَعَى نَحْوَ الْأَعَادِي رَاكِعَا؛ أَنْ يَشْرُقَ الْإِسْلَامُ نَوْرًا سَاطِعَا¹²⁸</p>	<p>1. بَايَعْتُ مَنْ بِالذِّينِ كَانَ الصَّدْعَا 2. شَيْخٌ حَسِينِيٌّ؛ سَدَادٌ فَعَلُهُ 3. قَدْ شَادَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ صَرِيحًا عَالِيَا 4. وَدَعَا جَمِيعَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لِدَوْلَةٍ 5. مَا صَرَّهُ خِذْلَانٌ مَنْ عَادَى الْهُدَى 6. فَالْحَقُّ مُنْتَصِرٌ وَأَمْرُ الْإِهْوَانَا:</p>
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1. I pledged allegiance to whom came out open with religion,¹²⁹
and for the crimes of the repressive apostate transgressors,

125 "Those who offer allegiance to you (*yubāyi' ūnaka*) do so to God," See Qur'an, 48:10; EQ, s.v. "Oaths."

126 See also EQ, s.v. "Obedience."

127 Ahlām al-Naṣr, *Akhīran rabbunā kataba al-samāhā* (al-Ghurabā' Media, n.d), accessed April 1, 2019, https://archive.org/details/pdf_collections_1.

128 See Appendix B.10.

129 The expression *ṣada'a bi-l-ḥaqq* means "to come out open with the truth." See also WEHR, *ṣ-d-*.

2. Shaykh Ḥussaynī, right-guidedness is his deed,
indeed, his speech drowns out guns,
3. He established Islam as a high-rise edifice,
he rendered novel wishes into reality,
4. He called upon all the Muslims a state,
which carried for them the chalice of the noble deeds luxuriously,
5. The abandonment of those who opposed the right path did not harm him,
nor did [the abandonment] of those who addressed himself to the enemies bowing,
6. The truth is victorious, and the command of our God
that makes Islam radiate luminously.

Oaths of allegiance were especially popular when DĀ‘ISH was gaining ground in the Iraq–Syria region and beyond. The recitation of a poem by an individual or a smaller jihadist group is intended to serve as a ritual of homage and allegiance that reaffirms the authority of the ruler and the bond between the ruler and the ruled. The oath of allegiance may also be sworn by other jihadist groups. This type of coercion is based on identification, whereby a smaller jihadist group swears loyalty to DĀ‘ISH, thus also agreeing to adopt a particular behaviour and ideology, which is also reflected in the symbolic world. The smaller group starts using the dominant group’s symbolism, including its flag, its group self-schema, and propagandistic methods. In doing so, the smaller group is placed in a satisfying relationship to DĀ‘ISH. In identification, an essential element is the power and attractiveness of DĀ‘ISH.

The group’s militant might is equally reflected in its symbolic world with high-tech propagandistic chants and videos that have revolutionized the jihadist scene. This conformity by identification makes the group more visible in the jihadist milieu. This visibility accords the smaller group with prestige and more power. One example of oaths of allegiance performed by smaller yet well-established groups is the case of Boko Haram based in north-eastern Nigeria, which later became known as ‘the Islamic State’s West Africa Province.’ This allegiance was codified in the form of a versified message preceding a speech:¹³⁰

وَأَنْتَرُوا أَعْلَى الْوُرُودِ	1. أَنْشُرُوا الْبَشْرَى جَمِيعاً
وَاهْتَفُوا أَعْلَى نَشِيدِ	2. وَارْفَعُوا التَّكْبِيرَ دَوماً
قَدْ تَعَدَّيْنَا الْحُدُودِ	3. أَهْتَى فَاسْتَبْتَبْ شِرِي
رَسْمِ أَحْفَادِ الْقُرُودِ	4. لَمْ تَعُدْ فِي أَرْضِنَا

1. Spread the good tiding to all,
spread the most valuable arrival,

130 See also “Abū Bakr Shekau – “Bay’ a Jamā’ at ahl al-sunna li-l-da’ wa wa-l-jihād li-khalīfat al-muslimīna Abī Bakr al-Baghdādī,” *Jihadology* (blog), December 23, 2016, accessed January 20, 2017, <https://jihadology.net/2015/03/07/al-urwah-al-wuthqa-foundation-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-jamaat-ahl-al-sunnah-li-l-dawah-wa-l-jihads-boko-%E1%B8%A5aram-abu-bakr-shekau-bayah-jama/>.

2. And raise the *takbīr* perpetually,¹³¹
call out the sweetest chant,
3. My Muslim polity, accept the good news,
indeed, we have transgressed the borders,
4. No trace remains in our land
of the descendants of the apes.¹³²

Verses pledging allegiance serve as a ritualized performance between DĀ'ISH and the individuals or groups. The language deployed to realize this ritual is performative. The poem functions as a ritual exchange that represents, embodies and symbolizes in its presentation the enacted ritual of submission and obedience. The oath, which is expressed as a verbal utterance, is an automatically effective power-word that dedicates the swearer to his power.¹³³ Once the oath of allegiance is publicized, its pronouncement is automatically accompanied by particular attitudes, including trust and reverence, of submission and gratitude towards DĀ'ISH. In this respect, the poem constitutes a ritual of incorporation. The negotiation is initiated by the smaller jihadist group, which performs a ritual that comprises submission and a public declaration of allegiance. Upon pledging allegiance to DĀ'ISH, individuals and jihadist groups synchronize their symbolic world, including their subscription to the group's self-schema.

In all of its communicational aspects, DĀ'ISH poetry serves as a public relations tool that communicates selective information related to the battlefield. Whether poetry is meant to encourage individuals to join DĀ'ISH, pledge allegiance to it, or celebrate the death of its key figures, DĀ'ISH verses become a propaganda exercise governed by the jihadist ideology. This conformity is not solely restricted to communicating news, but it also plays a vital role in the private life and public sphere of the organization's subscribers.

4.7.2. The Social Function

The jihadist grand narrative contributes towards accomplishing change by mobilizing the group sentiment. In the jihadist milieu, poetry is instrumentalized to circulate central and idealized elements of the jihadist culture and ideology. It also lends authenticity to modern-day accounts by way of poetic testimony, providing a literary record of socially accepted values. Additionally, poetry supplements social expression by circulating socially accepted norms entrenched in Bedouin values of honour and shame. These norms

131 The formulaic term *takbīr* is an exclamatory phrase expressing God's greatness. It is usually followed by the expression *allāhu akbar!* (God is Great!).

132 The derogatory term 'apes' refers to the Jews. Qur'anic references to the transformation of Christians and Jews into apes and pigs such as verses 2:65, 5:60, and 7:166 served as Qur'anic models of Israelite punishment and "as a warning against various phenomena of assimilation into Jewish and Christian beliefs and practices for which some heretical trends in Islam were held particularly responsible." See EQ, s.v. "Children of Israel."

133 For a discussion on the performativity of ritual, see also Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58.

are distributed through the creation of prototypes from among its subscribers. This form of normative influence asserts that individuals can only be accepted if they change their behaviour to meet the expectations of others; namely, people change because of social influence.

Norms function as lubrication of social interaction, whereby members and citizens living under DĀ'ISH rule are provided with expectancies that simplify new situations. These expectancies are entrenched in pre-Islamic Bedouin values and ethos as aristocratic moral code, an ideal highly praised in the Arabic-Islamic societies. In collectivist groups like DĀ'ISH, individuals continually attempt to live up to the expectations of their communities. Individuals living in collectivist cultures tend to place a higher value on the goals of the group than on individual preferences and are also more motivated to maintain harmony in their interpersonal relations. The circulation of collectivist values is connected to the hegemonic jihadist project of wielding control over the private life and the public sphere of its populace.

In the pre-Islamic and Islamic period, poetry was a prime propagator of tribal culture values, which served as a tool to glorify one's honour or lambast it.¹³⁴ Poetry sets the cultural code of a particular society; an instrument to control what is acceptable and unacceptable.¹³⁵ Ibn Qutayba (d. 889 CE) contends that the content of poetry "would help a miser to become generous, a coward to turn brave in battles, and a lowly man to rise above himself."¹³⁶ On a similar vein, the medieval Tunisian litterateur Ibn al-Rashīq (d. 1063 CE) highlights the importance of the socio-political role of poetry in pre-Islamic times as follows:

The Arabs needed to sing about the nobility of their character, the purity of their blood, and to recall their good battle days and faraway abodes, their brave horsemen and compliant steeds, in order to incite themselves to nobility and direct their sons toward good character..., to perpetuate memorable deeds, strengthen their honor, guard the tribe and inspire the awe of it in other tribes, since others would not advance against them for fear of their poet.¹³⁷

In the jihadist circles, culturally esteemed values are reinforced by borrowing verses originally composed by famous medieval Arab poets. In one of the issues of the weekly magazine *al-Naba'*,¹³⁸ the jihadist group propagates death as the highest honour by quoting two verses attributed to the tenth-century poet al-Mutanabbī (d. 965 CE)¹³⁹ with

134 KANAZI, 125

135 The appropriation of tribal moral values is discussed in section 3.2.2.1.

136 Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, 61.

137 Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, Abu 'Alī al-Ḥasan, *Al-'umda fī maḥasīn al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdīhi*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd 2 vols. 4th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), I:22, 82, quoted in Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 82.

138 See *al-Naba'*, 109:7.

139 Abū al-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn, *Dīwān al-mutanabbī* (Beirut: Beirut Printing House, 1983), 232.

one minor alteration, namely *ṣaghīr* (small) is interchanged with *ḥaqīr* (inconsiderate).¹⁴⁰

1. إِذَا غَامَرْتَ فِي شَرْفِ مَرُومٍ
فَلَا تَقْنَعْ بِمَا دُونَ النُّجُومِ
2. فَطَعْمُ الْمَوْتِ فِي أَمْرِ صَغِيرٍ
كَطَعْمِ الْمَوْتِ فِي أَمْرِ عَظِيمٍ

1. If you reach for the highest of honour,
do not settle for less than the stars,
2. For the taste of death in [pursuit of] a small matter,
is the same as the taste of dying in a mighty one.

Poetic verses composed by esteemed figures in the Islamic tradition are appropriated by DĀ'ISH as an authoritative source to exude an aura of legitimacy around the jihadist message. Other examples which surface in al-Naba' include the verses attributed to 'Abdallāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 797 CE), a scholar of Islam who is best remembered for his asceticism and for collecting the Prophetic Traditions. These verses, which focus on the effects of sins on the heart, accentuate the fusion of the Islamic tradition with the violent jihadist sub-culture:¹⁴¹

1. رَأَيْتُ الذَّنُوبَ تُمِيتُ الْقُلُوبَ
وَتَرَكْتُ الذَّنُوبَ حَيَاةَ الْقُلُوبِ
وَقَدْ يورثُ الدَّلَّ إِيْمَانُهَا
وَخَيْرٌ لِنَفْسِكَ عَصِيَانُهَا

1. I noticed that sins kill the heart,
becoming addicted to them brings humiliation,
2. That the abandonment of sin is life for the hearts,
so it is best for yourself to disobey it!

In a video production entitled *The Purification of Souls*, a child is heard chanting poetry versed in *mutaqārib* metre to a group of armed men while holding a gun in his hand.¹⁴²

1. سَلَكْتُ طَرِيقِي وَلَا لَنْ أَحِيدُ
2. وَوَدَعْتُ دُنْيَايَ قَلْبٌ عَنِيدُ
عَزَمْتُ الْمَسِيرَ بِعَزْمِ الْحَدِيدِ
تَوَجَّهَ طَرْفِي لِأَرْضِ الْأَسُودِ
فَأَيْتِي مَضَيْتُ لِأَرْضِ الْعِرَاقِ
3. فَيَا أُمَّ لَا تَحْزَنِي لِإِرَاقِي

1. I pursued my way, and I will not deviate,
I determined my path by the firm will of the iron,
2. My world let go of the stubborn heart,
my gaze was directed to the land of the lions,

140 Minor changes in diction that follow the same morphological pattern may hint towards the fact that these verses are reproduced from memory.

141 See al-Naba', 144:9, and repeated on page 10.

142 See also (14:57) in Aaron Y. Zelin, "Purification of the Souls—Wilāyat al-Raqqah," *Jihadology* (blog), June 20, 2017, <http://jihadology.net/2017/06/19/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-purification-of-the-souls-wilayat-al-raqqah/>.

3. O mother, do not grieve for me being apart,
for I went to the land of Iraq.

The verses are articulated in the form of an intimate discussion between a child and his mother, presenting the child as a prototype whose example should be followed blindly. In the video, the chant is followed by a short interview which portrays the child talking about his experience of emigrating to Syria. The exploitation of a male child as a prototype empowers the verses because this choice places higher expectations on adult men. In this way, DĀ'ISH dictates social norms and behaviours which are esteemed in the group such as one's determination to emigrate without deviation, setting one's gaze towards Iraq and the readiness to leave everyone behind including family members to join DĀ'ISH.

Poetry is utilized to construct an alternative reality which beatifies the brutality of death. Dying for the jihadist cause is manipulatively portrayed as a heroic act of martyrdom, where wounds ooze musk instead of blood. In a video production entitled *The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abū Muslim from Canada*, DĀ'ISH celebrates the life and death of a Canadian fighter. Choosing a foreign fighter as a prototype represents the group's imminent call for foreigners to join the jihadist cause. The video production contains clips of Abū Muslim talking about his experience of migrating from Canada to Syria, inviting others to perform *hijra* in the same manner. The verses of the trance-like chant entitled *O Victory in Obtaining Martyrdom* (*yā fawza man nāla l-shahāda*) glorify death, beautify martyrdom and invite others to follow suit.¹⁴³

<p>تُمحى الذُّنُوبُ إِذَا الدَّمَاءُ تَقَطَّرُ مِسْكَ تَفُوحِ جِرَاحِهِ وَتُعَطَّرُ وَتَسْلَحُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَا تَتَأَخَّرُوا عِزُّ إِذَا مَا نَسْتَجِيبُ وَ مَفْخَرُ</p>	<p>1. يَا فَوْزَ مَنْ نَالَ الشَّهَادَةَ صَادِقاً 2. وَإِذَا الزُّهُورُ تَعَطَّرَتْ بِعَبِيرِهَا 3. وَتَجَهَّزُوا يَا إِخْوَتِي لِعَدُوِّكُمْ 4. قَوْمُوا لِحَيِّ عَلَى الْجِهَادِ فَإِنَّهُ</p>
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1. O victory for those who have received martyrdom truthfully,
the sins will be erased when the blood drips,
2. When the flowers exude fragrance,
his wounds will emit musk and will be perfumed,
3. Prepare yourselves, my brothers, for your enemy,
be armed with the truth, do not linger,
4. Rise to perform jihad,
it is high ranking and boastful when we respond.

Poetry reinforces the act of 'martyrdom' as an integral part of the jihadist identity. The video production reaches its climax by visually portraying the death of the fighter¹⁴⁴ against the backdrop of acoustic melodies, namely, the chant, the recitation of

143 See Appendix A.2.

144 See also Zelin, "al-Ghurabā': The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abū Muslim from Canada."

Qur'anic verses,¹⁴⁵ and the extracts from the Prophetic Traditions.¹⁴⁶ The vivid propagation of this activity tends to serve as a reminder and a source of encouragement and inspiration for other individuals who are about to embark on a similar mission, assuring them that their acts will be equally remembered and glorified. The aural accompaniment to the scenes of brutality alleviates the pain of the act. It also justifies and glorifies death through culturally guided interpretations.

Poetry is also exploited to reconstruct Islamic dogmas such as the Qur'anic promise of paradise that cannot be reconstructed otherwise.¹⁴⁷ In an elegy composed in *kāmil* verse and following a monorhyme, Aḥlām al-Naṣr eulogizes Shibl al-Zarqāwī who was a fighter held in Abū Ghraib prison:

1. وَأَوَانَ عَانَقَهُ الرَّدَى
وَأَبَانَ مِنْهُ الدَّمَّ قَانُ
وَأَسْتَبَشَّرَتْ حورُ جِسَانُ
فَدَّ حَلَقَتْ رُوحُ الْهَنَا¹⁴⁸

1. The time came [when] death embraced him,
and brought forth his scarlet blood,
2. His soul soared to our Lord,
and the beautiful black-eyed [virgins] of paradise rejoiced.

Pre-Islamic themes are mobilized to remind other fighters of the divine promises. These promises motivate the group's adherents and inspire prospective recruits.

Alternatively, ancient poetry is selectively chosen and taken out of context to justify the modus operandi of the jihadist group. In a pamphlet entitled *From the Creator's Morals on Captivity and Enslavement*, classical verses serve as a source of legal and moral reference which justify slavery in DĀ'ISH controlled territory.¹⁴⁹ The pamphlet cites a poetic verse attributed to the eighth-century Arab poet known as al-Farazdaq or Abū Firās (d. circa 732 CE) who states:

1. وَذَاتِ حَلِيلٍ أَنْكَحْتَهَا رِمَاخَنَا
حَلَالَ لِمَنْ يَبْنِي بِهَا لَمْ تُطَلَّقْ¹⁵⁰

1. A married woman whom our lances have given in marriage [anew],
it is permissible to consummate the marriage with her even though she has not been divorced.

145 The video production entails a Qur'anic recitation of verse 2:218. See also Zelin, "al-Ghurabā': The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abū Muslim from Canada," 8:22.

146 See also Zelin, "al-Ghurabā': The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abū Muslim from Canada," 9:40, quoting *Kitāb al-jihād: sunan al-nasā'i*, book 25, *Hadīth* 50, accessed January 20, 2018, <https://sunnah.com/nasai/25/50>.

147 The Qur'an is replete with descriptive references of paradise consisting of its 'everlasting life' (2:82, 3:136), its 'gardens' (2:25, 3:133, 9:72), 'angels' (13:23–24), and 'food and drink' (2:25, 41: 31–32, 69:24, 47:15). See EQ, s.v. "Paradise."

148 See DAN, 60–1.

149 "Unseen Islamic State Pamphlet on Slavery," *Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi*, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2015/12/unseen-islamic-state-pamphlet-on-slavery>.

150 Muḥammad al-Amīn b. Muḥammad al-Mukhtār al-Jaknī Shinqīfī, *Aḍwā' al-bayān fī ṭāḥ al-qur'ān bi-l-qur'ān*, vol. 6 (Beirut: 'Ālam al-kutub, n.d.), 85.

Socially, poetry is mobilized to draw up sharp contrasts between the in-group and the out-group. The parochial, black-and-white view that DĀ'ISH puts forward simplifies the jihadist worldview into the binary opposition of right and wrong, jihadists against infidels, and brothers against enemies. The dichotomization of a radicalized worldview into the abode of Islam and the abode of apostasy is starkly differentiated by associating virtues with the in-groups and vices with the out-group, respectively. By characterizing the enemy, DĀ'ISH not only clarifies who the enemy is, but it also simplifies a complex political landscape in something easy to understand, creating “a good conscience among its partisans and a bad conscience among its enemies.”¹⁵¹ Ideological simplification characterizes the enemies and implies modes of action against them. This subtle social influence makes it less likely for DĀ'ISH members to view the world from the perspective of the ‘other.’¹⁵²

Well-chosen verses borrowed from the poetic tradition are partly sanctioned by time, culture, and tradition and are thus projected as credible sources. In a booklet entitled *Learn your Religion's Command*, DĀ'ISH propagandists reinterpret the five pillars of Islam by associating Islamic dogmas with the group's ideological outlook.¹⁵³ In a discussion dealing with apostasy, the propagandists cite two verses to justify action against the perceived apostate. These verses are attributed to a Moroccan Islamic scholar called shaykh 'Iṣām al-Bashīr al-Marrākashī (1972–):

1. وَرُعْمَ مَا قُلْتُ مِنَ التَّحْدِيرِ
 2. إِذَا بَدَأَ الْكُفْرَ حَلِيئًا وَظَهَرَ
 لَا يَتَّبِعِي الْوُقُوفَ فِي النَّكْفِيرِ
 مَنْ لَمْ يُكْفِرْ كَافِرًا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ

1. In spite of what I had previously said as a warning,
 one must continue to accuse apostasy,
2. If apostasy appears clearly,
 the one who does not accuse [him/her of] unbelief, becomes an unbeliever himself.

The circulation of specific virtues and subtle commands embedded in metred speech transforms poetry into a disciplinary device that serves as the linchpin in the process of producing and reinforcing guidelines for acceptable speech and behaviour. The exercise of memorizing and chanting verses of poetry internalizes these social values imposed by DĀ'ISH, which become personalized by means of constant repetition. Repetition is instrumentalized as a powerful tool to juxtapose newly formed organizational values circulated by DĀ'ISH with personal values. This juxtaposition induces complicity by creating practices in which the subscribers become accomplices by upholding norms constitutive of DĀ'ISH beliefs. Social values and behaviours are dictated in the jihadist milieu through the group's poetic lore, which is subtly reinforced by profound emotion-

151 Ellul, *Propaganda*, 189.

152 See also Erikson, “Pseudospeciation in the Nuclear Age,” *Political Psychology* 6 (1985): 213–7.

153 “Islamic State–dīwān al-da'wa wa-l-masājid ‘Learn Your Religion's Command’,” *Bayt al-masādir* (blog), May 8, 2017, accessed January 5, 2018, <https://baytalmasadir.com/2015/04/20/text-pdf-islamic-state-diwan-al-da%CA%BFwa-wal-masajid-learn-your-religions-command/>.

al resonances intertwining imperative and emotional functions with moral and pseudo-religious overtones.

4.7.3. The Function of Emotional Expression

By its very nature, the classical Arabic ode is a highly dense and emotional state that both heightens and highlights reality. Emotions played an essential role in classical Arabic poetry to the extent that classical litterateurs even considered classifying poetry according to the emotional states wherein “[p]assionately excited love poetry, anger invective poetry, desire praise poetry and fear apologetic poetry (poems asking for forgiveness); indulgence in wine favours descriptions of wine and binges.”¹⁵⁴ The emotions embedded in the modern variants of the classical Arabic ode vary from religious exaltation, grief in laments, the exaltation of the ego in chants of bravery, building group rapport, raising group solidarity, and stirring to new courage and militant vigour. For practical reasons, grassroot jihadist recruits are more likely to be influenced by utilizing provocative, emotional verses rather than by long theological debates.

The mobilization of DĀ'ISH poetry as an emotional expression needs to be understood vis-à-vis its effect on the human mind. Scholars from the field of psychophysiology, neuro-imaging, and behaviour, restate that poetry, the most ancient record of human literature, has accompanied humankind over such a long period because it has held a firm grip on human cognition and emotion.¹⁵⁵ Discursively, emotions are believed to “bias decision-making, in response to associated stimuli, towards behavioural outcomes conducive to, and away from those detrimental to, survival and reproduction.”¹⁵⁶ In a congenial group setting, emotionally laden verses describe the conflict but do not end in protest. Instead, stabilizing versified speech provides clear guidance for its recipients. The poetic language possesses unique qualities that cannot be replaced by any other cultural product or type of discourse because poetry “represents an ancient, cross-cultural, and emotionally powerful variety within the human communicative and expressive repertoire.”¹⁵⁷

DĀ'ISH discourse is manipulative because it is based on arguments designed to play upon the recipients' emotions that restrict their “alleged rational autonomy” because individuals “cannot deliberately elicit fully control of emotions.”¹⁵⁸ Jihadist poetry mo-

154 Schoeler, “The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Diwāns,” 7.

155 Eugen Wassiliwizky, Stefan Koelsch, Valentin Wagner, Thomas Jacobsen, and Winfried Menninghaus, “The Emotional Power of Poetry: Neural Circuitry, Psychophysiology and Compositional Principles,” in *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 12, no. 8 (2017), 1229.

156 Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 80.

157 Wassiliwizky, Koelsch, Wagner, Jacobsen, and Menninghaus, “The Emotional Power of Poetry: Neural Circuitry, Psychophysiology and Compositional Principles,” 1239.

158 Christian Junge, “On Affect and Emotion as Dissent: The *Kifāya* Rhetoric in Pre-Revolutionary Egyptian Literature,” in *Commitment and Beyond: Reflections on/of the Political in Arabic Literature since the 1940s* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2015), 253.

bilizes fear of perceived imminent physical threats posed by the out-group, which, in turn, generate specific behaviours by the in-group:

The implication is that specific kinds of threat perception trigger specific suites of affective and further cognitive responses, which, in turn, impel specific behaviours. For example, the emotion triggered by perceived physical threats is fear; the one triggered by perception of disease is disgust; and the perception of socio-cultural threats triggers contempt – a combination of moral disgust and anger – where the stereotypical trait associations that activate this response are not likely to connote hostility or disease, but, rather, a sort of moral wrongness.¹⁵⁹

Thomas Hegghammer argues that the jihadist culture feeds on emotional persuasion tools to override gaps in logic or even to reinforce and complement the cognitive persuasion work done by the doctrine.¹⁶⁰ Videos and biographies of jihadist propaganda are characterized by compelling emotional narratives which are employed to justify suicide attacks and coerce the populace emotionally. The narratives deal with themes of humiliation, impotence and collusion, inevitable victory through faith and sacrifice, eagerness and willingness to perform martyrdom at the heart of the mobilising narratives.¹⁶¹ DĀ'ISH poetry stimulates, influences, and imparts emotions to its listeners. Emotional discourse is intended to galvanize support for the organization's cause not solely from a narrow circle of activists, but also from the broader Muslim public. Versified DĀ'ISH propaganda, whether represented in the visual, aural, or written form, is meant to evoke or involve the emotions of its audience to communicate its worldview rapidly and subliminally.¹⁶²

Effective propaganda entails stirring up and orchestrating the audience's emotions from being flat sentimental to burning excitement and even blatant instinct.¹⁶³ Highly emotive messages circumvent informed judgments by ignoring alternative ideas or courses of action, and it is directed at provoking actions. Emotional verses stress the importance of peers, enforce unconditional obedience to the jihadist norms as well as cooperation and coordination with the organization. In a society that is shaped by an evolving conflict with the outside world stabilizing verses help DĀ'ISH fighters cope with unacceptable social conditions.

In some cases, emotion-laden verses serve as a force of escapism, which beautifies the harsh reality on the battlefield and fuel the fighters' determination. Elisabeth Kendall argues that this formidable artefact is utilized in order to manipulate the audience

159 Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 53.

160 Thomas Hegghammer, "Introduction: Why is Jihadi Culture and Why Should We Study it?" in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 14.

161 See also Mohammed M. Hafez, "Martyrdom Mythology in Iraq: How Jihadists Frame Suicide Terrorism in Videos and Biographies," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 1 (2007): 99–106.

162 See also Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 14.

163 Dovifat, *Handbuch der Publizistik: Praktische Publizistik*, 114ff, quoted in Thymian, *Propaganda: Konzepte und Theorien*, 218.

by creating an alternative reality that diverts attention from the grim truth. In this way, DĀ'ISH not only coats its brutal acts of violence in a flowery language, but it also legitimizes them. This is epitomized in a poem entitled *When the Cat is more Intelligent than Most Humans*.¹⁶⁴ The poem features a photo of DĀ'ISH fighter playing with a cat.¹⁶⁵ The militant jihadist explains in *mutaqārib* that:

<p>لَأُرِيدِي الشُّرُورَ وَأَحْمِي الْفَضَائِلَ وَلَا لَمْ تُصَدِّقْ أَكَاذِيبَ جَاهِلٍ بَعِيداً عَنِ الزُّورِ، عَنِ كُلِّ بَاطِلٍ</p>	<p>1. أَعِدُّ لِأَعْدَاءِ رَبِّي الْقَنَائِلَ 2. وَذِي قِطْعَةٍ لَمْ تَخَفْ مِنْ سِلَاحِي 3. فَيَا لَيْتَكُمْ تَعْرِفُونَ الصَّوَابَ</p>
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1. I prepare bombs for the enemies of my Lord,
to kill evil and protect the virtues,
2. This cat did not fear my weapons,
nor did it believe in the foolish lies,
3. If only you knew what is right,
far from falsehood and every lie.

This poem reveals the poet's inclination to retreat from unpleasant realities through the diversion of a fighter playing with a cat. It also breaks the stereotypical image of the militant jihadist fighter, by simplifying the worldview into the 'evil' and the 'virtuous' in a simplified language that even children can understand. DĀ'ISH militant jihadists are often compared to lions and visualized as powerful men.

On a similar vein, in a visual production entitled *The Caravan of Light–Wilāyat Nīnawā*, the video depicts a DĀ'ISH militant who uses a wheelchair. The militant fighter had lost his legs while fighting for the cause of DĀ'ISH.¹⁶⁶ The trance-like chant playing at the backdrop elicits a tranquil atmosphere that is enforced by graphic imagery. The act of performing jihad is glorified and beautified through poetry, and it is also set as a duty incumbent on the recipients. The DĀ'ISH fighter is praised (*madḥ*) for his courage, and his suffering is romanticized in the *wāfir* metre following the *nā* end-rhyme:

<p>وَيَمْلَأُ جُرْسُهُ الزَّاكِي سَمَانَا لِيُعْدِقَ فِي مَاقِينَا الْحَنَانَا</p>	<p>1. يُعَانِقُ طَيْفَهُ الزَّاهِي دُرَانَا 2. وَيَرْفَعُ بِالْجِهَادِ مَنَارَ حُبِّ</p>
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1. His radiant spectre hugs our fine dust,¹⁶⁷
his sinless sound fills our loftiness,¹⁶⁸

164 See Appendix B.12; DAN, 93.

165 See Appendix B.12; DAN, 93.

166 See (21:20–26:00) in Aaron Y. Zelin, "The Caravan of Light–Wilāyat Nīnawā," *Jihadology* (blog), January 3, 2017, accessed June 10, 2018, <https://jihadology.net/category/the-islamic-state/wilayat-ninawa/>.

167 The noun *dharr* can also signify dispersal, dissemination, or tiny insects. The derivative *dhurrī* means 'of or pertaining to the offspring or progeny.' See also WEHR, *dh-r-r*.

168 The adjective *zakī*, which is translated as sinless, has different meanings, including innocent, chaste, honest, pure, virtuous, and also fragrant, redolent, and sweet-smelling. Additionally, the term *samānā*

2. By means of jihad he erects the minaret of love
to make our eyes shed tears of empathy.¹⁶⁹

This chant comprises a myriad of emotions ranging from consolation to the injured militants, encouragement to the prospective cadres. In this case, poetic verses serve as a mechanism of emotional release which offers solace in times of pain, hope in times of despair, courage in times of doubt, and consolation in time of fear.

Poetry induces positive feelings by releasing tensions and by providing a productive outlet to conquer personal dysphoria. On the battlefield, it serves as an emotional release for a large group acting together from the inherently hostile environment. Its beauty is capable of producing pleasure to the listener who may have to cope with the harsh realities of warfare. The following example is concerned with a battlefield chant which focuses on stirring courage and vigour and on legitimizing physical response:¹⁷⁰

نُخُوضُ لظَاهَا وَأَهْوَالِهَا	1. إِذَا الْحَرْبُ سَبَّتْ مَشَيْبًا لَهَا
وَقُوْدٌ يُصْرَمُ إِشْعَالِهَا	2. فَتَنَحْنُ الْأَبَاءَ وَنَحْنُ لَهَا
فَسَلُّ أُمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ مَا نَالَهَا	3. سَقَيْنَا السُّيُوفَ بِمَاءِ لَهَا
وَقَدْ سَنَنْتُ الْحَقَّ أَحْوَالِهَا ¹⁷¹	4. نَحْتَشِدُ لِلرَّوْعِ أَنْذَالِهَا

1. If the war breaks out, we shall march towards it,
we enter its flames and its horrors,
2. We reject [humiliation], and for it [the war],
we are the fuel that sets it on fire,
3. We quench the thirst of our swords with blood,
ask the nation of apostates what hit it,
4. Its despicable ones were mobilized themselves to [witness] the horror [of war],
and the truth dispersed [the nation of apostates].

Verses imbued with emotions, resolve or minimize in-group conflicts. DĀ'ISH insurgents seek to minimize political divides among different Salafī-jihadist groups by appealing to emotional and personal themes embedded in the history, religion, culture, and ethos of predominantly Arabic-speaking Muslim communities around the world. In a poem composed by Aḥlām al-Naṣr in *basū* metre, the poetess exploits the political upheaval unfolding in Syria at the time to seek support for DĀ'ISH and encourage Syrians to act:

may also mean 'our sky' (*samā'unā*), in which case the radical hamza is dropped for the sake of the end-rhyme. See LANE, WEHR, *z-k-y, s-m-*, and *s-m-w*.

169 The term *māqīnā* means 'tear ducts.'

170 See (30:00 onwards) in Zelin, "The Caravan of Light–Wilāyat Nīnawā."

171 See Appendix A.15.

1. ¹⁷²تَنهَّدَ الْوَطْنَ الْمَكْلُومَ فِي أَلْمِ وَتَمَّ عَافَ طَوِيلَ الصَّمْتِ ثُمَّ حَكَى:

1. The injured homeland sighed in agony,
followed by a long-abhorred silence, and then it spoke...

By the same token, the poetess also addresses the plight of the Syrian citizens at the hands of their ruler. In an elegy dedicated to a thirteen-year-old Syrian boy called Ḥamza 'Alī al-Khaṭīb, the poetess recalls how the child was brutally murdered while in the custody of the Syrian government in Dar'ā. Al-Khaṭīb was detained during a protest against the government in April 2011. Versed in the *wāfir* metre, the poetess recalls how the Assad regime assaulted 'Alī al-Khaṭīb:

1. ضَرَبُوهُ قَدْ كَسَرُوا الذَّرَاعَ وَحَطَمُوا عُنُقًا وَصَدْرًا
2.¹⁷³ قَدْ شَوَّهَوهُ وَحَرَقُوهُ وَعَذَّبُوهُ فَمَاتَ عَدْرًا

1. They beat him up, they broke his arms, and they crushed his neck and chest,
2. They disfigured him, burnt him, tormented him until he died betrayed.

The incident described in these verses is exploited to shape the audiences' judgment and to exacerbate their anger towards the out-group, to heighten emotions, and to sensationalize the jihadist cause.

The action of inciting violence serves as a manipulative discursive strategy that is facilitated by evoking irrational emotions and mobilizing the populace. A call to violence or revenge is a useful incentive deployed by actors of jihadist propaganda because it goads the opponent into fighting. One of the chants composed in the *mutaqārib* metre published by al-aṣḍā' foundation propagates killing and shooting as the *modus operandi* leading to the group's success:¹⁷⁴

1. بِكَسْرِ الْجَمَاجِمِ
2. سَبِيلِ سَدِيدِ
3. وَحَدِّ الْمَوَاضِي
4. سَبِيلِ الْأَسْوَدِ
5. نَخُوضِ الْحُرُوبِ
وَعَزْفِ الْكَوَائِمِ
لِنَيْلِ الْمَكَارِمِ
بِكَفِّ الْقَشَاعِمِ
الْأَبَاةِ الضَّيَاغِمِ
وَتَهْوَى الْمَلَاغِمِ

1. By breaking the skulls
and playing silencing sounds,
2. is a righteous path
to gain the noble deeds
3. The edges of the sharp swords,
in the hands of tough men,

172 See DAN, 24.

173 See DAN, 20.

174 See Appendix A.16.

4. are the path of the lions
the proud, fierce lions,¹⁷⁵
5. we wage the wars
and love the epic battles passionately.

The three primary functions of DĀ'ISH poetry, namely, the communicational, emotional, and social functions, depict the underlying role of poetry in managing the private and public sphere of its populace. The functionality of poetry represents the external dimension of controlling the symbolic world. Internally, however, poetry has its own established mechanisms to fulfil the organizational objectives of DĀ'ISH. Two primary goals are sought through poetry; the primary goal deals with mobilizing the widespread plights and grievances experienced in DĀ'ISH ruled territories at a particular time. Instead of engaging with its populace through long theological debates, DĀ'ISH mobilizes poetry to seek blood vengeance. Revenge is misguidedly portrayed as the exclusive method by which shame is transformed into pride, pain into power, and death into a life of eternal bliss.

The second objective is intended to circulate a distorted worldview that depicts the omnipotence and omnipresence of DĀ'ISH. By wielding control over the communicational and social functions, DĀ'ISH dictates how the socio-political events should be perceived through its own lens. In doing so, intuitive logic is twisted to drill home a conflicted and parochial *Weltanschauung*. These two underlying objectives that, at times, override each other are developed through poetry's variegated thematic schemata, motifs, and literary devices, as exemplified in part three of this study.

175 The Arabic terms for 'lions' which are deployed in this poem are all different, namely *al-qashā'im*, *al-usūd*, and *al-dayāghim*.

PART III

Chapter Five

Blood Vengeance as a Moral Code of Action

5.1. Conceptualizing Blood Vengeance

One of the most significant themes that underpins this study is the ancient ethos of blood vengeance in pre-Islamic societies and its appropriation in DĀ'ISH poetry. Blood vengeance is an old mechanism that rests on the sacredness of blood and clan solidarity. Pre-Islamic tribal communities promoted blood vengeance as a moral code of action, which ensured the restoration of honour. The principal mark for blood vengeance in primitive societies is the “eye for eye” notion,¹ which is a form of a ritual sacrifice that redeems unavenged blood, binding tribes together but also separating them from one another.² The law of blood vengeance is one of “the most fundamental institutions of tribal society,”³ and it is triggered by means of ‘blood feud’ between clans. In pre-Islamic times, the call for blood vengeance was recorded in the Mu‘allaqāt of ‘Amr b. Kulthūm from the tribe of Taghlib, who claimed the following in one of his verses: “because our blood was spilled, their blood was made to flow” and “a person who will harm you will be injured twice as severely.”⁴

The advent of Islam posed a challenge to the pre-Islamic tribal customs, including blood vengeance. Toshihiko Izutsu argues that the Qur’anic message was intended to overcome the tribalistic ethos of pre-Islamic Arabia, wherein blood vengeance was considered as unislamic.⁵ Bloodshed is explicitly banned (*saḥk al-dimā’*) in the Islamic scripture.⁶ The Qur’an refers to murder-killing eight times⁷ and to vengeance four times⁸ with the general instruction being not to kill.⁹ Angelika Neuwirth advances on Izutsu’s claim by arguing that the standard pre-Islamic poetic themes are countered and nullified in Qur’anic passages. Among the examples provided by Neuwirth is the transi-

1 The concept of “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” features in the Bible (Exodus 21: 23–25), and the Qur’an, 5:45.

2 Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 80–1.

3 Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, “Structuralist Interpretations of Pre-Islamic Poetry: Critique and New Directions,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (1983): 85–107.

4 See Mu‘allaqāt of ‘Amr b. Kulthūm verses 42, and 51.

5 See also Toshihiko Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran: A Study in Semantics* (Tokyo: Keio Institute of Philological Studies, 1959).

6 References to the banning of bloodshed appear in two Qur’anic verses, that is, 2:30, and 84. See also EQ, s.v. “Bloodshed.”

7 See Qur’an, 4:29, 4:92, 4:93, 5:32, 6:151, 17:33, 25:68, and 50:74.

8 See Qur’an, 2:178, 2:179, 2:194, and 5:45.

9 See also EQ, s.v. “Vengeance.”

tory bliss of lost love conjured up by the *nasīb*, the erotic prelude of the *qaṣīda* which is inverted by the “counter-image of everlasting bliss” and amorous delight granted to the souls in paradise.¹⁰

Likewise, the Qur’anic message counteracted the pre-Islamic poetic motif of time and fate (*dahr*). The renowned medieval Arab lexicologist Ibn Manẓūr (d. 1312 CE) defines *al-dahr* as an extended period (*al-amadu al-mamdūd... al-dahru alf sana*).¹¹ Societies in pre-Islamic Arabian life conceptualized *al-dahr* (time as fate) or its near-synonym *maniyya* (fate or destiny)¹² as “the tyrannical sovereign, unpredictable and capricious, which set the appointed time (’*ajal*) for every man’s death.”¹³ Initially, the *dahr* motif appeared as an integral part of the elegy and resonated with a religio-philosophical tradition that harked back as far as pre-Islamic poetry.¹⁴ Upon the advent of Islam, the pre-Islamic notion of *dahr* transitioned to the Islamic concept of compensation and life after death, a transition that was not always easy to engender among early Islamic poets.¹⁵ The customary practice of weeping the dead, which was part of a ritual linked to the elegiac genre, was considered as unislamic after the revelation of the Qur’an. Pre-Islamic traces of the call for vengeance, however, still dominated poetic verses in the Islamic era. Al-Mutanabbī (d. 955 CE) versified blood vengeance in one of his poems, in which he stated: “you killed me, God will kill you. Attack the enemy and kill.”¹⁶

DĀ‘ISH adherents are obliged to live up to their credo which is entrenched in tradition and mediated through a culturally resonant form, that is, the ideological *qaṣīda*. Classical Arabic poetry, upon which DĀ‘ISH poetry is based, belongs to a ritual complex whereby both content and expression are largely ritually or traditionally prescribed. The ritual complex is a culturally honoured agreement, and it is crucial primarily in determining the asymmetrical power relations between different entities, which culminate in death as the ultimate sign of loyalty between the subordinate and the ruler. Historically speaking, the agreement was considered to be part of a ‘gift exchange’ that took place between distinct groups or personages in archaic societies as a sign of rein-

10 Angelika Neuwirth, *Scripture, Poetry, and the Making of a Community: Reading the Qur’an as a Literary Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 79.

11 See LISĀN, *d-h-r*.

12 According to Ibn Manẓūr, the plural of *maniyya*, namely *manāya*, is connected to the fate of death (*qadar al-mawt*). See Aida Gasimova, “Models, Portraits, and Signs of Fate in Ancient Arabian Tradition,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73, no. 2 (2014), 321.

13 Emil T. Homerin, “Echoes of a Thirsty Owl: Death and Afterlife in Pre-Islamic Arabic Poetry,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 44, no. 3 (1985), 167.

14 See also Pieter Smoor, “Elegies and Other Poems on Death by Ibn al-Rūmī,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* (1996): 49–85.

15 Pieter Smoor, “Ibn al-Rūmī: His Elegies and Mock-Elegies for Friends and Foes,” *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* (1997), 102ff.

16 See also EQ, s.v. “Vengeance.”

stating honour and good relationship.¹⁷ Suzanne Stetkevych argues that the classical Arabic ode “functions as a ‘token’ that represents, embodies, symbolises, in its presentation, the enacted ritual of submission and supplication.”¹⁸

The ‘gift exchange’ paradigm manifests itself concurrently in a twofold relationship. The first takes place between the ruler and the ruled, and the second between the ruler and other groups vying for political power. Although distinct in their relationship, these two dimensions equally converge by the ultimate prize of death. Pledging allegiance to DĀ‘ISH, for instance, represents the trajectory of enacting a ritual of submission and supplication, whereby the subordinate group is prized by a more prestigious rank or social status in the jihadist milieu upon declaring allegiance.¹⁹ Similarly, chanting of DĀ‘ISH poetry serves as a ritual of homage and a re-enactment of allegiance that reaffirms the authority of DĀ‘ISH and the bond between DĀ‘ISH and its subordinates. The ritual exchange involved therein amounts to the establishment and maintenance of a bond of domination based on obedience between DĀ‘ISH and its subordinates.

In the jihadist circles, loyalty between DĀ‘ISH and its adherents is linked to the willingness of the subordinate to kill the enemy even if this requires self-immolation. Violent acts against a perceived out-group are framed in terms of honour which is lost and the tribal code of conduct which is violated. The illocutionary force of poetry is mobilized by reminding the recipients to uphold the ancient pact of blood vengeance. In Salafi-cum-jihadist parlance, self-immolation is represented by the act of martyrdom, a concept which carries the logic of asymmetry in terms of power relations. The martyr is weaponized in the struggle for power, and the act of martyrdom promises moral superiority resulting from preordained death. The concept of self-sacrifice “could provide believers with a seducing idea of the afterlife.”²⁰ The willingness to die in battle or to perform martyrdom is projected as a form of a ritual sacrifice that reinstates honour and justice.

Violent acts promoted by DĀ‘ISH involve two types of sacrificial tokens. Jihadist propaganda portrays DĀ‘ISH fighters who perform martyrdom as a token of sacrifice for the benefit of the community. The ‘gift exchange’ between the organization and its adherents is coated in Islamic phraseology with the promises of the eternal paradise. Video productions depicting DĀ‘ISH adherents proclaiming ‘God is great’ (*allāhu akbar*) before self-immolation or during a shoot-out attest to their utmost obedience to the jihadist cause. The second sacrificial token is concerned with the killing of the out-group as the ultimate token to complete the ritual sacrifice.

17 See also Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen and West Ltd, 1966), 6–16.

18 Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode*, 18.

19 Examples of individuals and jihadist groups pledging allegiance to DĀ‘ISH are discussed in 4.7.1.

20 Olmo Goelz, “Martyrdom and the Struggle for Power: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Martyrdom in the Modern Middle East,” *BEHEMOTH – A Journal on Civilisation* 12, no. 1 (2019), 3.

Discursively, the poetic ritual of sacrifice is expressed in poetic specificities heir to the ancient *qaṣīda*. These specificities are maintained through a formalized language with phraseology that has become stylized and stereotyped, composed of more or less following recurring speech acts. Compared to everyday speech, ritual metred expression is characterized by canonic parallelism borrowed from the Islamic tradition and a particular language that is used for specific religious rituals referred to as the ‘rhetoric of re-enactment.’²¹ The repetition of Qur’anic phrases interlaces the ritualistic credo propagated by DĀ‘ISH with the ritual re-enactment expressed in the Islamic faith. In this manner, elements from religious rites that have become meaningful for the Islamic culture are extracted and juxtaposed in a ritualistic cultural artefact, permeating non-ritual behaviour and mentality.

The rhetoric of re-enactment from the past serves as a “recapitulative imitation, imaginatively possible and persuasive.”²² A verbal re-enactment is a form of actualization of the sacred language. In chanting or reciting the words of God first revealed to Prophet Muhammad, the reciter is held to repeat God’s commands ordained upon humanity and use them with the same efficacy that were used approximately 1400 years ago. The formal language of poetry on the battlefield is intended to motivate DĀ‘ISH cadres through its illocutionary force because poetry does not describe a particular action, but it constitutes the action itself, namely, it is valued for its performativity.²³ In the case of DĀ‘ISH, chanting poetry is understood as the initial step in verbal form towards performing blood vengeance, in which the out-group becomes a token sacrifice. Upon completion of the poetic ritual, moral evaluations are shifted, old tribal values are ascertained within the in-group, and the group identity is reinforced.

The performativity of DĀ‘ISH poetry is reflected in the *aghrād*, that is, the thematic intentions borrowed from the poetic tradition. The pre-Islamic thematic purposes do not indicate the existence of attitudes, but they effectively bring those attitudes into life “by virtue of the illocutionary act.”²⁴ Thematically, the quest for blood vengeance is provided by a mesh of variegated motifs that string together the broadest possible array of religious, historical, and literary titbits. Due to the centrality of the *aghrād* in appropriating tradition and negotiating power relations, a brief etymological and historical overview of its historical development deems adequate at this stage. This overview would hopefully offer a closer thematic analysis of DĀ‘ISH poetry by juxtaposing medieval literary theory with recent discussions of Arabic poetry. These two dimensions are especially insightful in decoding the literary exemplars of a current organization that composes poetry in the classical form.

21 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 65.

22 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 64.

23 The term ‘performativity’ is adapted from the work of Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58.

24 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58.

5.2. Thematic Schemata of DĀ'ISH Poetry

Since time immemorial, poets have availed themselves of the *qaṣīda* for a particular purpose. The purposefulness is determined by the ideological alignment of the poet. Etymologically, the term *qaṣīda* is derived from the verb *qaṣada* meaning 'to intend' and is to be understood as a framework that incorporates several thematic intentions known as *aghrāḍ* which are specifically chosen by the poet by keeping a targeted audience in mind.²⁵ Régis Blachère defines *aghrāḍ* as "a cluster of concepts, a series of images or evocations which combines with several others in order to constitute a more general theme which forms an axis of some sort."²⁶ In the medieval period, there were the four primary thematic intentions which classified an individual as a major poet (*fahl*), namely, eulogy (*madh*), lampooning (*hijā'*), self-praise (*fakhr*), and description (*wasf*).²⁷ These *aghrāḍ*, which were often the centre of debate even among classical scholars of literary criticism, were neither exclusive nor fixed in time.²⁸

Ali Hussein claims that the term *aghrāḍ* in Arabic does not reflect the Arabic notions of the topic (*fikra*), subject (*mawḍū'*) or genre (*jins adabī*) because classical Arabic poetry focuses mostly on the "targets of the poets in composing their verses."²⁹ To date, there has been no consensus among traditional and modern scholars on a specific number of *aghrāḍ* or which *aghrāḍ* are considered to be fundamental. Traditional literary critics realized that the number of *aghrāḍ* goes beyond what they had covered but chose alternatively to restrict themselves to the most common ones.³⁰

One of the most pertinent discussions among medieval scholars concerning the study of Arabic literary theory is based on the division of the *qaṣīda* into different 'targets of poetry' (*aghrāḍ al-shi'r*).³¹ The litterateur Qudāma b. Ja'fār (d. 948 CE) does not explicitly identify sub-categories but, "concerning specific 'aims,' he attempts to

25 See also Gregor Schoeler quoting Régis Blachère in "The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Diwāns," 41; Wolfhart Heinrichs, "Literary Theory: The Problem of its Efficiency," in *Arabic Poetry: Theory and Development*, ed. Gustave E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1973), 40–1, n. 100.

26 The term *aghrāḍ* is rendered as 'themes' or 'thematic intentions' in English only for the lack of a better term. See also Heinrichs, "Literary Theory: The Problem of its Efficiency," 36.

27 Salma Khadra Jayyusi, "Arabic Poetry in the Post-Classical Age," in CHALPCP, 28.

28 The inconclusive discussions generated among both classical literary critics and modern Arabists regarding the number of themes or motifs and their intricate relationship might be the result of the thematic flexibility of the classical *qaṣīda* that may be adapted differently with time and according to the intention of the producer. Al-'Askarī, for instance, has contrastive views on the matter. In *Diwān al-ma'ānī*, he considers the themes of pre-Islamic poetry to be five in number but contradicts this view in *Kitāb al-ṣinā'atayn*, by claiming the themes of poetry to be innumerable and lists only the most widely used. See also KANAZI, 128.

29 See Ali Hussein, "Classical and Modern Approaches in Dividing the Old Arabic Poem," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 35, no. 3 (2004), 305.

30 See also Ibn Rashiḳ, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsīn al-shi'r wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihī* (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), 108.

31 See also Heinrichs, "Literary Theory: The Problem of its Efficiency," 19–69.

deduce them from other, principal (subordinated) ‘aims’.³² Likewise, the Tunisian literary critic Ḥāzīm al-Qartajannī (d. 1284 CE), divides *aghrād* into major (*ummhahāt turuq*)³³ and narrow paths.³⁴ The medieval scholar suggests dividing the main sections in the poem into sub-sections consisting of direction (*jiha*), division (*faṣl*), and motif (*ma‘nā*).³⁵ The notions attached to *aghrād* in al-Qartajannī’s work, however, lack satisfactory clear-cut definitions. A more recent method of dividing poetry thematically is based on the ‘psycholiterary attempt’ initially explored by ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 CE) which links the states of mind to the themes of poetry like joy, wrath, and awe.³⁶ In this manner, “passionate excitement elicits love poetry, anger invective poetry, desire praise poetry and fear apologetic poetry.”³⁷

This method of division, which is outlined in al-Jurjānī’s work known as *the Secrets of Eloquence*, highlights the importance of assessing literary excellence of classical verses and expressions by going beyond the domain of words and into the realm of meanings.³⁸ Al-Jurjānī clarifies that “the way to discover excellence is to look inwardly, to introspect oneself and find out what impressions, satisfactions, emotions, and excitements the whole composition left on one’s soul.”³⁹ Even though thematic intentions are non-aesthetic elements in poetry, they may, at times, wield immense effect on the aesthetic ingenuity of poets and the emotions of the intended audience. To date, propaganda machines behind jihadist movements such as DĀ‘ISH continue to call upon the thematic intentions of poetry to influence the hearts and minds of a primary Arabic-speaking audience. These thematic intentions contribute towards raising conformity, supporting the jihadist identity, controlling inter-group relations, creating prototypes, shaping memory and behaviour, and also facilitating ideological exchange.

The successful mobilization of modern variants of the *qaṣīda* in the jihadist circles is the result of two complementary dimensions that define this artefact; the flexibility of its thematic intentions on the one hand, and its underlying structure with a fixed metre, rhythmic flow and an end-rhyme on the other hand.⁴⁰ The flexibility and multiplicity of

32 Schoeler, “The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Diwāns,” 12.

33 Al-Qartajannī explicitly uses the term *tarīq* as a synonym for *gharaḍ*. See also Abū al-Ḥasan Ḥāzīm al-Qartajannī, *Minhaj al-bulaghā’ wa-sirāj al-udabā’*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb b. al-Khūja (Tūnis: Dār al-kutub al-sharqiyya, 1966).

34 Hussein, “Classical and Modern Approaches in Dividing the Old Arabic Poem,” 302.

35 See also Al-Qartajannī, *Minhaj al-bulaghā’ wa-sirāj al-udabā’*.

36 Heinrichs, “Literary Theory: The Problem of its Efficiency,” 37.

37 Schoeler, “The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Diwāns,” 7.

38 Muhammad Khalafallah, “‘Abdalqāhir’s Theory in His ‘Secrets of Eloquence’: A Psychological Approach,” in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 14, no. 3 (1955), 166.

39 Khalafallah quoting al-Jurjānī in “‘Abdalqāhir’s Theory in His ‘Secrets of Eloquence’: A Psychological Approach,” 165.

40 Ibn Rashīq compares the relationship between form (*lafz*) and content (*ma‘nā*) to the relationship between the body and the soul (In Arabic, “al-lafzu jismun wa-rūḥuhū l-ma‘nā wa-rtibātuhi bihi ka-rtibātu l-rūḥi

aghrād that distinguishes the polythematic *qaṣīda* (*murakkabat al-aghrād*) enable poets to be creative in their content and to represent their worldview in multiple evolving sub-themes. The molecular structure of classical poetry facilitates the study of themes over genres because “different themes may be combined in one and the same poem, either loosely juxtaposed or more logically and firmly connected and interlocked.”⁴¹ For this reason, particular poetic verses may be extracted and repurposed in a different context. This thematic flexibility is especially evident in more recent forms of social media, whereby well-chosen verses appear to fit seamlessly in a post shared on Facebook or Twitter accounts of DĀ‘ISH subscribers.⁴²

Complementing the thematic flexibility is the well-established rigid metre and rhyme of the *qaṣīda*, which contributes to the memorization of poetry in the form of an aide-mémoire. In a culture that responds well to rhymed verse with metre, the rigid structure of poetry reinforces the thematic content. The medieval scholar Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī (d. 1005 CE) highlights the importance of the poetic metre, considering it to regulate words in a specific manner, making them more artistic and expressive.⁴³ Al-‘Askarī argues that a message encoded in poetry tends to survive longer due to its coherent parts assisted by the metre and end-rhyme.⁴⁴ Metre and rhyme are considered as “mnemonic means to achieve more durable remembrance and rapid dissemination. More than literary and aesthetic glory, rapid diffusion and long durability were the bases of renown for the poets and the only aims of poetry.”⁴⁵ Additionally, rhyme, metre, the sequential, and archetypal patterning of well-known images, rhetorical devices, and the reiteration of the same message through metaphors are mnemonic in origin and function, ensuring that the underlying message is not lost.⁴⁶ The conflation of form and content as a means of political interaction has turned the *qaṣīda* into an instrumental masterpiece for propagandistic purposes even in modern times.

In modern parlance, thematic intentions are appropriated from the Arabic poetic tradition to wield power over the populace’ perception of modern-day political issues. In the case of DĀ‘ISH poetry, multiple *aghrād* are reinvented to provoke blood vengeance. For the scope of this study, DĀ‘ISH poetry is divided into a hierarchy consisting of two supra-themes, namely blood vengeance and ideological communication. Concerning the former, thematic intentions are mobilized to condition the audience’ behaviour by eliciting anger and moral outrage from the recipients and, ultimately, to guide these emotions

bi-l-jismi”). See also Ibn Rashiq, *al-‘Umda fī maḥāsin al-shi‘r wa-adābihi wa-naqdihī*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1972), 124.

41 Heinrichs, “Literary Theory: The Problem of its Efficiency,” 36.

42 Likewise, poetic verses are circulated as an image via Instagram accounts.

43 KANAZI, 124.

44 KANAZI, 124.

45 Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age*, 23.

46 Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, “Ritual and Sacrificial Elements in the Poetry of Blood-Vengeance: Two Poems by Durayd ibn al-Simmah and Muḥallil ibn Rabī‘ah,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45, no. 1 (1986), 38.

into raising out-group aggression and into inspiring acts of martyrdom. Blood vengeance is sub-divided into verses of incitement, valour, elegies, and asceticism, which are mobilized to avenge blood. With regard to ideological communication, this supra-theme governs mostly the organizations' public relations within itself, with other organizations, and with the out-group. Ideological transmission is concerned with propagating a positive image of the caliphate and with indoctrinating the group's worldview and interpretation of the political situation taking place in the Iraq–Syria region and beyond. DĀ'ISH poetry is intended to praise the bravery of the in-group in battle with the underlying ideological purpose of creating prototypes in the jihadist milieu, radicalizing individuals and strengthening inter-group relations. These two supra-themes are interdependent, mainly because blood vengeance represents itself as a moral code of action that plays a central role in DĀ'ISH ideology.

For the sake of a thorough analysis, blood vengeance is dissected into the themes of incitement (*tahrīd*), bravery in battle (*ḥamāsa*), elegy (*rithā'*), renunciation (*zuhd*), and calling others to lead a life of abstention (*tazhīd*). In return, these themes are expressed in a series of motifs that contribute towards evoking blood vengeance. These motifs include exhortation (*istinḥād*), the call to take up arms (*istinḥār*), expressing reproach (*'atb* or *'itāb*), consolation (*ta'ziyya*), announcing or reporting the death of someone (*na'y*), threatening or a warning (*tawa'ud*, *wa'id*, *i'ād*),⁴⁷ and lampoon (*hijā'*).⁴⁸ Due to the flexibility of the polythematic *qaṣīda*, the distinction between themes, sub-themes, and motifs is challenging to delineate because, at times, themes transform into motifs, and at other times they lead a life of their own. However, the main intention behind every sub-theme and motif – even in the extreme cases of pious and ascetic verses – lies in the quest for blood vengeance. The analysis of poetry in this chapter follows a linear approach to best demonstrate how sub-themes and motifs contribute to the overarching theme of blood vengeance. Poems are discussed in their entirety to facilitate the understanding of how multiple motifs work together within a specific theme to accomplish the overriding theme of blood vengeance.

5.2.1. Elegiac Verses

The elegy (*rithā'*) presents itself as a symbolic action that enacts the rituals of mourning and reminiscing people, things, and times lost and absent. It engages in transforming death into a public act or at least making death highly publicized thereafter. In the pre-Islamic period, the origins of the elegy were characterized by the element of performance and which stemmed from the *niyāḥa* of wailing women.⁴⁹ The performance of mourning was an obligatory public lamentation incumbent on women. This obligation

47 Ibn al-Rashīq discusses this motif under *al-wa'id wa-l-indhār*. See also Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsīn al-shi'r wa-adābihi wa-naqdihī*, vol. 2, 159.

48 See also Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda fī maḥāsīn al-shi'r wa-adābihi wa-naqdihī*, vol. 2, 159ff.

49 Ignaz Goldziher, "Bemerkungen zur Arabischen Trauerpoesie," *Wiener Zeitschrift fuer die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 16 (1902): 307–39; Von Grunebaum, *Kritik und Dichtkunst: Studien zur Arabischen Literaturgeschichte*, 19.

was “ritually prescribed and served to express a typically liminal defiled and yet sacral state.”⁵⁰ The hortatory powers of the performance are archetypal in the sense that they are an expression of ritual intent and not of personal sentiment. Suzanne Stetkevych argues that *rithā*’ is not a failed or mediocre attempt at individual expressions but above all, “the performance of a ritual obligation” of a woman.⁵¹ This obligation came to an end “when her male relatives achieved vengeance for their fallen kinsman or, analogously, with the recitation of her elegy, which puts her ‘on record,’ as it were, as being in perpetual mourning and thereby relieves her of the obligation to continue actually mourning.”⁵² Without performing a ritual of public memorialization, commemoration, and narration, the lamented has no existence and cannot be remembered as a hero or a martyr.

The elegiac theme developed significantly during the Islamic period, and it contrasted the pre-Islamic elegy on various levels. During the Islamic conquests, the elegiac genre had traces of religious doctrines (*āthār al-ta’ālīm al-dīniyya*), manifestations of faith in God through death (*maẓāhir al-īmān bi-l-mawtī*), and rejoicing in heaven (*al-istibshār bi-l-janna*). Poetic verses became coated with Islamic terminology, made explicit reference to heaven and divine remuneration promised by God for martyrs and warriors (*al-thawāb wa-l-ajr al-ladhī ‘a’addahu allāh li-l-shuhadā’i wa-l-mujāhidīna*).⁵³

The recurrence of the elegy in the context of contemporary militant jihadist warfare addressed to male relatives is also aligned with classical conventions.⁵⁴ Stetkevych claims that the available corpus of pre-Islamic poetry seems to suggest “a preponderance of *rithā*’ for those who fell in the battle over those who died of natural causes.”⁵⁵ Elegiac verses are circulated in the jihadist milieu to lament high-ranking male personnel. Examples include the group’s former spokesperson Muḥammad al-‘Adnānī, the former chief of military operations in Syria ‘Umar al-Shishānī, and the former head of the group’s military Council called Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Bilāwī.⁵⁶ In sporadic cases, the lamented may be key members of another jihadist organization that supports DĀ’ISH or enjoys a good relationship with it. Examples include Abū ‘Abd Allāh Taw-

50 Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 165.

51 Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 162.

52 Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 166.

53 See al-Nu‘mān ‘Abd al-Muta‘āl al-Qādī, *Shi‘r al-futūḥ al-islāmiyya fī ṣadr al-islām* (Cairo: Dār al-qawmiyya, 1965), 253.

54 Elegies written for deceased women were only introduced later by the Arab poet and satirist al-Jarīr b. ‘Aṭīyyah b. al-Khaṭafā (650-729 CE) who lamented his wife. Ibn al-Rūmī (836-896 CE) also elegised his mother. See Ewald Wagner, *Grundzüge der klassischen arabischen Dichtung, Band I: Die altarabische Dichtung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987), 133-4; Smoor, “Elegies and Other Poems on Death by Ibn al-Rūmī”; Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 163.

55 See also Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 163.

56 Charles Lister, “Islamic State Senior Leadership: Who’s Who,” *Brookings*, October 20, 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/en_whos_who.pdf.

fīq Muḥammad Farīj⁵⁷ and Osama bin Laden,⁵⁸ amongst other essential figures in the jihadist circles. In sporadic cases, elegies are composed to celebrate the death of civilians who have not participated in the militant expeditions of the group and whose death was not related to the battlefield. One of Aḥlam al-Naṣr's elegies deals with the death of Salīm ʿAbd al-Qādir Zinjīr (1953–2013) who composed children's poetry in the form of Islamic chants for specific purposes including education, motivation, good upbringing in the Islamic faith, active community participation. By lamenting ʿAbd al-Qādir's death, Aḥlam al-Naṣr exploits his legacy and adapts it to the jihadist narrative.⁵⁹ The underlying intention behind conjoining Muslim personalities with DĀʿISH is to broaden the group's appeal to a broader Muslim populace.

In medieval Arabic literary scholarship, elegies were considered as a sub-theme of praise poetry (*madīh*),⁶⁰ because like *madīh*, elegies enumerate the virtues of the deceased but with a nostalgic element.⁶¹ Although elegiac verses tend to perpetuate the memory of particular individuals by extolling their virtues and commemorating their death, it is not the individuality but the permanence of their qualities which lies at the heart of the elegy.⁶² The principal objective of producing elegies in the jihadist milieu is thereby not only to immortalize critical figures but, more importantly, to crystallize fundamental values of the jihadist ethos. Thus, the composition of an elegy is a political act within itself because it enables DĀʿISH to shape the meaning of ancient tribal values and the image of particular figures thereafter.

Virtues of fallen fighters are frequently indicated in the opening verses of the poem. In an elegy commemorating the late Muḥammad al-ʿAdnānī (1977–2016)⁶³ entitled *You are still lofty O ʿAdnānī*, the former DĀʿISH spokesperson is lamented in *kāmil* metre. The opening verses do not only stress the righteousness of the high-ranking figure in DĀʿISH, but the verses also depict al-ʿAdnānī as a sacrificial token who completed the sacrificial rite and is consequently granted the paradisaical promise:

حَتَّىٰ ارْتَفَيْتَ إِلَىٰ رُحَابِ جَنَّانٍ أَنْعَمَ بِطُوبَىٰ وَالْمَقَامِ الْهَانِي	1. مَا زِلْتَ تَسْمُو أَيُّهَا الْعَدْنَانِي 2. دِيَاكَ مَا نَرْجُو الْإِلَهَ بِفَضْلِهِ
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57 Tawfīq Muḥammad Farīj is believed to have formed part of the Jamāʿat Anṣār Bayt al-Maqdis (Supporters of Jerusalem Group), which eventually pledged allegiance to DĀʿISH and became known as the province of Sināi (*wilāyat Sināʿ*). See also Milton, and al-Ubaydi, “Pledging Bayʿa: A Benefit or Burden to the Islamic State?” *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2015).

58 Aḥlām al-Naṣr's elegy for Osama bin Laden was composed prior to the complete separation of both organizations taking place during summer 2014. See DAN, 111.

59 Unlike most eulogized protagonists, Salīm ʿAbd al-Qādir died from illness and not on the battlefield.

60 See also Abū Hilal al-ʿAskarī, *Kūtāb al-ṣināʿatayn* (Cairo, 1952), 131–2; Qudāma b. Jaʿfar, *Naqd al-shiʿr* (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 23, and 49–50.

61 Al-ʿAskarī argues that the only difference between praise and elegiac poetry is that in a panegyric one writes “he is...,” whilst in an elegy one writes “he was...” See KANAZI, 128.

62 See also Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 167.

63 DĀʿISH spokesman and senior leader Muḥammad al-ʿAdnānī was killed in August 30, 2016 in Aleppo province.

7. You kindled the longing for eternity in us,
which is the purpose of pure faith and belief.

Culturally resonant symbols that are already meaningful to the populace in a favourable way are promoted as the driving force behind the deeds of the lamented. The acts of the lamented are emphasized by employing dynamic verbs repetitively in the past tense, including ‘shook’ (*zalzalta*, v. 4), ‘slew’ (*ṣa‘aqtahum*, v. 5), and ‘annihilated’ (*maqahṭa*, v. 5). The reconstruction of these deeds through morphological repetition maintains a rhythmic conversational-like quality throughout the poem and aids recall. Additionally, al-‘Adnānī’s militant acts are depicted as a direct result of tribal values lodged in the Islamic tradition. By associating key-value terms with al-‘Adnānī’s deeds, the organization borrows terms from the tradition which stir up favourable emotions in a predominantly Muslim populace and deliberately manoeuvres their signification to befit its jihadist narrative.

The poem addresses fallen fighters collectively, ensuring them that their deeds would be commemorated after their death. The collective, second-person plural also ensures the recipients that spilling their blood would automatically belong to the same group of deceased ‘heroes’ like al-‘Adnānī. The rhetorical use of the apostrophe serves as a timeless yet timely reminder for the prospective fighters that immortality is only achieved by turning words into deeds, namely, through the sacrificial rite. The spilling of ‘pureblood’ as a form of vengeance is the most esteemed evidence which proves that words are transformed into deeds. The collectively fallen figures are described as pure of speech and as pure of action:

تُلْقَى بِلاَ عَمَلٍ وَلَا بُنْيَانٍ	8. فَجِهَانُكُمْ مَا كَانَ مَخْضَ عِبَارَةٍ
وَرَمَاهُمْ شَلُّوا بِلاَ أَرْكَانٍ	9. بَلْ كَانَ رَعْدًا شَلَّ أَرْكَانَ الْعِدَا
حُطَّتْ بِهِ الدَّعَوَاتُ فِي إِتْقَانٍ	10. فَحُرُوفُكُمْ لَيْسَتْ مَدَادًا بَلْ دَمًا
نُسِجَتْ وَشَائِجُهَا بِدَمٍ قَانٍ	11. أَبْلَغَ بِمَا تَحْوِيهِ خَيْرُ رِسَالَةٍ

8. Your jihad was not a mere expression,
which was met without action or foundation,
9. But it was thunder which made the pillars of the enemy crumble,
it cast them, and they became disabled without staff,
10. Your letters [of the alphabet] are not ink, but blood,
by which the prayers were written to perfection,
11. Give tidings what the best message contains,
tightly woven with crimson blood.

The deeds of the lamented are emphasized by deploying a negative-positive restatement which balances the negation of undesirable qualities (*mā kāna maḥḍa ‘ibāratin...* in v. 8, and *laysat midādan...* in v. 10) with positive esteemed qualities (*bal kāna ra‘dan...* in v. 9). This negation, which was traditionally a formulaic stylistic expression that features in the *niyāḥa*, and later on, became also adopted by the pre-Islamic ele-

gies.⁶⁹ The poem shifts seamlessly from the second-person singular verbal form to the second-person plural nominal form. The actions adduced to al-‘Adnānī, including his act of martyrdom, no longer remain individual deeds but are synchronized through some kind of linearity with his predecessors who had similarly sacrificed themselves on the battlefield. As the poem develops from the specific to the general, the gap between the heroic deeds of al-‘Adnānī and the audience is narrowed. Al-‘Adnānī’s death is depicted as a prototypical figure for the in-group whose patterns of behaviour should be emulated. The symbolic portrayal of al-‘Adnānī’s death as a religious ascetic ritual aims to establish continuity with a suitable historical past, thereby preserving or even remoulding the social order.

The function of the apostrophic *abligh* (tell, inform) places the poetess “on record” as being in perpetual mourning. We find in this poem a certification documenting the accomplishment of blood vengeance. The act of blood vengeance is only recognized officially once it is recorded through the poem.⁷⁰ This process of making one’s death official through verse must be understood in light of the exigencies poetry being above all mnemonic both in its purpose and in its composition. His death becomes mythologized for redeeming cities with his blood, creating a path of guidance for his followers, kindling in the in-group a longing for eternity, and announcing and inviting Muslims to the caliphate. Al-‘Adnānī’s death is reinforced as a symbol of or a model for future martyrs, reminding them that their heroic deeds will be recorded and celebrated:

<p>دُخْرَ الْعَزَائِمِ فِي جَوَى الْوُجْدَانِ تَلْقَاهُ إِذْ تَرَكَوْا جَنَى الْأَغْصَانِ فَتَجَلَّدُوا بِالصَّبْرِ لِلْأُحْزَانِ</p>	<p>12. نَبَاكَ لَيْسَ يُضْبِعُ بَلْ يَبْقَى لَنَا 13. وَإِذَا يَغُورُ الْمَاءُ فِي جَوْفِ النَّرَى 14. وَالَّذِينَ يَصْنَعُ غَيْرَهُ يَا قَوْمَنَا</p>
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12. That [which you have done] is not in vain, but it will remain for us
as munition for the moral strength [ingrained] in our burning emotions,
13. When water penetrates the innermost soil,
you find it when you see the branches grow,
14. Religion produces plants like him, O people of ours,
arm yourselves with patience for sorrow!

Al-‘Adnānī’s courage is described metaphorically in martial terms (*dhukhr al-‘azā‘im*, v. 12). The spilling of his blood is a symbol for revitalization and redemption, giving life to others who would follow the same path. The elegy transmits a universal message celebrating those who have committed themselves to DĀ’ISH by word and action. This message is reinstated in the closing verses of the poem, in which the intentions and the deeds of DĀ’ISH martyrs are divinely ordained:

69 See also Wagner, *Grundzüge der Klassischen Arabischen Dichtung, Band I: Die Altarabische Dichtung*, 117.

70 See also Henri Lammens, “Le Caractère Religieux du thār ou Vendetta Chez les Arabes Préislamistes,” *Bulletin de l’institut Francais d’Archeologie Orientale* 26 (1926), 108–10.

يا قَائِدَ الأَبْطالِ وَالشُّجْعانِ
 كالنُّورِ يَصْرُغُ كالحاتِ دُخانِ

15. هُنَّاكَ رَبِّي فِي الجِنانِ وَخَلَدِها
 16. جَعَلَ الإلهُ دِماءَكُمُ وَمِدادَكُمُ

15. May my Lord give you bliss in paradise,
 O leader of the heroes and the courageous [ones],
 16. God made your blood and your ink,
 a light that kills the dark smoke.

In a different elegy, the death of the former chief of military operations known as Abū ‘Umar al-Shishānī features in a poem composed by the jihadist poet called Abū Qatāda al-Ḥaḍramī. The opening verses of the poem entitled *Martyrdom of Sheikh Abū ‘Umar al-Shishānī* fulfil the customary function of public pronouncement:⁷¹

أَسقى التُّرى بِدِمانِهِ الشَّيشانِي
 يَتَقَدَّمونَ الصَّفِّ دونَ تَوانِي
 سُمُرُ السِنانِ لَهُ بِخَيْرِ بِيانِ
 وَبِضَرْبِ هامِ الكُفْرِ لا الأوزانِ

1. بُشْرانَكُمُ بِالفَتْحِ يا إِخوانِي
 2. بُشْرانَكُمُ قاداتنا فِي حَرْبِهِم
 3. أَعْيى الكلامِ رِثاؤُهُ فَتَقَدَّمَتْ
 4. قَرِناؤُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ حَوْضِ غِمارِها

1. Glad tidings for the conquest, O brothers of mine,
 al-Shishānī quenched the soil’s thirst by his blood,
 2. Glad tidings to our leaders in their war,
 they advance in their battle line without lagging,
 3. His elegy exhausted the words,
 the and brown spears gave about him the best evidence,
 4. His elegy is [composed with] the war, plunging into its hazard,
 by beheading apostasy, and not by poetic metres.

The function of the anaphoric use of *bushrākum* in the first two verses is two-fold. Firstly, it reinstates the functional role of poetry in the announcement of death. Secondly, the positive connotations attributed to the verb *bashshara*, which means ‘to bring good news’ or ‘glad tidings,’ carry religious overtones, which help frame death in Islamic terms. Additionally, a reference is made to the relationship between words and action in verses 3 and 4, wherein the blood stained on al-Shishānī’s spear is claimed to present more reliable evidence than the poem itself. Provided that the poet ironically expresses these thoughts in metrical speech, the underlying message should be understood as an exhortation of the fighting men, a form of militant activism that was traditionally expressed in the form of *tahrīd*. The poet reminds the recipients that weeping the dead is unislamic, while referring to the eternal paradisaical reward awaiting al-Shishānī:

71 For the complete poetic text, see Appendix A.31, and B.1.

5. يَا إِخْوَتِي قَدَّرُوا الدُّمُوعَ رُوَيْدَكُمْ كَيْفَ الْبُكَاءِ عَلَى نَزِيلِ جَنَّاتٍ؟

5. O brothers of mine, wipe away your tears gently,
why is there weeping for [someone] inhabiting paradise?

On rare occasions, DĀ'ISH members lament the deaths of innocent individuals who are not affiliated with the organization. These deaths would have garnered the attention of the locals due to their brutality, are exploited by DĀ'ISH to heighten emotions, to galvanize support, and to evoke the ferocity of the pre-Islamic ethos of blood vengeance, whereby unavenged blood of the innocent can only be redeemed by the ritual of revenge. This is exemplified in the death of Abū Ḥamza 'Alī al-Khaṭīb who was a thirteen-year-old from the Syrian Governate of Dar'ā who was detained by the Syrian government on April 29, 2011, and was later killed following his participation in protests against the government. His death is exploited in a poem composed by Aḥlām al-Naṣr in *kāmil* metre entitled *His Blood Would not be shed among the People in Vain*. This poem exemplifies how organizations like DĀ'ISH inculcate a specific worldview. The poetic exemplar shows how DĀ'ISH insurgents seek to cut across ideological and political divides by appealing to blood vengeance as a *modus operandi*. It also demonstrates how DĀ'ISH manipulates the situation at a particular time to fit into a jihadist narrative. In this regard, poetry becomes an exercise of control over the memorialization of specific deaths filtered by the group's worldview and ideology.⁷²

1. يَا أَيُّهَا التَّارِيخُ سَجِّلْ حَادِثًا بَشَعًا وَمُرًّا
2. عَنِ مُجْرِمِينَ تَعَوَّلُوا جُرْمًا وَقَدْ عَبَدُوهُ دَهْرًا
3. عَنِ بُرْعِمٍ خُلُو صَغِيرٍ قَلْبُهُ يَنْسَابُ طَهْرًا
4. طِفْلٍ بَرِيءٍ يَرْتَجِي أَنْ يَرْجَعَ الْإِنْسَانُ حُرًّا
5. فَمَضَى مَعَ الشَّعْبِ الْأَبِيِّ، بَعَزْمَةٍ قَدْ نَارَ ثَوْرًا
6. وَرَنَا إِلَى الْحَلْمِ الْعَظِيمِ بِلَهْفَةٍ تَخْتَارُ خَبْرًا
7. خَرَجَ الْمُجَاهِدُ حَمَزَةٌ لِيَقُولَ لِلظُّلَمِ: صَبْرًا
8. إِنَّ الْإِنْتِصَارَ الْحَقَّ آتٍ، لَنْ يَرُومَ الْيَوْمَ مُرًّا
9. كُفُّوا عَنِ الظُّلْمِ الْأَثِيمِ وَعَمِّرُوا الْأَوْطَانَ طُرًّا
10. حَتَّى نُشِيدَ بِلَادَنَا عِلْمًا وَتَخَنَانًا وَبِرًّا
11. فَإِذَا بِجُنْدِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ عَدَا عَلَى الْأَطْفَالِ جَهْرًا
12. قَتَلُوا وَحَطَفُوا وَاعْتَقَلُوا وَانْتِهَكَاتِ وَأَسْرًا
13. عُصْفُورُنَا قَدْ غَابَ، لَا لَمْ نَسْمَعْ الْأَيَّامَ خُبْرًا
14. مِنْ بَعْدُ: عَادَ لِأَهْلِهِ مَيِّتًا بِجَسْمٍ مَارٍ مَوْرًا
15. وَشَهِدْنَا طِفْلًا صَغِيرًا كَانَ فِي الْأَفْلَاكِ بَدْرًا
16. يَا وَيْحَ قَلْبِي! مَا أَقُولُ وَقَدْ سَبَانِي الْخُرْنُ قَهْرًا؟
17. يَا غَيْرَةَ الرَّحْمَنِ قَدْ قَتَلُوا صَغِيرًا كَانَ زَهْرًا
18. قَدْ كَانَ طِفْلًا يَأْفَعُ، مَا عَاشَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ عُمْرًا

72 See DAN, 20–1.

19. ضَرْبُوهُ قَدْ كَسَرُوا الدَّرَاعَ وَحَطَّمُوا عُقْبًا وَصَدْرًا
 20. قَدْ شَوَّهَوْهُ وَحَرَّقَوْهُ وَعَذَّبُوهُ فَمَمَاتَ غَدْرًا
 21. أَوَاهُ مَا أَشْفَاهُمْ! يَا وَيْلَهُمْ قَدْ كَانَ طُيْبِرًا
 22. حُلْمُ الطُّفُولَةِ غَابَ خَلْفَ عَذَابٍ تَشْوِيهِ تَعْرِى
 23. وَحَكَى عَنِ الحَقْدِ العَجِيبِ لِطُعْمَةِ تَشْتَارُ شَرًّا
 24. لَا تَنْزُكُوا دَمَهُ الطَّهَوْرَ يَضِيعُ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ هُدْرًا
 25. قَوْمُوا أَيَا أَحْرَارُ لَبَّوْا صَوْتَهُ عَزْمًا وَثَارًا
 26. قَوْمُوا بِعَيْرِ تَهَاوُنٍ، فَكُؤَا البِلَادِ، كَذَاكَ أُسْرَى
 27. قَوْمُوا فَلَنْ تَجِدُوا أَيَا أَحْرَارُ بَعْدَ اليَوْمِ عُدْرًا
 28. لَهْفِي عَلَيْكَ أَيَا أَحْسَى يَا قَاهِرَ الأَشْرَارِ قَهْرًا
 29. رَغَمَ العَذَابِ فَبِسْمَةِ النُّعْمَى تَلُوخَ عَلَيْكَ بُشْرَى
 30. وَتُسْعُ فِي أَبُوَيْكَ تُحْنَانًا وَإِعْزَازًا وَفُخْرًا
 31. رَبَّاهُ يَا رَحْمَنُ أَلْهِمُ أَهْلَهُ سَكْنًا وَصَبْرًا
 32. عَوَضَهُمْ فَرَحًا وَأَنْسَأُ يَمْسَحُ الأَحْزَانَ طُرًّا
 33. يَا بِنَ الحَطِيبِ عَلَى خَطَاكَ نَسِيرُ نَحْوِ النَّصْرِ سَيْرًا
 34. لَا نَسْتَكِينُ وَلَا نَخِيبُ، لَنَا الإِلَهَ يَمْدُ أَجْرًا

1. Record, O epoch, a monstrous and painful tragedy,
2. Of criminals who have deviated by sinning, and venerated fate,
3. Of a sweet and small blossom whose heart befits purity,
4. An innocent child hoping for humankind to be unrestrained,
5. So he moved forth with the lofty people with the determination that incited revolt,
6. He gazed at the great dreams with a pain that favours good deeds,
7. The fighter Ḥamza went out telling the tyrants: 'steadfastness,'
8. Indeed, the victory of truth is forthcoming; it will not desire the day to be bitter,
9. Slap the injustice and build the homes together,
10. So that we develop our lands as an emblem, compassionately, and piously,
11. When soldiers of the criminals mistreat children in public,
12. By killing, abducting, arresting, violation, and imprisoning,
13. Indeed, our bird disappeared, no, we did not hear any news for days,
14. After that: he returned to his people dead, moving to and fro,
15. Our martyr, a small child, he was a full moon in orbit,
16. Oh, woe to my heart! What do I say? Sorrow imprisoned me forcibly.
17. O zeal of the Merciful, they killed a small one, he was a flower,
18. He was an adolescent child; he did not live for long among the people,
19. They beat him up, they broke his arms and crushed his neck and chest,
20. They disfigured him, burnt him, tormented him until he died betrayed,
21. Ah, the most wicked of them! Woe unto them, he was a bird!
22. The childhood dream disappeared, after the torment of disfigurement he was disrobed,
23. He talked about the shocking hatred of a small mob who consulted about the calamity,
24. Do not let his pureblood be spilt among the people in vain,
25. Rise, O free ones, heed the call in his voice with determination and revenge,
26. Rise without negligence, free the countries, and likewise the captives,
27. Rise, O free ones, you will not find an excuse after today,

28. My pain for you, O brother, O conqueror of the evildoers,
29. Despite the torture, the smile of happiness shines on you with glad tidings,
30. It radiates on your parents with compassion, high esteem, and pride,
31. They bought him up, O Merciful, to inspire his people with calm and steadfastness!
32. Compensate them with happiness and delight, and wipe away all the sorrows,
33. O Ibn Khatīb, we follow on your footsteps towards victory,
34. We will not be humiliated, and we will not be disappointed, God is the best supporter.

From the outset, we need to identify the structural outline of the poem's essential action leading up to blood vengeance. The poem opens with the announcement of the death, a role traditionally played by the *na'y* motif. Historically speaking, the *rithā'* genre developed separately from the polythematic *qaṣīda*, and some of its themes and formulas can be traced back to pre-Islamic times.⁷³ The *na'y* motif displays two leading roles of the poet; firstly, the poet as a messenger who makes an announcement and, secondly, the poet as a reporter who informs the public about the death of the lamented.⁷⁴ The narrative dimension related to this motif imbues the grieved with significance. These roles intend to generate considerable publicity by heightening emotions, forging solidarity, and sharpening the division between the in-group and out-group in the form of a poetic narrative.

The *na'y* motif is followed by characterizing the actors in this narrative, namely, the aggressors (v. 2), and the victim (v. 3–4). Characterization is followed by a description of al-Khaṭīb's final days, leading to his killing (v. 5–10). Subsequently, the poem shifts focus on the aggressors and their brutality (v. 12–15). After setting the scene, the poem proceeds to the section of weeping the dead. This section is expressed through the oral-formulaic expressions *yā wayḥa* (v. 16) and *yā waylahum* (v. 21). Additionally, the weeping of the dead also entails a depiction of the brutality against the child (v. 17–23). Recounting the brutality committed by powerful oppressors against a powerless child is intended to heighten the recipients' emotions and provokes their anger. Verse 24, which is coincidentally chosen as the title of the poem, is pivotal because it introduces the call for vengeance. The actors of the poem, namely, the aggressors and the child, are juxtaposed with the audience against the aggressors. The death of the child is depicted as a reasonable justification of 'blood feud' that necessitates blood vengeance. The poem ends by inciting the audience to seek blood vengeance (v. 25–27). Incitation is succeeded by tribal *fakhr* (v. 28–33), reminding the recipients of their traditions, that is, only through blood vengeance can the safety and satiety of the DĀ'ISH group be restored.

In a more generic classification, the first part of the poem (v. 1–23) mobilizes emotions by registering and describing the action that needs to be avenged. In contrast, the second part of the poem incites blood vengeance (v. 24–34). The structural composition

73 Wagner, *Grundzüge der Klassischen Arabischen Dichtung, Band I: Die Altarabische Dichtung*, 119ff.

74 For more about the poetic motif of *na'y* in classical Arabic poetry see also Smoor, "Elegies and Other Poems on Death by Ibn al-Rūmī," 54ff; Wagner, *Grundzüge der klassischen arabischen Dichtung, Band I: Die altarabische Dichtung*, 121ff.

may alternatively be divided according to the van Gennepian tripartite model of the rite of passage suggested by Suzanne Stetkevych.⁷⁵ The tripartite model is made up of three phases termed ‘separation,’ ‘liminality,’ and ‘aggregation.’ The ‘separation’ phase refers to a symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group from a set of cultural conditions, whereas the ‘aggregation’ phase occurs when the passage is consummated. The phase of ‘liminality’ takes place between the phases of ‘separation’ and ‘aggregation,’ whereby “the characteristics of the ritual subject (the ‘passenger’) are ambiguous.”⁷⁶ In this poem, the ‘separation’ phase occurs with the narration of the teenager’s murder (v. 1–14). The official Syrian authorities separated the child by using their force against him. The liminal phase places the teenager in a ‘sacrificial state’ (v. 14–23). The exit from sacrifice, that is, the ‘aggregation’ phase, takes the form the reincorporation of the child (v. 23–34). The killing of the innocent teenager, which initiated the sacrificial rite, can only reach completion, namely, the ritual rebirth, by avenging the victim’s blood.

Once the underlying structure of the poem is established, we can proceed to a more analytical and interpretative reading of this poem. The apostrophic phrase *yā ayyuhā al-ta’rikhu*, which introduces the separation phase, is indicative of the poetry’s formulaic character, namely its function to go “on record” as fulfilling the obligation of perpetual mourning. The separation phase juxtaposes youthfulness and virtues with the brutality and vices of the out-group to heighten the recipients’ emotions and dichotomize the narration. This dichotomy is additionally reinforced by deploying the preposition ‘an as an anaphora consecutively for contrastive effects (v. 2–3). The verb *taghawwalū*, which is deployed in verse 2 to refer to the out-group, originates from *ghilān* (pl. *ghūl*), an evil spirit or a species of *shayṭān* or jinn. It is believed that the *ghilān* appears before people in the desert, and it then changes its form taking on various appearances.⁷⁷ In this poem, the protean character of the verb *taghawwalū* describes the institutionalized violence committed by the Syrian regime.

In the separation phase, the poetic motif of *dahr* is recalled to elicit pity.⁷⁸ This motif comes within the framework of the conventional contents of the elegy, resonating with a religio-philosophical tradition that harked back as far as pre-Islamic poetry.⁷⁹ The poetess recalls how the supporters of the Syrian government worshipped fate as a false god (v. 2) and shattered al-Khaṭīb’s dreams by killing him at a young age (*mā ‘āsha bayna al-nāsi ‘umrā*, v. 18). The child’s great dreams expressed in verse 6 (*wa-ranā ilā l-ḥulmi al-‘aẓīmi*) soon vanished (*ḥulm al-ṭufūla ghāba*, v. 22). Particular emphasis is laid

75 For a discussion on this, see also Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 6ff.

76 See also Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 94–5.

77 LISĀN, *gh-w-l*.

78 The *dahr* motif in Arabic literature is discussed in section 5.1.

79 See also Smoor, “Elegies and Other Poems on Death by Ibn al-Rūmī,” 49–85.

upon the child's detainment. The phase of detainment leading to the child's killing stresses the liminality of the ritual paradigm, whereby the ritual of death starts transforming itself into a ritual of rebirth from verse 24 onwards. The sacrificial state of liminality is reinforced by the dialectical relationship between the verbs *'āda* (v. 14) and *ghāba* (v. 13, 22). The verb *'āda* refers to the cyclical repetition and return for anything done habitually or repetitively and is a succinct expression of the perpetually liminal state of the victim. This cyclical repetition is reinforced by the use of *māra mawrā* in the same verse. The verb *ghāba*, which means 'to vanish, stay away, disappear or hide,' is a preliminary indication of the entry into the sacrificial rite. In verse 13, *ghāba* is used to describe the child's disappearance and introduces his return in a transformed dimension.

Interspersed between the verses of the poem is the antithetical positive presentation of the child against the negative portrayal of the aggressors and their acts of brutality. The two parts of the antithesis develop concurrently to each other throughout the poem and are reinforced by the heightened use of morphological and lexical redundancy. Repetition resonates with the weeping nature of the poem, which portrays the poetess as struck by disbelief. The depiction of youthfulness is kept alive in the memory of the recipients through the semantic repetition, which is often embellished by nature imagery such as 'a sweet and small blossom' (v. 3), 'our bird disappeared' (v. 13), 'they killed a small, he was a flower' (v. 17), 'an adolescent child' (v. 18), and 'he was a bird' (v. 21). The brutality of the protagonist's death is rendered in the laudatory exclamations, which are charged with intense emotions. The poetess addresses her heart in the imperative 'Oh woe to my heart,' claiming that she felt, figuratively, imprisoned by the sorrow of the death (v. 16).⁸⁰ In contrast, the poetess also addresses 'the most wicked of them!' exclaiming 'ah...woe unto them!' (v. 21).

The victimization of the child and the dramatization of the events polarise the in-group from the out-group, in which the in-group is represented as a victim of violent threats.⁸¹ The in-group is defined in broader terms; it includes individuals who are against violence committed by the Syrian government. Additionally, the vivid description of violence committed against the child is reinforced by the repetition of specific lexical roots, which is an ornamental device mnemonic in origin and function. Known in Arabic as *jinās al-ishtiqaq*, this device produces a kind of acoustic that satisfies and intensifies the sound and reinstates the meaning. This feature is recurrent even within the same poetic composition, as exemplified in the following examples:

80 One could feel some traces, albeit remotely, to the poetess al-Khansā'. The poetess, who is known for her powerful elegies and whose work presented a structure that was inherited more or less "wholesale" by later poets, tended to start her poems using an imperative address to her eye, to pour forth abundant and unhindered tears. See Smoor, "Elegies and Other Poems on Death by Ibn al-Rūmī," 53.

81 See also Teun Van Dijk, *Ideology and Discourse: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (London: Sage, 1998), 84.

mujrimīna...jurman (v. 2), *thāra thawrā* (v. 5), *takhtāru khayrā* (v. 6), *māra mawrā* (v. 14), *tashtāru sharrā* (v. 23), *qāhir...qahrā* (v. 28), and *nasīru...sayrā* (v. 33).

Albeit less frequent, there are other examples interspersed in the same poem, which are classified as the *jinās* of inversion (*jinās al-qalb*). In this case, the repetition of certain consonants contributes to the melody of the verse *yartajī...yarja'a* (v. 4), *yarūma...murrā* (v. 8), and *al-naṣr sayrā* (v. 33). Strategic anaphoric repetitions contribute to arousing the audience's pent-up emotions of pity and anger, leading the audience to be more emotional and less able to act rationally. The redundancy of the underlying message through various discursive devices facilitates to propagate a particular worldview and functions as a mechanism which deactivates self-inhibiting norms and encourages DĀ'ISH cadres to perform acts of brutality against the perceived out-group.⁸² Members of the Arabic-speaking populace general public may not necessarily accept or subscribe to the radical ideology of DĀ'ISH. However, they may be provoked emotionally by the depiction of brutality inflicted against the most innocent and vulnerable members of its society.

A blunt shift in the poem occurs in verse 24, which demarcates the ritual of death from the ritual of rebirth. This verse is pivotal in the development of the poetic narrative because it introduces the customary poetic section known as *takhallus* or a release or disengagement from sadness and the beginning of optimism. The rebirth or the exit from the sacrifice is characterized by incitement (*tahrīd*), and it heeds the warning not to let the child's 'pureblood be shed among the people in vain.' This change in tonality is also indicated in the grammatical tense. The ritual of death is expressed in the past tense, whereas the ritual of rebirth is formulated using the present tense and the imperative mood. In the ritual of rebirth, the audience is addressed directly and ordered to respond to the child's voice through determination and revenge (v. 25). The incitement is conveyed through the imperative, first-person plural form *qūmū*, which is used anaphorically in three consecutive verses (v. 25–27). The call for arms is strengthened by demanding the audience to free the city and the captives (v. 26). In a consolatory tone, the poetess praises the upbringing given by his two forefathers (*abwayka*, v. 30), ensuring the recipients that the child's deeds made his parents proud and compassionate (v. 31). The role of the ritual rebirth is to create a prototype from among the populace and to galvanize the audience into action by completing the rite of passage.

The transformation from the ritual death to the ritual rebirth is conveyed by following intensifying verbal patterns, namely, the geminate root of the first verbal form (*fa'ala*). In emotionally charged diction, the poetess contrasts the child's innocence with the excruciating pain of his death, including beating, breaking of bones, destruction of body parts, defacing, and burning, among others (v. 19–20). The vehemence of the

82 In the field of mass management and propaganda studies, Emil Dovifat enlists 'hatred', 'the motif of compassion', and 'a moral foundation' among the subtlest means of mobilization to manage the masses. Basing its propaganda on seemingly moral issues, the message demands the primitive urge for communal responsibility. Compassion is a positive basic human desire that may be artfully constructed around the instrumentalization of a false martyr. See Dovifat, *Handbuch der Publizistik: Praktische Publizistik*, 133.

Syrian government is reinforced in verse 20 by the dominance of the *fa'ala* verbal form, that is, *shawwahūhu*, *ḥarraqūhu*, *adhdhabūhu*, which indicates an action that is intensive, reiterative or habitual.⁸³ Verses 12, 19, 20, and 22, which depict the macabre acts inflicted upon al-Khaṭīb's body, explicate the sacrificial state of the rite of passage (liminality). Etymologically, the roots of *h-r-q* have ritual associations; namely, the roots are linked to the burnt offering or a martyr by fire (*ḥarīq*).⁸⁴ The child's body is deployed as a collective sacrifice, and the blood is thereby to be avenged.

In the second part of the poem (v. 24–34), the *fa'ala* verbal form reappears, but fulfilling different functions, namely, a reversal of roles (*labbū*, v. 25, and *fakkū*, v. 26). The determination and fearlessness of the child are ritualistically juxtaposed with morphologically resembling diction denoting blood vengeance. The phrase *bi-'azmatin qad thāra thawra* in verse 5, which refers to the child, resonates morphologically with the incitement of revenge in verse 25, that is, *labbū ṣawtahu 'azman wa-tha'ra*. The child's steadfastness to endure pain is weaponized against the enemy. Endurance of force, usually in the form of pain, results in defiance and resistance to the dominant culture's demands. It turns pain into power, humiliation into honour and, ultimately, death into rebirth. The endurance of pain is a form of power and a sign of activist loyalty, encouraging people not to surrender. It also makes the power wielder powerless.

The transformation from the ritual death into the ritual rebirth is reinforced by the use of the end-rhyme. There seem to be several similarities between the two sections such as *usrā* (v. 12 and 26), which signifies captivity or imprisonment, *ṣabrā* (v. 7 and 31), which means forbearance, and *qahrā*, which denotes compulsion (v. 16 and 28). Verse 24, which is also prioritized as the title of the poem, ends with the term *hadrā* ('in vain'), which may be considered as an incomplete *jinās* coupled with *dahrā* in verse 2. The overturning of consonants *d-h-r* into *h-d-r* may subtly symbolize the overturning of the ritual death into rebirth and passivity into power. The term *qahrā* in the phase of the ritual death, which refers to the sorrow that conquered the poetess, is transformed into a conqueror in the phase of the ritual rebirth, in which *qahrā* is grammatically part of a cognitive accusative reinstating the term *qāhir* preceding it. Likewise, *usrā* in verse 12, which indicates the captivity of children by Asad's government, is balanced with the call to set free those in captivity in verse 26. Similarly, the end-rhyme *ḥurrā* in verse 4, which refers to the child's wish for humankind to be free, is transformed into the elative form *aḥrā* in verse 34, which signifies God's power to make humanity the freest.

The ritual paradigm presented in DĀ'ISH elegies fulfils multiple purposes. Primarily, it instigates blood vengeance as part of a rite of passage. In a political landscape that lacks effective systems of justice, framing violence in terms of the ancient ethos of blood vengeance tends to resonate deeply with a populace that feels insecure and in constant danger. The emotionally charged narrative of sufferings and death is moulded by the oral and written traditions of the community, eventually becoming a canonical

83 William Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, vol. 1, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 137.

84 LANE, *h-r-q*.

tradition exploited by DĀ'ISH to foster solidarity through blood vengeance. By adopting Stetkevych's analysis discussed in this section,⁸⁵ it seems that the literary or ritual function of the poem, that is, the reason that it is preserved and repeated, is to communicate essential information to the survival of the in-group, and in turn, to raise aggression against the out-group.

On a similar vein, the ritual paradigm constructs heroes. The ritual paradigm is intended to transform death into martyrdom and individuals into martyrs through a rite of passage. When this transformation takes place, death is elevated to an exalted level.⁸⁶ Death is transformed into a physical as much as a symbolic act of power. The act of martyrdom is an act of sacrifice which fulfils a dual purpose. Firstly, it is performed for the greater good by purifying the community as a whole. Secondly, it challenges the relationship between the dichotomous 'victim' and 'abuser' by delegitimizing the out-group while at the same time consolidating the status of the group within the broader jihadist community. In anti-establishment or insurgent groups like DĀ'ISH, which harbour no legitimate political power, martyrdom "forges authority, escalates the struggle, reinforces the ranks, legitimizes the alternative culture, and creates a sense of differentiation and animosity vis-à-vis the enemy."⁸⁷ By mythologizing the death of an individual, the lamented stimulates the commemoration of revolutionary goals and stirs deep emotions. The role of martyrdom is thereby politicized even though it derives its legitimacy and justification from a shared religious and traditional memory.

In collectivist cultures that are based on communal interaction and bonds, martyrdom is often considered as an absolute duty to obedience and is framed in religious terms by choosing not to give up faith or a principle in the face of suffering, death, torture, or execution for holding a defiant view.⁸⁸ Martyrdom is understood "as a response to the collective experience of suffering, fear and utter confusion."⁸⁹ A deliberate renunciation of life is essential in order to achieve the primary task of preserving DĀ'ISH. Hence, the preservation of DĀ'ISH as an organization, which is conceptualized in Islamic terms, is prioritized over the conservation of the individual. The individual must sacrifice his life for the sake of the survival of the rest.

The concept of martyrdom in DĀ'ISH terminology is not exclusively bound to the voluntary act of death, but it also includes involuntary death. Of particular significance is the involuntary death of individuals that were not members of DĀ'ISH like this case of the thirteen-year-old Syrian boy called Abū Ḥamza 'Alī al-Khaṭīb. Due to his political activism, the protagonist in this poem is depicted as a martyr (*shahīduna*) in verse

85 See also Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 82–3.

86 Michael Barkun, "Appropriated Martyrs: The Branch Davidians and the Radical Right," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 1 (2007): 117–24.

87 Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 5.

88 Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 3.

89 Friederike Pannewick, *Martyrdom in Literature: Visions of Death and Meaningful Suffering in Europe and the Middle East from Antiquity to Modernity*, vol. 17 (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2004), 1.

15, a term that denotes dying for God and the country.⁹⁰ The term *shahīd* is employed amidst a list of highly esteemed ancient mythologized virtues such as ‘steadfastness’ (*al-ṣumūd*) and ‘purity’ (*al-tahāra*) that gain automatic resonance with the public because of their religious subtext and tradition. Irrespective of the bodily defeat, al-Khaṭīb’s death is portrayed as victorious because his spirit is not broken. This steadfastness is rewarded by immortality. The strategy of mobilizing historically-loaded terms that resonate positively with the populace is mobilized by jihadist propagandists to manipulate the reconstruction of the events and to guide the audience’ to blood vengeance.

Obtaining the esteemed title of a martyr (*shahīd*) is not a self-made process, but it is a social construct that gains momentum by the social environment and group identity. The narrative presented to the audience, however, is not that of the child himself or that of his family members,⁹¹ but the poet’s narrative moulded by the ideology of DĀ’ISH. In this manner, the death of an innocent child and the grievances of his family and community are exploited by being projected through the jihadist paradigm. In the process of constructing martyrs, jihadist elegies are at the same time also reshaping an individual’s narrative, aligning it with the group’s worldview, to the extent that poetic narrative tends to portray the worldview of DĀ’ISH more than the worldview of the lamented. Once this narrative is articulated and communicated, DĀ’ISH indirectly claims the death of individuals as part of its jihadist paradigm. The experience of death becomes bound up with the narratives that have reshaped by a selective reconstruction of the social memory interlaced with the group’s worldview.

5.2.2. Verses of Incitement

Thematically, blood vengeance is exacted through the verses of incitement known as *tahrīd*. In pre-Islamic and early Islamic times, inciting warriors during battle was part of a public obligation incumbent on women.⁹² In terms of content, verses of incitement have traditionally enjoyed a synecdochic relationship to the elegiac genre, namely, that of the part to the whole.⁹³ Inciting the audience to blood vengeance is based on the im-

90 During the early years leading to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the 1930s, poetry was mobilized to elucidate the tragic experience of the Palestinians through an aesthetic of martyrdom and heroism. In this aesthetic, death was conceived in terms of sacrificing oneself for one’s nation and one’s God. See Friederike Pannewick, “Der symbolische Kampf um das Gedenken an Helden und Märtyrer des ‘Arabischen Frühlings’,” in *Sakralität und Heldentum*, eds. Felix Heinzer, Joern Leonhard, and Ralf von den Hoff (Wuerzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2017), 274 ff; “Selbstopfer und Subversion: Erfahrungen des Extremen in der arabischen Literatur und Gesellschaft,” in *Extreme Erfahrungen: Grenzen des Erlebens und der Darstellung*, eds. Christopher F. Laferl, and Anja Tippner (Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos, 2017), 74ff.

91 The poetess refers to the child’s forefathers towards the end of the poem (v. 30–31), perhaps to give the narrative an instant flavour of authenticity.

92 See also Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 162.

93 See also Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, “The Rithā’ of Ta’abbata Sharran: A Study of Blood-Vengeance in Early Arabic Poetry,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31, no. 1 (1986): 27–45; *The Mute Immortals Speak*; and “Ritual and Sacrificial Elements in the Poetry of Blood-Vengeance: Two Poems by Durayd ibn al-

PLICIT idea of reception, and it is intended to shape, direct, and even command. The relationship between the classification of command and literary themes was first mentioned by the Kufan grammarian and philologist Tha‘lab (d. 904 CE) in his brief treatise called *Qawā‘id al-shi‘r* (‘the Foundations of Poetry’) in which the scholar lists ‘command’ as one of the four main foundations of poetry.⁹⁴ Discursively, calling for action is generally illustrated by the use of the imperative mood.

In the jihadist discourse, DĀ‘ISH verses of incitement are usually shorter in form, consisting of approximately ten verses and are identified by the hortatory titles, repetitive grammatical structures, day-like speech, the dichotomous positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation and the imperative mood. These poems are accompanied by a powerful image at the background that reinforces the poetic content. Incitement verses are addressed to the in-group and may involve verses of exhorting adherents to attack the enemy (*hijā’*).

Burn Them!

The self-indicative title *Burn Them!* is a powerful epitome of *tahrīd*, which is akin to the traditional *thaghriyya* or border verses. The verses are composed in *ramal* metre, and the poem’s underlying message is foreshadowed by a stark graphic of human bodies burning in the background.⁹⁵ Traditionally, the term *al-thaghriyya* and its plural form *al-thughūriyyāt* (also known as *al-Rumiyyāt*) used to refer to a highly emotional type of war poetry written in during the late seventh and tenth-century deployed by the Arabs as ideological warfare against the Byzantines. *Taghriyya* verses addressed mostly the life of the Muslims living in the border towns, including the plight of Muslim captives.⁹⁶

The poem *Burn Them!* is a versified reply to a military battle initiated by the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2016 code-named ‘Operation Euphrates Shield.’ Erdogan intended to occupy northern Syria by leading a cross-border operation through the Turkish military and Turkey-aligned Syrian opposition. In late December 2016, DĀ‘ISH published a video entitled *Shield of the Cross-Wilāyat Ḥalab* which showed Erdogan’s troops burned alive as a retaliation for their attacks on northern Syria.⁹⁷ This event was also recorded in the following verses of vengeance:

1. يَا جُنُودَ الدَّوْلَةِ العُرَا سَلَامًا أُحْرِقُوا جُنْدَ الطَّوَاغِيَتِ اللُّنَامِ

Simmah and Muhallil ibn Rab‘ah”; Wagner, *Grundzüge der Klassischen Arabischen Dichtung, Band I: Die Altarabische Dichtung*, 116–34.

94 Other declarative forms include prohibition and question. Geert Jan van Gelder, “Some Brave Attempts at Generic Classification in Premodern Arabic Literature,” *Aspects of Genre and Type in Pre-Modern Literary Cultures* (1999), 17–8.

95 See Appendix B.5.

96 Nizar F. Hermes, “The Byzantines in Medieval Arabic Poetry: Abu Firas’ “Al-Rumiyyat” and the Poetic Responses of al-Qaffal and Ibn Hazm to Nicephore Phocas’ “Al-Qasida al-Arminiyya al-Mal‘ūna” (The Armenian Cursed Ode),” *Byzantina Symmeikta* 19 (2009), 41.

97 See also Aaron Y. Zelin, “Shield of the Cross–Wilāyat Ḥalab,” *Jihadology* (blog), December 23, 2016, accessed January 20, 2017, <https://jihadology.net/2016/12/23/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-shield-of-the-cross-wilayat-%E1%B8%A5alab/>.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>جَرَّعُوهُمْ مِنْ لُطَى الْمَوْتِ الزُّوَامِ
 أَسْمَعَ الْجَمْهُورَ مَسْمُوعِ الْكَلَامِ
 مُرْفِقاً أَقْوَالَ زُورٍ بِإِيتِيسَامِ
 عَاكِساً أَقْوَالَهُ، يَا لَلْفَصَامِ!
 هَلْ يَرَى الْمُرْتَدُّ أَثَارَ إِصْطِلَامِ؟!
 رَجَّهْمُ فِي حَرْبِ حُسْرِ وَأَنْهَزَامِ!
 وَعَدُوا عَنْ كُلِّ عَيْشٍ فِي صِيَامِ
 عِبْرَةً تَرْوِي لَكُمْ حَالَ الطَّغَامِ
 بَلْ قِصَاصُ الْحَقِّ أَمْضَى مِنْ حُسَامِ</p> | <p>2. شَرَّدُوا مَنْ خَلَفَهُمْ فِي حُكْمِ عَدَلِ
 3. "أَرْدُغَانِ" سَاقَ وَعَدَا فِي إِنْتِخَابِ
 4. زَاعِماً لِلتُّرْكِ سَعْدًا وَأَزْدِهَارًا
 5. وَإِذَا الْأَمْرُ أَنْجَلَى مِنْ بَعْدِ هَوْلًا!
 6. جَرَّهْمُ صَوْبَ الْبَلَايَا وَالْمَنَابِيَا
 7. جُنْدُهُ دَلُّوا لَدَى خَيْرِ الْكَمَاةِ
 8. وَبَدُوا مِثْلَ الْكَلَابِ الْبَائِسَاتِ
 9. حُرِّقُوا نُّارًا لِأَلَامِ الْبَرَايَا
 10. دَوْلَتِي لَنْ تَتْرَكَ الْكُفَّارَ هَمَلًا</p> |
|---|---|

1. O soldiers of the noble [Islamic] State, greetings,
burn the soldiers of the corrupt tyrants,
2. Expel those who follow them by means of a just ruling,
make them sip from the flame of violent death,
3. Erdogan made a promise in the election,
he made the crowd listen to honey-coated words,
4. Claiming happiness and prosperity for the Turks,
accompanying untruthful statements in a smile,
5. When the situation eventually ended up horrendous,
he contradicted his own assertions; O how schizophrenic!
6. He dragged them into calamity and death,
he forced them into a battle of loss and defeat,
7. His soldiers were humiliated by the best-armoured warriors,
and lost all life,
8. They became like the miserable dogs,
a lesson that tells you about the situation of the lowly people,
9. They were burnt as a retaliation for the suffering of the innocent,
Does the apostate see the effects of eradication?
10. My State will not leave the infidels shed tears,
But just retaliation is sharper than the sword.

Incitement verses provide a rationale for blood vengeance. This rationale bridges the ideological worldview of DĀ'ISH and its demand for action. Structurally, the instructive verses of the poem *Burn Them!* follow the four primary ideological functions outlined in CDA that link thought to action, namely, programmatic or prescriptive (v. 1–2), explanatory (v. 3–7), evaluative (v. 8–10), and orientation (v. 1–10).⁹⁸ The first two verses prescribe a program for political activism. In the first verse, the noun-adjective attribute of *al-dawla al-gharrā* is indicative of the political manifesto set out by the organization. The political term 'state' (*al-dawla*) is assigned the martial term *al-*

98 See also Terence Ball, Richard Dagger, and Daniel I. O'Neill, *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2ff.

gharrā, which denotes the cutting edge of the sword.⁹⁹ The program of action laid out by the organization is presented in the rule of three, namely, to burn, to expel, and to coerce Turkish soldiers to ‘sip from the flame of violent death.’ The verb *jarra ‘a*, which follows the *fa ‘ala* verbal form, indicates an intensified action. This intensification is reinforced by the imperative mood. The action of forcing the enemy to drink a draught of death (*jarri ‘ūhum*) is a direct expression of the rite of blood sacrifice. The bivalency of the blood sacrifice of the enemy slain in vengeance dictates that for the avengers, it is considered as “purifying, life-giving, and life-sustaining,” whereas for the enemy, it is polluting.¹⁰⁰

The program of action is immediately followed by an explanatory function, whereby the reason behind the current socio-political condition is outlined (v. 3–8). Discursively, the out-group is a political construct that is framed in generic derogatory name-calling. In CDA scholarship, the terminology deployed to describe the out-group forms part of the name-calling strategies, which helps orient the socio-political landscape.¹⁰¹ The name-calling strategy is based on the linguistic construction of social actors and how these are referred to in terms of the major categories.¹⁰² The selected linguistic means, which define the in-group and the out-group relationship in the poem *Burn Them!*, entail religionization, collectivization, militarization, animalization, and pathologization.¹⁰³ Religionization is realized by the derogatory scriptural terms ‘infidels’ (*kuffār*, v. 10), and ‘deviator’ (*murtadd*, v. 9).

The name-calling strategy is subtly reinstated by other diction with pseudo-religious overtones such as *lazā* and *al-ḥaqq*. The term *lazā* in verse 2 evokes the Qur’anic chapter known as the Ascending Stairways (*surat al-ma ‘ārij*), which makes references to the flame of Hell. Likewise, the term *al-ḥaqq* in verse 10, which is used synonymously in DĀ’ISH rhetoric to refer to the organization itself, evokes one of the ninety-nine attributes of God in Islam. Religionization promotes the bipolar sphere that consists of ‘good’ and ‘evil,’ thus enabling DĀ’ISH to connect the in-group and out-group classification of modern-day warfare to the militancy-scriptural rhetoric of ‘good’ and ‘evil.’ Additionally, religious diction aims to undermine the authority of the out-group, by functioning as *argumentum ad verecundiam*, which feeds on the social memory of Islamic battles. By

99 The meaning of the lexeme *gharrā* is ambiguous. Its translation is assumed from the context. The verb *gharra* denotes “to mislead, deceive, beguile; to delude.” The second form may also mean “to endanger, imperil, risk, jeopardize.” The noun *gharr* means “(cutting) edge of a sword,” whereas the term *ghirr* means “inexperienced, gullible, new, green; a greenhorn; recruit; inattentive, inadvertent, headless.” See also WEHR, *gh-r*.

100 See also Stetkevych, “Ritual and Sacrificial Elements in the Poetry of Blood-Vengeance: Two Poems by Durayd ibn al-Simmah and Muhalhil ibn Rabī‘ah,” 42.

101 The referential strategies employed in this case that form part of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), build on more recent seminal works. See Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 49ff; Reisigl and Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism*, 45ff.

102 See also Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 49–61.

103 These terms are adopted and adapted from an exhaustive list provided in Reisigl, and Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination*, 53.

extension, it also facilitates analogical comparison to mythologized battles by early Muslim rulers.

A similar name-calling strategy is known as collectivization, which refers to social actors as group entities without quantifying them. The strategy of referring to the out-group in generic terms helps simplify a complex political landscape. The out-group is agonistically toned into a simplified worldview of ‘us’ and ‘them’ through the use of various poetic tools. The strategy of militarization takes the form of an antithesis (*tibāq*) in the first verse by contrasting the ‘brave soldiers of the State’ (*junūd al-dawla al-gharrā*) to the ‘soldiers of the corrupt tyrants’ (*jund al-tawāghīt al-li‘ām*). Additionally, the out-group is strategically depicted as psychologically abnormal through the terms ‘schizophrenic’ (*faṣām*, v. 5). The name-calling strategy of animalization portrays the out-group in derogatory terms, namely, ‘the miserable dogs’ (*al-kilāb al-bā’isāt*, v. 8), and ‘lowly’ (*al-ṭaghām*, v. 8). By way of contrast, the in-group is referred to as ‘innocent’ human beings (*al-barāyā*, v. 9). The generic term *al-barāyā* universalizes the conflict by subtly implying that the battle waged by Erdogan is not exclusively against DĀ’ISH, but against humanity in general.

Derogatory language sharpens the message of utter spite towards the target. Simple frequent one-word-predications, which are circulated in the jihadist’s shared schema, are dehumanizing in the sense that they strip symbolically the characteristics that make individuals human, turning the out-group into sinners, sub-humans or animals. In the poem, Erdogan is depicted as a double-faced person who won the election by misguiding the Turkish people with false promises. The poem also implies that Erdogan is a liar and manipulator of words. His authority and judgments are challenged by claiming that he is psychologically deficient, and thus he is not fit to rule (v. 3–4). He is personally held responsible for the humiliation and the death of his soldiers (v. 6–9). These discursive strategies follow the logical fallacy of *argumentum ad hominem*, whereby the discourse is targeted to delegitimize Erdogan by characterizing him as incompetent.

The evaluative section (v. 8–10) instigates blood vengeance as retaliation against Erdogan and the perceived infidels. This warning is reinstated through the rhetorical question in the penultimate verse, and the group’s claim of invincibility in the final verse. Likewise, the call for vengeance is reinforced through the verbalization of the message, namely, through the dominance of the *fa‘ala* and *af‘ala* verbal forms, which are causative. The gemination of the second radical consonant in the case of *fa‘ala* may project the allusion of intensity and plays a significant and subtle role in power relations by strengthening the cause for blood vengeance. The examples are *aḥriqū* (v. 1), *shar-ridū* (v. 2), and *jarri ‘ūhum* (v. 2). Especially in the case of the fourth form *aḥraqa* – the principal verb which holds the central message in this poem – reflects the notion of instructing someone to perform something in a specific manner.¹⁰⁴ The verbs in the *fa‘ala* and *af‘ala* forms recall the logic of retribution against the actions of Erdogan,

104 El Said Badawi, Michael Carter, and Adrian Gully, *Modern Written Arabic: A Comprehensive Grammar* (London: Routledge, 2004), 60.

which are described by the verbs *jarrahum* and *zajjahum* (v. 6). The repetitive grammatical structures of these verses reinforce the thematic element of calling for blood vengeance explicitly mentioned in the evaluative section.

Explode the Decaying Cross with your Suicide Vest

Similar name-calling strategies of inciting vengeance are deployed in a poem circulated as a graphic entitled *Explode with your Suicide Vest*.¹⁰⁵ Metred in *kāmil* and following a monorhyme *li*, the poem issues commands to kill oneself by suicide bombing against the ‘crusaders’:

- | | |
|--|---|
| وَأَلْتَنَّتْزِرُ جُنَّتْ بِأَفْطَعِ حَالِ | 1. فَجَرُّ بِسُرَّتِكَ الصَّلِيبِ البالي |
| رَفَعَ اللِّوَاءِ بِسَيْفِهِ الجَوَالِ | 2. قَدْ أَجْلَبُوا بِالْخَيْلِ قَتْلًا لِلَّذِي |
| بَيَّتِ الغَيُورِ وَمَلَعَبِ الأَطْفَالِ | 3. وَتَتَابَعَتْ أَحْقَادُهُمْ حَتَّى عَلَى |
| وَيُحْطَطُونَ بِهَا لِكُلِّ قِتَالِ | 4. هَذِي الكِنَانِيسُ تَحْتَفِلُ بِعَدَابِنَا |
| جَمَعُوا بِهَا قِطْعَ السَّلَاحِ الغَالِي | 5. أَوْتَادُ إبْلِيسَ اللِّعِينِ بِأَرْضِنَا |
| وَلْتَتْرَكُوا حَرْبًا لِديني الغَالِي | 6. سَنَقِيتُ مَقَالَتَنَا لَهُمْ أَنْ أُسْلِمُوا |
| وَيَاذِنِ رَبِّي فَجَرُوا بِصِيَالِ | 7. فَأَيُّوَا فِهَاهُمْ قَدْ تَنَنَّرَ شِرْكُهُمْ |
| أَنَّ الصَّلِيبَ وَأَهْلَهُ لِرِزْوَالِ | 8. اللهُ أَكْبَرُ! بِشَّرُوا أَحْلَاقَهُمْ |
| وَسَيُجْرِي نَهْرًا مِنْ دَمِ سَيَالِ | 9. عَيْسَى سَيَنْزِلُ كَاسِرًا لِصَلِيبِكُمْ |

1. Explode the decaying cross with your suicide vest,
let the corpses be spread in the most monstrous way,
2. They brought forth horses killing whoever
raised the banner with their mobile sword,
3. Their hatred reached as far as
the protective [husband] and the children’s playground,
4. These churches celebrate our torments,
they plan inside it every combat,
5. The tent hooks of Iblis, the Devil, in our land,
inside it, they collected pieces of the expensive weapon,
6. As we have said to them before: embrace Islam,
abandon the war against my precious religion,
7. They refused, and look at them, their polytheism scattered,
with my Lord’s permission, they were exploded while fighting,
8. God is the Greatest! Let their allies know,
that the cross and its people will become extinct,
9. Jesus will transcend breaking your cross,
a river will be at the flow of running blood.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix B.3.

This poem is composed against the backdrop of a graphic visual showing a shoot-out. Its main message is communicated in the first verse, which directly exhorts the audience to militant activism (programmatically). Acoustically, the combination of cacophonous and fricative sounds captures the discordance of the situation on the battlefield poetically, wherein the explosion of the body is contrasted to the corpses. In the first verse, consonance consists of the plosive, bilabial /b/ in the first hemistich, the emphatics such as /s/ and /z/, and the glottal /ʔ/, which are contrasted with the fricative consonance of /th/ in the second hemistich. The exhortation is followed by a series of explanatory verses that ridicule the perceived ‘crusaders’ and justify the jihadist group’s cause for retaliation. DĀ’ISH exploits the killing of children on the playground and the out-group’s planning of attacks inside churches to communicate its message emotionally and curb any impulse to sympathize with the out-group.

In emotionally-charged diction with pseudo-religious overtones, Christians are demonized as ‘Iblis, the Devil’ in verse 5 and are also linked indirectly to the crusaders in verse 6. By blurring time periods and jointly resurrecting disparate historical phenomena, DĀ’ISH appropriates a centuries-old, church-sanctioned series of wars aimed at recovering the Holy Land from Muslim rule (1095–1291 CE). These historical battles are particularly resonant because DĀ’ISH poets situate anticolonial resistance and invasions within the same struggle, in which an Islamic east is juxtaposed against a Judeo-Christian west. By appropriating historical battles with contemporary socio-political manoeuvres, the group’s narrative no longer remains a twenty-first-century phenomenon but gains authority by its claim of continuity with past Islamic struggles. The poem’s subtext is not exclusive to the Christians, although the explicit references to the cross, the churches, and Jesus seem to suggest otherwise. In the process of appropriating historical terms, the out-group is semantically generalized to include Europeans who oppose the group’s worldview.

Ritualization of the suicide bombing, which is indicated in the first two words of the poem, is echoed in verse 8. The expression *allāhu akbar*, which carries Islamic connotations, precedes a message of warning addressed to the allies of the out-group that the people of the cross would disappear. In the jihadist trajectory, the Islamic attestation of faith has come to indicate one’s loyalty to the jihadist cause, and also serves as a formulaic expression which is generally proclaimed before committing self-immolation. Placing the phrase *allāhu akbar* before the heeding the warning may serve as a subtle claim that the out-group addressed in this poem would be targeted by suicide explosions based on the significance of the phrase in the jihadist discourse as part of a ritualized suicide attack.¹⁰⁶

106 This argument is explored in section 3.2.

Shake the Throne of the Cross

In the jihadist poetry, the pre-Islamic ethos of blood vengeance is encoded behind a multi-layered form of discourse that comprises heightened emotional diction, syntactical patterning, and selective ancient knowledge combined with pseudo-Islamic overtones. These layers are exhibited in a poem composed in the *ramal* metre entitled *Shake the Throne of the Cross*.¹⁰⁷

أَطْفِنُوا نَارَ الْمَجُوسِ	1. زَلُّوا عَرْشَ الصَّلَيبِ
وَاقْطِفُوا تِلْكَ الرُّؤُوسِ	2. وَاصْرَعُوا كُلَّ الْخُطُوبِ
لَا تَخَافُوا مِنْ يَهُودِ	3. لَا تُبَالُوا بِالْأَعَادِي
دُونَ دِينِي لَنْ تَعُودُ!	4. إِنَّ أَمْجَادَ الْبِلَادِ
بِالْفَسَادِ وَبِالسَّلَاحِ	5. طَالَمَا جَارُوا عَلَيْنَا
وَاسْتَلَذُوا بِالْجِرَاحِ	6. أَضْرَمُوا فِينَا الْمَاسِي
أَلَمْتُ شَعْبِي الْكَلِيمَا!	7. كَمْ مَظَالِمَ دَامِيَاتِ
دَامِيًا وَغَدَاً أَلِيمَا	8. سَامَهُ الطَّعْيَانُ شَرًّا
يُرْجِعُ الْمَجْدَ السَّلَيبَا	9. مَنْ سِوَاكُمْ يَا أُسُودُ؟!
يَنْصُرُ الدِّينَ الْحَبِيبَا!*	10. يَصْنُرُ الْكُفْرَ الْحَقُودُ
إِنَّ بَعْدَ اللَّيْلِ فَجْرَا	11. إِنَّ بَعْدَ الْعُشْرِ يُسْرَا
وَأَنْتِصَارُ الْحَقِّ بُشْرَى	12. لَنْ يَدُومَ الْحَالُ مُرًّا،

1. Shake the throne of the cross,
extinguish the fire of the Magians,¹⁰⁸
2. Strike down all blows of fate,
pluck out those heads,
3. Do not worry about the enemies,
do not fear the Jews,
4. Indeed, the glories of the country
will not return without my religion,
5. They continually tyrannized us,
with corruption and weapons,
6. They kindled pain in us,
they were relished in the injuries,
7. How many bloody acts of injustice!
[How many] injuries my people were made to suffer severely!

107 Versions of this poem are also found on *YouTube* video. See DAN, 47; Asad al-Falluja, “Zalzilū ‘arsh al-ṣalīb...atfi ‘ū nār al-majūs,” *YouTube* video, 2:42, October 20, 2017, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPX7zGlhAKM&has_verified=1.

108 The term *al-majūs* refers to the adherents of Mazdaism. It is a term that is sometimes used to indicate the belief of the ancient Persians that became Zoroastrianism under the influence of Zoroaster (Zarathustra). It takes its name from the supreme god of Zoroastrianism, the Ahura Mazda. The term *al-majūs* also features in the Qur’an alongside the Jews, the Sabaeans, and the Christians in the Qur’anic verse, 22:17.

8. Despotism aimed at it [an] evil,
bleeding base and painful.
9. Who other than you, O lions?
will bring back the pillaged glory,
10. Hatred strikes down the apostasy,
the beloved religion will be victorious,
11. Indeed, hardship will be followed by ease,
indeed, the night will be followed by daybreak,
12. The deplorable situation will not last,
the triumph of the truth is good news.

The reiteration of the deep structure, which is evident in both the form and content, should be understood in light of the exigencies of oral-mnemonic poetry because redundancy is the residue of protracted orally based thought. The rule of redundancy is essential in protracted orally based thought because it serves as a mnemonic device to remind the recipients of the underlying message. Repetition of the just-said ensures that the message would still be preserved orally, should part of the poem be lost or distorted. Thus, redundancy ascertains the continuity of the message. In this poem, redundancy consists of repetitive rhyme scheme, metre, morphological patterning, and rhetorical devices. The rhyme scheme deviates from the conventional monorhyme and follows the rhyming pattern of AA, BB, CC, DD, EE, and FF. This pattern is also reflected internally in the rhyming scheme of the first hemistich (v. 1–4 and 9–12). In the final two verses, the rhyming scheme governing the first hemistich and the second hemistich is identical, that is, *rā*.¹⁰⁹

The rhythm generated by the rhyme scheme is reinforced by parallel morphological structures. The construction of the first two verses for instance, which are bound together by an internal rhyme *bi* and an end-rhyme *ūs*, is based on a verbal structure in the pattern of a transitive verb followed by a genitive construction in the form of *muḍāf-muḍāf ilayhi* structure. The transitive verbs at the beginning of each hemistich are trisyllabic, composed in the imperative mood, and signify violence (*zalzilū*, *atfi ū*, *aṣra ū*, and *aqtāfū*). The verbal structure is also deployed in the third verse; however, it is accompanied by the negation, namely, *lā tubālū* and *lā takhāfū*.

Through this syntactical patterning of the negation, the objects attributed to the transitive verbs, namely, the enemies and the Jews, are indirectly equated. The syntactical patterning in verse 10 is instrumentalized to widen the gap between the ‘apostasy’ (*al-kufr*) and the ‘beloved religion’ (*al-dīn al-ḥabīb*). This dichotomized worldview is extended by the assonance in the verbs ‘to strike down’ (*yaṣri ū*) and ‘to be victorious’ (*yaṣaru*), which is reinstated by the third-person masculine singular and the same order of the consonants /s/ and /r/. The sense of immediacy and ephemerality created through these verbal structures in the imperfect tense is contrasted with the generic claims made using the nominal structure.

109 Verses 3 and 4 have a similar rhyming scheme, namely *dī* in the first hemistich, and *ūd* in the end-rhyme.

The repetitive structure *'inna ba'da* in the first and second hemistichs of verse 11 followed by two proverbial sayings, namely, *al-'usri yusrā* ('hardship will be followed by ease') and *al-layli fajrā* ('night is followed by daybreak') remind the recipients of these claims entrenched in tradition that are believed to be true. The shift between verbal and nominal structures compliments the underlying message of the poem. The verbal structure is deployed to mobilize active militancy. In contrast, the seemingly universal truths based on ancient knowledge expressed in the nominal structure ascertain the consistency of the message and the immortality of DĀ'ISH.

The rationale behind the call for arms is cast in Qur'anic references and pseudo-religious diction to stimulate religious immunity. In the case of this poem, there are three intertextualities to the Qur'an. The phrase *inna ba'da al-'usri yusrā* (v. 11) is a divine Qur'anic promise, whereby "Allah will bring about, after hardship, ease" (*sayaj'alu allāhu ba'da 'usrin yusrā*).¹¹⁰ Additionally, the terms 'the Magians' (*al-majūs*, v. 1), and 'the Jews' (*al-yahūd*, v. 3) are enlisted as those who will be judged by God on the Day of Resurrection along with the Sabeans and the Christians.¹¹¹ The importance of these terms is reinforced by their position at the end of the verse. Additionally, the exhortation to extinguish the fire (*atfi'ū l-nār*, v. 1) echoes a Qur'anic verse which says the following about the Jews: "Every time they kindled the fire of war [against you], Allah extinguished it" (*kullumā awqadū li-l-ḥarbi atfa'aha llāh*).¹¹²

Interspersed among the poetic verses are emotionally driven words that may unconsciously influence one's decisions and behaviour by triggering value judgments and arousing particular emotions. In this poem, blood vengeance is implicitly reinstated through *argumentum ad passiones* by focusing on the injustice committed by the out-group against the in-group (*jārū 'alaynā*, v. 5). The semantic field denoting agony is repeatedly expressed in the following expressions: 'they kindled us with painful grief' (*adramū finā al-māsī*, v. 6), 'they took pleasure in the injuries' (*istaladhū bi-l-jurāhi*, v. 6), 'bloody acts of injustice' (*maẓālim dāmiyātin*, v. 7), 'made suffer severely' (*ālamat...al-kalīmā*, v. 7), and 'bleeding, base and painful' (*dāmiyā waḡdan alīmā*, v. 8). Emotionally charged diction is mobilized to galvanize support for blood vengeance that is expressed in the expression 'pluck out those heads' (*aqtafū tilka al-ru'ūs*, v. 2). Historically, the chopping and preservation of heads served as authentic proof that the act of vengeance was completed. Etymologically, the roots *q-t-f* of the verb *aqtafū* imply "to gather, to harvest, to pluck," a metaphor that is often deployed in the jihadist discourse in the context of blood vengeance and its results.¹¹³

Islamic intertextualities and pseudo-religious diction in the jihadist poetry exude an aura of cultural authenticity and religious legitimacy, even if from a vantage point beneath the Qur'an's transcendental status. When these culture-based layers are subtly interwoven skillfully in a modern variant of the esteemed *qaṣīda*, the predominantly

110 Qur'an, 65:7.

111 Qur'an, 22:17.

112 Qur'an, 5:64.

113 The metaphor of blood is discussed further in section 5.3.

Muslim, Arabic-speaking recipients may be unable to understand the real intentions or to see the full consequences of the beliefs or actions advocated by the DĀ'ISH.¹¹⁴

5.2.3. Verses of Military Zeal

One of the most perennial themes deployed by jihadist groups to advocate war and blood revenge is *ḥamāsa* or 'military zeal' verses. Traditionally, the concept of *ḥamāsa* is rooted in the ancient Bedouin code of honour and is closely related to the willingness to defend one's group or tribe for tribal solidarity and balance (*al-aṣabiyya*).¹¹⁵ As an integral part of the Bedouin code of ethics, the term entered the literary circles and became included in the 'poetic themes' (*ma'ānī al-shi'r*). Abū Tammām (d. 849 CE) dedicated the first chapter of his oldest anthology to *ḥamāsa*, whereas al-Buḥtūrī (d. 897 CE) – Abū Tammām's fellow townsman and disciple – also composed an anthology with the same title.¹¹⁶ Abū Tammām's contribution, however, remained the model for imitation by later poets and helped to maintain the prestige of archaic poetry. *Ḥamāsa* verses simulate the ancient poetic tradition, albeit using a more simplistic lexicon, formulae, and imagery. *Ḥamāsa* verses are often produced in the form of a chant, and they strike a balance between boosting the morale of DĀ'ISH cadres on the battlefield and threatening the out-group. For this reason, poems dealing with military zeal are thematically interwoven with other poetic motifs, such as threatening the enemy.

DĀ'ISH propagandists capitalize on ideologically loaded verses of valour to impart particular values to a target audience covertly but persuasively. *Ḥamāsa* verses are often expressed in the form of an appeal to old tribal values such as manliness and strength, vigour and endurance, honour, determination, and perseverance. From a discourse-analytical perspective, old tribal values realize predicational strategies because they depict DĀ'ISH subscribers as possessing particular qualities and virtues that are meaningful to a specific society. One poetic exemplar which conflates Islamic values with physical violence is extracted from a chant propagating bravery and courage entitled *By Breaking the Skulls*.¹¹⁷

وَعَزَفِ الْكَوَاتِمِ	1. بِكَسْرِ الْجَمَاجِمِ
لِنَيْلِ الْمَكَارِمِ	2. سَبِيلِ سَدِيدِ
بِكِفِّ الْقَسَائِمِ	3. وَحَدِّ الْمَوَاضِي

114 See also Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," 361.

115 In Arabic dictionaries, *ḥamāsa* tends to refer to "an anthology of poetry extolling Bedouin virtues and, in particular, valour." See also LANE, and LISĀN. *ḥ-m-s*.

116 Studies on *ḥamāsa* collections are numerous. See also Adel Sulayman Gamal, "The Basis of Selection in the "Ḥamāsa" Collections," *Journal of Arabic Literature* (1976): 28–44; Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the 'Abbāsīd Age*, vol. 13 (Leiden: Brill, 1991).

117 See Appendix A.16.

1. By breaking the skulls,
the sounds of the silencers,
2. A righteous path,
to gain noble deeds,
3. By the edges of the sharp swords,
by the hand of the lions.

Against the backdrop of an upbeat soundscape, this poem equates physical violence ('the breaking of skulls') and weaponry ('silencers and swords') with noble deeds and Islamic references ('a righteous path'). References to weaponry are underscored through polysemic diction. The lexeme *sadīd* in verse 2 does not only mean "right, correct," but it could also signify "hitting the target (arrow, spear)."¹¹⁸ The presence of the *sukūn*, that is, the absence of a vowel at the end of the end-rhyme concurs with the acoustic image of violence and the soundscape of the battlefield that the verses recreate.

The strategic re-engineering of old tribal codes of honour is essential in the hegemonic project of DĀ'ISH because values of morality are inclined to propagate the DĀ'ISH worldview. In turn, the repetition of these values achieves cognitive effects by prompting construal operations that lead to conceptual representations. The emotive impact of these verses is bound to various literary and cultural factors, including the medium of poetry and the socio-cultural and religious layers that are manifested in poetry.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, poems of valour achieve perlocutionary effects because these verses induce the audience "to act in accord with [a] set of attitudes, feelings, values and intentions."¹²⁰

We have Risen Up

The exhortatory power of *hamāsa* is conjured up in a chant entitled *We have Risen Up*.¹²¹ The chant's message is expressed in a simpler and more accessible vocabulary and accompanied by highly repetitive morphological structures with only two words per hemistich. The style of the chant lacks the literary embellishment of classical Arabic poetry. It is less remote from the language of everyday use, but it still manages to instigate militant activism and blood vengeance:

نَشَدْنَا الصُّعُودَ	1. قَطَفْنَا الرُّؤُوسَ
جَرَدْنَا الصَّدِيدَ	2. رَشَقْنَا الكُؤُوسَ
مَلَأْنَا الصَّعِيدَ	3. دَبَحْنَا الجُنُودَ
فَكُونُوا الشُّهُودَ	4. وَكُنَّا الوُقُودَ
بِأَرْضِي عُهُودَا	5. أَرَدْتُمْ بَقَاءَ

118 WEHR, *s-d-d*.

119 For a discussion on the function of emotional expression in DĀ'ISH poetry, see section 4.7.3.

120 Richard B. Gregg, "Embodied Meaning in American Public Discourse during the Cold War," in *Metaphorical World Politics*, eds. Francis A. Beer, and Christ'l De Landtsheer (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 60.

121 See Appendix A.18.

وَكُونُوا حَصِيدَا	6. فَذَوْقُوا فَنَاءً
ذَهَبْتُمْ بِعَيْدَا	7. حَلُمْتُمْ مَزِيدَا
طَرِيدَا شَرِيدَا	8. عَدَوْتُمْ عَيْبِدَا
كَسَرْنَا الْغُمُودَ	9. فَرَيْنَا النُّحُورَ
نَصَرْنَا الْجُدُودَ	10. شَفَيْنَا الصُّدُورَ

1. We have chopped off the heads,
we have chanted to rise,
2. We have sipped the chalices,
we have shipped the rust,¹²²
3. We have slaughtered armies,
we have filled the [battle]field,
4. We were the fuel,
so be the witnesses,
5. You wanted eternity,
in my land forever,
6. So taste annihilation,
be [our] harvest yield,
7. You have dreamt excessively,
you went far,
8. You have become slaves,
driven out and exiled,
9. We have slit the throats,
we have broken the scabbards,
10. We have healed the hearts,
we have given victory to our forefathers.

This chant exhorts the in-group to seek blood vengeance by plundering and destroying the out-group. The overwhelming use of past tense in the first-person plural *-nā* generates a rhythmic repetition that enumerates the operations carried out by DĀ'ISH. The repetitive morphological patterns shaped by choice of lexicon like 'destroyed,' 'smashed,' and 'slaughtered' create an even rhythmic movement which, reinforced by a fixed metre, conjures up the uplifting spirit on the battlefield. The repetitive use of the past tense gives a sense of reassurance of the group's achievement. This reassurance is further enhanced by the excessive number of verses addressing the in-group in comparison to the minimal verses addressing the out-group. The enemy is addressed through the second-person plural in verses 5 to 8. These verses entail threat-connoting attributes ('taste annihilation,' v. 6).

In verse 2, the act of sipping the chalices recalls an ancient ritual sacrifice, whereby the amount of blood in the chalice signifies "an act of nourishing and revitalizing the

122 The verb *jarrada* can additionally mean "to unsheathe (the sword)." See WEHR, *j-r-d*.

kin, while concomitantly depleting and devitalising the enemy.”¹²³ The image of ‘sipping chalices’ is symbolic of both the abundance and the avenged blood. The enemy’s blood is purifying because it cleanses unavenged, polluted blood. The act of slitting of throats (v. 9), which recalls the ritual of sacrificial beasts,¹²⁴ dehumanizes the out-group and portrays the perceived enemies as powerless because their throats are their only shield of protection. The completion of the sacrificial rite is reinforced by explicit references to revitalization, such as peeling the pus (v. 2), and healing the chests (v. 10).

We Came as Falcons

The chant *We Came as Falcons* is intended to encourage its members to take part in the participatory struggle. The chant is composed in repetitive morphological structures and a monorhyme *nā*, and it exploits animal imagery and verbal structures indicating physical activity to verbalize aggression for its dramatic action:¹²⁵

طِعَانًا بَعَيْنِنَا	1. صُقُورًا أَتَيْنَا
سِرَاعًا مَضَيْنَا	2. خِفَافًا مَشَيْنَا
كُبُودًا قَرَيْنَا	3. نُحُورًا بَرَيْنَا
كُفُورًا سَقَيْنَا	4. رُؤَامَ الْمَنَابِيا
أَسُودًا سَرَيْنَا	5. بِبَعَثِ السَّرَايا
غَضَابًا سَعَيْنَا	6. لِسَخِّ عِدَانَا
شِرَارًا رَمَيْنَا	7. هَتُونِ الْبَلَايا
عَبِيدًا صَلَيْنَا	8. سَعِيرًا تَسَامِيا
كِلَابًا شَوَيْنَا	9. بِعَصْفِ أَطَانَا
كِرَامًا أَتَيْنَا	10. بِدِفْقِ دِمَانَا
جِنَانًا شَرَيْنَا	11. نَحْتُ خَطَانَا
سُهُوبًا طَوَيْنَا	12. بِعَزْمِ تَرَانَا
خُضُوعًا أَبَيْنَا	13. لِنَفْدِي رُبَانَا
لِزَامًا عَلَيْنَا	14. فَتَنْعَلِي لِيَوَانَا

1. We have come as falcons,
we have sought jousting [with lances],
2. We have marched light-weighted,
we have gone forth hastily,
3. We have cut necks,
we have taken out livers,

123 Stetkevych, “Ritual and Sacrificial Elements in the Poetry of Blood-Vengeance: Two Poems by Durayd ibn al-Simmah and Muhalhil ibn Rabī‘ah,” 31.

124 The notion of slitting throats as a sacrificial ritual of blood vengeance appears in early Arab rituals. See also Stetkevych, “Ritual and Sacrificial Elements in the Poetry of Blood-Vengeance: Two Poems by Durayd ibn al-Simmah and Muhalhil ibn Rabī‘ah.”

125 See Appendix A.17.

4. Instant death,
we have made the apostate imbibe,
5. By sending out the squadrons,
we have marched at night as lions,
6. To annihilate our enemies,
we have moved forward with fury,
7. There is a torrential calamity [awaiting you],
we have flung sparks,
8. Rising beyond the flames of fire,
we have branded the slaves,
9. With the trembling of our flame,
we have grilled the dogs,
10. With the gushing of our blood,
we have come as dignified ones,
11. We quicken our steps,
towards the paradise that we have bought,
12. You will see us with steadfastness,
traversing steppes of land,
13. To sacrifice [ourselves] for our Lord,
we rejected lowliness,
14. So we raise our banners
as an obligation [imposed on] us.

A recurrent feature of DĀ'ISH poetry is the allusion to animals, especially the use of animal imagery that is culturally resonant to confer on the in-group and out-group particular attributes. In this chant, the omnipotent falcon (v. 1) representing the in-group is starkly contrasted to the dog (v. 9) denoting the out-group. The program of militant activism against the out-group is reinforced by placing active verbs at the end of every hemistich. The choice of verbs feeds from two semantic fields; the first category of verbs deals with aggression, while the second category signifies 'moving forward.' Verbs of aggression are deployed to promote militancy and to mobilize the audience towards a specific behaviour conditioned by a seemingly divine promise.

Acts of aggression are correlated to divine promises and the Islamic tradition through causation. By committing acts of jousting (*baghaynā*, v. 1), cutting of necks (*nuḥūran baraynā*, v. 3), branding of slaves ('*abīdan ṣalaynā*, v. 8), and grilling (*shawaynā*, v. 9) are depicted as pious and sacrificial acts (*li-nafdī rubānā*, v. 13) which grant the in-group access to paradise (*jinānan sharaynā*, v. 11). Socially accepted values that resonate positively with a predominantly Muslim populace such as dignity (*kirāman*, v. 10) and steadfastness ('*azm*, v. 12) are interspersed in the poem to reinforce a premeditated worldview, whereby violence appears to be sanctioned by the Islamic tradition. Other verbs which belong to the same semantic field of moving forward to fight the enemy, such as *ataynā* (v. 1), *mashaynā* (v. 2), and *sa'aynā* (v. 6), resurface towards the end of the chant and collocated with dignity (*kirāman ataynā*, v. 10), and paradise (*naḥuṭhthu khaṭānan*, v. 11).

O Superior

The poem entitled *O Superior* is composed in *kāmil* metre following the monorhyme *ru*, and it avails itself of several discursive techniques. It is accompanied by a graphic of a man aiming to shoot and is peppered with overtones of Islamic scripture. The poetic message is intended to strengthen the in-group relations and motivate DĀ'ISH cadres to join in the battle to capture the city of Mosul. Mosul was seized by DĀ'ISH in June 2014. The Battle of Mosul, which became code-named *ma'arakat al-mawṣil*, was a major military campaign launched by the Iraqi Government forces and with allied militias to retake the city of Mosul between 2016 and 2017. The poem is dated to March 18, 2017, shortly after the Iraqi troops had begun their offensive to recapture Mosul in February 2017.¹²⁶

- | | |
|---|---|
| عَمَرَ الخَرَابَ بِشَرَعِهِ الأَبْرَارُ | 1. الأَرْضُ تَشْهَدُ أَنَّهُمْ عَمَّارُ |
| قَصْفُ وَلَا نَارٌ وَلَا إِخْصَارُ | 2. مَا ضَرَّ أَرْضَ البَاذِلِينَ لِرَبِّهِمْ |
| حَتَّى العَدُوِّ بِشَأْنِهِمْ بَخْتَارُ | 3. تَبَيَّنُوا ثَبَاتاً لَا ثَبَاتَ كَمِثْلِهِ |
| لَمَّا تَنَاهَى فِي المَدَى "اسْتِنْفَارُ!" | 4. هَا مَوْصِلُ الأَخْيَارِ تَشْهَدُ فِعْلَهُمْ |
| جَيْشٌ كَمِّيَّ بَاسِلٌ كَرَارُ | 5. فَتَوَافَدَ الأَبْطَالُ نَحْوُ نُغُورِهَا |
| وَجَوَارِ رَبِّ العَالَمِينَ اخْتَارُوا | 6. لَبَّوْا نِدَاءَ إِمَامِهِمْ يَوْمَ الوَعَى |
| وَنَقَشْتُمْ فَخْرًا بِهِ الإِكْبَارُ | 7. فَبَدَّلْتُمْ جُنْدَ الخَلِيفَةِ جَهْدُكُمْ |
| خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ ظَنَّ الخِلَافُ يُصَارُ | 8. وَخِتَامُ مَعْرَكَةِ الأَسْوَدِ تَكْشِفَتْ |
| نَصْرَ الشَّرِيدِ إِلَهُه القَهَّارُ | 9. مَا حَايَبَ المَوْلَى رَجَاءَ عَبِيدِهِ |
| رُومًا وَفُرسًا بِالوَعَى كَرَارُ | 10. فَكَانَ يَحْكُمُ بِالكِتَابِ مُصَاوِلًا |
| لِثَمَحِصِّ الأَطْهَارِ مِمَّنْ خَارُوا | 11. سُنُّ البَلَاءِ المُرِّ تَجْرِي دَائِمًا |
| فَحَنَّتْ عَلَى الأَسَدِ الغَضَابِ قِفَارُ | 12. فَتَنَنَكَّرَتْ صَحَوَاتُ أَمْرِيكَ لَهُمْ |
| دِينًا بِهِذَا طَمَأَنَّ الجَبَّارُ | 13. وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللهُ جُنْدًا نَاصِرُوا |
| بَيْتٌ تَهْتَمُ هَذِهِ الكُفَّارُ | 14. يَا أَيُّهَا الأَعْلُونَ لَا تَبْكُوا عَلَى |
| أَوْ جُرْحِ جِسْمٍ قَدْ كَوَّنَهُ النَّارُ | 15. أَوْ إِخْوَةَ ذَهَبُوا لِعِنْدِ مَلِيكِهِمْ |
| يُشْرَى التَّبْدِيلِ لِمِثْلِهَا وَيُعَارُ | 16. كُلِّ الصُّنُوفِ وَإِنْ تَفَرَّدَ حُسْنُهَا |
| نَصْرُ النُّقْيِ ثَبَاتُهُ البِنَارُ! | 17. إِلا العَقِيدَةُ لَا بَدِيلَ لِفَقْدِهَا |
| مَا خَافَ جِبْنَ حَوَاهِ ذَاكَ الغَارِ | 18. يَا أَيُّهَا الأَعْلُونَ إِنَّ مُحَمَّداً |
| مَعَهُمْ! وَعَفَى الكَافِرِينَ تَبَارُ | 19. إِنَّ العَزِيزَ مُؤَيَّدٌ أَنْصَارُهُ |

1. The land is witnessing them as builders,
the innocent rebuilt the ruins with their pious decree,¹²⁷
2. Nothing can harm the land of those who sacrificed [themselves] for their Lord,
neither bombing nor the fire or siege,
3. There is nothing like it in its steadiness,
[to the extent that] even the enemies themselves become helpless,

126 See Appendix B.7.

127 The term *al-kharāb*, which means "ruin, state of destruction or dilapidation" is contrasted to the etymological '-m-r, which conveys the meaning of "to build, rebuilt, reconstruct." See WEHR, *kh-r-b*, and '-m-r.

4. This is noble Mosul witnessing their deeds
when the call to war came to an end for a long time,
5. The heroes flocked to the frontiers,
an armoured, brave and dragging army,
6. On the day of the war, they answered the call of their Imam,
they chose to be beside the Lord of [all the] Worlds,¹²⁸
7. Soldiers of the caliphate you gave your efforts,
that way, you engraved [God's] magnification with glory,
8. At the end of the lions' battle, the good was exhibited,
even though they thought the opposite,
9. The Lord never disappoints the request of his servants,
the victorious [God] granted the outcasts victory,
10. Indeed, he ruled by using the Book, attacking
repeatedly Rome and Persia by war,
11. The paths of bitter quittance run perpetually,
to test the virtuous, and who declined in force,
12. The Awakenings under American tutelage became unrecognizable,¹²⁹
desert leaned towards the angry lions,
13. Let God make the soldiers successful, supporting
the religion, pacifying the Almighty,
14. O superior ones, do not cry about
a house which was demolished; the infidels destroyed it,
15. Or about brothers who went to their Lord,
or about bodies branded by fire,
16. For all different types, even for those which are unique in their beauty,
there is always the alternative to buy or borrow something similar,
17. Except for the belief, there is no alternative if it is lost,
the victory of the pious with the steadfastness of the sword,
18. O superior ones, indeed Muhammad,
was not afraid when the cave shielded him,
19. Indeed, the Supporters of God are supported,
the end destroys the apostates.

In verse 10, the active participle *muṣāwīlan*, which refers to the action of God attacking Rome and Persia, enjoys an etymological resemblance with the name of Mosul. This pun subtly links militant activism with the safeguarding of the city. Mosul's firm-

128 The phrase *rabbi l-'ālimīn* echoes the second verse of the *Fātiḥa*, which is the opening chapter of the Qur'an.

129 The term *ṣaḥwāt*, which I translate as 'the Awakenings,' were coalitions between tribal Sheikhs in a particular province in Iraq sponsored by the US military. These coalitions were created from 2005 onwards to fight al-Qa'ida in Iraq. In other instances, the term is used by DĀ'ISH to discredit the other Sunni armed groups in Syria, including al-Nuṣra Front.

ness is reinforced in verse 3 by the consonance of the etymological root *th-b-t* in the phrase *thabatū thabātan lā thabāta ka-mithlihi*.

The sacrificial rite that accompanies blood vengeance is echoed in this poem through the choice of diction. DĀ'ISH fighters are referred to as the sacrificers who sacrificed themselves for their Lord (*al-badhilīna*, v. 2). The roots *b-dh-l* resurface in verse 7 to project the act of martyrdom as a sacrificial deed, which brings everlasting pride. In verse 5, the DĀ'ISH adherents who died on the battlefield are praised as brave and heroic because they remained steadfast in their beliefs. Additionally, the followers are described as being good listeners and obedient, answering the call's Imam to engage in warfare (v. 6). The Islamic concept of obedience (*al-tā'a*) is a moral action, whereby individuals adhere and fulfil their religious duty. In ancient wisdom it is believed that "religion is not based on one's personal opinion; rather it is to adhere" (*laysa al-dīn bi-l-ra'ī innamā huwa attbā'*).¹³⁰ In the Islamic faith, all moral action is, in some sense, a listening, the reverberation of the words of God within human souls and action. Poetic verses are turned into a powerful instrument for honing this reverberatory faculty, attuning and orienting the senses to a seemingly divinely ordered worldview dictated by DĀ'ISH. In the jihadist trajectory, DĀ'ISH followers are coerced to submit themselves to the common good of the group.

The poem makes abundant use of Qur'anic allusions and Islamic images, which legitimate the militant agenda of DĀ'ISH. The exploitation of Qur'anic intertextualities is not novel in the Arabic-Islamic tradition. Qur'anic themes and formulae entered poetry as early as the mid-seventh century with Ḥassan b. Thābit (d. before 661 CE).¹³¹ However, scholars argue that during the Abbasid times, poets "deemed themselves entitled to engage and contend with it [Qur'an], even if from a vantage point beneath its transcendental status."¹³² Depending on their situation and their targeted audience, Abbasid poets exploited the rhetorical power of the Qur'an as a literary weapon "to argue with and satirize others, or evoked the Qur'an to protect themselves against satire. When poets chose to be offensive, they enhanced the force of their attacks by using the Qur'an as a rhetorical weapon, against which there could be no response."¹³³

The title *yā ayyuhā al-a'lawna* ('O superior') resonates with the following Qur'anic verse cited from surat Āli 'Imrān:

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.¹³⁴

130 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 40–1.

131 Gruendler, "Abbasid Poets and the Qur'an," 137.

132 Gruendler, "Abbasid Poets and the Qur'an," 155.

133 Gruendler, "Abbasid Poets and the Qur'an," 155.

134 Qur'an, 3:139.

For recipients who are well versed in the memorization of the Qur'an, the term *al-a'lawna* ('superior') subconsciously triggers the Qur'anic conditional phrase '*in kuntum mu'minīna*' ('if you are true believers'). The multiple uses of the negative *lā* in this particular Qur'anic verse are echoed as a rhetorical device in the poem (v. 2 and v. 4), and it serves as a subtext which reinstates the Qur'anic message. Furthermore, the phrase 'O superior do not cry' (*yā ayyuhā al-a'lawna lā tabkū*) in verse 14 bears striking resemblances to the Qur'anic *lā taḥzanū* ('do not grieve'). The Qur'anic chapter of Āli 'Imrān is symbolic because it entails verses which deal with martyrs and warfare. The Qur'anic verse 3:140 reads: "[a]nd these days [of varying conditions] We alternate among the people so that Allah may make evident those who believe and [may] take to Himself from among you martyrs – and Allah does not like the wrongdoers." Similarly, the Qur'anic verse 3:159 states: "[a]nd if you are killed in the cause of Allah or die – then forgiveness from Allah and mercy are better than whatever they accumulate [in this world]." In the jihadist circles, these verses are circulated among the populace to fit modern-day warfare with a broader anachronistic Islamic narrative. Qur'anic intertextualities instigate coercion by reminding them to live up to their beliefs and divine promises.

Qur'anic intertextualities buttress the figure of Prophet Muhammad, who is projected as an archetype that never shirked his responsibilities (v. 18–19). The cave mentioned in verse 18 is an intertextual reference to when Prophet Muhammad is believed to have hidden for three days with Abū Bakr in a cave in *Jabal Thawr* in the south of Mecca, escaping from the Meccan scouts that were looking for him to kill him.¹³⁵ The last hemistich of the poem, namely *wa-'uqbā al-kāfirīna tabāru*, echoes another Qur'anic verse which states, "And do not increase the wrongdoers (*zālimīna*) except in destruction (*tabāru*)."¹³⁶ Additionally, links to these Qur'anic verses are strengthened through religiously loaded diction embedded in the poem. The term *istinfār* (v. 4) denotes the call-up for expeditions, *rabb al-'ālimīna* (v. 6) refers to God as the Lord of the Worlds, *al-kitāb* (v. 10) is used synonymously with the Qur'an, and *al-jabbār* (v. 13) like *al-'azīz* (v. 19) are among the ninety-nine attributes to God, *al-taqiyy* (v. 17) connotes the characteristic of being 'pious' or 'God-fearing'.¹³⁷

The logics of argumentation expressed in the poem gain their rhetorical power from the Qur'an, and the Islamic tradition, because emotionally-imbued discourse peppered with religious allusions has "more chances to control the minds and actions"¹³⁸ of the audience. Intertextualities consolidate the deeper message and justify the hegemonic project of DĀ'ISH. Jihadist groups exploit Islamic references that are kept alive in the

135 This event is mentioned in the Qur'an, 9:40.

136 Qur'an, 71:28.

137 God-fearing piety (*al-tuqā*) is linked to the genre of asceticism. Traditionally speaking, it became a major criterion of character and the prime virtue extolled in the *zuhdiyyāt* composed after the advent of Islam. See Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry*, 216.

138 Teun Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis" in *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, eds. Deborah Tannen, Deborah Schiffrin, and Heidi E. Hamilton (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 355.

collective memory of a predominantly Muslim audience because the Islamic societies have preserved the Islamic scripture through its recitation and memorization. The Qur'anic allusions are reinterpreted by jihadist groups to represent the modern-day political landscape and equate it to a broader anachronistic narrative.

Soon, Soon

Soon, Soon is one of the most circulated DĀ'ISH chants combining verses of militant zeal with threatening the out-group (*tawa'ud*).¹³⁹ Parts of its verses appear as a soundtrack on several execution videos, including the video, which shows the burning of the Jordanian pilot Mu'adh al-Kasāsiba, the beheading of the Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and the beheading of Copts on a beach in Libya. This chant also appeared on a French business website, which was hacked by DĀ'ISH aligned pirates, and it accompanies a video in which Yemeni children are shown re-enacting the beheading of the Copts.¹⁴⁰

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>صِرَاعاً رَهيباً وَسَوْفَ تَرَى
لِأَجْلِ دِمَارِكَ حُسَامِي أَنْبَرِي
بِسِغِينِ ثَارٍ سَمْتٌ مَنْ حَرَى
وَتَفْجِيرِ وَيْلٍ لِكَيْ يُذْخَرَى
فَذُوقُوا وَبَالِي إِذَا أُسْجِرَى
بِمَاذَا سَتَلْقَى فِتَى كَبْرَا
لِهَذَا اسْتَحَالَتْ لَطْأً مُسْعِرَا
فَأَيُّنَ الْمَنَاصِ شِرَارَ الْوَرَى؟
بِخَوْفٍ وَصَمْتٍ نَسُقُ الْعُرَى
وَعُودُوا فِرَاراً بِلَيْلِ السُّرَى
مَلْنَا الْفِجَاجَ دَمًا أَحْمَرَا
لِجَمْعِ الْكِلَابِ إِذَا عَسْكَرَى
بِجَدِّ سَعَيْنَا لِشَمِّ الْبُدْرَى
نَمُوتُ وَوَقُوفاً كَأَسَدِ الشُّرَى</p> | <p>1. قَرِيباً قَرِيباً تَرَوْنَ الْعَجِيبَ
2. بَعْفُ دِمَارِكَ تَكُونُ الْمَعَارِكُ
3. مَشِينَا بِسَمْرِ لَجْرٍ وَنَخْرٍ
4. بِأَشْبَاحِ لَيْلٍ وَفَيْثِيَانِ هَوْلِ
5. بَدَأْتُمْ قِتَالِي بِحُلْفِ الضَّلَالِ
6. طَوِيلًا سَتَلْقَى بِحَرْبِي سَتَلْقَى
7. إِذَا الْخَيْلُ جَالَتْ وَشَالَتْ وَصَالَتْ
8. تَلْطَى الرِّصَاصُ وَجَاءَ الْقِصَاصُ
9. إِلَيْكُمْ سَنَأْتِي بِذُبْحٍ وَمَمُوتٍ
10. فَتَيْلَتُمْ جِهَاراً فَذُوقُوا الْخَسَارَةَ
11. إِذَا الْكُفْرُ مَاجٍ وَأَرْغَى وَهَاجٍ
12. بِسَمْرِ الْجِرَابِ بِضَرْبِ الرَّقَابِ
13. أَتَيْنَا أَتَيْنَا بِعَزْمٍ مَضِينَا
14. نَخَوْضُ الْخُتُوفَ نَرُصُّ الصُّفُوفَ</p> |
|---|--|

1. Soon, soon you shall witness wonders,
you shall witness a fearsome fight,
2. The battles will [take place] within your own house,
my sword has been sharpened for your destruction,
3. We have marched in darkness to cut off and slaughter,
with the knife of vengeance that aims for those who deserve it,

139 The translation in this work is adapted from a translation provided by Menashe Shemesh. See also Menashe Shemesh, "Islamic State Songs – A Major Tool for Reinforcing its Narrative, Spreading Message, Recruiting Supporters," *Right Side News*, accessed April 30, 2018, <https://www.rightsidenews.com/2015/08/13/islamic-state-songs-a-major-tool-for-reinforcing-its-narrative/>.

140 See also Shemesh, "Islamic State Songs – A Major Tool for Reinforcing its Narrative, Spreading Message, Recruiting Supporters."

4. With nightmares and the frightening young men,
a distressing blast to defeat [you],
5. You launched a war against me with a misguided coalition,
so have a taste of the calamity that shall befall you,
6. For a long time, you shall remain miserable in my war,
with what will you face a young man who calls out 'God is Great,'
7. When the horses roam, raise their heads and leap forth,
this way, [the horses] transform into an ignited blaze,
8. When the bullet flies and retribution comes,
where shall you find refuge, vilest of all men?
9. We come to you with slaughter and death,
with fear and silence, we sever the bonds,
10. You have failed publicly, so taste the defeat,
return in flight, under cover of night,
11. When apostasy is agitated, furious and fuming with rage,
we shall fill the roads with crimson blood,
12. With the thrust of the spear and the striking of necks,
heaping up the corpses of dogs when marching,
13. We have come, we have come, we have advanced with determination,
in earnest we have striven to smell the peak,
14. We shall engage with death to close ranks,
we shall die standing tall, like the courageous lions.

As the title suggests, the underlying message of the poem is two-fold; firstly, to present the out-group as a close or imminent threat that warrants immediate action, and secondly, to praise the jihadist group and project its military successes, which may, in turn, motivate DĀ'ISH cadres to engage in battle. The group's achievements serve as threat-connoting cues which are intended to serve as a fear-mongering campaign that intimidates the out-group. The group's immortality is reinstated by the loose mono-rhyme *rā*, which establishes a steady flowing rhythm throughout the chant giving the impression that the group's successes are voluminous and never-ending. Additionally, the rhythm of the poem is reinforced through the internal rhyme, which characterizes the first hemistich of every verse. The internal rhyme is also repeated amidst the second hemistich. Taking the first five verses as examples, one can notice that the rhyming words also happen to follow the same morphological pattern, namely, *qarībā*, *'ajībā*, *rahībā* (v. 1), *diyārik*, *ma'ārik*, *damārik* (v. 2), *samrin*, *naḥrin*, *tha'rin* (v. 3), *laylin*, *hawlin*, *waylin* (v. 4), and *qitālī*, *ḍalālī*, *bālī* (v. 5).

There are different strategies at play that incite aggression against the out-group and threaten immediate attacks. These strategies consist of Qur'anic references and frequent poetic epithets. Lexically, aggression is heightened by referring to weaponry such as the sword (v. 2), the blade (v. 3), the bullet (v. 8), the spear (v. 12), and the implication of bombs (v. 4 and v. 7). Feeding on the same semantic field of aggression are references to the dismemberment of the body, the overflow of blood and slow painful death in verses 3, 6, 11, and 12. Acoustically, aggression is reinforced from the outset through consonance. The redundancy of the uvular plosive *qaf* and the glottal *'ayn* in the first

hemistich of verses 1 and 2 seem to conjure up the fervour of violence. Likewise, parallel morphological patterns such as *li-jizzin wa-naḥrin* (v. 3), *bi-dhabhin wa-mawtin* (v. 9), and *bi-khawfin wa-ṣamtin* (v. 9) serve as rhythmic slogans of aggression which are strategically interspersed in the poem. Equally noticeable is the phrase *bi-sikkīni tha'rin* in verse 3. By means of the genitive construction (*iḏāfa*), revenge is attributed to the knife, implying that blood vengeance must be taken by slaughtering the out-group. Blood vengeance resurfaces at the end of the poem, whereby aggression against the out-group is portrayed as a ritual of purification. In this ritual, the ranks would be reunited once the blood of the in-group is avenged by slaying members of equal rank from the out-group (v. 14).

5.2.4. Verses of Asceticism

Religious asceticism is a powerful mobilizing force exploited by jihadist groups to demand blood vengeance. The term *zuhdiyya* is derived from the verb *zahada*, meaning “to renounce,” “to withdraw,” “to abstain from gratification.”¹⁴¹ The motif of asceticism is rooted in pre-Islamic communities, and it is generally concerned with renunciation (*zuhd*) and calling others to lead a life of abstention (*tazhīd*).¹⁴² Ascetic discourse works in the realm of the binary sets of life and death, the worldly and the outwardly, and the ephemeral and immortality. Upon the advent of Islam, the concept of *zuhd* featured in the Qur'an and came to mean “a life of self-denial and devotional exercises.”¹⁴³ In decoding how the ascetic impulse is appropriated by DĀ'ISH, a brief historical overview of this motif in the literary-cum-Islamic tradition is adequate.

In the literary circles, both Pagan and Islamic communities deployed ascetic motifs as premises but to different results. Pagan communities lamented the inevitability and bitterness of death, whereas Islamic societies perceived *zuhdiyya* as a pious exercise.¹⁴⁴ According to ancient Islamic wisdom, “there is no treasure more precious than piety” (*wa-lā kanz a'azz min al-taqwā*).¹⁴⁵ In the early Islamic age, *zuhdiyya* considered the world as morally evil and as a baited snare.¹⁴⁶ *Zuhdiyya* came to reflect the transitory nature of this life, and devout Muslims started calling for a return to the way of life led by the Prophet and his pious Companions. *Zuhdiyya* gained its significance due to the wealth and widespread indulgence of luxurious living during the Muslim conquests. Eventually, from the eighth-century onwards, *zuhdiyya* came to describe the elaborate and systematic ascetic doctrines, and it turned itself into a forceful movement in the religious and political life of the Muslim community.

The *zuhdiyya* genre in the Arabic-Islamic poetic tradition is characterized by extremely conventional themes and simple language. *Zuhdiyya* poetry is linked in form

141 See LANE, LISĀN, WEHR, *z-h-d*.

142 Andras Hamori, “Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt),” in CHALABL, 267.

143 Hamori, “Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt),” in CHALABL, 265.

144 See also Hamori, “Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt),” in CHALABL, 265.

145 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 38–9.

146 Hamori, “Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt),” in CHALABL, 267.

and substance to sermons and homiletic writings, echoing phrases from the Qur'an and the Prophetic Traditions.¹⁴⁷ Similar to the verses produced in Islamic times, the underlying poetic message of DĀ'ISH poetry is often linked to sermons and homiletic writings composed by jihadist ideologues and circulated in the jihadist milieu. The Qur'an and its imposition on the quality of language and style had a profound impact on poetry. A controversial political group emerging from the Arabic-Islamic tradition that mobilized its followers by placing the Qur'an at the centre of its ideology is known as Kharijism.¹⁴⁸ The literary manifestation and ideology of the Kharijite group bear striking resemblances to contemporary jihadist movements, especially DĀ'ISH.¹⁴⁹ Initially, the Kharijites emerged as religious zealots who adhered strictly to the Qur'an and Sunna. At a later stage, the group adopted a political doctrine which concerned itself with the caliphate.¹⁵⁰

On the literary level, Kharijite poetry abounds with end-of-time eschatological references stemming from the Qur'an to assuage their shame-filled anxiety over having fallen from grace by attacking a changing world.¹⁵¹ Kharijite poetry is replete with scriptural rhetoric consisting of Qur'anic language of pious militancy placed within an eschatological framework of Islamic scripture and philosophy. Kharijite verses did not appeal "to reason and logic" but referred "to religion and emotion to attract believers to their cause."¹⁵² The recitation of their poetry was mostly performed to advance their commitment to their faith and interests. The *zuhdiyya* motif established itself as a fundamental part of the Arabic literary repertoire, to be developed and reclaimed later by the jihadists continuing or contrasting with traditional conventions.¹⁵³

Zuhdiyya verses are instrumentalized to bestow Islamic attributes on DĀ'ISH. The discourse of DĀ'ISH communicates understandings of obedience and loyalty in terms of a chain of filial piety and seemingly religious authority that culminates and stops in DĀ'ISH. DĀ'ISH reclaims pious religious behaviour to ennoble ritual violence against the perceived out-group. DĀ'ISH ascetic impulses, which may be interpreted as being located in the particular contingencies of our era, are rooted in the rejection of the worldly. DĀ'ISH poetry abounds with scriptural rhetoric of pious militancy. Arguments

147 Hamori, "Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt)," in CHALABL, 269.

148 During the arbitration between 'Alī und Mu'āwīya (657 CE), the Kharijites fought against the Caliphs using both weaponry and verse. Kharijites applied their verses and principles verbatim and polarised the worldview into two irreconcilable camps of good and evil. See also Gruendler, Klemm, and Winckler, "Arabische Literatur," in *Islam: Einheit und Vielfalt einer Weltreligion*, 360.

149 The similarities between the Kharijites and modern militant jihadists are pointed out by Asma Afsaruddin, "A New Weapon of Islamist Extremists is...Poetry?" *The Conversation*, July 13, 2015, accessed <https://theconversation.com/a-new-weapon-of-islamist-extremists-is-poetry-43102>.

150 Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 5.

151 Paul L. Heck, "Eschatological Scripturalism and the End of Community: The Case of Early Kharijism," *Archiv der Religionsgeschichte* (2005), 141.

152 Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 90.

153 These chief motifs are also conventions of this genre within the Arabic poetic tradition that did not change much with time. See also Hamori, "Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt)," in CHALABL, 269–70.

are peppered with allusions to the hadith and Qur'anic verses, imbuing the poetic discourse with emotions. Cast in Qur'anic diction, DĀ'ISH poetry plays upon the sensitivity and emotions of a specific milieu in which the merest reference to the Qur'anic text – whether in the form of lexicon, imagery, or formulae – strikes up extraordinary reverberations. Qur'anic phraseology adds moral and religious immunity and also avoids condemnation.

Additionally, the exploitation of religiously loaded items justifies the domination of a jihadist social order. The group correlates religious obedience with obedience towards DĀ'ISH. Disagreement with DĀ'ISH is considered blasphemous. This interpenetration of religion and politics in the jihadist sub-culture features in a chant called *You were Free*. DĀ'ISH addresses the in-group members who escaped from the jihadist compound.¹⁵⁴ These members are reminded that they have lost their benefits as a result of escaping to the land of apostasy (*dār al-kufr*). At the end of the chant, DĀ'ISH issues the following dire warning (*indhār*) to those who leave Islam:

1. مَنْ رَأَى دِينًا سِوَى الْإِسْلَامِ يَوْمًا
2. وَأَرْجَعُوا لِلدِّينِ إِنَّ الدِّينَ عَزُّو
سَوْفَ يُخْزَى ثُمَّ تُخْفِيهِ الْخَفَايَا
وَأَطْلُبُوا الْعِزَّ بِتَجْهِيزِ السَّرَايَا

1. Whoever considers [any other] religion except for Islam,
he will undoubtedly be degraded and then disappear,
2. So return to faith; indeed, religion is high rank,
seek high status by preparing the squadrons.

In this chant, Islam and DĀ'ISH are used interchangeably. Islam is imbued with political and militant overtones, denoting military might and squadrons. Leaving DĀ'ISH territory is equated with leaving Islam, and returning the DĀ'ISH compound is projected as returning to Islam.

The interpenetration of religious piety and militant activism, namely, Islam and DĀ'ISH, comes to the fore in a chant entitled *My Umma was not Satisfied with the Weakness*. The concept of *zuhdiyya* is deployed to strengthen the associations between the two distinct entities by appropriating the Islamic tradition in light of modern-day warfare. By cementing of the jihadist worldview in the Islamic faith, organizations like DĀ'ISH shape the collective memory of the populace, and mobilize it behind an apparent religious cause.¹⁵⁵

1. أُمَّتِي كَانَتْ لَا تَرْضَى الْوَهْنَ
2. هَمُّهَا دِينٌ لَا هَمَّ النَّعْمِ
3. يَوْمَ كَانَ الصَّحْبُ يَرْجُونَ لِلْجَنَانِ
4. نَصْرُ دِينِ الْمُؤَلَى لَهُمْ دِثَارِ
أُمَّةٌ كَانَتْ مِنْ خَيْرِ الْأُمَّةِ
هَمُّهَا يَسْمُو وَيَعْلُو لِلْقَمَمِ
كَانَتْ الدُّنْيَا لَهُمْ تَحْتَ الْقَدَمِ
وَشِعَارٌ وَفَوَاذٌ وَعَلَمٌ

154 See Appendix A.12.

155 See Appendix A.8.

1. My Muslim community was not satisfied with weakness,
the Muslim community was from among the best communities,
2. Its concern was religion and not a luxurious life,
its concern was to be exalted and to rise to the peak,
3. When the Companions [of the Prophet] were hoping for paradise,
the world was for them under the foot,
4. Triumph of the Lord's religion is for them is a cover,
a slogan, a heart, and a flag.

These verses mask the group's political doctrine in Islamic terms by utilizing religiously loaded diction such as 'the Islamic polity' (*umma*), 'the Prophet's companions' (*al-ṣaḥb*), and 'paradise' (*al-jinān*).¹⁵⁶ References to paradise, which are common in DĀ'ISH rhetoric, justify the group's actions of violence and self-immolation through the promise of future prosperity. The direct associations attributed to significant Islamic terms are meaningful to the Muslim society in a positive way, are manipulated to fit into the jihadist trajectory. The link established by DĀ'ISH between the jihadist political realm and the Islamic tradition is an apparent attempt by DĀ'ISH to legitimate its actions and to garner support from the broader Muslim community.

Be Pure with God

The intricate relationship between the political and the spiritual, the ephemeral and the immortal, is expressed in a chant called *Be Pure with God*, which is composed following the *basīṭ* metre:¹⁵⁷

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>كُلُّ شَيْءٍ صَائِرٌ نَحْوَ الزَّوَالِ
خَالِيًا مِنْ كُلِّ حَالٍ دَاتٍ بِالِ
مُحَكَّمِ النَّسْجِ وَمِنْ أَقْوَى الْجِبَالِ
فَأَعْتَمِدْ وَاسْعُدْ بِدَيْتِكَ الْوَصَالِ
دُونَكُمْ خَوْضُوا مَيَادِينَ الْقِتَالِ
فَارَ مَنْ لَبِي وَضَحَى كُلَّ غَالِي
يَسْمَعُ الْهَمْسَ بِدَرَاتِ الرَّمَالِ
وَعُرَاةً فَكُنْصْنَا تَوْبِ الْمَعَالِي
تَلْقَاهُ يُنْجِبُكَ فِي سَوْدِ اللَّيَالِي
ثُمَّ يَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّي ذُو الْجَلَالِ</p> | <p>1. كُنْ مَعَ اللَّهِ نَفِيًّا لَا تُبَالِي
2. عِشْ قَنُوعًا بِالرَّضَى مُسْتَسْلِمًا
3. إِنَّ حَبْلَ اللَّهِ يَا هَذَا مَتِينٌ
4. إِنَّ تَصَلُّهُ فَهَوَ لِلْعَبْدِ وَصُولٌ
5. إِنَّ أَرَدْتُمْ عِزَّةً فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
6. ذُرُّوهُ الْأَمْرَ جِهَادًا فَارْتَقُوا
7. كُلُّ مَنْ يَدْعُوهُ يَلْقَاهُ قَرِيبًا
8. يَا إِلَهَ الْكَوْنِ جِئْنَاكَ خُفَاءً
9. رَبُّكَ الْحَامِي فَاسْأَلْهُ خَالِصًا
10. كُلُّ مَا فَوْقَ الْبَرَابِإِ زَائِلٌ</p> |
|---|---|

156 These verses resonate with the verses of al-Mutanabbī's famous poem *al-khīl wa-l-līl*.

157 The metre of this poem is corrupt. The translation is adapted from Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi. See Aymenn Jawad Al Tamimi, "Be with God – New Nasheed from the Islamic State," The Aymenn Jawad Al Tamimi Blog, October 29, 2015, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2015/10/be-with-god-new-nasheed-from-the-islamic-state>.

1. Be pure with God and do not worry,
everything is heading to perdition,
2. Live modestly with contentment and submissiveness,
free from every wretched situation,
3. Indeed, the rope of God, O, you are firm,
firmly twisted and of the most durable cords,
4. If you connect to it, it is an achievement for the servant,
so take advantage and feel fortunate of that union,
5. If you desire the glory in every matter
other than yourselves, then embark boldly in the arenas of fighting,
6. The peak of the matter is jihad, so rise to it,
for whoever heeds the call and sacrifices everything precious succeeds,
7. Everyone who calls Him encounters Him soon,
He hears the whisper in the tiny particles of sand,
8. O God of the Universe, we have come to You barefoot,
and naked, so dress us up in the garments of Excellence,
9. Your Lord is the protector, so ask Him sincerely,
you find Him rescuing you [even] in the black night,
10. All that is above creation is transitory,
What remains is the face of my Lord, the Splendid.

DĀ'ISH poetry reconfigures Islamic teachings to promote a life of restraint and denial in the context of contemporary warfare. The chant takes on an authoritative persona that imparts advice to its recipients, reminding them of the transient nature of life. The subtle recurring call to trust in God is known in Arabic as *tawakkul*. This master-concept was established in early Muslim asceticism, which, in its extreme form, could mean limiting oneself to mere sufficiency and the dismissal of all concerns in one's livelihood, including one's family and a luxurious life.¹⁵⁸ The ephemeral qualities of the worldly are reinforced in the first and last verse of the poem through the terms *al-zawāl* (v. 1) and *zā'il* (v. 10). Etymologically, the roots *z-w-l* mean 'to abandon, leave, disappear, come to an end.'¹⁵⁹

The ephemerality of life is starkly contrasted with the permanent attributes of Islam and God. The jihadist group projects itself in terms of the qualities that have been customarily bestowed upon Islam. Immortality is implied in the chant by the redundant diction, which signifies God, namely *rabbī* (v. 9, 10), *allāh* (v. 1, 3), and verbs like *yabqā* (v. 10).¹⁶⁰ The chant also entails discursive traces that trigger connections to particular Islamic dogmas and beliefs of the Hereafter, such as God's image as the provider of garments on the Day of Judgment. The reference to garments in verse 8 echoes

158 Hamori, "Ascetic Poetry (Zuhdiyyāt)," in CHALABL, 270–1.

159 See also LANE and WEHR, *z-w-l*.

160 The slogan of DĀ'ISH, namely, 'remaining and expanding' (*bāqīya wa-tatamaddad*), also latches onto the quality of longevity or immortality that is attributed to Islam.

the Qur'anic description of paradise, where those who do righteous deeds would be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearl, and garments of silk.¹⁶¹

The call for compliance is empowered by culturally-guided interpretations. The command to obey DĀ'ISH is expressed in Islamic phraseology and ancient wisdom, which helps to blur the lines between the religious and the political. The technique of interchanging Islam with DĀ'ISH is extended to the semantic associations of these two terms. Islamic virtues such as 'purity' (*naqiyy*) and 'devotion' (*khāliṣ*) reinforce the call for religious piety in the jihadist context. Likewise, the term *dhū l-jalāl* (v. 10), which means 'Master of Majesty and Generosity' (*dhu l-jalāl wa-l-ikrām*), is one of the ninety-nine attributes for God in Islam.

The transfer of attributes from Islam to DĀ'ISH is explicitly mentioned in verses 5 and 6, in which the transfer from the temporal to the everlasting spiritual state can only take place by sacrificing oneself on the battlefield. Remaining steadfast in the face of hardship is a pious exercise of obedience. Steadfastness is intensified through an intertextual Qur'anic reference to 'the rope of God' (*ḥabl allāhi*, v. 3). This intertextuality reinforces unity among the in-group and invites fighters to join the group.¹⁶² In verse 2, the recipients are ordered to 'live modestly with...submissiveness' (*ish...mustasliman*, v. 2). The term *mustaslim* is the active participle derived from the verb *istalama*, which means "to surrender, capitulate, give way, submit, abandon."¹⁶³ The roots of *mustaslim* are theologically loaded because they share the common radical roots and hence semantic field as *islām* (submission). The call for obedience is also reinforced through formulaic expressions and ancient wisdom such as the example in verse 6, namely, *fāza man labbā wa-dahḥā kullā ghālī* ('whoever heeds the call and sacrifices everything precious succeeds').

I am not Content with the Life of Humiliation

Another example of ascetic verses which deals with the transfer from the ephemeral to the immortal is the chant called *I am not Content with the Life of Humiliation*:¹⁶⁴

- | | |
|---|--|
| وَحُبُّ الْمَوْتِ بِالْعِزِّ مَرَامٌ | 1. حَيَاةُ الدُّنَى لَا، لَا أُرْتَضِيهَا |
| فَمَا لِلْعَبْدِ فِي الدُّنْيَا مَقَامٌ | 2. فَلَا وَاللَّهِ لَا أَخْشَى الْمَنَايَا |
| لَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ | 3. وَإِنَّ الْمَوْتَ فِي ذَرْبِ الْجِهَادِ |
| لِحُبِّكَ لَا أَكِلُ وَلَا أَنَامُ | 4. فَيَا ذَرْبَ الْجِهَادِ هَلُمَّ إِنِّي |
| خُذِلْتُ مِنَ الْبَرِيَّةِ أَوْ أَلَمْ | 5. سَابِقِي وَافِيَا بِالْعَهْدِ مَهْمَا |
| سَابِقِي ثَابِتاً مَهْمَا أَسَامُوا | 6. وَمَهْمَا سَامَنِي الْأَعْدَاءُ قَهْرًا |

161 See Qur'an, 22:23.

162 "And hold firmly to the rope of God (*ḥabl allāhi*) all together and do not become divided." Qur'an, 3:103.

163 WEHR, *s-l-m*.

164 Translation is adapted from Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi. See Aymenn Jawad Al Tamimi, "'I am not Content with a Life of Humiliation' – Nasheed from the Islamic State's Ajnad Media," The Aymenn Jawad Al Tamimi Blog, October 12, 2014, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2014/10/i-am-not-content-with-a-life-of-humiliation>.

7. فَلَا وَاللَّهِ مَا فِي الْعَيْشِ خَيْرٌ
 8. فَصَبْرًا يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ صَبْرًا
 9. لَكُمْ بِالشَّامِ جَيْشٌ كَالْأَسْوَدِ
 10. فَتَنْصُرُ اللَّهَ أَتِ لَا مَحَالٍ

وَفِي الْأَسْوَارِ أحرارٌ تُضامُ
 فَدَعَوَاتُ اللَّيَالِي لَكُمْ سِيهَامِ
 وَجَيْشٌ فِي الْعِرَاقِ لَهُ اخْتِدَامِ
 وَجُنُودُ اللَّهِ لِلدِّينِ أَقْلَامُوا

1. I am not content with a life of humiliation,
the love of death in glory is an aspiration,
2. No, I swear by God that I do not fear the fate of death,
for the servant has no residence in the [material] world,
3. Indeed, death in the path of jihad,
is verily God's favour bestowed on whomever He wills,
4. O path of jihad, come on!
verily, I neither become weary nor do I sleep for the love of you,
5. I will remain loyal to the pledge no matter what
setbacks or blame I have suffered from [other] humans,
6. Whatever oppression enemies afflict me with,
I will remain steadfast whatever they intend,
7. No, I swear by God that there is nothing better in life,
in the walls are mistreated, free men,
8. So patience, servants of God, patience!
for the calls of the nights are arrows for you,
9. You have an army like the lions in Syria,
and an exploding army in Iraq,
10. The victory of God is proximate with certainty,
the soldiers of God have established the religion.¹⁶⁵

The dialogical chant is divided into two main parts, which together instigate the audience to engage in the battlefield. The two parts are indicated by a grammatical feature known as *iltifāt*, that is, the use of verbal inflexions differing in person and number for the same referent in the same passage. *Iltifāt* is indicated by the narratorial shift from the first-person singular to the second-person singular. The first part of the chant, that is, verses 1 to 7, denotes submission to a recognized authority. This part serves as a pledge of loyalty to the organization, which is narrated in the first-person singular. This pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*) is a ritual of acceptance that resonates with the historical contract (*'ahd*, v. 5) made between the ruler and the community of Muslim believers.¹⁶⁶ By chanting the verses in the first person singular, the reciters are reminded of their pledge. The recitation of this chant also serves a public sign of conformity to the grand narrative of DĀ'ISH. The second part of the chant starts from verse 8 onwards, and it is indicated by the abrupt change to the second-person singular. This part entails an authoritative

165 This verse echoes the Qur'anic verse which reads: "And to establish prayer (*aqīmū al-ṣalāwa*) and fear Him. And it is He to whom you will be gathered." See Qur'an, 6:72.

166 For a discussion about the pledge of allegiance, see section 4.7.1.

voice that incites the audience to take action while promising them an inevitable victory through faith and sacrifice.

There is a correlation between the first and second parts of the chant. The pledge or contract mentioned in the first part is subtly linked to the willingness to take up arms (v. 8–9) and die for the group implied in the second part. In the chant, self-immolation in the name of God is perceived as liberating. The pain attributed to one's death is projected as a temporary state that can be soothed by the spiritual one. Self-immolation is depicted as an event which turns humiliation into honour, and slaves of the material world into 'servants of God' (*'ibād allāh*, v. 8). Virtues such as 'steadfastness' (*al-thābit*, v. 6), 'patience' (*al-ṣabr*, v. 8), and 'death' (*al-manāyā*, v. 2) contribute to the perceived image of self-immolation as divinely ordained.

5.3. The Blood Metaphor

The poetic exemplars analyzed in this chapter are characterized by recurring metaphorical references to blood. Metaphors are powerful discursive means mobilized by DĀ'ISH to instigate blood vengeance and to cement a particular worldview. Metaphors exercise the imaginative power to describe an object or action in terms of another, thereby providing us with a novel perspective on it. In this sense, metaphors are communicational: they are meant to "change the addressee's perspective on the referent of the topic that is the target of the metaphor."¹⁶⁷ In DĀ'ISH poetry, metaphors should not only be conceptualized as an aesthetic embellishment of political language but, more importantly, as tools that play a pivotal part in structuring the political field itself. Metaphors "communicate ideology covertly but persuasively"¹⁶⁸ by providing "the cognitive framework for worldview,"¹⁶⁹ guiding its recipients to view the world through a specific prism. That way, metaphors can highlight and "privilege one understanding of reality over others."¹⁷⁰ Metaphors are inherently manipulative because of their partiality, by which a specific worldview is subliminally imposed upon its recipients, impacting or manipulating their attitudes, ideas, and value systems.¹⁷¹ In the case of DĀ'ISH, metaphors are mobilized to enhance the status of the in-group and debasing the out-group.¹⁷²

167 Gerard Steen, "The Paradox of Metaphor: Why We Need a Three-Dimensional Model of Metaphor," *Metaphor and Symbol*, no. 4 (2008), 222.

168 Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 128.

169 Otto Santa Ana, *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 21.

170 Paul Chilton, *Security Metaphors: Cold War Discourse from Containment to Common House* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 74.

171 Critical discourse analysts have recognised the ideological power of metaphors and their involvement in the representation of the worldview from the perspective of a particular interest. See Hart, *Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Science*, 125; Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Awareness* (London: Longman, 1995), 44.

172 See also Raimund H. Drommel, and Gerhart Wolff, "Metaphern in der Politischen Rede," *Der Deutschunterricht* 30, no. 1 (1978): 71–86.

If we define ideology as a political mythos, then ideological metaphors are distinguished by their mythical potential. Unlike poetic metaphors, ideological metaphors are not defined by the personal experience and the biography of one single individual but are interested in a mega-narrative. Ideological tropes do not delve deep into the world of the unreal but become entrenched in a particular culture to the point that its members fail to notice that their reality is metaphorically and not factually represented. The way DĀ'ISH organizes its perceptions of the world depends on the structures governing its production, including traditions, cultures, religion, discourses, or epistemic realities, implying that metaphors need to be grounded in a specific culture at a particular space in time to be intelligible.

Ideological tropes provide a shorthand that makes it easier to handle complex realities. By making use of simplified language, black-and-white rhetoric and representations, ideological metaphors play a significant part in constituting social reality. Metaphors establish security and stability in a community by managing the context and steering the interpretation of perception concerning results and facts. Metaphors reduce complexity and assist with orienting a specific worldview in social and political reality.¹⁷³ Metaphors become integrative, evoking a 'common feeling' among members and implicate a shared worldview of imagination and judgments.

The ideological metaphor is connected to the human lifeworld and is often composed in response to an actual situation, a momentous occasion, or a socio-historical issue. Thus, it serves as a reflex of the collective conscience. The need to connect with reality may be attributed to the fact that DĀ'ISH poetry is not composed as *art for art's sake* but is intended to reach the wider populace. Treating only fantastic or imaginary themes metaphorically would not be taken seriously primarily due to the reality on the battlefield. Ideological metaphors are circulated through discourse repetitively, to the point that the novel metaphor "becomes a familiar part of one's mental world."¹⁷⁴ By accepting as natural a coding which is arbitrary, individuals become "acquiescent, uncritical; we acknowledge meanings without examining them."¹⁷⁵ Through constant repetition, ideological metaphors become perceived as natural and inevitable, often misleading individuals by the metaphors' selective view of things.¹⁷⁶ By means of naturalization of ideological representations, ideological tropes "come to be seen as non-ideological 'common sense'."¹⁷⁷ The recipients often fail to notice that what they deem as natural is, in fact, ideological. The process of naturalization becomes a discursive process, by which DĀ'ISH maintains its social domination in a predominantly Muslim society.

173 Nasalski, *Die Politische Metapher im Arabischen Untersuchungen zu Semiotik und Symbolik der Politischen Sprache am Beispiel Ägyptens*, 86.

174 Sik Hung Ng, and James J. Bradac, *Power in Language: Verbal Communication and Social Influence* (California: Sage, 1993), 140.

175 Roger Fowler, *Linguistic Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 57.

176 Ng, and Bradac, *Power in Language: Verbal Communication and Social Influence*, 141.

177 Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Awareness*, 28.

The metaphor of blood is manifested in different forms; at times, it is implicitly attributed to the sowing of seeds and harvesting, whereas at other times, it is connected to the image of writing a letter in blood. From the outset, it should be clarified that the Qur'an lacks any reference to human blood for sacrificial purposes.¹⁷⁸ Self-immolation is an altruistic act that runs counter to the human instinct for survival, and the Qur'an pronounces itself explicitly against self-immolation.¹⁷⁹ Two prominent verses that contain this prohibition are: “[s]pend in God’s cause: do not contribute to your own destruction with your own hands,”¹⁸⁰ and “[d]o not kill each other, for God is merciful to you.”¹⁸¹ The prohibition of self-immolation is ingrained in the Islamic ethic, which considers life as a gift bestowed by God and hence preaches the duty to bear suffering and pain.¹⁸²

In DĀ'ISH poetry, the imagery which conveys harvesting and sowing seeds is amalgamated with the image of blood for sacrificial purposes. Harvesting belongs to one of the most critical sectors of life, exerting a considerable impact on social reality. In its primitiveness, this metaphor connects vertically with the modern-day audience because it is rooted in one's environment and not in the poetic imagination. The stability and regularity of natural phenomena like harvesting provide a guarantee of the results. If one sows seeds and nurtures the plants or saplings, one is expected to reap the harvest in the proximate future. Likewise, if one sows undesired vices, then the harvest of their future produce would be determined by it.

The metaphorical concept of harvesting is appropriated from the Qur'an; however, there is no scriptural evidence connecting this metaphor with blood. The metaphorical concept of harvesting as it appears in the Qur'an deals with the action of sowing, and it is linked to producing something new.¹⁸³ It denotes scattering the seeds over the ground for growing, or more symbolically, to impregnate a growing medium with seed. The Qur'anic verse, which deals with the representation of men and women explicitly, appears in *surat al-baqara* whereby women are considered as a place of cultivation for men:

178 In Islam, the spilling of blood takes the form of a sacrificial ritual solely restricted to animals. See also EQ, s.v. “Blood and Blood Clot.”

179 See also Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 4.

180 Qur'an, 2:195.

181 Qur'an, 4: 29.

182 For a more detailed discussion on these verses in light of Islamic scholarship. See Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 39.

183 The metaphor of reaping the produce of one's harvest is rendered in ancient wisdom such as proverbs and also in the Qur'an: “On the Day the punishment will overwhelm them from above them and from below their feet. And it will be said, “Reap what you sowed” (29:55).

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

Your wives are a place of sowing of seed for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish and put forth [righteousness] for yourselves. And fear Allah and know that you will meet Him. And give good tidings to the believers.¹⁸⁴

DĀ'ISH propagandists modulate the harvest metaphor by associating it with the blood metaphor, amalgamating the ideological worldview of DĀ'ISH with divine authority. This manipulation of imagery is empowered through the shared semantic field. Qur'anic imagery is assimilated, transformed, and modified in DĀ'ISH rhetoric to create a novel argument validated by tradition, which justifies self-sacrifice of the in-group. DĀ'ISH rhetoric to create a novel argument validated by tradition, which justifies self-sacrifice of the in-group. This new metaphor manipulatively reconstructs death as heroic and desirable.

In the following example, the blood of the late DĀ'ISH spokesman al-'Adnānī is metaphorically portrayed as water that gives life to new trees:

1. وَإِذَا يَغُورُ الْمَاءُ فِي جَوْفِ النَّرَى
تَلْقَاهُ إِذْ تَرَكَوْا جَنَى الْأَعْصَانِ
2. وَالَّذِينَ يَصْنَعُ غَيْرَهُ يَا قَوْمَنَا
فَتَجَلَدُوا بِالصَّبْرِ لِلْأَحْزَانِ¹⁸⁵

1. When water penetrates the innermost soil,
you find it when the harvest of the branches grow,
2. Religion produces another plant, O people of ours,
so arm yourselves with patience for sorrow!

The blood and harvesting metaphors are instrumentalized in elegiac verses as a form of consolation. In a poem lamenting al-Shishānī's death, the actions of the deceased are depicted through this novel metaphor:

1. بُشْرَاكُمْ بِالْفَتْحِ يَا إِخْوَانِي
أَسْقَى النَّرَى بِدِمَائِهِ الشَّيْشَانِي
2. بُشْرَاكُمْ قَادَاتْنَا فِي حَرْبِهِمْ
يَتَقَدَّمُونَ الصَّفَّ دُونَ تَوَانِي¹⁸⁶

1. Glad tidings of the conquest, O brothers of mine,
al-Shishānī gave the earth his blood to drink,
2. Glad tidings to our leaders in their war,
they advanced the battle line without tardiness.

The harvest-cum-blood metaphor communicates its hortatory power by transforming a horrific death on the battlefield into a collective social object. Blood is perceived as purifying, life-giving, and life-sustaining. Al-Shishānī's blood is depicted as giving life to the future generations of fighters.¹⁸⁷ In beautifying death and turning the lamented

184 Qur'an, 2:223.

185 See Appendix A.30, and B.2.

186 See Appendix A.31, and B.1.

187 This metaphor is reinforced by choosing specific etymological roots connected to drinking. In the fourth verse of the poem, the term *ghimāruhā* is used to refer to the danger of war. Another derivative from the

into a prototype, this metaphor engages in communicating the act of dying as a heroic deed. By extension, blood purifies the land, leads the way to prospective cadres, and creates the figure of a mythical hero.

Blood ratifies the superiority of specific values over personal being and signifies the ultimate assimilation of a truth that is perceived as the true essence of life. The group's ideology is placed above physical survival, and death in battle becomes perceived as a radical expression of group solidarity. The death of the head of DĀ'ISH military Council called Abū 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Bilāwī is metaphorically depicted as watering the tree of the caliphate, namely in the foundation of DĀ'ISH.¹⁸⁸

1. وَدِمَائِكُمْ يَا قَائِدِي طَلُّ النَّدى
يَسْقِي بِنَا شَجَرَ الخِلافةِ عامراً
2. دَعْنِي أَحْمَنُ كَيْفَ يَزُكُو جَنِّيها
فَدِمَائِكُمْ ماءً يُفِيضُ تَنْوُراً¹⁸⁹

1. Your blood, O leader, is a drizzle of dew,
which waters the tree of the caliphate growing,
2. Let me guess how its harvest is pure,
your blood is water that pours illumination.

The process of linking Qur'anic metaphors with modern-day warfare enables jihadist organizations like DĀ'ISH to portray acts of brutality in terms of historical continuity. The reliance of the harvest-cum-blood metaphor on the proximate future and the distorted link to the Qur'an serves as an equally potent tool to legitimize the *status quo* within the DĀ'ISH milieu. Violence is not projected to the populace as a twenty-first-century phenomenon, but it is marketed as a custom entrenched in the Islamic tradition. The endless repetition of this novel metaphor strengthens the connections between Islam and DĀ'ISH in the recipients' minds until the novel associations become part of the shared memory in the long run. Manipulated elements of the Islamic tradition are mobilized as a rationale for violent chores to make the jihadist narrative seem part of authentic mainstream Islamic culture and not a radical sub-culture.

5.3.1. Drinking and Composing Letters in Blood

The manifestation of blood in death or martyrdom is extended to the realm of writing letters by blood. Martyrdom is symbolically regarded as the ultimate act of faith in the jihadist stream. This deed is projected mostly through direct references to one's writing by blood. In the Qur'an, references to ink (*midād*) appear only once. A sea of ink is depicted as a metaphor for God's speech, stating that, "[i]f the sea were ink (*midādan*) for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my

same root is *ghumarun*, which is a Qur'anic term that refers to "a small drinking cup or bowl with which people divided the water among themselves in a journey when they had little of it." See Appendix A.31, and B.1; LANE, *gh-m-r*.

188 Charles Lister, "Islamic State Senior Leadership: Who's Who," *Brookings*, October 20, 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/en_whos_who.pdf.

189 See DAN, 120.

Lord were exhausted, even if [w]e brought the like of it as a supplement.”¹⁹⁰ However, no links have been established between blood and ink in Islamic texts.¹⁹¹

In the jihadist circles, self-immolation is considered as the completion of an agreement between God and the jihadist fighters. DĀ‘ISH cadres are praised for carrying out battles in accord with the teachings of God. In the following verses, heroic deeds are described in terms of writing (*yusaffiruhā*) and drinking:

يَذُلُّ الْكُفْرَ، أَعْيَاءُ إِسْحَابُ
دِمَاءُ الْمُعْتَدِي: لَهُمُ الشَّرَابُ

1. بُطُولَاتٌ بِهَا تُؤَفِّقُ رَبِّي
2.¹⁹² بُطُولَاتٌ يُسَطِّرُهَا أَسْوَدٌ

1. Heroic acts that humiliate apostasy and cause it to withdraw are approved by my Lord.
2. Heroic acts which are drafted by the lions, the blood of the aggressors is their potion.

The image of in-group fighters ingesting the out-group’ blood as the harvest of their hard labour is especially recurring in chanted verses. The in-group drinks the blood of the out-group as a reward for their success. However, the act of humans ingesting blood is unislamic, and it is forbidden in the Qur’an.¹⁹³ In the jihadist paradigm, ingesting the blood of the perceived enemy fulfils the function of purification. A similar example concerning the ingesting of occurs in the chant entitled *By the Breaking of Skulls*:

1. وَنَقَطِفُ رَأْسًا
2. وَنَشْرَبُ دَمًا

بِسُمْرِ اللَّهَازِمِ
لَذِيذًا وَقَاتِمِ

1. We shall pluck heads with brown lances,
2. We shall drink blood, so tasty and dark.¹⁹⁴

The image of drinking blood also features in the case of in-group fighters who die in battle. In a short poem shared on social media directly after al-‘Adnānī’s death, the fate of death (*al-manāyā*) is sought and the successors of the lamented are portrayed as benefiting from his death. The verses illustrate the defiance of the militant jihadists in the face of death. The act of drinking their predecessors’ blood demonstrates their willingness to continue in his footsteps:¹⁹⁵

190 See Qur’an, 18:109; EQ, s.v. “Instruments.”

191 It may be for the same religious symbolism that Saddam Hussein allegedly had the Qur’an written using his own blood. The Qur’an was eventually displayed in the mosque known as the ‘Mother of all Battles’ in Baghdad.

192 For the complete poem, see DAN, 63.

193 See Qur’an, 2:173, 5:3, 6:145, and 16:115; EQ, s.v. “Blood and Blood Clot.”

194 See Appendix A.16.

195 See Appendix B.13.

وَتَشَبَّ فِي دَارِ الْعَدَا النَّيْرَانِ

1. هَاتُوا الْمَنَايَا تَرْتَوِي مِنْ كَأْسِهَا

1. Bring forth the fate of death; we are watered from its glass,
we light up the fire in the house of the enemy.

In another example, al-‘Adnānī’s death is metaphorically depicted as a letter that was composed with blood instead of ink:¹⁹⁶

تُلْفَى بِلَا عَمَلٍ وَلَا بُنْيَانِ
وَرَمَاهُمْ شَلَّوْا بِلَا أَرْكَانِ
خُطَّتْ بِهِ الدَّعَوَاتُ فِي إِتْقَانِ
نُسِجَتْ وَشَاجِبُهَا بِدَمِّ قَانِ

1. فَجَاهِدُكُمْ مَا كَانَ مَحْضَ عِبَارَةٍ
2. بَلْ كَانَ رَعْدًا شَلَّ أَرْكَانَ الْعَدَا
3. فَحَرُوفُكُمْ لَيْسَتْ مِدَادًا بَلْ دَمًا
4. أَبْلَغَ بِمَا تَحْوِيهِ خَيْرُ رِسَالَةٍ

1. Your jihad was not a mere expression,
which was met without action or foundation,
2. But it was thunder which made the pillars of the enemy crumble,
It cast them, and they became disabled without staff,
3. Your letters [of the alphabet] are not ink, but blood,
by which the prayers were written to perfection,
4. Give tidings about what the best letter contains,
tightly woven with crimson blood.

The image of writing a letter with one’s blood has a special connection to martyrdom. Death in battle is glorified in the jihadist trajectory because it carries the logic of asymmetry in terms of power relations. Death is weaponized in the struggle for power, and preordained death promises moral superiority. Al-‘Adnānī’s death is elevated by accentuating his strength and power, portraying him as a robust and successful combatant. The poem narrates that the “best letter” was composed by the dark blood of the lamented. In this writing, the poem suggests that every letter of the alphabet was woven together by al-‘Adnānī’s crimson blood. The term *itqān*, which means ‘perfection or precision,’ echoes the Islamic phrase ‘a perfect deed’ (*itqānu l-‘amali*).

One particular example expresses the irritation of the poet against the inaction of the in-group. Echoing Abu Tammām’s (d. 845 CE) famous verse that ‘the sword is truer in telling than books,’¹⁹⁷ the poet Abū Qatāda al-Ḥaḍramī declares:

سُمِرُ السِّينَانِ لَهُ بِخَيْرِ بَيَانِ
وَبِضْرَبِ هَامِ الْكُفْرِ لَا الْأَوْزَانِ¹⁹⁸

1. أَعْيَى الْكَلَامِ رِثَاؤُهُ فَتَقَدَّمَتْ
2. رِثَاؤُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ خَوْضَ عِمَارِهَا

1. His elegy exhausted the words,
Brown spearheads were mere eloquent about him,

196 See Appendix A.30, and B.2.

197 Abu Tammām’s verse claims, “al-sayfu aṣḍaḡu anbā’an min al-kutubi.” See Muhammad M. Badawi, “The Function of Rhetoric in Medieval Arabic Poetry: Abū Tammām’s Ode on Amorium,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* (1978), 47.

198 See Appendix A.31, and B.1.

2. His elegy is [composed with] war, in its mêlée,
by striking the apostasy's heads off, not by poetic metres.

The brown colour of the tip of the lance expressed by the alliterative collocation *sumru al-sināni*, serves as an epithet for the wood from which lance shafts were made. Blood vengeance as a mode of action is probably one of the most explicit ideological vectors of transmission in DĀ'ISH poetry. This pre-Islamic tribalistic ethos is re-engineered to fit into a complex modern-day political landscape by echoing a remote and distorted tradition. By blurring the distinction between Islam and DĀ'ISH, poetry is deployed as an overt social force with which to associate and unify the two distinct facets. The interpenetration of Islam and DĀ'ISH in the form of multiple scriptural references taken out of their original context serves as a bid to claim legitimacy by a seemingly genealogical lineage to the Prophet.

The message of DĀ'ISH, which is loaded with theological diction and allusions, is granted religious immunity, giving the illusion that blood vengeance is divinely decreed. In addition to the instigation of violence, some poems do not deal directly with blood vengeance but engage in diffusing different ideological facets that are equally expressive of the group's jihadist ethos. These poems are discussed thoroughly in the following chapter.

Chapter Six

Poetry as a Vehicle of Ideological Transmission

6.1. Mobilizing Poetry to Enforce a Specific Worldview

Discursively, verses of ideological transmission depict multiple aspects of organizational power relations, including ideological polarization, enhancement of the group's status through moral superiority, and the outright discreditation of the opponents. Poetry is a platform that cloaks reality from those outside the experience. It also reveals reality on different levels of intensity to those within the experience.¹ The power of poetry lies within its ability to wield control over the perception of reality and to circulate specific social values that trigger specific behaviour and action.² The reformulation of reality through the jihadist lens is especially crucial for a politically volatile region. The classical Arabic ode is instrumentalized as an old vector of mobilization and ideological transmission among different ideologies. When the Egyptian government shut down the internet network during the Egyptian revolution in January 2011, poetry became retooled to spread the message of the revolution through word of mouth, "echoing the oral tradition found in Arab culture."³ As a medium, the classical form of poetry enjoys a broader popular appeal among a populace that takes pride in its long-standing traditions, cultural affinities, and historical legacies.

The most effective tactic which accompanies ideological transmission is the emotional charge. Anti-establishment organizations like DĀ'ISH deploy emotional persuasion tools to help shape the beliefs and preferences of activists, ultimately affecting their decision to join, stay in, or perform specific tasks for the group. The jihadist narrative reaches out to those whose identity is rooted in a history of shared suffering, following decades of invasions, wars, and denied states. The paradigm of struggle prompts identification with a potential group by showing them who or what they may become. Emotionally charged language is an essential discursive mechanism in the transmission of DĀ'ISH ideology because it overrides gaps in logic, it reinforces and complements the jihadist narrative, it simplifies a complex political landscape, and it also constructs a coherent enemy. Additionally, emotional discourse based on collective struggles, subtly enforces a 'moral code' on the populace, which is accompanied by specific responsibilities that reflect the group's ideology. A closer thematic analysis of the verses circulated

1 Ideological poetry, including the poetry composed by DĀ'ISH, is considered as 'platform' poetry. See section 4.3.

2 The discursive manipulation of a specific worldview is discussed in section 3.1.1, and 4.7.1.

3 The importance of the classical form of poetry as an old vector of mobilization is discussed in Lewis Sanders IV, and Mark Visona, "The Soul of Tahrir: Poetics of a Revolution," in *Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir* (Cairo: AUC Press, 2012), 214.

by DĀ'ISH sheds light on how DĀ'ISH illuminates – recalls or reinvents – its narrative to transmit a particular worldview.

6.1.1. *At Your Service O Sister*

DĀ'ISH propagandists mobilize poetry to impose a strict code of conduct upon the female populace. The stereotypical representation of women as mothers, daughters, and wives manifests itself extensively in the DĀ'ISH poetic discourse. This manifestation is strategically galvanized in the propaganda machine by reviving powerful female voices from the Islamic tradition, or by resorting to the Islamic history to validate women's importance in the organization.⁴ In the grand narrative of DĀ'ISH, anachronistic historical allusions portray women living in the jihadist milieu as free and highly esteemed. These voices are depicted as role models for the female audience living in DĀ'ISH-controlled areas. Female brigades, which make part of the propaganda machine, are engaged in monitoring other women in the caliphate and are equally present online to manipulate others outside the Iraq–Syria region into joining DĀ'ISH.⁵

Poetic subtlety provides DĀ'ISH with its mechanism to coerce the behaviour of its female populace about the most delicate issues, including the regulation of sexual activity with jihadists and bearing their children. One poetic exemplar that mobilizes metaphors, intertextualities, and literary devices to explore the male-female relationship in the jihadist milieu is called *At Your Service, O Sister*. It is composed by the group's poetess Aḥlām al-Naṣr in *kāmil* metre. The male-female relationship is indicated by the similar choice of diction deployed to refer to the two sexes, namely *aḥrār*, which means 'the freemen,' and *ḥarā'ir*, which refers to the noble virgin women. Both terms are derived from the plural form of the noun *ḥurr* which conveys the meaning of noble or free-born.⁶

1. لَبَّيْكَ يَا أُخْتَاهُ هَاكَ الرُّوحَ تَفْدِي طَهْرَكَ
 2. لَبَّيْكَ إِنْ عَجَزَتْ يَدَايَ: فَدَى فُؤَادِي عِزَّكَ
 3. لَبَّيْكَ إِنَّا لَا نَهَابُ الْمَوْتِ أَوْ نُخْشَى الرَّدَى
 4. لَبَّيْكَ إِنْ نَدَاءَكَ الْأَحْرَارَ لَمْ يَذْهَبْ سُدَى

1. At your service, O sister, take the soul to ransom for your purity!
2. At your service, if my hands are incapable, my heart redeems your pride,

4 The representation of women tends to be more intense in DĀ'ISH than other militant jihadist organizations such as al-Qa'ida. See Kendall, "Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition," 230–1.

5 See also the discussion about the female brigades in section 3.2.1.3.

6 This poem is not cited in its entirety. Only a number of selected verses are reproduced for discussion. The numbering of the verses is only used to show continuity between different sets of verses belonging to the same poem. For the complete poem, see Appendix A.7; DAN, 34.

3. At your service, we neither fear death nor perdition,
4. At your service, indeed, your call to the free ones did not go unnoticed.⁷

The anaphoric phrase ‘at your service’ (*labbayki*) is a response to a prior request, which is often made in distress.⁸ The term *labbayki* not only foreshadows the content of the verses, but its redundancy explicates that its message is directed toward women. The title *Labbayki yā ukhtāhu* is a formulaic expression that revives a centuries-old and well-known incident recorded in Islamic history. This expression recalls the story of a Muslim woman captured and imprisoned by the Romans during the reign of the eighth Abbasid Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, also known as al-Mu‘taṣim bi-llāh (d. 842 CE). It is narrated that when al-Mu‘taṣim heard of the news, he gathered an army on the best horses available to rescue her. Upon meeting the woman, al-Mu‘taṣim is believed to have used the expression *labbayki, labbayki*.⁹ The appropriation of *labbayki* in the context of women caught in warfare triggers comparisons between the historical event and the modern-day battlefield. DĀ‘ISH male fighters are subliminally equated with the image of al-Mu‘taṣim and depicted as the protectors of women. The role of women in DĀ‘ISH compound is clarified in the following verses:

5. فَلتَعْلَمِ الدُّنْيَا جَمِيعاً أَنَّنَا نَقْدِي الحَرَائِرِ
6. بِالرُّوحِ بِالدَّمِ، لَيْسَ فِينَا غَائِبٌ خَوْفاً وَخَائِسٌ
7. إِنَّ الفِتَاةَ بِدِينِنَا مَعزُوزَةٌ وَمُكْرَمَةٌ
8. وَلِنَصْرِهَا هَبَّتْ أَسودٌ سَطْرَتْ ذِي المَلْحَمَةِ
9. هِيَ نُصْفُ مُجْتَمَعِ بِهَا قَدْ أَزْهَرَتْ أَحْلَامُنَا
10. هِيَ أَحْتُنَا أَوْ أَمْنَا رَبَّتْ لَنَا أَعْلَامُنَا
11. هِيَ إِبْنَةٌ تَحْكِي البِرَاءَةَ تَحْتَذِي إِقْدَامَنَا
12. هَذِي مَكَائِثُهَا الرِّفِيعَةُ صَاعِهَا إِسْلَامُنَا!

5. Let the entire world know that we redeem the free noblewomen,
6. By soul and blood, no one is missing among for fear or cowardice,
7. Indeed, the girl in our religion is respected and venerated,
8. For her victory, lions embark upon drafting this great battle.
9. She constitutes half of the society; because of her, our dreams have flourished,
10. She is our sister or our mother that brought for us our distinguished [people],

7 The term *al-ahrār* may refer to *ḥarakat ahrāru al-shām al-islāmiyya* founded in December 2011 which is a coalition of multiple Islamist and Salafist units that united into a single brigade to fight against the Syrian government led by Bashār al-Asad during the Syrian Civil War armed Salafi-jihadist rebel group in northwestern Syria.

8 In a non-jihadist context, the phrase *Labbayki yā ukhtāhu* has also found resonance in the Iraq–Syria region as a military campaign to safeguard women from attacks of the government. See “Qaṣf bi-l-kulūr ‘alā Idlib wa-ghurfa ‘amliyyāt bi-ḥalab li-waqfi tajāwuzāt PYG,” *Alsouriya*, May 3, 2015, <https://tinyurl.com/y6ztpb9v>.

9 The imprisoned Muslim woman is believed to have shouted from her prison *wā-mu ‘taṣima* (O my grief, Mu‘taṣim), to which later, the caliph answered *labbayki, labbayki*. For a more detailed narrative of the incident, see also ‘Alī Ibn Athīr, *Kitāb al-kāmil fi-l-tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār kitāb al-‘ilmīyya, 1987), vol. 6, 40ff.

11. She is a daughter who speaks innocence and follows our advancement,
12. This is her elevated position which our Islam has crafted for her.

The poem conjures up the female image as being highly esteemed through popular phraseology borrowed from collective memory. The phrase *fa-l-ta'lamu l-dunyā* in verse 5 is a formulaic expression used to make declarative remarks of one's beliefs or political persuasions. The formula consists of a positive indirect command expressed through the structure of prepositions *fa-li* followed by an apocopated verb.¹⁰ Likewise, the phrase *bi-l-rūḥ, bi-l-dam* in verse 6, which means 'I will sacrifice my soul and blood for' features in political slogans and politically-motivated chants.¹¹ The expression *bi-l-rūḥ bi-l-dam, nafḍīka* has often appeared as a rallying slogan during protests in the Arab world to show support for a particular cause or figure. It is found in a self-indicative title of a chant dedicated to Palestine entitled *bi-l-rūḥ bi-l-dam, nafḍīka yā aqṣā* ('by spirit, by blood, I will sacrifice myself O Aqṣā'). This phrase was also used as a slogan that expressed support for Ḥāfīz al-Asad ("with spirit, with blood, we sacrifice for you, O Ḥāfīz"). It also surfaced in demonstrations that took place in Amman, Jordan, whereby the expression *bi-l-rūḥ bi-l-dam, nafḍīka yā filisṭīn* was accompanied by *labbayki yā aqṣā*. More recently, the term featured in the Arab uprisings, and it was often employed as a refrain in chants or a rallying slogan in countries like Iraq, Yemen, and Syria. In the context of this poem, the phrase does not only reinstate the willingness of DĀ'ISH cadres to protect women, but it also echoes the narrative of al-Mu'taṣim inferred in the title of the poem. The description of women as *nuṣfu mujatama'in* ('half of society,' v. 9) reverberates Islamic wisdom. It is attributed to the medieval Islamic jurisconsult of the Sunni tradition known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1350 CE).¹² This phrase is redefined in verses 10 and 11, reinstating the stereotypical functions of women as child-bearers, custodians, and obedient daughters in the jihadist sub-culture.

In verses 13 to 16, the female figure is projected as being elevated with pride and dignity, which must be shielded to retain chastity and purity:

13. طَهَّرُ الحَرَائِرِ فِي الشَّامِ لَتَسْتَحْيَ مِنْهُ السَّحَابُ
14. حِصْنٌ مَنِيعٌ طَالَمَا فَهَرَ الذُّبَابُ مَعَ الذُّنَابِ
15. وَعَلَى حُدُودِ الحِصْنِ قَدْ نَزَفَتْ دِمَاءٌ زَاكِيَاتُ

10 Badawi, Carter, and Gully, *Modern Written Arabic*, 436.

11 See Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 64; Ibn Filistīn, "Ughniya bi-rūḥ bi-dam, nafḍīka yā aqṣā jadīd 2017," *YouTube* video, 6:36, December 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9r0rY98cgVY>; Wajh al-Urdun, "al-sha'b al-urdunī yuḥtif 'Labbayk yā Aqṣā', bi-l-rūḥ bi-l-dam nafḍīk yā filisṭīn' fī masīra waṣṭ al-āṣima 'amman," *YouTube* video, July 21, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkTGsC2bRbE>; Zaid Alfadhli, "Aḥmad al-Muṣlāwī bi-rūḥ bi-l-dam," *YouTube* video, 4:57, August 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hys5gCd-xwM>; al-Shā'ir Aḥmad al-Daylamī, "bi-l-rūḥ bi-l-dam, nafḍīka yā yaman min kalimāt wa-ilqā' al-Shā'ir Aḥmad jadīd 2016," *YouTube* video, 5:55, January 21, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcDMD3sO8E4>.

12 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya is best remembered as the foremost disciple and student of the controversial and influential fourteenth-century Sunni reformer Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328 CE), whose work is circulated in the jihadist circles.

16. تَفْدِيهِ عَزْمًا مِنْ وَحُوشٍ ضَارِيَاتٍ عَادِيَاتٍ

13. So pure are the free noblewomen in Syria that even the clouds shy away,
14. An impenetrable fortress that the flies and the wolves have long attacked together,
15. On the borders of the fortification pureblood is shed,
16. Redeeming it with determination from the savage and rapacious beasts.

The polarization between the in-group and the out-group is subtly reinforced through several rhythmic phrases. The collocation *ḥiṣnun manī'un* ('an impenetrable fortress,' v. 14), which develops rhythm through the nunation, depicts the in-group as upright and sturdy. By contrast, *al-dhubāb ma'a l-dhi'āb* ('the flies with the wolves,' v. 14) refers to the out-group. These phrases are distinguished by phonological and morphological patterns. The cacophonous consonants *dhal* and *bā* which feature in the terms *al-dhubāb* and *al-dhi'āb* to represent the out-group are contrasted to the euphonic letters in *ḥiṣnun manī'un*, which represent the in-group. Additionally, the terms *al-dhubāb* and *al-dhi'āb* form an incomplete *jinās* (*jinās ghayr tāmm*).

There seem to be two parallel symbolic narratives unfolding in this passage. The first narrative is concerned with the explicit reconstruction of the harsh environment of the battlefield. This trajectory is expressed through terms like 'fortress' (v.14), 'attacked' (v. 14), 'borders' (v. 15), and 'pureblood' (v. 15), in which DĀ'ISH fighters are portrayed as protecting their fortifications and conquering their enemy. The blood on the borders of the fortification may also symbolize the death of the fighters caused by their encounter with the enemies. The explicit narrative about warfare being phallogentric and penetrative allows for extensive sexual punning. The second narrative is more implicit, and it concerns the role of women in procreation and child-bearing. Provided that the portrayal of women is the leitmotif that runs throughout the poem, the second narrative seems to be the underlying message that is meant to be transmitted through this poem.

For a better understanding of the metaphors involved in the second narrative, a brief etymological analysis of crucial phrases is adequate. The term *ṭuhr* in the phrase *ṭuhr al-ḥarāi'r* (v. 13) conveys the meaning of abstinence, chastity, being upright, moral excellence, especially of a woman.¹³ The term *al-ḥarāi'r* (sin. *ḥurra*) also shares the same semantic field. *Al-ḥarāi'r* is a classical term that designates a free noblewoman of high social status; this title served as a label of distinction and honour. Likewise, the collocation *ḥiṣnun manī'un* (v. 14) may either explicate a 'fortified fortress' according to the first narrative, or 'impenetrable chastity' implied in the second narrative. The lexeme *ḥiṣn*, which means 'fortress or tower,' implies the state of women being chaste. In Islamic law, the derivative *muḥṣina* refers to the in the chastity of a woman of unblemished reputation. The meaning of verse 15, which narrates about pureblood redeemed on the borders of the fortress, may be understood in light of the warfare paradigm, in which

13 See LANE, *ṭ-h-r*.

case DĀ'ISH fighters spill their blood by performing self-immolation.¹⁴ Alternatively, the image of pureblood could also symbolize women losing their chastity. These parallel narratives are, in essence, correlated because the blood in the context of warfare is purifying, life-giving, and life-sustaining. In the case of the procreation narrative, blood also opens up the possibility of life through birth.¹⁵ This poetic ambiguity is a subtle mechanism to address women's obligations towards the jihadist sub-culture.

The narrative of female members as child-bearers becomes more dominant as the poem progresses. In verses 17 and 18, the poem declares that male fighters would father an abundant number of children:

17. إِنْ مَاتَ مُعْتَصِمٌ فَكُلُّ شَبَابٍ شَامٍ لَهُ حَفِيدٌ
18. أَلْفٌ وَأَلْفٌ نُمُّ أَلْفٌ مَعَ أَلْفٍ بَلَّ يَزِيدُ!

17. If 'a seeker of the protection in God' (*mu'tašim*) dies, then every Syrian youth is his grandchild,

18. One thousand after one thousand, then one thousand with thousands and increasing.

The active participle *mu'tašimun*, which means 'the one who seeks protection in God,' recalls directly the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tašim who is implied in the title of the poem. Additionally, verse 17 suggests that the death of a fighter who dies for his faith is to be replaced by a multitude of children who could follow in his footsteps. References to procreation resurface at a later stage in the poem through the term *mahdu l-karāmi* ('the cradle of dignity'):

19. يَا أُخْتُ إِنِّي ابْنُ الشَّامِ وَأَرْضُنَا مَهْدُ الْكِرَامَةِ

19. O sister, I am the son of Syria, and our land is the cradle of civilization.

On a literal level, the term *mahdu l-karāmi* may refer to the historic title bestowed upon Mesopotamia as the cradle of civilization. On a more symbolic level, the term *mahdu* conjures up the image of newborns. The second trajectory, which depicts women as child-bearers, is reinforced through the rhetorical influence of the Qur'an:

20. قَرِّي أَيَا أُخْتَاهُ عَيْنًا لَنْ تُعَانِي مِنْ هَوَانٍ
21. قَرِّي .. فَإِنَّ الْأُسْدَ تَعْدُو بَيْنَمَا هَرَبَ الْجَبَانَ

20. Be contented O sister, do not worry about disgrace,

21. Be contented... Indeed, the lions attack while the cowards flee.

The recurring collocation *qarrī 'aynan* is to be understood vis-à-vis its religious associations because it features in the Scripture. The Qur'anic context of the phrase *qarrī 'aynan* reiterates the dominant trajectory of the poem. The nineteenth Qur'anic chapter is dedicated to Mary and her conception of Jesus. In this particular Qur'anic verse, Mary

14 See also the discussion on the metaphor of blood in section 5.3.

15 The spilling of blood as a metaphor for sowing seeds and procreation is explored in section 5.3.

is told to keep herself satiated with food and drink and to abstain from talking to humankind:

فَكُلِّي وَاشْرَبِي وَعَيْنَا فِيمَا تَرَيْنِ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

So eat and drink and be contented. And if you see from among humanity anyone, say, 'Indeed, I have vowed to the Most Merciful abstention, so I will not speak today to [any] man.'¹⁶

The divine order of abstention should be understood in the context of an unwedded Mary suffering from aggravated birth pain.¹⁷ The fighters' declaration of protecting *al-'arīn* is symbolic:

22. وَأَصِيحُ: لَتَبِيكُنَّ إِنِّي هَا هُنَا أَحْمِي الْعَرِينَ

22. I shout: at your service, I am here to defend your pride.

The term *al-'arīn* may either connote one's pride or a den. A den, which refers to a wild mammal's hidden home, may connote the home of DĀ'ISH fighters who are often depicted as lions in the jihadist discourse. Additionally, women in the female populace are projected as the mothers of today's cubs and tomorrow's lions. In the context of the dominant trajectory, protecting *al-'arīn* may imply safeguarding the female body because it gives birth to the symbolic lions.

The ambiguity between the narratives of warfare and procreation is evident even in the last verses of the poem:

23. فَأَلْزِمْ حُدُوكَ لَا تُغَادِرْهَا أَبَا جِنْسِ الْعَبِيدِ
24. إِنَّا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ لَا نُخْشَى وَلَا نَرْجُو سِوَاهُ
25. قَدْ فَازَ مَنْ يَحْيَا عَلَى حَقٍّ وَيَمْضِي فِي هُدَاهُ

23. So oblige your limits, do not leave them, O descents of 'Ubaydi,

24. Indeed, we are the servants of God, who neither fear nor request [anything] except for him.

25. The one who gives life to truth and moves forward in his guidance succeeds.

The term *jins al-'Ubaydi* is a pun which may signify the descents of 'Ubaydi. The verb in the masculine singular *tughādir* ('leave,' v. 23) seems to support this interpretation. The tribe of 'Ubaydi is significant for a population living in the Iraq–Syria region because historically, it refers to one of the most ancient and powerful Arab tribes in Iraq, which settled in Mesopotamia. The tribe directly descends from 'Umrū bin Ma'adī Yakrib (d. 642 CE), a famous Arabian knight known for his extreme bravery and valour, who was a companion of the Prophet. The exhortation to oblige by one's limits may thus be a projection of al-Mu'tašim's call to protect women from the Byzantines on the militant fighters. Alternatively, the term can also signify sex slaves if rendered as *jins al-'abīd*.

16 See Qur'an, 19:26.

17 See Qur'an, 19:23.

During the peak of DĀ'ISH, Yazidis were often targeted as sex slaves sold on the market for DĀ'ISH militants. The etymological root *'-b-d* resurfaces in verse 24, reminding the recipients that they are the servants of God (*'ibād allāh*). Verse 25, which happens to be the final verse of the poem, is formulated as a generic universal truth, claiming that whoever gives life to the truth will succeed. The term *al-ḥaqq* is an ambiguous term. In this case, however, giving life to truth may refer to the prospective infants procreated by DĀ'ISH militants.

By mobilizing particular elements from the Islamic tradition that are meaningful to the jihadist sub-culture in a positive way, the poem reinforces its paradigm of depicting the female populace as child-bearers. It also subtly coerces its female audience to remain silent if – as in the case of the story of Mary – the people close to them may not approve of their child-bearing for DĀ'ISH fighters. This selective use of the Scripture serves the double function of conveying religious legitimacy, even immunity, and also it pre-empts consent. The tradition of belief is deployed for its normative power. The method of thinking itself becomes disarmed by the rigid restriction to traditional mode. By resorting to phraseology derived from a religious corpus, DĀ'ISH aims to have its 'voice' becoming the voice of tradition and, most importantly, that of the Qur'anic ethos and its own interpretation of it. DĀ'ISH members are then not depicted as the innovators but the messengers of that ethos. Such manipulation appeals to tradition and authority, but it also uses logical gaps and fallacies by a selective recasting. As a result, poetry is weaponized in the jihadist milieu.

6.1.2. *My Brother in Religion*

The notion of brotherhood in the jihadist discourse is based on the traditional understanding of political order and the asymmetrical power relations. Brotherhood implies close or thick relationships with a group of people, not merely a connection with specific persons. It is a collective relationship based on descent and one which is deeply ingrained in the Arab and Islamic moral codes.¹⁸ Fraternal relations are depicted as the most decisive factor for solidarity because brotherhood inclines to collective concern and action. It is a form of mechanical solidarity resulting from intense group belonging and homogeneous beliefs and sentiments common to all the members of the group rather than an ethos of individualism and ties that link individuals with crisscrossing loyalties.

The call to build and maintain bonds of brotherhood gains its rhetorical influence from the Qur'an.¹⁹ It indicates membership in a genealogical group, and more extensively, it indicates membership in a group united by a shared belief.²⁰ The bond of Islamic brotherhood manages to transcend blood relationships, whereby creatures are linked by way of servitude to their creator. In contemporary mainstream political dis-

18 See also Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 98ff.

19 See Qur'an, 58:22.

20 See also EQ, s.v. "Brother and Brotherhood."

course, the metaphor of *ukhuwwa* resonates broadly with particular ideologies in the Arab world.²¹ The pan-Arab nationalist discourse depicts all Arabic-speaking countries as one large family and its citizens as brothers.²² Oman's former sultan Qābbūs b. Sa'īd (1970–2020) frequently referred to his population as brothers or Oman's sons (*ikhwa* or *abnā' umān*), whereas the Syrian President Bashār al-Asad often addresses the Syrian population with the expression 'O brothers and sons' (*ayyuhā l-ikhwa wa-l-abnā'*) in official discourse.²³

The metaphor of *ukhuwwa* permeates day-to-day conversations, formal speeches, pamphlets, and other forms of jihadist propaganda discourse. This metaphor stresses the importance of the fraternal bond that exists among the male militants. One poetic manifestation is the chant entitled *My Brother in Religion*, which is composed following the *wāfir* metre:

أبَاءٌ مِثْلُ مَا كُنَّا	1. أَخِي فِي الدِّينِ لَارِئْنَا
يَزِيدُ هَبَاتَهُمْ وَهَنَا	2. تَحَالَفْنَا عَلَى الأَعْدَاءِ
وَيَأْخُذُ كُلُّنَا مِنَّا	3. يُوَالِي بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا
سَيُشْبِعُ ظَهْرَنَا طَعْنَا	4. تَأَخَّرْنَا فَمَا أَحَدٌ
يُؤَاكِبُ لَفْظُهَا المَعْنَى	5. فَحِينَ أَقُولُ أَنْتَ أَخِي
لِنُكْمِلَ قُوَّةَ المَبْنَى	6. كَجِسْمٍ وَاجِدِ صِرْنَا
عَسَى الرَّحْمَنُ يَرْحُمَنَا	7. وَنَحْنُ لِبَعْضِنَا رَجْمٌ
أَخُوهُ بِأَهْلِهِ حُسْنَى	8. وَيَخْلِفُ مَنْ عَزَا مِنَّا
تُحِيلُ تَخَوُّفِي أَمْنَا	9. فَرُؤْيُهُ إِخْوَتِي حَوْلِي
لِسَانًا أَوْ يَدَا صَنَا	10. وَفِي سِلْمِي لَهُ سِلْمٌ
لِنُثَبِّتَ مَا حُكِيَ عَنَّا	11. أَلَا يَا إِخْوَتِي قَوْمَا
لِنَبْقَى مِثْلُ مَا كُنَّا	12. بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ فَاعْتَصِمَا

1. My brother in religion,
we are still fathers as we have [always] been before,
2. Join us against the enemies,
so that their dust and weakness increase,
3. We shall bond with each other,
and all of us shall benefit from it,
4. We became brothers, and no one
will stab us in the back,
5. When I say that you are my brother,
the meaning accompanies the word,

21 Nasalski, *Die Politische Metapher im Arabischen Untersuchungen zu Semiotik und Symbolik der Politischen Sprache am Beispiel Ägyptens*, 118.

22 For examples of the familial metaphor as used by Arab nationalist leaders on the political sphere, see also Nasalski, *Die Politische Metapher im Arabischen Untersuchungen zu Semiotik und Symbolik der Politischen Sprache am Beispiel Ägyptens*, 118ff; Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 106ff.

23 Stock, *Arabische Stilistik*, 100.

6. We have become like one body
so that the strength of the foundation is complete,
7. For among ourselves we are connected by kinship,
the [most] Merciful should have mercy upon us,
8. Who attacks among us is followed by
his brother with good kin,
9. The vision of my brothers is around me,
which changes my fear into safety,
10. In my composure with him, there is peace
of the tongue or helping hand,
11. O brothers of mine, rise,
to affirm what has been said about us,
12. With the bond of God protect yourselves,
to remain as we have [always] been.

In the jihadist discourse, the concept of brotherhood or fraternal relationship (*ukhuwwa*) dominates over other relationships. It represents the organization's idealized relations of domination and membership, and it specifies the form of public obedience towards the organization. These commitments underpin the familial structure and are representative of a system deeply ingrained in values and expectations that govern the behaviour of the relationships of the members. Since the bond is predominantly derived from ties of family or kinship (v. 7–8), DĀ'ISH presents solidarity as based on close, face-to-face, and emotionally charged relationships, and these dimensions are mutually entailed.

In the jihadist group, this metaphor is mobilized as a symbolic exercise of group-building. The denominative verb *ta'akhhaynā* (v. 4), which means 'we became brothers,' stresses that the group's fraternal bond is not exclusive to its members, but outsiders may become part of it. It consolidates the in-group relationships among members of DĀ'ISH transnationally through a vertical and hierarchy of legitimacy. It also reinforces a horizontal hierarchical lineage that subtly connects modern-day jihadist fighters with ancient Islamic warriors and leading figures of Islam. Imaginary familial bonds are exploited in the jihadist sub-culture "to build up an image of Islamic State as an emotionally attractive place where people belong, where everyone is a 'brother' or 'sister'."²⁴ The terms 'brother' and 'sister' project the Muslim polity of believers (*umma*) as a substitute family, whereby every Muslim shares a 'brotherly' or 'sisterly' relation with all other Muslims. The imagined family lineage, which transcends blood, provides members with emotional comfort, a sense of security, and a purpose in life. It is also a significant source of identity, psychosocial support, and social status, which binds its members through extensive mutual commitments and obligations.²⁵ Members are ex-

24 Atwan, *Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate*, 13.

25 One way of creating this 'false' identity, is by applying a nomenclature to anyone who joins DĀ'ISH, including non-Arab fighters. The *kunya* nomenclature becomes a symbolic rebirth or a ritual whereby

pected to show loyalty to the collective group, to place its good above their own, and to follow the orders of those above them in the hierarchy.

In this chant, the metaphor of the fraternal relationship is framed as a religious bond (*akhī fī l-dīn*, v. 1). Qur'anic intertextualities and hadith references are seamlessly inserted into the chant to reinforce authority and legitimate the group's strategies, reminding them of their duties towards the group. The manifestation of DĀ'ISH militants as one body in verse 6 is borrowed from the Islamic tradition.²⁶ The body metaphor provides an easy and convincing solution to the problem of social order. One hadith clearly states that "[t]he believers are like one person; if his head aches, the whole body aches with fever and sleeplessness."²⁷ The message is validated by intertextuality to a famous Qur'anic verse, which also deals with the bond of fraternal relationship subtly implying that the brotherly relationship is divinely ordained. The expression 'with the rope of God unite' (*bi-ḥabli llāhi i'taṣimū*, v. 12) echoes a Qur'anic verse which calls against division and demands unity among the people, namely, "and hold firmly to the rope of God [*wa-i'taṣimū bi-ḥabli llāhi*] all together and do not become divided."²⁸ This Qur'anic verse affirms brotherhood of the believers, reminding Muslims that before accepting Islam they were enemies, then "He unified your hearts so that through his bounty you became brothers."²⁹

The chant also refers to the past as a mobilizing force. In verse 2, ancestors are brought in to remind the audience of glorious past Islamic heritage to which they are connected by kinship. The final two verses echo, albeit subtly, the group's appeal to live up to the beliefs laid out by their ancestors. References to the members' collective forefathers, give credibility to the claims made by DĀ'ISH, through which the group may establish continuity and obedience.

6.1.3. *Let the World Verily Witness that I am a DĀ'ISH Member*

Formulaic expressions, intertextualities, repetitive morphological patterning, and neologisms are powerful discursive forces that reinforce the ideological hegemony of DĀ'ISH and contribute towards building up a jihadist ethos. One poetic exemplar of various morphological patterning is a short poem entitled *Let the World Verily Witness that I am a DĀ'ISH Member*. This poem consists of ten verses, which are composed in the *sarī'* metre by Aḥlām al-Naṣr:³⁰

DĀ'ISH members disavow their old self and identity. In return, they are granted a new self, new identity, and a new family. See section 3.2.1.4.

26 The metaphor is also found in the Judeo-Christian tradition. It is argued in the Corinthians that "if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it." See 1 Corinthians 12:26.

27 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 5665, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2586, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://sunnah.com/muslim/45/86>.

28 See Qur'an, 3:103.

29 See Qur'an, 3:103; EQ, s.v. "Brother and Brotherhood."

30 See Appendix B.15; DAN, 55.

- أَرْهَارُهَا تَقْوَى بِشَوْكِ خَادَشٍ
 فَهَوُ الدَّلِيلُ عَلَى النَّبَاتِ (العائشي)
 كَالنُّورِ يَسْطَعُ فِي الضَّبَابِ الْغَائِشِ
 فَعَدَا عَلَيْهَا كُلَّ حِقْدِ طَائِشِ
 فَمَحَتْ أَكَاذِيبَ الْهُرَاءِ النَّاهِشِ
 فَالِدِينُ دُسْتُورٌ وَلَيْسَ بِهَامِشِ
 فَعَدَا الْكَذُوبُ أَمَامَهَا كَالرَّاعِشِ
 كَالْمَاءِ يَبْدُو صَافِيًا لِلْعَاطِشِ
 رَغْمًا عَلَى شَرِّ أَتْسِيمِ فَاجِشِ:
 فَلْتَشْهَدْ الدُّنْيَا بَأَنِّي دَاعِشِي
1. يَا دَوْلَةَ الْإِسْلَامِ كُونِي دَوْحَةً
 2. وَلْتَصُمُدِي إِبَّانَ ظُلْمِ غَادِرِ
 3. كُونِي عَلَى كُلِّ اتِّهَامٍ بَاطِلِ
 4. أَدْنَهُمْ بِمَضَائِبِهَا وَتُبَاتِهَا
 5. (د) دَعَسَتْ رُؤُوسَهُمْ بِكُلِّ بَسَالَةٍ
 6. (أ) أَرَسَتْ قَوَاعِدَ دِينِنَا فِي عَزْمَةٍ
 7. (ع) عَصَفَتْ بِكُلِّ مَكِيدَةٍ حَيْكَتْ لَهَا
 8. (ش) شَمَلَتْ جُمُوعَ الْمُتَهَكِّمِينَ بِبِرِّهَا
 9. فَلْتَسْمَعُوا إِخْلَاصَنَا فِي قَوْلِنَا
 10. إِنْ كَانَ حُبُّ الصَّالِحِينَ تَدْعُشَا

1. O State of Islam, be a large tree with widespread branches,
 whose blossoms are superior to the vicious thorns,
2. Resist treacherous injustice,
 because it is the proof of steadfast living,
3. For every false accusation be
 like the light that radiates brightly in the dark fog,
4. It caused them pain with its sharpness and its steadfastness,
 for it was attacked by every [kind of] irrational hatred,
5. It trampled down on their heads with all courage,
 it obliterated the prattle and mordacious lies,
6. It anchored the principles of our religion with determination
 because the religion is a constitution and not [something] marginal,
7. It blew violently every devised conspiracy [connected] to it,
 the lies in front of it were quivering,
8. It bestowed its care upon the exhausting crowd,
 like water which appears pure for the thirsty,
9. So listen to our sincerity in our speech,
 despite the sinful and obscene evil,
10. If the love of the faithful ones demands to become a DĀ'ISH member,
 then let the world verily know that I am a DĀ'ISH member.

The rhythm of the poem flows through the liberal use of different formulaic expressions that resonate with a primarily Arabic-speaking populace. The grammatical construction expressed in the title of the poem, namely, *fa-l-tashhadi l-dunya bi-annani DĀ'ISHĪ*, is often used to make declarative remarks of one's beliefs or political persuasions. The formula consists of a positive indirect command utilizing the structure of *wa* or *fa* followed by the preposition *li*, which is succeeded by an apocopated verb.³¹ This formulaic expression can be traced back to a poetic verse attributed to the scholar Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shafī'ī (d. 820 CE), an Arab Muslim theologian and

31 Badawi, Carter, and Gully, *Modern Written Arabic*, 436.

scholar who is known for being the first contributor to the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). The original verse attributed to him states:

1. إِنْ كَانَ رَفُضاً حُبُّ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ فَلنَشْهَدِ النَّعْلَانِ أَنِّي رَافِضِي

1. If the love to the members of the House of Muhammad demands rejection
then let humankind and the jinn witness that I am a rejector.³²

The poetic verse attributed to al-Shafī'ī is a declaration of one's faith in the Prophet. In the poem of DĀ'ISH, the testimony of faith is foreshadowed in verse 2 through the structure *wa-l-taṣmudī* ('resist') and in verse 9 through the phrase *fa-l-tasma'ū ikhlāsanā fī qawlinā* ('so listen to our sincerity in our speech'), which follow the same grammatical construction. In addition to the recurring grammatical structure, the declaration of faith is empowered by choice of the verb *shahada* in the second part of the verse. *Shahada*, which means 'to witness,' echoes the Islamic creed known as *al-shahāda*; a testimony of one's faith in God and the Prophet. Other pseudo-religious terms include the verb *ittaqa bi-* meaning 'to seek protection' in verse 1 that is collocat-ed with the sanctifying thorns, which is etymologically connected to religious piety (*al-taqwā*).

The ferocious and belligerent jihadist ethos is also reinforced in the same poem by the use of acronymic verses. The acronym redefines the meaning of DĀ'ISH by conflating faith with militant activism, namely, *da'asat ru'ūsahum* ('it trampled down on their heads,' v. 5), *arsat qawā'id* ('it founded the principles,' v. 6), *'aṣafat* ('it blew violently,' v. 7), and *shamat...bi-birrihā* ('it bestowed its care,' v. 8). The acronym stands out from the rest of the poetic text for two main reasons. Firstly, it exploits a list of verbs placed at the beginning of the first hemistich in the third person feminine singular in the perfect tense. Additionally, the acronymic verses create their unique rhythm, which is reinforced by the poem's rhyming scheme. The ending of the first hemistich of verse 5, that is, *tin*, rhymes with the first hemistich of verse 6. Likewise, the affixed pronoun *hā* in the first hemistich of verses 7 and 8 contributes to the acronym's own rhythm.

The term DĀ'ISH is worthy of a brief commentary primarily because of the roots *d-'sh*, which lack a dictionary entry. The abbreviation DĀ'ISH, which stands for *al-dawla al-islamiyya fī l-'irāq wa-l-shām*, coincidentally follows the pattern *fā'il* which dominates this poem. The noun pattern *fā'il*, which is known as 'the agent noun,'³³ is reinforced through the end-rhyme itself following the same pattern. This morphological patterning signifies the doer of an action, often a person who resorts to action. Some examples of this morphological pattern include *khādīsh*, *ghādir*, *bāṭil*, *al-'ā'ishī*, *al-ghābīsh*, *ṭā'ish*, *al-nāhīsh*, *bi-hāmīsh*, *ka-l-rā'ish*, *li-l-'āṭīsh*, *fāḥīsh*, *al-ṣālīhīna*, *DĀ'ISH*. By extension, the morphological patterning captures and transmits the militant activism attributed to DĀ'ISH members.

32 'Umar Fārūq al-Ṭabbā', *Diwān al-'imām al-shafī'ī* (Beirut: Dār al-qalam, 1995), 81.

33 Badawi, Carter, and Gully, *Modern Written Arabic*, 88.

A more striking observation concerns the masculine *nisba* suffix attached to DĀ'ISH, which is a fully productive grammatical form in Arabic, which makes it possible to form adjectives derived from any nominal base. The *nisba*, which originally denoted a relationship of belonging, formerly of kinship,³⁴ is employed to construct the identity of DĀ'ISH members. In the case of DĀ'ISH, the *nisba* is a discursive tool to provide individuals with a group identity and a sense of belonging in the same way that it usually functions with nationalities of country names. The referential adjective *DĀ'ISHĪ*, which connects individuals to the group, is accompanied by violent deeds that are represented in the acronymic verses. The use of *DĀ'ISHĪ* solely in the masculine *nisba* form suggests that the poem is addressed to the group's male followers. This neologism is reinforced by the term *tada'ush*, which finds itself placed in the formulaic expression echoing the scholar al-Shafī'ī. The term *tada'ush* is constructed on the pattern *tafa'ul*, which is a verbal noun derived from the fifth verbal stem *tafa'ala*. The fifth verbal form is often the reflexive of the second verbal form.³⁵ In this case, the neologism *tada'ush* is assumed to mean 'to become a member of DĀ'ISH.' The term *tada'ush* in Aḥlām al-Naṣr's poem juxtaposes *Ali Muḥammad* (House of Mohammed) in the original verse by al-Shafī'ī, declaring that if becoming part of DĀ'ISH is required for the love of the faithful, then one should become part of it. This poem illustrates how morphological patterns, neologisms, and verses attributed to religious scholars are re-engineered to propagate and legitimate a culture of militancy and induce loyalty in the target audience.

6.1.4. *At Your Service Anṣār al-Shari'a*

Poetry is deployed as a tool to interact not only between subordinates within the same group but also between DĀ'ISH and other jihadist groups. Group dynamics, including new affiliations, are communicated through the poetic platform. The poem entitled *At your Service, Supporters of Shari'a* discusses the intra-group relations between DĀ'ISH and a Salafist-jihadist group known as 'The Supporters of Shari'a,' which is predominantly active in Tunisia, Libya, Mali, and Mauritania. This poem is composed in *kāmil* metre and follows the *rā* monorhyme. It was circulated on social media, accompanied by a graphic form.³⁶ Parts of its verses feature in a political pamphlet written about the situation in Tunisia,³⁷ while the remaining verses resurface in an elegy dedicated to Rāghib al-Ḥannāshi.³⁸

34 See section 3.2.1.4.

35 See also Badawi, Carter, and Gully, *Modern Written Arabic*, 60.

36 See Appendix B.4.

37 Aḥlām al-Naṣr, "Tūnis, balā' wa-ṣumūd," *Al-Sumoud Media*, accessed October 10, 2018, <https://ia601503.us.archive.org/5/items/tunus>.

38 See DAN, 64–5.

1. لَبَّيْكَ أَنْصَارَ الشَّرِيعَةِ؛ إِنَّا
 2. لَمْ نَنْسَ فُرْسَانَ الْبُطُولَةِ إِنَّمَا
 3. فِي تُونِسَ الْعَرَاءِ أَلْفُ حِكَايَةٍ
 4. قَدْ عَاتَتْ فِيهَا الظَّالِمُونَ وَأَجْمَعُوا
 5. وَتَمَسَّكُوا حَتَّى تَمَكَّنَ رَأْسُهُمْ
 6. قَدْ جَامَلَ الطُّغْيَانَ وَالْإِفْسَادَ، بَلْ
 7. لَمْ يُرْسِ شِرْعَةَ رَبِّنَا فِي حُكْمِهِ
 8. لَبَّى الْأَعَادِي بِالْجِرَائِمِ، لَمْ يَكُنْ
 9. قَهْرَ الْأَبَاةِ بِخِسَّةٍ فِيهَا الْأَذَى
 10. مَنَعَ النَّقَابَ، أَبَاحَ كُفْرًا مُلْجِدًا
 11. يُتَوَسَّلَ الرِّضْوَانَ مِنْ كُفْرِ الْعَدَا!!
 12. يَنْمَسَحُ الْمَسْحَ الدَّلِيلَ بِكَافِرٍ
 13. لِكَانَ مَسَاقًا قَدْ تَخَبَّطَ عَقْلُهُ!
 14. يَا رَبِّ خَلِّصْ تُونِسًا مِنْ شَرِّهِ
 15. إِخْوَانُنَا يَشْكُونَ حَالًا بَانِسًا
 16. فَهُوَ النَّعَامُ أَمَامَ جُرْمِ عَدُونَا
 17. تَبَّتْ يَدَاؤُهُ وَلَنْ يَطُولَ ظِلَامُهُ
 18. أَبْطَلْنَا أَنْصَارَ شِرْعَةَ رَبِّنَا
 19. وَاللَّهِ بِحِمِيكُمُ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ مَدَى
 20. وَيَزُولَ كَيْدَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ وَجَمْعُهُمْ
- لَمْ نَنْسَ جُرْحَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْأَحْمَرَا
 تَزْدَادُ فِينَا النَّارُ عَزْمًا مُجَمَّرَا
 تُدْمِي فُوَادَ الْمُخْلِصِينَ الْأَخْضَرَا
 كَيْدًا خَبِيثًا مُدْلِهِمَا أَبْخَرَا
 مِنْ حُكْمِ تُونِسَ فَانْبِرَى مَتَبَخَّرَا
 كَانَ الْفَسَادَ بَعَيْنِهِ مُتَجَبَّرَا
 بَلْ كَانَ سَوَاطِئَ دَامِيًا مُسْتَنْسِرَا
 إِلَّا عَيْنَا لِلظُّلُومِ وَمُخْبِرَا
 قَتَلَ الْبِوَاسِلَ وَالْمَعَانِي الْأَطْهَرَا
 فَالْحَالُ أَمْسَى مَوْلَمًا مُتَكَبَّرَا
 أَتْرَاهُ مَجْنُونًا؟! أَجِيبُوا يَا تُرَى!
 مَتَأَسَّلَمَ هَيْهَاتَ يَفْقَهُ أَوْ يَرَى!
 وَكَأَنَّهُ تَمَلَّ أَحَاقَ بِهِ الْكِرَى!
 أَنْتَ الْعَالِمُ بِمَا يَدُورُ وَمَا جَرَى
 أَوْهُ خَلَّفَ قِيُودَهُ أَسَدُ الشَّرَى!
 أَسَدٌ عَلَى مَنْ بِالشَّرِيعَةِ قَدْ سَرَى
 فَالْحَقُّ يَبْقَى أَلْبَجَا بَلْ أَنْوَرَا
 نُوَدُّوا عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ مَا بَيْنَ الْوَرَى
 لِنُكُونَ رَايَتِكُمْ عَلَى شَمِّ الدَّرَى
 وَيُؤَوِّبُ فِي ذُلِّ كَنْيَبِ مُجَبَّرَا

1. At your service, Anṣār al-Sharī'a,
we did not forget the red injury of the Muslims,
2. We did not forget the knights of bravery,
on the contrary, the fire increases inside us with determination,
3. About esteemed Tunisia [we hear] a thousand stories,
about the bleeding hearts of the faithful ones,
4. In which the oppressors caused havoc, and they agreed together about
the harmful, arrogant and bad breath of deception,
5. They pretended to adhere until their head
was able to rule Tunisia and became arrogant,
6. Indeed, not only was he courteous to tyranny and corruption,
he was himself corrupt and tyrannical,
7. He did not base his ruling on the law of our Lord,
instead, he was a bloody scourge becoming eagle-like,
8. He responded to the enemies with the crimes,
he was not more than eyes and an informant for the oppressor,
9. He conquered the brave [ones] by vileness and multiple offences,
he killed the fearless [ones] and the meanings of the virtuous,
10. He prohibited the headscarf; he allowed unbelief and heresy,
then the situation became grievous and disturbing,
11. He demanded satisfaction from the unbelieving enemies,
Is he insane? Answer me!

12. The despicable monstrosity wiped the unbeliever,
pretending to be a Muslim; how far away! He does not know, and he does not see,
13. As if this madness disturbed his brain!
as though he is drunk and in deep slumber,
14. O Lord save Tunisia from his evilness,
you are the All-Knowledgeable of what is happening and what has happened,
15. Our brothers who are complaining about a miserable condition,
the persevering lion gave refuge to him by putting him behind bars,
16. He is the ostrich when faced with crimes of our enemies,
[but] a lion against those who apply the Shari‘a,
17. May his hands be ruined and his oppression short-lived,
because the truth remains bright and illuminating,
18. Our heroes, the supporters of our Lord’s Shari‘a,
[are the ones who] defend Islam from among the humankind,
19. May God protect you and make you victorious for a long time
so that your flag will be [flying] at the highest peak,
20. The deception of the criminals and their crowd disappears,
and he will return [to where he was] forcibly in humiliation and grievance.

The message of the poem is cemented in the here-and-now. The poem makes references to current affairs to establish relevance in the day-to-day issues faced by the Tunisians. The jihadist narrative appeals to a populace whose identity is rooted in a history of shared suffering and political injustices. The opening verses establish a link between DĀ‘ISH and the addressed by referring to the pain through the generic expressions *jurh al-muslimīna al-aḥmar* (the ‘red injury of the Muslims,’ v. 1), and *fursān al-buṭūla* (‘the knights of bravery,’ v. 2). The struggles of Anṣār al-Shari‘a are generalized as the collective struggle of the Muslim community, thereby portraying the Salafi-cum-jihadist group as part of mainstream Islamic culture. Pain is transformed symbolically into a source of power; the red injuries of the Muslim populace mentioned in the first verse are turned into a fire in the second verse.

The poem moves swiftly to blaming Tunisia’s former president Zayn al-‘Abidīn b. ‘Alī (1987–2011) for the intensified pain experienced in the country. The poem identifies the addressed through antonomasia, which means that the lampooned is not identified by his proper name, but through commonly associated characteristics which are essential from the DĀ‘ISH viewpoint. This rhetorical device is mobilized to dehumanize the former president, to garner support for out-group aggression, and to goad Anṣār al-Shari‘a into fighting against the ruling government. ‘Abidīn b. ‘Alī is described as ‘arrogant’ (v. 5), ‘corrupt’ (v. 6), ‘tyrannical’ (v. 6), ‘insane’ (v. 11), and ‘pretending to be a Muslim’ (v. 12). He also stands accused of collaborating with the West by serving as their ‘informant’ (*mukhbīr*, v. 8), and serving as ‘eyes for the oppressor’ (*‘aynān li-l-ẓulūmi*, v. 8). In trying to depict the ruler as unfit to rule, the poem casts doubt on the legitimacy of the ruler. His policies are also scrutinized; he is criticized for supporting

unbelief and heresy (v. 10) by not applying Shari'a (v. 7), and for prohibiting the veil (*mana'a al-niqāb*, v. 10).³⁹

The necessity to enforce an illegitimate and oppressive group like Anṣār al-Shari'a takes its cue from an iconic recourse to pseudo-religious phraseology and pent-up emotional language. There is a shift from sorrowful to an optimistic mood from verse 14 onwards. The verses generate a sense of hope and promise that the situation would change for the better if Tunisians place their trust in Islam. The poem maximizes the appeal by framing Anṣār al-Shari'a as 'defenders of Islam' (*dhawdū 'an al-islām*, v. 18). Likewise, the poem entails generic and ambiguous statements with pseudo-religious overtones, which serve as guiding wisdom for the recipients such as 'truth remains bright and illuminating' (*fa-l-ḥaqqu yabqā ablaḥan bal anwārā*, v. 17). This mixture of different elements serves as a typical example of how DĀ'ISH manages to win over the hearts and minds transnationally through the exploitation of collective suffering and the demonization of political leaders. Versified messages shape the audiences' judgment and exacerbate their anger towards the out-group, heightening emotions that favour the jihadist cause.

6.1.5. To al-Bayḍā'

<p>عَلَىٰ إِعْمَالِهَا سَيْفَ السَّرَايَا نُقِطِعُ جَذَرَ شِرْكٍ لِلْخَزَايَا تُعْشَعِشُ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْبَلَايَا عَنْ الْغَايَاتِ وَاتَّضَحَّتْ خَبَايَا تَعَجَّلْ أَسْدُنَا نَحَرَ الضَّحَايَا فَرَاخُوا يُرْسِلُونَ لَنَا الْمَطَايَا يُحَاصِرُ جَمْعُنَا كُلَّ الزَّوَايَا نُقِطِعُ كُفْرَكُمْ مِمَّا التَّنْظَايَا تَسْوَسُ بِشَرِّعِهِ كُلَّ الْبِرَايَا</p>	<p>1. إِلَى الْبَيْضَاءِ مَوْفُورُ التَّحَايَا 2. نُجَرِّدُهَا مِنَ الْأَعْمَادِ حَتَّى 3. أَقَامُوا بَيْنَ أَظْهَرِنَا زَمَانًا 4. أَرَادَ اللَّهُ تَطْهِيرًا فَجَلَّوْا 5. إِذَا مَا الدِّينُ جَابَهُ كُفِرَ قَوْمٌ 6. يَظُنُّ كِلَابُهُمْ أَنَّا ضِعَافٌ 7. وَمَا عَلِمَتْ كِلَابُهُمْ بَأَنَّا 8. قَرِيبًا تَنْزِلُونَ لِأَرْضِ قَوْمِي 9. قَمُوتُوا إِنَّ "بَاقِيَةَ" أَنتُكُمْ</p>
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1. To al-Bayḍā' heartfelt congratulations,
for its operations [by] the sword of the squadrons,
2. Unsheathing it from the scabbard,
to cut into pieces the roots of the disgraceful polytheism,
3. They lived in our midst for a long time,
in their hearts, they nested a calamity,
4. God wanted to cleanse, so they were beyond
their goals, and what was hidden became apparent,

39 In 1981, the former Tunisian President Habib Bourgiba ratified the law, which effectively banned Tunisian women from wearing the headscarf in state offices. In 1985, this law was further expanded to include educational establishments. During Ben 'Alī's regime, the government began cracking down on females wearing the hijab, enforcing the laws set by his predecessor.

5. When religion responded to the nation of unbelief,
our lions hurried to slaughter the sacrificial victim,
6. Their dogs think that we are weak,
so they sent us riding beasts,
7. Their dogs did not know that
our people surround all the corners,
8. Soon, you will leave the land of my nation,
your unbelief cut deeply into the shinbone,⁴⁰
9. So die! Indeed, “remaining” advanced towards you,
governing all of humanity with its Islamic law.

This short poem produced by al-Battār media productions depicts the exploitation of poetry as a tool to spread current news about recent events and battles in the jihadist milieu. These verses of congratulations (*tahni'a*) composed on March 7th, 2017, celebrate the victory of DĀ'ISH against the Ḥūthis in the province known as al-Bayḏā' in Yemen. The group's success is projected through its dichotomized language coated in typical jihadist rhetoric, culminating in aggression towards the out-group (v. 8–9). The out-group is repeatedly dehumanized through animal epithets ('dogs,' v. 6–7). The killing of the Ḥūthis is coated in Islamic terminology, projecting it as though it was divinely ordained. The killing is depicted as God's intervention for purification (*arāda allāhu taḥīran*, v. 4). Likewise, the fighting against the Ḥūthis is portrayed in generic and dichotomized terms, namely, Islam against the 'nation of apostasy' (*kufr qawmin*, v. 5). This polarized worldview facilitates communication by simplifying a complex political landscape for everyone to understand. Discursively, the dehumanization of a perceived enemy and pseudo-Islamic allusions intend to deactivate self-inhibiting norms against murder. Apart from serving as a public relations outlet for DĀ'ISH, these verses strengthen in-group relations and portray DĀ'ISH as an invincible organization, thereby reinstating its authority and legitimacy.

6.1.6. *The Lands of Truth are My Home*

Versified messages are sometimes constructed as emulation or formal retort verses known in Arabic as *mu'āraḏa*. Historically, retort verses date back to pre- or early Islamic times and gained more popularity from the Abbasid period onwards.⁴¹ Emulation formed a significant focus of critical endeavour during the tenth-century waning of the

40 The term *shazīyya* (pl. *shazāyā*), which I translate as the shinbone, can also refer to the splinter or shrapnel.

41 The literary emulation enjoyed popularity in the outskirts of the Arabo-Persian world, namely in Iran, Moghul India, and Spain. See also Geert Jan Van Gelder, *Classical Arabic Literature: A library of Arabic Literature Anthology* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 15; Paul E. Losensky, “The Allusive Field of Drunkenness’: Three Safavid-Moghul responses to a Lyric by Bābā Fighānī,” in Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *Reorientations: Arabic and Persian Poetry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 227–62.

Cordoban Caliphate.⁴² Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī (d. 1030 CE), who was one of the most famous court poets of Muslim Spain, composed a *mu'āraḍa* by appropriating an earlier famous classic produced by al-Mutanabbī (d. 965 CE). Al-Mutanabbī's celebration of military victory was inverted into a wedding feast to defend the patron's peaceful diplomacy with Christian neighbours in al-Qastallī's *qaṣīda*.⁴³ More recently, neo-classical poets such as Aḥmad Shawqī (d. 1932) also availed themselves extensively of this technique.⁴⁴ The term *mu'āraḍa* means 'opposition or confrontation,' and it often entails an agonistic element,⁴⁵ although it does not focus primarily on attacking the model of the poet.⁴⁶ The approach to direct literary influence originally meant the response to a former model is constructed in the same metre and rhyme.⁴⁷ Modern literary critics consider the thematic contrafact of an original poem as a requirement for a poem to be considered as a complete *mu'āraḍa*. If any of the three elements (metre, rhyme, theme) is missing, the *mu'āraḍa* is deemed to be incomplete (*nāqis*).⁴⁸ In the jihadist literary circle, an example of a *mu'āraḍa* is a poem composed by the female poet of DĀ'ISH Aḥlām al-Naṣr entitled *The Lands of Truth are my Home*:⁴⁹

بَنُو (الإِسْلَامِ) إِخْوَانِي	1. بِلَادُ (الْحَقِّ) أَوْطَانِي
بِإِنصَافٍ وَإِحْسَانٍ	2. إِلَهُ الْكَوْنِ يَا مُرْنَا
وَتَوْجِيهَاتٍ قُرْآنِي	3. وَلَأَنِّي وَفَّقَ إِيْمَانِي
لِقَطَطَانٍ وَعَدْنَانٍ	4. وَلَيْسَ تَعْصُبِي يَوْمًا
كَذَا فِي أَرْضِ بَلْقَانٍ	5. أَحِي فِي الْهِنْدِ أَنْتَ أَحِي
بِلَادُ الْعَرَبِ شَيْشَانٍ ⁵⁰	6. وَفِي الْأَهْوَاِزِ وَالْأَقْصَى،
وَنَادَتْ أَرْضُ أَفْغَانٍ	7. إِذَا صَاخَتْ فِلِسْطِينَ

42 For other examples of emulation, see also Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, "The *Qaṣīdah* and the Poetics of Ceremony: Three 'īd Panegyrics to the Cordoban Caliphate," in *Languages of Power in Islamic Spain*, ed. Ross Brann (Maryland: CDL Press, 1997): 1–48.

43 See also Beatrice Gruendler, "Originality in Imitation: Two *Mu'āraḍas* by Ibn Darrāj Al-Qastallī," *Al-Qantara: Revista de estudios árabes* 29, no. 2 (2008): 437–65.

44 See also Geert J. H. Van Gelder, "Mu'āraḍa," in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, eds. Julie Scott Meisami, and Paul Starkey, vol. 2 (London: Routledge, 1998), 534.

45 The term *'āraḍa*, from which the verbal noun of *mu'āradā* is derived, means "to offer resistance, to contradict, to oppose, to compare." See WEHR, '-r-d.

46 For a thorough discussion on the relationship between *mu'āraḍa* and *naqā'id*, see also Matitiahu Peled, "On the Concept of Literary Influence in Classical Arabic Criticism," *Israel Oriental Studies* 11 (1991), 4–6; Wagner, *Grundzüge der Klassischen Arabischen Dichtung, Band II: Die Altarabische Dichtung in Islamischer Zeit*, 31–4.

47 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 CE) considered *mu'āraḍa* as a stylistic device that imitates or even emulates a previous widely known text with the general intention of surpassing it. See also Arie Schippers, "Mu'āraḍa," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* eds. C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W. Heinrichs, and C. Pellat (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 260–1; Peled, "On the Concept of Literary Influence in Classical Arabic Criticism," 37–46.

48 See also Muḥammad Maḥmūd Qāsim Nawfal, *Tārīkh al-mu'āraḍāt fī al-shi'r al-'arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-furqān, 1983), 13.

49 See DAN, 43.

50 The term *Aḥwāz* is misspelt in the original as *Aḥwāz*.

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| وَأَسَاءَ وَقَطَّانِي: | 8. وَعَانَتْ كوسوفو ظَلَمًا |
| يَتُوقُ لِنَصْرَةِ الْعَانِي | 9. رَنَا قَلْبِي لَهُمْ شَغَفًا |
| بِهَذَا الدِّينِ أَوْصَانِي | 10. وَمَا فَرَّقْتُ بَيْنَهُمْ |
| يَقُومُ عَلَى الْهُدَى الْهَانِي | 11. فَإِنَّا كُلُّنَا جَسَدٌ |
| وَيَمْسُخُ دَمَهُ الْقَانِي | 12. يُكْفِكِفُ مِنْ مَوَاجِعِهِ |
| إِلَى لُغَةٍ وَأَلْوَانِ | 13. فَلَا عِرْقٌ يُفَرِّقُنَا |
| عَلَى التَّقْوَى بِإِيمَانِ | 14. كِتَابُ اللَّهِ يُجْمَعُنَا |
| لِنَشْتَاتِيَتْ وَعُدُونِ | 15. لِنَحْسَأَ كُلُّ أَمَالٍ |
| بِرُعْمِ جُنُودِ شَيْطَانِ | 16. سَنَبَقِي إِخْوَةً دَوْمًا |

1. The lands (of truth) are my home,
the sons (of Islam) are my brothers,
2. God of the universe summons us,
to justice and goodness,
3. My loyalty conforms with my faith,
and the guidance of the Qur'an,
4. My solidarity is not with
al-Qaḥṭān and 'Adnān for a day,⁵¹
5. My brother in India, you are my brother
as [are you, my brothers] in the Balkans,
6. And in Ahwāz and Aqṣā,⁵²
in the Arab land of Chechnya,
7. When Palestine cried out in pain,
and when Afghanistan called out,
8. When Kosovo,
Assam and Pattani suffered injustice,
9. My heart went out with love to them,
longing to help those suffering,
10. I did not make a difference among them,
this is what religion commended me,
11. Indeed, we are all one body,
that rises in the right way,
12. Restraining from hurting it,
and wiping its scarlet blood,
13. No provenance divides us,
no language and colour [of skin],
14. The book of God unites us,
with loyalty in faith,

51 According to Arabic genealogy, 'Adnān is the traditional ancestor of the 'Adnanite Arabs of Northern, Western, and Central Arabia, often contrasted with the Qaḥṭānite Arabs of Southern Arabia who descended from Qaḥṭān.

52 The term *Aqṣā* refers to the third holiest site in Islam located in the Old City of Jerusalem in Palestine.

15. [in order] to deflate any hopes
to scatter or attack us,
16. We will remain brothers forever,
despite the armies of Satan.

These verses contrafact a poem constructed in 1960s by the Syrian politician and poet Fakhri al-Barūdi (d. 1966) called *The Arab Lands are my Home*. Al-Barūdi's poem became the unofficially recognized anthem in the Arab world, propagating a pan-Arabist worldview.⁵³ The pairing of the two poems is facilitated by a similar thematic narrative, identical end-rhyme (*ni* or *nī*) and metre (*wāfir*). Additionally, the poems follow the same formulaic expression *bilādu l-...awṭānī* in the first verse. This phrase became synonymous with al-Barūdi's pan-Arab nationalist poem.

Al-Barūdi's poem was appropriated by various movements in the Arab-Islamic world, including the pan-Islamist current.⁵⁴ Al-Barūdi's call for Arab unity resonated with a younger generation of singers who continued the tradition of performing unity songs. However, the intention of chanting al-Barūdi's poem changed with the emergence of the uprisings in the Arab world in 2011. The poem helped Arab demonstrators recall their former glory and create a stark contrast with their reality. Al-Barūdi's poem is evoked in one of Hishām al-Jakh's controversial performances of poetry entitled *The Visa (al-ta'shīra)* as part of the talent show 'A Prince of the Poets,' in which al-Jakh also criticizes the ineffectiveness and disunity among Arab leaders.⁵⁵

1. بلادُ العُربِ أوطاني	1. مِنَ الشَّامِ لِبَغْدَادِ
2. وَمِنْ نَجْدٍ إِلَى يَمَنِ	2. إِلَى مِصْرَ فَتَطْوَانِ
3. فَلَا حَدَّ يُبَاعِدُنَا	3. وَلَا دِينَ يُفَرِّقُنَا
4. لِسَانِ الضَّادِ يُجَمِّعُنَا	4. بِغَسَّانٍ وَعَدْنَانِ
5. لَنَا مَدَنِيَّةٌ سَلَفَتْ	5. سُنَّجِيهَا وَإِنْ دُثِرَتْ
6. وَلَوْ فِي وَجْهِنَا وَقَفَتْ	6. دُهَاهُ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجَانِ
7. فَهَبُّوا يَا بَنِي قَوْمِي	7. إِلَى الْعُلَبَاءِ بِالْعِلْمِ
8. وَغَنُّوا يَا بَنِي أُمِّي	8. بِلَادِ الْعُربِ أوطاني

1. The Arab lands are my home,
from Damascus to Baghdad,
2. And from Najd to Yemen
to Egypt and Tetouan,

53 Fakhri al-Barūdi was a politician and a Member of Parliament. He is considered as a leading figure in the struggle for independence and one of the founding fathers of the Syrian Republic.

54 For a rendition of the chant 'The people of Islam are my Brothers' (*banū l-islām ikhwānī*), see also "Nashīd al-islām ikhwānī li-l-ṣaff al-sādis," *YouTube* video, August 20, 2015, accessed June 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIKq7PS0IQ>.

55 See also "Hishām al-Jakh al-Ta'shīra," *YouTube* video, January 12, 2011, accessed June 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hNtCgkLKaM>.

3. For no border distances us,
no religion divides us,
4. The language of Dād unites us,
Ghassān and ‘Adnān,
5. We have a civilization that went before,
we will revive it if it has been effaced,
6. Even if against us stood
the crafty humans and jinn,
7. Rise sons of my nation
with the aid of knowledge to the high [goals],
8. O sons of my Mother, sing:
the Arab lands are my home.

The *mu‘araḍa* composed by Aḥlām al-Naṣr depicts the group’s political narrative as an antidote to the pan-Arab nationalist impulses in the Arab world. In a direct critique to the failure of the Arab nationalist leaders, al-Naṣr’s *mu‘araḍa* reconfigures al-Barūdī’s poem following the same *wāfir* metre and end-rhyme *-ānī*, but with several deliberate alterations. The first transformation appears in the first verse, and it deals with the notion of homeland. The genesis of home (*waṭan*) has been the subject of an intensive historical, literary, and political inquiry among Arabists and political scientists alike. In classical Arabic literature, the historical development of the poetic motif of *al-ḥanīn ilā l-waṭan* could be traced back to pre-modern times. The physicality of home in remote times, however, “is scarcely described in the earliest poetry, – it has no shape or form.”⁵⁶ The understanding of *waṭan* as a ‘nation-state’ is only a modern concept introduced in modern Arabic literature. This notion depicts a closely-knit relationship between the quest for land – a physical geographical territory that one can call home – and the political undercurrents that have taken place in the Arab region. The absence of homeland, as portrayed in modern Arabic literature, developed into further themes related to leaving, travel, and exile.⁵⁷ Writers and poets give multiple reasons for leaving their home, including humiliation, seeking God’s ubiquitous grace, finding a place in which one enjoys harmony, respect and justice, and exercising one’s rights and opportunities as ‘a free agent’ (*ḥurr*).⁵⁸

Al-Naṣr’s poem latches onto a leading concept in the Arab nationalist ideology, which depicts love for one’s country, and redefines it to befit the jihadist narrative. The deliberate choice of ‘homelands’ (*awṭān*) in the plural form reinforces the outright rejec-

56 Beatrice Gruendler highlights the ambivalence towards the term *waṭan* in classical literature and how the same idea can have contradictory interpretations, both rooted in its basic principles. Beatrice Gruendler, “*al-ḥanīn ilā l-waṭan* and its Alternatives in Classical Arabic Literature,” in *Classical Arabic Literature in Representations and Visions of Homeland in Modern Arabic Literature*, eds. Sebastian Guenther, and Stephan Milich (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 2016), 17.

57 Gruendler, “*al-ḥanīn ilā l-waṭan* and its Alternatives in Classical Arabic Literature,” 10.

58 Gruendler, “*al-ḥanīn ilā l-waṭan* and its Alternatives in Classical Arabic Literature,” 10–3.

tion of the Western-imposed nation-state ideology.⁵⁹ Al-Naṣr's use of the plural *awṭān* follows related but distinct strategies in the nation-building process undertaken by DĀ'ISH. The opening lines of the two poems mirror these strategies:

bilādu l-'urbi awṭānī *min al-shāmi li-baghdāni* (al-Barūdī, v. 1)
bilādu l-ḥaqqi awṭānī *banū (l-islāmi) ikhwānī* (al-Naṣr, v.1)

In al-Barūdī's poem, the homelands are restricted to a spatial location (*al-'urb*), whereas in al-Naṣr's poem, the homelands are identified by the pseudo-Islamic term *al-ḥaqq*. In ancient religious wisdom, Islam is referred to as the foundation of truth (*al-ḥaqq*).⁶⁰ The term *al-ḥaqq* is defined as a claim to 'the divinely revealed truth,'⁶¹ and it evokes one of the ninety-nine attributes of God. In jihadist rhetoric, *al-ḥaqq* is semantically polyvalent; in this case, it refers to DĀ'ISH controlled territories. Unlike al-Barūdī's poem, which restricts the homelands to Arab countries, *awṭān* as perceived in the jihadist narrative implies that the jihadist identity is not connected to one specific country, but to a particular faith (*banū l-islāmi*, v. 1). Unlike the pan-Arab nationalist identity, which delimits group membership to the Arab countries, the jihadist narrative does not delineate its perceived caliphal location. The ambivalence of the term *bilādu l-ḥaqqi* is strategically formulated in a manner that is sufficiently vague to admit a variety of possible interpretations. Strategic ambiguity of the caliphal terrain provides a sense of flexibility, which allows DĀ'ISH to redefine countries and geographical areas as part of its territory, continually adjusting its territory according to the gains and losses of the organization.

Another distinction between al-Barūdī's poem and al-Naṣr's *mu'āraḍa* is based on the projection of unity and group identity. The pan-Arab nationalist narrative rallies its supporters behind a unifying Arabic language (*lisānu ḍādi yujma'unā*, v. 4). The term *lisānu l-ḍād*, which was used by the pan-Arabist movement to refer to the Arabs as "the speakers with the letter Ḍ," dates back centuries and appears in the verses of famous classical poets such as al-Mutanabbi (d. 965 CE).⁶² *Lisānu l-ḍād* signals the distinctiveness of the language because the emphatic *ḍ* is believed to be a unique feature of the Arabic language. The term also serves as a new label given to the Arabic language, which is not derived from the name of the people who initially spoke it but from the articulatory difficulty of a particular phoneme.⁶³ The phoneme /ḍ/ "becomes an authenticating emblem, a border guard and a defining symbol of a group identity, signaling...who does or does not belong to the in-group."⁶⁴ The phrase *lisānu ḍādi yujma'unā*

59 DĀ'ISH has spectacularly visualised this outright rejection by propaganda material, showing the burning of passports, the destruction of the Iraq–Syria border, the emphasis on Islamic law, and the creation of a new currency.

60 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 132–5.

61 The term *al-ḥaqq* is also one of the ninety-nine names attributed to God in Islam.

62 Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology*, 59.

63 For a discussion on the use and function of *luḡathu l-ḍādi* historically, see also Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology*, 59ff.

64 Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology*, 59.

(‘the language of Dād unites us,’ v. 4) in al-Barūdī’s poem is contrafacted with *kitābu llāhi yujma’unā* (‘the book of God unites us,’ v. 14).

In the jihadist trajectory, Islam is projected as the primary source of identification and unification. In stark contrast to al-Barūdī’s claim that neither borders nor religions can divide the Arabic speakers (v. 3), al-Naṣr’s poem states that neither provenance, nor language, or skin colour can divide Muslims (v. 13). The *mu’āraḍa* proposes the ascendance of Islam as a primary source of political organization and moral authority. The group’s attempt to build and maintain bonds of brotherhood based on Islam alludes to the Qur’an.⁶⁵ Historically speaking, Islam gave men an identity by which to define themselves in regard to others.⁶⁶ The bond of Islamic brotherhood manages to transcend blood relationships, and creatures are linked by way of servitude to their creator. This bond is reinstated in al-Naṣr’s *mu’āraḍa* by the metonymic body metaphor (v. 11), in which Muslims around the world are regarded as one body, collectively moving on the ‘right path.’⁶⁷ Additionally, the poetess claims that whoever is committed to Islam is part of a united body that stands in the ‘right guidance’ (*al-hudā al-hānī*, v. 11).

Islam is a generic term, which entails multiple denominations and religious ideologies that do not necessarily conform to the Salafī-jihadist worldview. Islam is weaponized as a source of identification, which distinguishes the jihadist group and distances it from Western social and political concepts. The projection of Islam as the main criterium for group identity is intended to make the jihadist narrative seem part of the authentic mainstream Islamic culture and not a radical sub-culture. Unlike the pan-Arab nationalist identity, which is exclusive to Arabic speakers in the Arab world, al-Naṣr’s poem projects the jihadist group membership as inclusive for whoever is willing to convert to Islam. A jihadist identity based on the Qur’an and loyalty, irrespective of differences in ethnicity, language, or skin colour (v. 13–14), demonstrates a commitment to a particular ideological project which serves as an antidote to Arab nationalism. These examples demonstrate how pseudo-religious terms and associations are manipulated to implement the jihadist worldview upon the populace living in DĀ’ISH territories.

Another technique, which is deployed excessively in DĀ’ISH propaganda to manipulate the audience systematically, consists of mobilizing emotionally charged rhetoric. Messages embedded with intense emotions and traumas make the recipients vulnerable to manipulation.⁶⁸ The jihadist identity, which DĀ’ISH propagandists strive to push forward, reaches out to those whose identity is rooted in shared suffering and collective

65 “You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred.” See Qur’an, 58:22.

66 Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber and Faber, 2013), 57.

67 The body metaphor is common in Islamic rhetoric. One of the wise sayings attributed to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 661 CE) is “religion is a body; its head is knowledge of God, its spine obedience to him.” See Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 13.

68 Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” 375.

yearning for victory following decades of failure and defeat. The jihadist identity is “intensely parochial and seemingly universal, linking Muslims to struggles across the world, from Afghanistan to Palestine, and providing the illusion of being part of a global movement.”⁶⁹

The allusion to a shared history of invasion, wars and denied states in India, the Balkans, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Palestine, Kosovo, and other stateless nations such as Ahwāz,⁷⁰ Pattānī,⁷¹ and Assam⁷² (v. 6–8) is exploited to garner support and to attract recruits. For members of historically opposed or marginalized groups, the narrative of struggle prompts identification with a potential organization by showing them who or what they may become. The poetess builds upon the woes of various societies of discriminated Muslims to propagate the ideology and, by extension, the identity of DĀ’ISH. The representation of the jihadist identity as inclusive and non-discriminatory (v. 13–14), is a strategic tactic to widen the group’s appeal among communities that have felt left out by the global Muslim and Arab communities. By linking suffering in Iraq to other Muslim conflicts, al-Naṣr seems to suggest that the struggle in Iraq is the central battlefield in which one has to fight the war against the perceived enemies of Islam. The projection of the jihadist struggle as a universal conflict for Muslims in general appeals to the emotional need for unity and solidarity among Muslims. Besides, allusions to these conflicts and struggles play an essential role in legitimating DĀ’ISH. The process of legitimation takes place by igniting unresolved conflicts of discrimination to disguise and justify oppressive and violent actions carried out by DĀ’ISH. Emotions are thereby exploited as a tool of coercive control intended to generate coercion by making individuals cling irrationally, emotionally, and passionately to a course of action.

In its entirety, al-Naṣr’s poem functions as a discursive tool to construct and negotiate group identities and relationships in the jihadist context. The poem renegotiates power relations between the Arab nationalist discourse and the ideological worldview of DĀ’ISH. Al-Naṣr engages in the process of identification by appropriating a previous

69 Kenan Malik, “A Search for Identity Draws Jihadis to the Horrors of Isis,” *The Guardian*, February 28, 2015, accessed January 26, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/01/what-draws-jihadis-to-isis-identity-alienation>.

70 Ahwāz is a predominantly Arab city in the southwest of Iran that was devastated in the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and subsequently declined into a village. The National Liberation Movement of Ahwāz is an Arab Nationalist and Separatist organization whose goal is to create an independent state.

71 Pattānī, one of the four provinces of Thailand, is home to a Malay Muslim majority and is facing an increasing rise in neo-Jihadists. Local jihadist insurgent groups are also attempting to create an Islamic *Umma*. See also Virginie Andre, “‘NeoJihadism’ and YouTube: Patani Militant Propaganda Dissemination and Radicalization,” *Asian Security* 8, no. 1 (2012): 27–53.

72 Assam is a state in North-East India with a fast-growing Muslim population currently standing at 10.7 million. The region was also targeted by jihadist groups to recruit DĀ’ISH sympathisers. See also Guwahati, “Assam Police Alerted over Fear of Islamic State Recruiting Youth,” *Hindustantimes*, March 6, 2017, accessed June 11, 2018, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/assam-police-alerted-over-fear-of-islamic-state-recruiting-youth/story-hiZOW5S8Khcacg41rxUG9J.html>.

poem, and more importantly, a former ideology, and identity. The *mu'āraḍa* is involved in a conscious hegemonic struggle, which aligns DĀ'ISH worldview as an adversary to the marginalization, political shortcomings, and societal ills created by the Arab nationalist ideology. The appropriation presents its audience with an antagonistic worldview that is precisely intended to offer an alternative identity vis-à-vis a competing discourse.

6.1.7. *Indeed, Whenever the Rulers Deviate, They Disappear*

The poem entitled *Indeed, Whenever the Rulers Deviate, They Disappear* positions DĀ'ISH as an anti-establishment movement by launching an attack on five officially recognized leaders in the Arab or Islamic world. The poem, which is versified in *kāmil* metre, is of particular interest to our analysis because of its relevance to the protests code-named Arab Spring uprisings happening at the time of composition. References in the poem suggest that it was composed during the socio-political protests unfolding in the Arab world between the end of 2011 and 2014 when the collection of poetry was published.⁷³ These references consist of the assassination of Libyan leader Gaddafi (1961–2011), the ousting of Tunisia's President Zayn al-'Abidīn b. 'Alī (1987–2011), the anti-Asad protests in Syria, the Yemeni uprising, and the Egyptian Revolution leading to the toppling of the long-time President Ḥusnī Mubārak (1981–2011). The poetess exploits the pain and traumas suffered by Arab and Muslim societies living under repressive regimes to purport DĀ'ISH as the only solution for a better change:

1. Indeed, whenever the rulers deviate, they disappear,
that is a rigorous and rational principle,
2. Obey God [in accordance with what] He wants, for
the only ruling is the rule of God, and it will not deviate,
3. Indeed, people desire an honourable living,
with a ruler who is responsible for their rightful possession,
4. [A ruler who] fears God and who guards His sacred sites,
and who applies the principles without digressing,
5. [A ruler who] gives everyone their rights with fairness,
without distinguishing between the people that are wandering about,
6. He is a ruler who is noble, intelligent, fair,
trustworthy, wise, truthful and honourable,
7. You do not close your eyes when he appears,
[someone who] is concerned with and he dissipates his energy in elevating
the people to a higher place,
8. or [he does not] set out to live a life of plenty and opulence if
poverty and emaciation is destroying his country,
9. He is the affectionate father whose sentiment
is a source of love and indeed of noble origin,

73 This poem is only rendered in translation due to its length. For the Arabic version of the poem, see Appendix A.33, and DAN, 31–3.

10. This authentic president, how much would they vouch for him!
the hearts of Islamic theologians sympathize with him,
11. But the rulers of humankind, O, what sorrow,
they were corrupt, [and this corruption] ascended to ignorance,
12. He may well oppress the countries and their people,
killing the people because he is a deviator,
13. He may well oppose the truth because he is its enemy,
behaving hypocritically towards his adherents because he is an agent,
14. He may well try to deceive us by depriving us of our rightful possession,
renouncing that the sorrow is connected,
15. Those interests generated business for them,
they sided with their interests, no matter [if they had] to be biased,
16. How much did the world suffer from their calamitous torture!
Oppression is evil, annihilating and calamitous,
17. How many smiles disappeared from our homes!
As though we were the ones who put them behind bars as prisoners,
18. The drought attacked our land and our residential zones,
where is the beauty that dresses up the fields?
19. Where is the growth that our prosperity generated?
This is my country; the question is not a matter of secondary importance,
20. This is my home and for its love lived humankind,
so why is the construction in its land paralyzed?
21. Is it prohibited to regain its place
among the countries? What is the justification?
22. Humankind remained patient during deceitful oppression,
and they demanded integrity of conduct, longing for soft ground,
23. They gave them opportunities for improvement, and they hoped
for the best. Indeed, patience with [oppression] is unpleasant,
24. And when the leaders of evilness thought that
they owned the people forever,
25. They increased corruption, and their injustice humiliated humankind
unjustly, amongst it are my people and I am exhausted with thirst,
26. The blaze of the esteemed revolution burnt,
the roaring thundered, and the neighing reverberated,
27. Our revolution sent echoes all around the world,
no, we do not have any path, except for the right one,
28. The truth is our quest, and our practice is the right path,
it is what we need, and it has no substitute,
29. Our Islam upheld the rights and its people,
a grandiose law that is extremely difficult to emulate,
30. It is [abundant] rain for the thirsty ones, and a smile for the disconcerted,
its soldiers are the knights including horses,
31. The corrupt ones, criminals and their group
are rats of unsuccessful and hasty injustice,

32. They reap what they sow, the times of their mischief,
their harvest is despicable as is their craziness,
33. The people of noble deeds cannot endure them anymore,
they are a severe corruption and exemplary punishment,
34. The great revolution was established by our people,
my people are proud, and they are not despicable,
35. This has been the path of the Eternal [God] since the creation of humankind,
for many years and we are all towering:
36. Oppression is death, and a devastating violation,
justice is light that is desired in the darkness,
37. Inform me, O heads of evil,
Are your riches given preference on the day of death?
38. Does the oppression of humankind and defeating it protect you,
or does it speed up your destruction?
39. (Zayn the corrupt) you escaped without reluctance,
He is the path, and there is no other,
40. Ḥusnī: you seem to have thought that this is a novelty,
a remote matter that is not terrifying,
41. You escaped from your excessive shock, perplexed,
may the criminal hands be ruined, O baffled one!
42. Ah, Mu‘ammar, O oppressor of the people [following] the true religion,
hell to your crimes, O ogre!
43. You conquered a people loathing the oppression of its president,
and his stupidity, [behaving] as though he was intoxicated,
44. My Lord brought about your fall because you oppressed Libya,
as you judge, you will be judged, O crazy,
45. (Yemen) was swept away with misguidance, and it was not of little importance,
how unlikely is it for nobility to remain misguided?
46. (Bashar) O Satan of a dark period,
may his hand be ruined because he is despicable,
47. My country suffered perpetually from his subjugation,
and it measured grievances [from which even] the mountains abated,
48. Tragic oppression battled the free [people],
oppression is fierce, O brother, and of evil consequences,
49. Our people were like the prisoners for a long time,
the rule is fire, darkness, and rattle,
50. All the land floats in blood,
its condition is [one of] overflowing lament,
51. All the rights dried out from our land,
the evilness is subjugating, shameless and despicable,
52. The holding capacity of the prolonged sorrow overflowed,
our sadness is lasting and burdensome,
53. When the revolutions of rejection were set in motion,
[the revolutions] asked for rights that could not be delayed,

54. The truth is light, and dignity is a quest
for the people in my home because that is lacking,
55. The young men maintained their ground with determination against your oppression,
with virtues that made their mind perplexed,
56. O my homeland, patience for a prolonged distance,
because oppression, O homeland, is paralyzed,
57. My Syria is a lofty and glorious home,
a grandiose, deeply rooted and graceful country,
58. It witnessed the Islamic conquests of the lofty ancestors,
led by Sayf al-Hudā al-Maslūl,
59. The outstanding God moved our people,
because the people are faithful and glorious,
60. More explicitly, He exalts them to freedom,
without chain[s] and corruption circulating,
61. The most magnificent during the triumph of the homelands appeared
by dawn, composing our dreams and saying:
62. God congratulated you, O people of Syria,
your glory is erect and firmly established,
63. This is the end of the arrogant oppressor,
the people live on, and the regime disappears,
64. This is the end of your oppression, O what good luck
did the [Qur'anic] verses and the revelation bring with it!
65. For the truth is forever, it never disappears,
evilness is ephemeral, and God is a guardian,
66. The tyrants and the crimes were of no use,
no, the glorification and reverence were useless,
67. The future of the obscene proprietors is eternal damnation,
and their rule will be overturned with the guillotines,
68. Praise my Lord, this homeland of mine is free,
the confinement was broken by the fettered young men,
69. So beware, our rulers, of your oppression,
because whenever the rulers deviate, they disappear.

The unfolding analysis of this poem is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the exploitation of tradition as an ancient rationale, which justifies and validates the more profound message of the poem. Selective elements borrowed from and mythologized as part of Islamic history are instrumentalized for their persuasive force. By fostering legends and mythic tales, poetry succeeds in creating patterns of meaning and in contextualizing the jihadist identity. The second part demonstrates how the underlying message shifts swiftly from mobilizing tradition to exploiting the socio-political events taking place in the Arab and Islamic world.

The Islamic Tradition as an Ancient Logic of Argumentation

The deeper message of the poem is transmitted through various discursive strategies, including argumentative fallacies based on Qur'anic intertextualities, and ancient wisdom. The dominant message of this poem is contained in the title, that is, *'inna l-mulūka idhā tajūru tazūlu* ('Indeed, whenever the rulers deviate, they disappear'). The lack of justice is indicated through the verb *jāra*, which means 'he declined, or deviated from the right course' and even 'he acted wrongfully, unjustly, injuriously, or tyrannically.'⁷⁴ The formulaic declaration, which is reinforced by the indicative particle *'inna*, is strategically positioned in the first hemistich and the last hemistich of the poem.⁷⁵ The argument put forward in the formulaic title is known as *argumentum ad consequentiam*, which concludes a hypothesis based on whether the premise leads to desirable or undesirable consequences. Since the desirability of a premise's outcome does not make the proposition true, this argument is regarded as a type of informal fallacy. The *argumentum ad consequentiam* expressed in the first hemistich is equated to 'a rigorous and rational principle' (*ḥukmun ṣārimun ma'qūlu*, v. 1) in the second hemistich. The term *ṣārim*, which is attributed to 'judgment' (*ḥukm*) and translated as 'rigorous,' may also signify 'sharp.' In the jihadist rhetoric, the latter meaning is attributed to the knife.⁷⁶ The semantic ambiguity of *ṣārim* seems to imply that the judgment awaiting those who are unjust is death by the blade or sword. This subtlety foreshadows 'the guillotines' (*al-maqāṣil*, v. 67), awaiting those who deviate, which is mentioned towards the end of the poem. In the corpus of Sunni extremist theology, the term *ṣārim* recalls the book entitled *Kitāb al-ṣārim al-maslūl 'alā shātīm al-rasūl* ('The Unsheathed Sword against whoever insults the Prophet'), which is attributed to the thirteenth-century Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328 CE).

The expression *'inna l-mulūka idhā* resonates with a Qur'anic verse in the chapter of the Ant, which states as follows:

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعْرَءَ أَهْلِهَا آذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

She said, "Indeed kings – when they enter a city, they ruin it and render the honoured of its people humbled. And thus do they do."⁷⁷

This Qur'anic verse reverberates throughout the poem via derivatives based on the key terms *afsadūhā* ('they ruin it'), *a'izza* ('the honoured'), and *adhillā* ('the humbled'). Derivative terms that resurface in the poem include: 'they were corrupt' (*kānū fasādan*, v. 11), 'they increased corruption' (*zādū l-fasāda*, v. 25), 'the corrupt ones' (*al-fāsīdūna*, v. 31), 'the painful corruption' (*al-fasādu l-murr*, v. 33), 'Zayn the corrupt' (*Zayn al-fāsīd*, v. 39), and 'no corruption' (*lā fasāda*, v. 60). The Qur'anic binary pairs

74 See also WEHR, *j-w-r*.

75 Medieval literary critics argued that structurally, the opening and closing verses of a poem carry the most weight. See also KANAZI, 132.

76 One of the more popular DĀ'ISH chants is entitled *ṣalīlu l-ṣawārim* ('the clashing of the swords'). See Appendix A.3.

77 Qur'an, 27:34.

‘pride’ (*a‘izza*) and ‘humiliation’ (*madhalla*)⁷⁸ also feature in derivatives like *dhalīl* (v. 34) or through other diction that shares a similar semantic field like ‘dignity’ (*al-karāma*, v. 3 and 54) and ‘poverty’ (*faqrūn*, in v. 8).⁷⁹

The Qur’anic verse alludes to the Biblical Queen of Sheba, also known as Bilqīs. Bilqīs was a nebulous figure remembered for her legendary voyage to meet Solomon, the King of ancient Israel.⁸⁰ On a superficial level, the Qur’anic verse implied in the poem seems to support and validate the deeper narrative of the poem. The female voice attributed to the Qur’anic verse also concurs with Aḥlām al-Naṣr’s voice. However, references to the Qur’an are made from a vantage point, beneath the deeper level of its context. In the Qur’anic trajectory, Bilqīs’ statement took place at a time when the queen was still a non-believer. The non-believing Bilqīs attacks kings like Solomon for believing in God and ruling with religious principles. The story of Bilqīs, however, develops gradually in the Qur’an to the point when the queen meets Solomon and submits herself to God immediately by converting to Judaism. Upon meeting Solomon, the queen contradicts her previous statement in the following declaration: “My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”⁸¹

According to the jihadist narrative, the strict interpretation of the Qur’an and its understanding of Shari‘a is considered as an authoritative source of identification against the perceived West and the colonial powers. Terms like Shari‘a and its derivatives are frequently repeated in DĀ’ISH rhetoric to frame the group’s violent struggle with Islamic principles and, in return, acquire religious immunity. Islam is equated to ‘a grandiose law’ (*shar‘un ‘aẓīmūn*, v. 29) that cannot be emulated (*laysa ‘anhu badīl*, v. 28), echoing the dogmatic belief of the inimitability of the Qur’an (*i‘jāz al-qur‘ān*). The poem projects the enemy in theologically loaded terms, which are intended to characterize DĀ’ISH enemies, to ridicule them, and to imply modes of action against them. In verse 46, Bashār al-Asad is equated with Iblīs. The Qur’anic expression *tabbat yadā* (v. 46), which means ‘may the hands be ruined,’ is deployed to attack him and his activities.⁸² Another expression with pseudo-Islamic overtones is *yattaqī ḥurumātihi* (‘who guards His sacred sites,’ v. 4). An ideal ruler is envisioned as a person who is devout (*taqwā*) to the sacred places. The notion of *taqwā* is closely related to one’s belief “in the form of an implication: if A, then B.”⁸³ Moreover, the term *ḥurumātihi* echoes the Qur’anic phrase *ḥurumāt allāh* (‘sacred ordinances of God’).⁸⁴

78 The term *madhalla* echoes the expression *al-mawt wa-lā l-madhalla* (‘better death than humiliation’), an ancient form of wisdom used as a slogan in the recent Syrian uprisings.

79 One of the ancient wise sayings recorded by Al-Qāḍī al-Qudā’ī is the expression *al-qilla dhilla* (‘poverty humiliates’). See also Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 8–9.

80 The Qur’an states the following: “She was told, ‘Enter the palace.’ But when she saw it, she thought it was a body of water and uncovered her shins [to wade through].” See Qur’an, 27:44.

81 Qur’an, 27:44.

82 This expression is also addressed to Ḥusnī Mubārak in verse 41. See Qur’an, 111:1.

83 See also Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’an* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966), 196.

84 See Qur’an, 22:30.

Contemporary jihadist warfare is connected to past historic Islamic battles, including ‘Islamic conquests’ (*futūḥ al-ghābirīna*, v. 58), and historic Islamic warriors such as Sayf Allāh al-Maslūl. Al-Maslūl, who was also known as Abū Sulyamān Khālīd b. al-Walīd (585–642 CE), was a companion of the Prophet from the Meccan tribe of Quraysh. He is mostly known for his military tactics and prowess. His military achievements include the conquests of Arabia during the Ridda Wars, Persian Mesopotamia, and Roman Syria between 632–636 CE. Under his military leadership, Arabia was united under a single political entity code-named ‘Caliphate’ for the first time in history.⁸⁵ In the jihadist realm, the historical figure of Khālīd bin al-Walīd is exploited to link the jihadist framework to the Arab-Islamic tradition.⁸⁶ The female poet refers to DĀ‘ISH combatants as Sayf al-Hudā al-Maslūl to consolidate the connection between the legendary companion of the Prophet and the DĀ‘ISH fighters in the collective memory of the jihadist populace.

The popularity of Sayf al-Maslūl in popular Arabic culture has kept his memory alive in the subconscious of the Arabic-speaking audience in the Iraq–Syria region. References to mythological Islamic heroes serve as an emotional resource, bringing back memories of a tremendous communal Islamic past. Al-Maslūl is one of the main characters that surface on a popular television series called *Omar*, which deals with the first years of Islam. The figure of Sayf al-Maslūl is also celebrated in a Syrian television drama series dedicated to him called *Khalid b. al-Walīd*, which was aired between 2006 and 2007. The mythic power of Sayf al-Maslūl together with Harūn al-Rashīd (766–809 CE) are mobilized in the Syrian national anthem, claiming that “from us is al-Walīd, and from us is al-Rashīd” (*fa-minnā l-walīdu wa-minnā l-rashīd*).

The poetic message is particularly persuasive because it deploys proverbs (*amthāl*, sing. *mathal* or *umthūla*) or maxims (*ḥikam*, sing. *ḥikma*) that appear to be associated with religious or general wisdom sayings of the targeted audience.⁸⁷ The two proverbs identified in this poem include *yajnūna mā zara ‘ū* (‘they reap what they sow,’ v. 32) and *kamā tadīnu tudānu* (‘as you judge, you will be judged,’ v. 44).⁸⁸ The former refers to the Arab and Muslim leaders and their engagement in corruption, while the latter serves as a justification for the assassination of the late Libyan leader Mu‘ammar Gaddafi.

The poem is embellished with religious maxims (*ḥikam*), which are indicated by the theologically loaded terms denoting ‘truth’ or ‘justice.’ Within the Arabic poetic tradition and its modes of classification, *ḥikma* developed into one of the thematic inten-

85 Agha Ibrahim Akram, *Sword of Allah: Khalid Bin Al-Waleed His Life and Campaigns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

86 See also Aḥmad Bak al-Laḥḥām, *‘Abqariyyat Khālīd b. al-Walīd al-‘Askariyya* (Jedda: Dār al-manāra, 1986).

87 For a detailed etymological explanation of the term *ḥikma* in classical sources, see also Dimitri Gutas, “Classical Arabic Wisdom Literature: Nature and Scope,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 101, no. 1 (1981): 49–68.

88 See LISĀN, *d-y-n*.

tions.⁸⁹ In DĀ'ISH poetry, wisdom sayings tend to be characterized by strategic ambiguity, which describes instances in which language is intentionally deployed in ambiguous ways to accomplish organizational goals. Ambiguous communication can be more helpful than clear communication, particularly during periods of rapid change and uncertainty dictated by a volatile environment. It is the potential of strategic ambiguity to serve an enabling function within discourse by allowing divergent objectives to coexist and ideologically diverse groups to, if not work together, then at least work in parallel. Strategic ambiguity in discourse thus enables conflicting interpretations to coexist and it also allows diverse groups to pursue what may be conflicting goals.

In Islamic discourse, the polyvalent notion of truth (*ḥaqq*) is one of the ninety-nine attributes of God. It is included in several wise sayings such as “righteousness is exemplary, iniquity unsound” (*al-ḥaqqu mithāl wa-l-bāṭil khabāl*), “righteousness saves, iniquity destroys” (*al-ḥaqqu yujnī wa-l-bāṭil yurdī*)⁹⁰ or “whoever transgresses the truth finds his path closing in on him” (*man ta'addā al-ḥaqq dāqā madhhabihi*).⁹¹ In the poem, the term recurs in formulaic expressions denoting maxims such as *al-ḥaqqu maṭlūbunā wa-daydanunā l-hudā* (‘truth is our quest, and our practice is the right path,’ v. 28), *al-ḥaqqu nūrun wa-l-karāmatu maṭlūbun* (‘truth is light, and dignity is a quest,’ v. 54), *fa-l-ḥaqqu bāqin lā yazūlu madā l-madā* (‘for truth is forever, it never disappears,’ v. 65). Suggesting that truth is one’s right (*al-ḥaqqu maṭlūbunā*), the poem connects the message with the socio-political rhetoric of the time, whereby prodigious sways of protests were protesting for their rights. The poetess also depicts the group’s modus operandi as *al-hudā* (‘the right path’), a term which is overloaded with religious connotations. The derivative of *hudā* features in the Fātiḥa, the first Qur’anic chapter, whereby God is asked to guide people on the right path (*ihdinā l-ṣirāṭa l-muṣṭaqīm*).⁹² The term *al-ḥaqqu* is also expressed in terms of light (*nūr*) and virtue words like *karāma* (‘dignity’).

The polyvalent term *al-ḥaqqu* is contrasted with *al-zulmu* (injustice), a Qur’anic term that signifies unjust or cruel exercise of authority. An Islamic maxim states that “oppressing the weak is the worst oppression” (*ẓulm al-da'if afḥash al-zulm*).⁹³ In the context of this poem, *al-zulmu* refers to the leaders in the Arab and Islamic world.⁹⁴ In verse 36, the poem reads *al-zulmu mawtun wa-i'tidā'un muhlikun...wa-l-'adlu nūrun fi-l-dujā ma'mūlu* (‘oppression is death, and a devastating violation...justice is light that is desired in darkness’). Everlasting life attributed to justice is contrasted to death, which symbolizes injustice and oppression. Inherited wisdom is strategically inserted into the poem to produce memorable, easily repeated, information-rich phrases. By means of self-serving elements borrowed from tradition, DĀ'ISH propagandists aspire to gain

89 See also Gutas, “Classical Arabic Wisdom Literature: Nature and Scope,” 62ff.

90 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 14–5.

91 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 32–3.

92 See Qur’an, 1:6.

93 Qutbuddin, *A Treasury of Virtues*, 14–5.

94 See also EQ, s.v. “Oppression.”

authority, legitimacy, and respect by the status of Islam and its complete submission to the will of God and the unchallengeable status of the Qur'an.

The formulaic maxims related to *al-ḥaqqu* and *al-zulmu* are not exclusively representative of an inherent jihadist ethos. Maxims or general wisdom are bequeathed by word of mouth from one generation to the next and are set to the same functional use, namely to influence the hearts and minds of the recipients and coerce them into collective action by the utterance of familiar and unassailable wisdom. Strategically ambiguous terminology is instrumentalized to position the jihadist discourse in relation to the Islamic discourse and parallel to the mainstream pan-Arabist discourse. Strategic ambiguity enables jihadist propagandists to strengthen the connection between Islam and DĀ'ISH, and also to include the jihadist narrative within a mainstream framework of political ideologies in the Arab world.

Contemporary Rhetoric of Arab Uprisings

DĀ'ISH poetic discourse bears striking resemblances to the discourse of Arab uprisings. The interplay between traditional discourse and conceptually contested ideographs that are meaningful to a populace partaking in the Arab uprisings is instrumentalized to make the jihadist message relevant and attractive for recipients living in a warzone. By levelling DĀ'ISH discourse with the Arab uprisings, the group's discourse becomes timely because it connects its message to the socio-political events unfolding at the time. Identical terms allocate for strategic ambiguity among the mainstream populace by strategically granting the group subtle entry into the public square alongside other ideologies. By aligning the group's discourse with the popular rhetoric of the protests at the time, the jihadist paradigm makes itself available to the undecided populace.

Traditional discourse is interspersed with terminology that evokes contemporary Arab uprisings. Maxims or inherited wisdom can only be deemed as effective if it can connect a known reputable source such as religious literature, culture, or traditions to a new situation. Qur'anic intertextualities, religious allusions, and inherited wisdom are exploited to consolidate the jihadist worldview of the contemporary socio-political events taking place in the Arab and Islamic world. The relationship of servitude and submission of humankind towards God in Islam is adopted as an ideal model for the relationship between the political rulers and the ruled in the modern-day political sphere. The parallel link between God and the politicians is established through by the etymological roots *m-l-k*, whereby *al-mulūk* in the first verse denotes political rulers on earth, and the phrase *al-mulku mulku llāhi* in the second verse, which connotes God's ruling.⁹⁵ In the poetic narrative, an ideal 'God-fearing, responsible leader' (*ḥākīm...mas'ūlu... yakhshā al-ilāha*, v. 4–5) embodies the qualities of being *ṣādīqun wa-jalīlu* ('truthful and majestic,' v. 6). The dysfunctional master-servant relationship adopted by the politicians starkly contrasts God's idealized relationship with human-

95 The terms *al-malik* (the King) and *mālik al-mulk* ('the Owner of All Sovereignty') are two of the ninety-nine attributes of God.

kind. The poem attacks the political leaders for shirking their contractual duties towards their citizens by deviating (*tajūru*, v. 1), which contradicts the undeviating rule of God (*laysa taḥūlu*, v. 2).

The relationship between the ruler and the ruled is based on strict obedience. The call for compliance, or the act of complying with the demands of the one in authority, allows for asymmetrical power relations because it is linked concomitantly to the legitimation of authority and the power to command. Obedience features in the second verse through the verb in the imperative mood *aṭ'i*. The stem of the verb *aṭā'a* follows *af'ala*, which is considered to be a causative form.⁹⁶ Through this morphological stem and its Qur'anic reverberations, the persona of the poem coerces its audience to obey.⁹⁷ In the Qur'an, the roots *t-w-* especially following the *af'ala* stem take precedence over the several expressions that convey the idea of obedience. All eleven occurrences of the verb *aṭā'a* in the Qur'an, which are coincidentally in the imperative mood, demand obedience to God and the Prophet. In only one instance, obedience is demanded to "those having authority among you."⁹⁸ In the poem, the choice of the verb *aṭā'a* over other near-synonyms such as *sallama* or *aslama* is based on depicting obedience as a form of active practice, which contrasts the roots *s-l-m*, which connote a relatively passive initial act of submission.⁹⁹

Throughout the poem, the ruled is often referred to as 'the people' (*al-sha'b*). The redundant term *sha'b* is worthy of a deeper etymological and historical analysis due to its resonance – and to an extent interference – with the socio-political events code-named 'Arab Spring' unfolding in the region at the time of composition. By definition, the verbal noun *sha'b* (pl. *shu'ūb*) refers to "people, folk, nation, tribe, race," and the adjective *sha'bī* conveys the meaning of "national, people's; popular, folksy." Likewise, verbal form *sha'aba* means "to gather, assemble, rally," and the adjective *sha'biyya* denotes popularity.¹⁰⁰ Initially, the term *sha'b* carried negative connotations that signified "a tribal confederacy or super tribe, a people, or an ethnic group, often of non-Arab stock."¹⁰¹ In Islamic history, the *shu'ūbiyya* movement took its name from a Qur'anic verse.¹⁰² *Al-shu'ūbiyya* meant "belonging to the peoples (non-Arabs)" and advocated "a powerful, sometimes extreme, backlash amongst conquered peoples against the Arabs of Arabia in particular."¹⁰³

96 Badawi, Carter, and Gully, *Modern Written Arabic*, 60.

97 The longest passage in the Qur'an that instructs obedience through the roots *t-w-* is found in 24:47–56.

98 See Qur'an, 4:59; EQ, s.v. "Obedience."

99 See also EQ, s.v. "Obedience."

100 WEHR, *sh-'-b*.

101 Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East: The Evolution of Modern Political Discourse*, 48–9.

102 The term *shu'ūbiyya* originates from the Qur'anic verse 49:13, which contrasts tribal confederations of non-Arabs with Arab tribes. It reads, "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples (*shu'ūb*) and tribes (*qabā'il*) that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted."

103 Harry T. Norris, "Shu'ūbiyyah in Arabic Literature," in CHALABL, 31.

The semantic appropriation of the term into its current use to refer to the ruled as opposed to the ruler developed with the absorption of modern western ideas.¹⁰⁴ During the French Revolution, the term was used in early Arab accounts to refer to the French people arising in total revolt against King Louis XVI by describing the king's flight from Paris as "fear of the *sha 'b*." Likewise, *sha 'b* was the term used to express the "will of the French people" (*irādat sha 'b faransī*).¹⁰⁵ Decades later, the term found resonance with Western political ideographs. In Arabic, the phrase 'the government of the people by the people' is rendered as *al-sha 'b bi-l-sha 'b*. Likewise, democracy is defined as a government chosen by the *sha 'b*, and popular sovereignty is translated as *wukalā' al-sha 'b* ('representatives of the *sha 'b*').¹⁰⁶ The term *sha 'b* acquired a broader meaning due to the terms that were mechanically associated with it such as 'rights' (*huqūq*), 'will' (*irāda*), 'power' (*quwwa*), and 'voice' (*ṣawt*).¹⁰⁷ The term *sha 'b* was capable of evoking powerful emotions in the pan-Arab nationalist discourse, whereby politicians like the Egyptian Jamal 'Abd al-Nāṣir addressed their audience as *sha 'b 'arabī* ('the Arab nation'); a collocation which broadened the term *sha 'b* transnationally to include the Arab identity.¹⁰⁸

In modern parlance, the term *al-sha 'b* appeared in a rallying chant of the popular uprisings in the Arab world called 'The Will to Live' (*irādat al-ḥayā*) to reflect the protests emerging in Tunisia in 2011. The chant is appropriated from a verse in a poem composed by the Tunisian poet Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī (1909–1934) which reads "[i]f one day the people (*al-sha 'bu*) will to live, then destiny must reply." Al-Shābbī's chant rippled from one public square to another, and the demonstrators answered in equally mobilizing slogans, "the people want the fall of the system" (*al-sha 'b yurīd isqāṭ al-nizām*)¹⁰⁹ and "the people demand the liberation of Tahrir" (*al-sha 'b yurīd taḥrīr al-maydan*).¹¹⁰ Al-Shābbī's popular verse was also resurrected in Tahrir square when another distinguished Egyptian poet called Ahmad 'Abd al-Mu'ī Ḥijāzī used al-Shābbī's opening verse to write a new ode to the Egyptian Revolution.¹¹¹

The progression of the poem is distinguished by a discursive twist, whereby power designated in the hands of the *hākīm* (v. 3) is transferred to the ruled towards the end of the poem. The values initially associated with an ideal leader are transferred to the *al-sha 'b*. The values of *ṣādiqun wa-jalīlu* ('truthful and majestic,' v. 6) attributed to a God-fearing leader are inferred upon the people, namely, *al-sha 'bu sha 'bun ṣādiqun wa-*

104 Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East*, 49.

105 Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East*, 49.

106 Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East*, 49.

107 Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East*, 50.

108 Stock, *Sprache als ein Instrument der Macht*, 129.

109 A sociolinguistic study of the Arab Spring slogans may be found in the work of Nadir Sirāj, *Maṣr al-thawra wa-shi'arāt shabābihā: dirāsa lisāniyya fī 'afwiyyat al-ta'bīr* (Beirut: dirāsa al-markaz al-'arabī li-l-abḥāth wa-dirāsāt al-siyāsāt, 2014), 136.

110 Laura Gribbon, and Sarah Hawas, "Signs and Signifiers: Visual Translations of Revolt," in *Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir*, ed. Samia Mehrez (Cairo: AUC Press, 2012), 120, and 138.

111 See also Sanders, and Visona, "The Soul of Tahrir: Poetics of a Revolution," 213.

jalīlu (v. 59). The transfer of power divested in the hands of the people, however, is not a transitory process representative of popular sovereignty or a democratic process, but a process which is derived exclusively from God. According to the poetic narrative, it is God who is believed to have moved people to protest (v. 59), and it is God who has granted people their freedom (v. 60).

Reconfiguring the Context of the Arab Uprisings

The phenomenon of the ‘Arab Spring’ protests cannot be exclusively analyzed according to the degrees of conformity with the pre-existing proposals formulated in other cultural contexts¹¹² due to the various determinants in the Arab world, including right-wing movements of religious inspiration.¹¹³ Nor should the protests be discussed exclusively in light of new forms of protests mobilized by new media, even though the internet might have played a significant role in mobilization.¹¹⁴ Social media like Facebook served as a powerful mobilization tool that allowed people to network and organize themselves more effectively, but it was not social media that triggered the protests. Nora Lafi suggests that in order to understand the logic of mobilization in the Arab world today, it would be more useful to examine the roots of civil societies rooted in the rich cultural and social heritages that societies enjoyed even pre-dating colonial times.

Several old civic habits which are not necessarily integrated into modern representations of mobilization that can better explain the dynamics of mobilization in the societies of the contemporary Arab world, including “the morale as a reason for discontent, the ways of propagation of protest, the form of solidarity at work.”¹¹⁵ An ancient civic habit that is adopted by DĀ‘ISH for mobilization feeds on the “anger and moral outrage”¹¹⁶ against violent rulers. This morale is often triggered by an appeal to emotions and collective suffering. In a poem penned in *kāmil* metre, al-Naṣr describes her firsthand experience of the Arab uprisings which broke out in the spring of 2011 against the rule of the Syrian president Bashār al-Asad:¹¹⁷

112 Lafi, “The ‘Arab Spring’ in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World (2010–2014),” 681ff.

113 For a discussion on these differences, see also Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2007), 291; Holger Albrecht, *Contentious Politics in the Middle East: Political Opposition under Authoritarianism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 252; Martin Beck, Cilja Harders, Annette Juenemann, and Stephan Stetter, eds., *Der Nahe Osten im Umbruch: Zwischen Transformation und Autoritarismus* (Wiesbaden: Verlag fuer Sozialwissenschaften, 2009).

114 For a discussion on the role media, see also Albrecht Hofheinz, “Social Media in the ‘Arab Spring’: The Example of Egypt,” Report and Policy Brief, *The New Middle East*, Oslo, October 2012; Franck Mermier, *Mondialisation et Nouveaux Médias dans l’espace Arabe* (Paris: Maisonneuve and Larose, 2003), 438ff; Jean-Philippe Bras, and Larbi Chouikha, *Médias et Technologies de Communication au Maghreb et en Méditerranée* (Tunis: IRMC, 2002), 398ff.

115 Lafi, “The ‘Arab Spring’ in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World (2010–2014),” 685.

116 Barrington Moore, *Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* (London: Sharpe, 1978), 540.

117 For the full poem, see DAN, 26–7.

فَسَاقَطَ الْعَظْمُ الْمَتِينُ وَقَدَّ وَهْنُ! 1. وَرَصَاصُهُمْ فَجَرَ الدِّمَاغَ مُزْلِزِلًا
 لَكَأَنَّ فِي دَرْسِ تَشْرِيحِ الْبَدَنِ!! 2. ثَقَبَ الْحَنَاجِرَ نَائِرًا أَشْهَاءَهَا
 تَجْرِي سَيُولًا هَادِرَاتٍ كَالْمُرُنْ! 3. غَسَلَتِ الشُّوَارِعَ مِنْ دِمَاءٍ لَمْ تَزَلْ

1. Their bullets shattered our brains like an earthquake,
even strong bones cracked them broke,
2. They drilled our throats and scattered our limbs,
it was like an anatomy lesson!
3. They hosed the streets while blood still ran,
like streams crashing down from the clouds.

Jihadist propagandists attempted to win over the hearts and minds of recruits by presenting their narrative disguised in Islamic terms. The subtle link between DĀ'ISH discourse and the rhetoric of the popular uprisings in the Arab world is reinforced by conceptually contested ideographs such as 'justice' (*'adāla*), 'injustice' (*ẓulm*), 'dignity' (*karāma*), 'truth' (*ḥaqq*), 'the right path' (*al-hudā*), 'freedom' (*ḥurriyya*), and 'revolution' (*thawra*) which permeate the poem. In verse 3, the poem discusses people seeking *'aysh karāma* ('an honourable living'). This phrase resonates with popular slogans chanted during the Egyptian revolution such as *'aysh, ḥurriyya, karāma insāniyya* ('bread, freedom, human dignity')¹¹⁸ and *'aysh, karāma, 'adāla ijtīmā'iyya* ('bread, dignity, social justice').¹¹⁹ Apart from the transmission of its message through poetry, the discursive strategies embedded in poetry are strikingly crucial in mobilization. DĀ'ISH poetic exemplars reveal how DĀ'ISH availed itself of mythic figures, ancient wisdom, Islamic key terms, and other historical references to garner support among the populace.

Although the discourse of jihadist groups and that of Arab uprisings is characterized by redundant references to 'justice,' 'dignity,' 'revolution,' and 'freedom,' the interpretation and associations attributed to these key terms differ extensively. The core experience of modernity for mainstream protest groups is considered as consisting of a "desire to wipe out whatever came earlier, in the hope of reaching at least a point that would be called a true present, a point of origin that marks a new departure."¹²⁰ Mainstream groups understood these terms in the framework of a Western-based political model which often associated 'modern' concepts like democracy to the notion of freedom. Although the concept of democracy might have carried positive connotations with the

118 Sirāj, *Maṣr al-thawra wa-shi'ārāt shabābihā: dirāsa lisāniyya fī 'afwiyyat al-ta'bīr*, 65–6.

119 See also Bahgat Korany, and Rabab El-Mahdi, eds., *Arab Spring in Egypt: Revolution and Beyond* (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2012), 17–42; Gribbon, and Hawas, "Signs and Signifiers: Visual Translations of Revolt," 103–142, and Lewis Sanders IV, "Reclaiming the City: Street Art of the Revolution," in *Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir*, ed. Samia Mehrez (Cairo: AUC Press, 2012), 143–82; Rachid Ouaiassa, "On the Trail of Frantz Fanon," in *Commitment and Beyond: Reflections on/of the Political in Arabic Literature since the 1940s*, eds. Friederike Pannewick, Georges Khalil, and Yvonne Albers (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2015), 114; Sirāj, *Maṣr al-thawra wa-shi'ārāt shabābihā: dirāsa lisāniyya fī 'afwiyyat al-ta'bīr*.

120 Paul De Man, "Literary History and Literary Modernity," *Daedalus* 99 (1970), 384–404.

younger generation rallying in the uprisings, democracy was still perceived as a foreign concept without any authentic roots in the Arabic-Islamic culture in general. In the case of Iraq, which was still recovering from the US-led invasion, the interpretation of freedom in terms of a democratic system might not have resonated well with the Iraqi population. On the polarized end of the imaginary political spectrum was the Islamist-cum-jihadist paradigm that reinterpreted the ideographs of 'justice,' 'dignity,' and 'freedom' in terms of religion and traditions. The jihadist ideology did not base its interpretation on foreign concepts, but it relied exclusively on the appropriation of the Arabic-Islamic heritage to implant cultural and historical continuity.

On the cultural level, the intersection of jihadist rhetoric with traditional discourse and the Arabic uprisings suggest that the Salafi-jihadist stream was equally engaged in the protests and in the political discussion that emerged at the time. Since its formative years in the late 1970s, the jihadist undercurrent has mastered the ancient logic of mobilization in the Arab-Islamic world. Organizations like DĀ'ISH are only a more experienced facet of Jihadism that had learnt their lessons from their predecessors' mistakes over three decades. This evidence calls for a fundamental change in the mainstream western perception of public squares. Contrary to mainstream media coverage, the advent of the 'Arab Spring' protests should not be conceptualized as a communal voice demanding 'democracy,' 'freedom,' and 'human rights.'¹²¹ Instead, public squares like Tahrir Square in Egypt that were occupied during the protests consisted of a shared space where multiple voices, narratives, and ideologies competed against each other. The different narratives and ideologies present in the public squares sought to mobilize support for their cause by influencing other protestors to rally behind their cause.¹²²

The jihadist ideology that has existed parallel to the political systems in the Arab-Islamic world benefited from a rare opportunity, whereby this minority group could converge and compete with other political streams of thought¹²³ for political power.¹²⁴

121 Western media often broadcast the Arab Spring protests as being made up of one homogenous group with a united political voice in favour of freedom, justice, and secularism, amongst others. This is the same political rhetoric that Nūrī al-Mālīki adopted once he was installed as a Prime Minister after the US-led invasion of Iraq. The subjective focus on these socio-political events by Western media could have been to prove to the rest of the World that the much-awaited freedom, peace, and democracy promised by the American invasion was about to be fulfilled.

122 The subsequent victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Salafist groups in the democratic elections in Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen, and the role of Islamist insurgents in Syria reflect the diversity of the 'Arab Spring' protests and the multiplicity of political determinants. Also, these victories reinstate the position of political Islam as a more popular and authentic alternative to the Arab nationalist paradigm.

123 Although Jihadism registers itself as an 'anti-establishment' movement which opposes the officially recognized governments and its leaders, it does not compete for political power through a political system that is already in place. The relationship between the Arab Nationalist paradigm and the Salafi-jihadist paradigm should be regarded as a battle over the political system. The lack of continuation in governance often characterized by the paralysis and political stagnation of a country benefit organizations like DĀ'ISH because a political vacuum gives jihadists the possibility to apply their political system based on the jihadist interpretation of Shari'a.

The interaction of various ideologies is evident in the hybrid movement that occupied Tahrir Square in Egypt in 2011 that consists of young intellectuals, gangs of violent young men, members of Muslim Brotherhood, and Salafist activists sharing the same place.¹²⁵ This plurality of opinions, ongoing commitment, and ideological alignments has always characterized multi-ethnic societies and multiple religions, sects, and denominations living in the Arab and Islamic world. These protests also paralyzed local political systems and turned most countries into a battlefield, whereby the most powerful and perhaps the most violent, ruled. After Gaddafi's assassination in 2011, for instance, the political vacuum created in Libya made space for different ideologies – including the jihadist paradigm¹²⁶ – to compete for political power. Thus, when the protests gained momentum in the Arab-Islamic world, the jihadist undercurrent had already had an organic system in place with a hierarchical system and propaganda machine to back it up. It had its slogans, its rhetorical repertoire, and its mobilizing strategies of identification that appeared to be rooted in the older forms of local civic conscience and Islamic heritage.

6.2. Resemblances between the Literary Manifestations of DĀ'ISH and Kharijism

Based on the analysis of this work, several discursive similarities may be drawn up between the poetic voice of DĀ'ISH and the literary manifestations of medieval religious and political factions such as the Shī'a, the Kharijites, and the Zubayrids.¹²⁷ On the literary level, the most obvious comparison between DĀ'ISH and Kharijism is connected to the lack of praise poetry (*madīh*). Salma Jayyusi argues that Kharijite poetry was “free from eulogy of the ruling class and from tribal and racial prejudices.”¹²⁸ Poetry composed by medieval religio-political factions was ideological:

It responded to events and reflected the moral, emotional and sometimes intellectual attitudes of its propagandists. Most importantly, it was poetry that treated new subject matter and situations...Because it reflected new viewpoints and experiences that were directly re-

124 A sociolinguistic study of the Arab Spring slogans reinforces this. For a list of slogans like *al-sha'b yurid isqāt al-niẓām* ('the people desire the fall of the regime'). See Sirāj, *maṣr al-thawra wa-shi'ārāt shabābi-hā: dirāsa lisāniyya fī 'afwiyyat al-ta'bīr*, 136.

125 See also Emad El-Din Shahin, “The Egyptian Revolution: The Power of Mass Mobilization and the Spirit of Tahrir Square,” *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 1, no. 1 (2012): 46–69; Lafi, “The ‘Arab Spring’ in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World (2010–2014),” 686–7; Zeinab Abul-Magd, “Occupying Tahrir Square: The Myths and the Realities of the Egyptian Revolution,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 3 (2012): 165–72.

126 The black flag representing revolutionary Islamists was identified among the protests in Tunis, Cairo, and Benghazi. See Ostovar, “The Visual Culture of Jihad,” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, 91.

127 The rhetorical resemblances between DĀ'ISH and the Kharijite discourse are discussed vis-à-vis verses of asceticism in section 5.2.4.

128 Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in *CHALUP*, 414.

lated to current events, it employed for the most part of the language of the day, a language characterised in general by vitality, simplicity, and...directness.¹²⁹

Poetic manifestations produced by the Kharijite served “both as a stimulus to action and as a commentary on contemporary events, on which it casts a vivid light.”¹³⁰ Poetic verses were, and in the case of contemporary jihadist groups still are, a useful tool to mobilize and recruit supporters rallying behind their cause.¹³¹ Akin to the medieval ideological groups, DĀ‘ISH poetry is direct, emotionally driven, resembles a day-like speech, and deals with the here-and-now.

Ideologically, the medieval ideological factions perceived the ascendance of Islam as a primary source of political organization. Thus, Islam became instrumentalized a motivating force in their political sphere.¹³² The Kharijites emerged as religious zealots who adhered strictly to the Qur’an and Sunna but later adopted a political doctrine which concerned itself with the caliphate.¹³³ Kharijite intransigence further manifested itself in “affirmations of principle and, in extreme cases, in acts of terrorism.”¹³⁴ Kharijites maintained the doctrine that “no race or tribe enjoyed inherent superiority.”¹³⁵ Kharijite ideology argues that individuals can be distinct from one another based on their thought and ideology rather than their ethnic background, social class, or tribe.¹³⁶ Traces of this principle are expressed in the poem *The Lands of Truth are my Home*:¹³⁷

إلى لُغَةٍ وَأَلْوَانٍ
عَلَى التَّفْوَى بِإِيمَانٍ

1. فَلَا عَرَقٌ يُفَرِّقُنَا
2. كِتَابَ اللَّهِ يُجْمَعُنَا

1. No provenance divides us,
no language and colour [of skin],
2. The book of God unites us,
with loyalty in faith.

Another Kharijite principle revolves around the representation of Muslims as ‘one body.’¹³⁸ Kharijites regarded individuals as part of a whole, not as a distinct behaviour

129 Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in CHALUP, 413.

130 Rubinacci, “Political Poetry,” in CHALABL, 187.

131 See also Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 43.

132 Elisabeth Kendall mentions other verses attributed to the Kharijites that are used by modern-day jihadists.

See also Kendall, “Jihadist Propaganda and its Exploitation of the Arab Poetic Tradition,” 233.

133 Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 5.

134 Roberto Rubinacci, “Political Poetry,” in CHALABL, 186.

135 Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, eds. Stanford J. Shaw, and William R. Polk (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 69.

136 See also Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 42.

137 See DAN, 43.

138 Aḥmad Mu‘ayta, who discusses socio-political thought and the poetry of the Kharijites, argues that Kharijites did not propagate individualism because to their belief, no human being possessed any distinct behaviour which makes one superior to any other human being. See Aḥmad Mu‘ayta, *Al-Islām al-khawārij* (Latakia, Syria: Dār al-ḥiwār, 2000), 81.

that makes one superior to other human beings.¹³⁹ The principle of disregarding individualism resurfaces in DĀ'ISH discourse:

يَقُومُ عَلَى الْهُدَى الْهَانِي ١. فَإِنَّا كُلُّنَا جَسَدٌ

1. Indeed, we are all one body,
that rises in the right way.

The rhetoric of Kharijism and DĀ'ISH abounds with end-of-time eschatological references alluding to the Qur'an that attack a changing world to assuage the militants' shame-filled anxiety over having fallen from grace.¹⁴⁰ Like DĀ'ISH, the Kharijite worldview is polarized into good and evil, or the abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*) and the abode of war (*dār al-ḥarb*). This absolutist and dichotomized worldview is empowered by adopting a Qur'anic language of pious militancy-scriptural rhetoric as a *raison d'être* and *modus operandi*. According to Kharijite principles, true believers had to attack evil wherever they found it. Kharijite poetry is "the purest example of an Islam-oriented poetry,"¹⁴¹ and focused mostly on advocating courage and loyalty. In the Kharijite worldview, piety is conceived in "an activist, indeed militant, way,"¹⁴² and active militancy is propagated as the only possible response to revelation.¹⁴³ The element of extreme piety often connected to a renunciation of worldly desires as reflected in Kharijite poetry appears to be "a continuation of the Qur'an's injunctions to activist piety."¹⁴⁴

Similar to the poetic voice of DĀ'ISH, poetry of jihadist fervour composed during the early Arab conquests was 'clothed' in Islamic terms (*fa-shi'ru l-jihādi...yuktasā hadhā al-ṣibgh al-islāmī*), and was based on the collective emotions of the Muslim community.¹⁴⁵ Key terms like *al-ḥaqq* – often adduced to a never-ending struggle with worldly interest (*hawā*) – also recur among the most frequent in Kharijite and DĀ'ISH poetry.¹⁴⁶ Kharijite poetry is composed in a revolutionary tone and encourages individuals to sacrifice themselves.¹⁴⁷ The notions of the Last Judgment and the Hereafter are also vividly represented in the ideology of DĀ'ISH. These notions are often accompanied by calling the followers to be ready for death at every instant.¹⁴⁸ Like DĀ'ISH,

139 Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, 42.

140 Heck, "Eschatological Scripturalism and the End of Community: The Case of Early Kharijism," 141.

141 Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry," in CHALUP, 414.

142 Fred Donner, "Piety and Eschatology in Early Kharijite Poetry," in *Fī miḥrāb al-Ma'rīfah: Festschrift for Iḥsān 'Abbās* (Beirut: Dār Sader Publishers, 1997), 14.

143 Heck, "Eschatological Scripturalism and the End of Community: The Case of Early Kharijism," 146.

144 Donner, "Piety and Eschatology in Early Kharijite Poetry," in *Fī miḥrāb al-Ma'rīfah: Festschrift for Iḥsān 'Abbās*, 16.

145 "fa-'inna shi'ra l-jihādi yaqūmu asāsan 'alā l-wijdān al-jamā'ī li-jamā' al-muslimīna," 'Abd al-Muta'al al-Qāḍī, *Shi'r al-futūḥ al-islāmīyya fī ṣadr al-islām*, 244.

146 Heck, "Eschatological Scripturalism and the End of Community: The Case of Early Kharijism," 146.

147 Iḥsān 'Abbās describes Kharijite verses as "revolutionary ascetic poetry" (*shi'r zuhdī thawrī*). See also Iḥsān 'Abbās, *Shi'r al-khawārij* (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1974), 9.

148 See also Anthony Bubalo, and Greg Fealy, *Joining the Caravan? The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia* (Double Bay: Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2005), 86.

Kharijism also expressed “a profound desire to die for the cause and thereby win everlasting bliss.”¹⁴⁹

One of the most explicit allusions to the medieval religious and political factions in DĀ'ISH propaganda features in a video production entitled *The Clanging of Terror*.¹⁵⁰ The production starts by reciting a hadith, which is immediately followed by poetic verses against a backdrop of corpses of DĀ'ISH militants. The hadith sets a soothing tone, alleviating the militants' death by reminding the recipients that:

1. أرواحهم في جوف طير خضر تسرح في عليين
2. فكم بين هذا القتل الكريم و بين الموت اللئيم

1. Their souls (the martyrs) are in green birds roaming freely in paradise,
2. What a difference between honourable killing and vile death.¹⁵¹

These verses are immediately followed by poetic verses narrating a dialogue between the Umayyad poet Abū Firās al-Farazdaq (d. 732 CE) and Imam Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (d. 680 CE), who is the most prominent figure in Shi'ite Islam. Upon Ḥusayn's return from the pilgrimage, al-Farazdaq demands how Ḥusayn can confide in the members of Kufa (*Ahl al-Kūfa*) when he knows that these people killed his cousin Muslim b. Aqīl (d. 680 CE). In tears, Imam Ḥusayn answers as follows:

<p>فَقَلَّهٗ جِرْصِ الْمَرْءِ فِي الرَّزْقِ أَجْمَلُ فَمَا بَالُ مَتْرُوكٍ بِهِ الْمَرْءُ يَبْخَلُ فَقَدْرُ ثَوَابِ اللَّهِ أَعْلَى وَأَنْبَلُ فَقَتْلُ امْرِءٍ فِي اللَّهِ بِالسَّيْفِ أَجْمَلُ</p>	<p>1. لَنْ كَانَتْ الْأَرْزَاقُ قِسْمًا مَقْدَرًا 2. وَإِنْ كَانَتْ الْأَمْوَالُ لِلتَّرْكِ جَمْعَهَا 3. وَإِنْ كَانَتْ الدُّنْيَا تُعَدُّ نَفِيسَةً 4. وَإِنْ كَانَتْ الْأَبْدَانُ لِلْمَوْتِ أَنْشِنَتْ</p>
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1. Even if the sustenance were preordained,
it is more beautiful for a person to pay less attention to the sustenance,
2. Even if the money were to be left compiled,
why would one care to be greedy for it?
3. Even if the temporal world were considered valuable,
the value of the reward of God is higher and nobler,
4. Even if the bodies were created for [the purpose of] death,
then killing a person for the sake of God with a sword is more beautiful.

The circulation of religious verses that are attributed to Shi'ite figures such as Imam Ḥusayn contradicts the jihadist view of Shi'ite Islam. DĀ'ISH pronounces itself categorically against Shi'ite Islam, often referring to Shi'ite Muslims as ‘the ones who devi-

149 Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in CHALUP, 413.

150 Aaron Y. Zelin, “Clanging of the Terror #2–Wilāyat al-Khayr,” *Jihadology* (blog), September 16, 2017, accessed January 22, 2018, (0:32), <http://jihadology.net/2017/09/15/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-clang-ing-of-the-terror-2-wilayat-al-khayr/>.

151 This line echoes the hadith, “Their Souls are in the Insides of Green Birds having Lanterns Suspended from the Throne,” accessed January 22, 2018, <https://sunnah.com/qudsi40/27>.

152 Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amīn, *A 'yān al-shī'a*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-ta'āraf li-l-maṭbū'āt, 1983), 595.

ated' (*al-rawāfiḍ*) or as Safavids (*al-ṣafawiyya*). The latter term refers directly to the Safavid dynasty that ruled large parts of contemporary Iraq between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries and now carries negative connotations.

The reasons behind the deployment of Shi'a aligned verses in DĀ'ISH propaganda are two-fold. Firstly, the source and context of the verses may be less important than the underlying message transmitted in verse. Secondly, these verses may reflect the word-attentive, person-interactive DĀ'ISH sub-culture. Shi'a aligned verses chanted in the video may have become part of the collective memory to the extent that the reciters do not remember the original context of the verses. This argument is supported by the alteration of diction from the original hadith. The term *jannah*, which is initially mentioned in the hadith, is replaced by the term *'aliyyin*, which is one of the attributes of paradise used in the propagandist video.¹⁵³

153 Additionally, the use of *'aliyyin* may be intentionally altered to rhyme with *al-la'īm* in the second part of the line that is not taken from the hadith.

Conclusion

Decoding DĀ'ISH set out to investigate the symbolic world in the jihadist milieu by deciphering the hallmarks of DĀ'ISH discourse. More specifically, the main goal was to determine how discursive strategies of domination may engender commitment in the subscribers of the jihadist group. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* has demonstrated that these strategies are based on and enabled by the appropriation of the Arabic-Islamic tradition, including the Arabic poetic tradition, which wields substantial influence over the social memory of a primary Arabic-speaking audience. Culturally resonant mechanisms borrowed from the Arabic tradition are strategically weaponized to win over the hearts and minds of the jihadist populace and to influence their behaviour by indoctrinating a specific worldview, raising conformity, generating obedience, and deactivating self-inhibiting norms against murder and mayhem.

The most prominent finding to emerge from this work is the revival of the past to interpret the reality on the battlefield and legitimate a new worldview. The classical Arabic language is a powerful medium through which DĀ'ISH can mix between traditional and contemporary paradigms, continually delineating the distinction between the past and the present to promote a jihadist ethos and exercise asymmetries of power. The past is manifested in the form of a massive intrusion of historical references, Qur'anic intertextualities, theologically loaded words, references to Muslim figures, ancient wisdom, formulaic expressions, and value-words denoting the pre-Islamic Bedouin ethos. These references are deployed as symbolic mechanisms of control that shape the worldview of DĀ'ISH subscribers and contribute towards coercing individuals to obedience. Confrontations with the out-group are depicted in terms of the apocalyptic narrative, widening the Manichean divide between good and evil, and the Muslims and the crusaders. Ambiguous terms entrenched in tradition, and ancient wisdom are reinterpreted to represent an inherent jihadist ethos. If DĀ'ISH has exploited such discursive symbols for its own purposes, it has done so in the full knowledge that they were firmly rooted in the consciousness of its audience and that these symbols are capable of arousing powerful emotions. These elements that form part of the collective consciousness are put to the practical use of manipulating the recipients and moving them to action by the utterance of familiar and unassailable wisdom.

The second significant finding is related to the importance of modernity to connect with the daily lives of an audience made up of different age groups scattered transnationally. Although the past is exploited significantly, in essence, the ideology of DĀ'ISH is novel, and it is linked intricately to current events. From a technological perspective, various social media platforms were exploited intensely as part of the group's propaganda mechanism to transmit the worldview through poetic verses, graphics, videos, and catchy chants. Thematically, DĀ'ISH discourse has proven to be timely because it is close to the human lifeworld, and it engages with the political situation of the time. The ideological outlook of DĀ'ISH is influenced by the socio-political

factors taking place within its landscape. The foundation of DĀ'ISH emerged against the backdrop of a troubled socio-political context characterized by the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. The invasion created a political vacuum, whereby multiple vectors – including the Salafi-jihadist movements – were vying for political power. DĀ'ISH discourse is replete with references that have shaped the social memory of modern-day Iraq and the Arab world in general, including the brutality at Abū Ghrayb prison, the shocking deaths of infant protestors, and the oppression of Arab nationalist governments. The instrumentalization of the past and the present impart to DĀ'ISH discourse its particular novel flavour. They make it a repository of archaeological relics and a living thing that is continually developing, changing, shedding one shape, and slipping into another.

The results of this investigation have shown that tradition and orality are two critical tools with which power abuse and manipulation are carried out. The Arabic tradition is instrumentalized as an account of political authority or legitimacy based on Max Weber's ideal typology. Naming strategies have shown to be a clear example of how tradition is exploited as a source of legitimation to exercise manipulative power. Names with religious associations that assume cultural resonance, legitimate modern institutes while also serving as a source of novel jihadist identity and ideological transmission. Lexical items carrying Islamic and martial overtones, and terms associated with Islamic figures are strategically marketed as the names of particular institutions, publishing houses, and brigades to reconstruct novel institutions as authentically Islamic even though they have no counterpart in the Islamic tradition. Likewise, the group attempts to symbolically reconstruct the geographical landscape of Iraq, Syria, and other countries by replacing these places with historical place names. This strategy becomes a credible source of legitimation, giving the illusion that the group's narrative is inevitable and preordained. By mobilizing tradition, the organization's ideas, its jihadist ethos, its specific behaviour, and its violence come to be normalized and taken-for-granted among the jihadist populace.

Similar functions include the mobilization of the genealogical linkage deployed by DĀ'ISH to build a group identity based on old cultural logics of identity formation. This cultural system of identification pre-dating Islam is reconfigured in the jihadist milieu as a source of identification for Arabs and non-Arabs joining DĀ'ISH. Individuals subscribed to DĀ'ISH ideology become linked to esteemed ancestors by way of an adopted name. The act of accepting a new name is an initial symbol of compliance and obedience, and, in turn, it serves the organization as a mechanism of controlling the private sphere of individuals. A unique identity that is hidden behind a new name, a black uniform and covered faces allocate for anonymity, which is essential in deactivating self-inhibiting norms, in deindividuating members, and in giving them a false sense of group identity. On a similar vein, a new name with an apparent lineage to a glorious past dictates a specific kind of behaviour and loyalty entrenched in age-old values of tribal society. These virtues, which resonate with the pre-Islamic Bedouin ethos, are reinterpreted in terms of upholding the worldview of DĀ'ISH. Thus, the creation of the jihadist identity is projected as a reinvention of tradition. To this extent, the group's concern with tradition is only a means to reach a novel ideological end.

DĀ'ISH discourse reveals the group's deliberate effort to obscure, blur, and distort reality. In the political sphere, DĀ'ISH seeks power by continually attempting to blur the lines between Islam and Jihadism, the jihadist milieu, and the Islamic culture. By making connections based on entrenched cultural sensibility and knowledge and rallying into the service of totalizing religious warfare, DĀ'ISH appeals to the hearts and minds of its primary Arabic-speaking audience. This kind of strategy makes it easier for organizations like DĀ'ISH to gain support within a broader mainstream Arabic and Islamic culture. This does not mean, however, that the discursive strategies through which DĀ'ISH transmits its ideology reflect an Islamic ethos. Multiple examples in this research have revealed that modern-day incitement to violence is masqueraded behind the ferocious pre-Islamic ethos of blood violence, a practice which was abandoned upon the advent of Islam. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* has also shown that the jihadist metaphor of spilling blood to harvest new members latches onto Qur'anic imagery of harvesting, extending this image to the battlefield. The Qur'anic image of harvesting, however, is neither related to blood, nor violence. Contrarily, the Qur'anic concept of harvesting describes procreation between a man and a woman to cultivate their offsprings. This example is significant on two accounts; firstly, it uncovers how novel discourse framed in Islamic references is formulated. Secondly, this example lays bare the group's distortion of the Qur'anic narrative by adopting its metaphors and allusions to a completely different situation and context. Qur'anic allusions confer religious immunity and paper the gap in logic to the group's inhumane demands. By the same token, the death of prominent DĀ'ISH figures is commemorated through the ritualistic genre of elegy, which involves the weeping of the death. The pre-Islamic custom of weeping the death also became unislamic upon the advent of Islam due to the belief in paradise and the Hereafter. These long-standing cultural practices, which were abandoned during the Islamic period, are instrumentalized in modern-day warfare to mobilize the masses emotionally and passionately.

The theoretical position that language can be employed to construct and consolidate a specific *Weltanschauung* is amply maintained and exemplified in this study. This work has identified how power abuse may be achieved by resorting to literary, semiotic, and culturally sanctioned symbolism, which is mechanically drummed home by incessant repetitions. This study has argued that discursively, repetition takes multiple forms, ranging from iconography to chants, to the recurrence of phraseology, metaphors, formulaic expressions, and diction that contribute to the jihadist group self-schema. Modern jihadist poetry is replete with structural and thematic repetitions that are borrowed from a long-standing poetic tradition. Structurally, repetitive morphological patterning, end-rhymes, monorhymes, and metre are exploited for their mnemonic effect on the deeper message of the poem. The function of elegies engages the audience in a poetic ritual that is only fulfilled once unavenged blood is redeemed. The strategic use of repetition, especially in the case of slogans, keywords, and phraseology, is a practical discursive aspect of manipulation. Repetitive symbolism contributes towards creating a repertoire of resonant symbols with which to produce an idealized hegemonic populace of DĀ'ISH rule. In exercising its capacity to renegotiate, subvert or appropriate rhetorical and symbolic meanings and to insist on the momentary stability of signification,

DĀ'ISH advertises its domination. Moreover, DĀ'ISH discourse is formulated in an emotionally-appealing language which is strategized to make large masses of people identify with the group, hate its enemies, and obey the orders willingly.

Poetic exemplars collected from a wide range of DĀ'ISH material led to the conclusion that DĀ'ISH poetry is to be classified as a subset of the modern *qaṣīda* that is characterized by the ideological fervour of militant jihadist organizations. This genre of poetry has developed by blending tradition with modernity, producing melodious and aesthetically-appealing chants that mainly target a juvenile audience. *Decoding DĀ'ISH* has argued that the classical Arabic ode is probably the most befitting medium to embody historical references and elements from tradition because its structure is imbued with cultural authenticity. In the jihadist circles, poetry serves as a popular platform through which new allegiances are pledged and publicized. Due to its connections to the oral tradition, this kind of poetry is a powerful medium to memorize and spread a message among a primary Arabic-speaking populace. Composing poetry is cheap, it does not require technical skills, and it diffuses quickly, especially in war-torn societies where other forms of discourse and media may not always be available or easily accessible. This research has concluded that DĀ'ISH poetry is not mannerist in style, and therefore, it is not composed as *art for art's sake*. This type of poetry appears to have been stereotyped, even depersonalized. Particular traits like the virtues of the in-group and the vices of the out-group are concealed under a huge equalizing mask of absolutes. DĀ'ISH poetry is considered to be close to the human lifeworld and is emotionally driven. Furthermore, DĀ'ISH poetry is circulated as a collective experience; it is confined to the repetition of innumerable variations of the accepted 'truths' and concepts of the past, without any manifestation of the inner motivations, joys, and agonies of the individual poet. Except for Aḥlām al-Naṣr, poets are not often celebrated as individuals and could rarely be identified especially in the case of chants. Due to its propagandistic and ideological elements, DĀ'ISH poetry inevitably lost any individual features that distinguished one poet from the other in the classical poetic tradition.

The results of the study indicate that the ideologically driven modern *qaṣīda* has retained several functions in the jihadist milieu that are linked to the poetic tradition. This study has claimed that DĀ'ISH poetry fulfils three main functions, namely, the function of communication, the social function, and the function of emotional expression. These functions are dictated by the worldview of DĀ'ISH and its group self-schema. Poetry is composed in a performative language, and it is often accompanied by a specific attitude determined by an enacted ritual of submission and obedience. Poetry composed in the form of oaths of allegiance is accompanied by trust and reverence, submission, and gratitude, dedicating the swearer to their power. Poetry is conceptualized in terms of a 'gift exchange,' whereby it functions as a token that embodies and symbolizes the enacted ritual of submission and supplication. Verses pledging allegiance become a ritual exchange that amounts to the establishment and maintenance of a bond of domination and obedience between DĀ'ISH and its subordinates. Verses of militant zeal promoting death in battle or suicide attacks are also ritualized in the form of sacrificial tokens. In-group members who die for DĀ'ISH become a token of sacrifice for the benefit of the community. The 'gift exchange' between DĀ'ISH and the fighters is framed in Islamic

phraseology with promises of eternal paradise. The out-group members who are killed by DĀ'ISH militants become the ultimate token to complete this ritual sacrifice. Upon completion of the poetic ritual, old tribal values are ascertained within the in-group, and group identity is reinforced. Thus, the function of communication is inherently manipulative because it is governed by the group's grand narrative.

Furthermore, DĀ'ISH poetry fulfils a social function by circulating central and idealized elements of the group's ideology. These elements are encoded in specific cultural values that reverberate with the Bedouin ethos but whose meanings are appropriated and renegotiated by DĀ'ISH. The meaning of virtue words like honour, righteousness, and manliness, which have been a significant vehicle of honour code in the Arab society, are subverted, reinterpreted, and recontextualized as the group's quest to kill the out-group. Likewise, the function of emotional expression is exploited to galvanize support for the jihadist cause, to circumvent informed judgments, and to minimize in-group conflicts.

The thematic analysis of poetic exemplars has indicated that generally, the oral-formulaic characteristics of poetry are exploited for two primary intentions; firstly, to transmit the group's ideology, and secondly to incite blood vengeance. Repetitive morphological patterning, puns, and ambiguous key terms are all mobilized to transmit particular codes of conduct, to manoeuvre attacks against competing ideologies, to establish and strengthen intra-group relations, and to demonize out-group members. More specifically, poetic exemplars taken into consideration have revealed how poetry is mobilized to mitigate the role of women in the caliphate, to create a bond of brotherhood among the fighters, to ridicule and vilify pan-Arab nationalist leaders, and to reinterpret and engage in the discussions about the Arab uprisings. Likewise, blood vengeance is framed in a narrative triggered by social injustice and oppression. Among the main thematic clusters borrowed from the poetic tradition are the elegies, which are exploited for its ritualistic and symbolic action, verses of incitement, asceticism, bravery, and retort verses. Through such thematic clusters, DĀ'ISH seeks to move forward by harking back to the roots of the Arabic tradition in order to regain past energies and spiritual and moral ways of conduct and understanding of life and propagating them into this secular society, which, in the group's view, seems to be no longer consonant with the glorious Arabic-Islamic tradition. This is done by exploiting the poetic, moral, ethical, and cultural traditional ethos to propagate a new culture based on these theologially sanctioned virtues, a *Weltanschauung* of seeing life in terms of right and wrong.

Additionally, the research has also hinted that praise poetry, which constitutes particular relevance in the poetic tradition, is lacking in DĀ'ISH poetry. Verses of praise are often embedded in pledging of allegiances or elegies but do not constitute a theme on their own. The lack of the praise genre, in addition to the poetry's rootedness in the human lifeworld, its simplicity and directness of style, its bipolar worldview between good and evil, its pious militancy-scriptural rhetoric, and the specific lexicalization at the core of its ideology hints towards a striking resemblance between DĀ'ISH poetry and the literary manifestations of religious and political factions which appeared during the Umayyad period such as the Kharijites.

Multiple analyses based on recurring lexical items circulating in DĀ'ISH poetry revealed that not all value concepts exploited by DĀ'ISH are of ancient provenance. The

use of *sha'b*, for instance, connects the group's deeper message to the popular uprisings that were taking place in the Arab world at that time. This claim is further supported by other semantically-rich ideographs that gained currency with the Arab uprisings include terms like 'justice' (*adāla*), 'injustice' (*zulm*), 'dignity' (*karāma*), 'truth' (*haqq*), 'freedom' (*hurriyya*), and 'revolution' (*thawra*). These contested terms enable groups like DĀ'ISH to connect their message with the popular uprisings and to provide a competing interpretation instead. This semantic flexibility grants DĀ'ISH subtle entry into the public square alongside other ideologies. This revelation implies that individuals subscribed to the Salafic-cum-jihadist paradigm were equally vying for political power when the public squares were occupied by protestors from early 2011.

The findings suggest that poetry is a powerful tool in warfare through which DĀ'ISH and other jihadist groups can achieve domination discursively. The production of poetry in the form of chants provides an appealing aesthetic to the jihadist paradigm. DĀ'ISH poetry is meant to make individuals cling irrationally, emotionally, and passionately to a course of action. More importantly, it is weaponized to legitimate acts of terror, to influence the behaviour of its populace, and to sugar-coat reality on the battlefield. This research contributes immensely to ongoing debates over how citizens from multiple Arab countries became, in the words of Van Dijk, 'victims of manipulation' to the extent that they were willing to leave their families and homes and join the jihadist battlefield in Iraq and Syria. It is the most extensive study so far that focuses on non-militant practices of Jihadism, focusing specifically on primary sources in Arabic. Although this study has focused on DĀ'ISH material in particular, the discussion related to the discursive strategies of domination in the symbolic world may also be applied to other jihadist organizations that exploit similar mechanisms of mobilization. When taken together, these results suggest that the Arabic and Islamic traditions are exploited by DĀ'ISH to fulfil the organization's ideological vision. Religious allusions and cultural intertextualities are manipulated to legitimate and justify violence even to the extent of normalizing unislamic practices.

This book serves as a base for future academic engagement taking place at the intersection of language, literature, and politics in the jihadist milieu, striving for a broader acceptance of modern jihadist poetry among the international academic community. The theories of domination applied to analyze DĀ'ISH discourse may be deployed to other forms of jihadist discourse. Since this work is concerned with how propaganda is being communicated to an Arabic-speaking audience, it is by nature highly policy-relevant; discursive strategies of manipulation shed light on why or how people are convinced to join extremist groups. Any intervention or counter-narrative of lasting impact has to be grounded in a thorough understanding of the cultural logics of mobilization, personality and identity structures, and the belief systems and desires of these groups. Understanding these discursive strategies of domination can also contribute to the study of radicalization. Discussions in this regard can generate ideas on how to create a more effective long-term counter-narrative to dissuade recruits from joining the jihadist battlefield, and to weaken the manipulative power of jihadist groups. Moreover, *Decoding DĀ'ISH* also carries considerable implications, dictating, to name a few, that significant resources must be allocated to propaganda, public relations, youth education, and a campaign,

both cyber and real-time, to contain and ultimately destroy the transnational movement's ability to communicate effectively.

The findings are subject to at least three limitations. First, the study is hampered by the lack of information and challenges to collect or even access the material concerning the jihadist milieu. In the case of the primary sources taken into consideration, this material often lacks details on the author, the publisher, and the date of publishing. When most of this information is lacking, it is difficult to verify or attribute jihadist verses to their organization. Additionally, since this material is connected to a specific socio-political context at a particular point in time, references to events happening in the jihadist milieu may be overlooked. A second limitation of this study lies in the qualitative approach that was applied to a set corpus. The limited number of selected poems attributed to DĀ'ISH may not be representative of the vast corpus of poetry that organizations like DĀ'ISH produce on a daily basis. This material is unavailable for researchers. On a similar vein, the current investigation was mostly based on poetic discourse, which is by no means the only form of jihadist discourse produced by DĀ'ISH. Sermon-like speeches, for instance, are equally worthy of analysis vis-à-vis the discussion about power abuse and manipulation. Finally, the study focuses on how DĀ'ISH attempts to exercise its manipulative power over its populace. The work could not, however, discuss to what extent are these strategies of domination successful on the subscribers of this particular ideology. It is challenging to assess whether people who come to believe in the DĀ'ISH trajectory obey the group because it is in their material interest to do so, or because they fear the coercive consequences of not obeying. Likewise, this study does not conclude that everyone may be radicalized. However, certain groups are more vulnerable to radicalization than others.

This book has brought up many questions hinting towards the fact that the jihadist material itself deserves more careful study than it has received up till now. Ideally, these findings should be broadened to cross-disciplinary research of jihadist discourse that analyses its manipulative power by also taking into consideration the cultural, religious, and historical implications of the Arabic and Islamic traditions. Future research should consider the potential effects of sermon-like public preaching (*khuṭba*). On the literary level, a more thorough discussion is needed to acknowledge and make sense of this modern genre of poetry, especially for its strategic significance as a battle-cry in the propagation of jihadist ideology on the battlefield. As this work has indicated, the classical Arabic ode has still retained its popularity among jihadist groups, and it is continually being reinvented on the political arena of jihadists. Understanding this kind of poetry can help us understand the rationale exploited to trigger specific actions and policies. This study could be further expounded by analyzing this poetic discourse in terms of its efficacy in a post-modernist era, where grand narratives, especially in the West, are losing ground, and every individual prefers subscribing to a meta-narrative rather than subscribing to one mega-narrative.

Appendix A

A.1 Soon, Soon

صِرَاعاً رَهِيْباً وَسَوْفَ تَرَى
لِأَجْلِ دِمَارِكَ حُسَامِي انْبِرَى
بِسِكِّينِ نَارٍ سَمَتْ مَنْ حَرَى
وَتَفْجِيرِ وَبِلِ لِكِي بُدْخَرَى
فَذَوْقُوا وَبَالِي إِذَا أُسْجِرَى
بِمَاذَا سَتَلْقَى فِتَى كَبْرَى
لِيْهَذَا اسْتَحَالَتْ لَطْأً مُسْعِرَى
فَأَيُّنَ الْمَنَاصُ شِرَارَ السُّورَى
بِخَوْفٍ وَصَمْتٍ نَشَقُّ الْعُرَى
وَعُودُوا فِرَاراً بِلَيْلِ السُّرَى
مَلْنَا الْفِجَاجَ مَمَّا أَحْمَرَى
لِجَمْعِ الْكِلَابِ إِذَا عَسْكَرَى
بِحَدِّ سَعْيِنَا لَشَمِّ السُّرَى
نَمُوتُ وَقُوفاً كَأَسَدِ الشُّرَى

قَرِيْباً قَرِيْباً تَرَوْنَ الْعَجِيْبَ
بِعُقْرِ دِيَارِكَ تَكُونُ الْمَعَارِكَ
مَشِيْنَا بِسَمْرِ لِحَزِّ وَتَحْرَ
بِأَشْبَاحِ لَيْلٍ وَفِتْيَانِ هَوْلِ
بِدَاتُمْ قِتَالِي بِحَلْفِ الضَّلَالِ
طَوِيْلًا سَتَبْقَى بِحَرْبِي سَتَشْقَى
إِذَا الْخَيْلُ جَالَتْ وَشَالَتْ وَصَالَتْ
تَلْطَى الرَّصَاصُ وَجَاءَ الْقِصَاصُ
إِلَيْكُمْ سَنَاتِي بِذَبْحٍ وَمَوْتِ
فَشِلْتُمْ جِهَاراً فَذَوْقُوا الْخَسَارَةَ
إِذَا الْكُفْرُ مَاجٍ وَأَرْغَى وَهَاجِ
بِسَمْرِ الْحِرَابِ بِضَرْبِ الرَّقَابِ
أَتَيْنَا أَتَيْنَا بِعِزِّ مَضَيْنَا
نَخُوضُ الْخُتُوفَ نَرُصُ الصُّفُوفَ

A.2 O Victory in Obtaining Martyrdom

تُمَحَى الذَّنُوبُ إِذَا الدِّمَاءُ تَقَطَّرُ
مِسْكَ تَفُوحِ جِرَاحِهِ وَتُعَطَّرُ
أَرْوَاحُهُمْ فِيهَا تَعْبِشُ وَتَعْمُرُ
وَمَعِينِ خَيْرَاتِ بَزِيدٍ وَيَكْتُرُ
وَسَيَشْفَعُونَ لِأَهْلِهِمْ إِنْ يُحْصَرُوا
فِي الْقَبْرِ لِأَنَّ يَسْأَلُوا أَوْ يَقْهَرُوا
سَيَرُوا إِلَى تِلْكَ الْحَيَاةِ وَشَمَرُوا
فِي اللَّهِ شِدْوًا بِالْحَدِيدِ وَ سَمَرُوا
وَعَلَى الْمَفَارِقِ فِي الرُّؤُوسِ تَنَسَّرُوا
لَمَّا يَرَوْنَ تِلْكَ الْمَكَارِمِ تَدَشَّرُوا
مَا يَشْتَهَوْنَ لِيُكْرَمُوا وَ لِيُأَجْرُوا
الشَّهَادَةَ فِي الْوَعَى وَ نُكْرَرُوا
وَتَدَكَّرُوا سَاخَ الْجِهَادِ تَذَكَّرُوا
كَابُولِ شَدَّتْ وَالنَّجَاتِمْ ضَمَّرُوا
تَرَكَوا النَّعِيمَ إِلَى الْجِهَادِ وَغَادَرُوا
لِلَّهِ وَاقْتَحَمُوا الصَّعَابَ وَكَتَبَرُوا
وَإِسْأَلَهُمْ كَيْفَ الْمَعَاقِلِ دَمَّرُوا
وَسِوَاهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ قَطْرِ قَدْ سَرُوا
أَحْرَارُهَا سَارُوا وَلَمْ يَتَّقْهَقَرُوا
مِنْهَا الْأَسَاوِسُ لِلْوَعَى قَدْ شَمَرُوا

بِأَقْوَرٍ مِنْ نَالِ الشَّهَادَةِ صَادِقًا
وَإِذَا الزُّهُورُ تَعَطَّرَتْ بِعَبِيرِهَا
وَخَوَاصِلِ الطَّيْرِ الْمُتَعَمِّمْ مَسْكَنًا
وَأَهْلُهُمْ مَنَازِلَ فِي الْجَنَانِ وَصُحْبَةً
وَأَهْلُهُمْ مِنَ الْخُورِ الْحَسَانِ رِضَاهُمْ
مَا مَسَّهَمْ مَوْتُ وَلَا فِي فِتْنَةٍ
مَا مَاتَ مِنْ نَالِ الشَّهَادَةِ مُخْلِصًا
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَقَطَّعَتْ أَوْصَالُهُمْ
وَتَمَسَّطَتْ دُونَ الْعِظَامِ لِحَوْمِهِمْ
يَرْجُونَ لَوْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ تَأَلُّمًا
وَإِذَا الْإِلَهُ دَعَى وَقَالَ سَأَلُوهُمْ
قَالُوا نُرِيدُ الْعُودَ لِلدُّنْيَا لِكِي نَلْقَى
فَأَمْضُوا بِحَدِّ مِنْ مُجِدِّ هِمَّةٍ
إِخْوَانُكُمْ شَدُّوا سُرُوحَ مَطِيهِمْ
وَتَدَكَّرُوا أَهْلَ الْجَزِيرَةِ إِخْوَةً
تَرَكَوا النِّسَاءَ وَأَهْلَهُمْ وَدِيَارَهُمْ
وَإِسْأَلُ فُلُوقِ الرُّوسِ كَيْفَ صُمُودَهُمْ
مِنْ مِصْرٍ سَارُوا وَ الْجَزَائِرِ أَنْجَبَتْ
بِأَيِّمَانٍ وَصِدْقِ عَزِيمَةٍ
وَإِذْكَرُ بِلَادِ الرَّافِدِيْنَ وَ شَامَنَا

مَا بَدَّلُوا وَآرَأَهُمْ مَا غَيَّرُوا
 وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ تَجَهَّزُوا لِيُغَادِرُوا
 أَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا فَإِنَّهُ أَوْ أَنْ تُنصِرُوا
 فَالْقُدْسُ تُكْبِي وَالْيَهُودُ تَجَاسَرُوا
 وَتَسْلَحُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَا تَتَأَخَّرُوا
 عِزُّ إِذَا مَا تَسْتَجِيبُ وَمَفْخَرُ

مِنْهُمْ قَضَى نَحْباً وَمِنْهُمْ نَاطِرٌ
 أَهْدَى إِلَى تِلْكَ الْمَعَاوِلِ دَعْوَةٌ
 شَدُوا الرِّحَالِ إِلَى الْجِهَادِ عَسَكُمْ
 وَعَسَاكُمْ أَنْ تُرْهِبُوا أَعْدَائَكُمْ
 وَتَجَهَّزُوا يَا إِخْوَتِي لِعَدُوِّكُمْ
 قَوْمُوا لِحَيِّ عَلَى الْجِهَادِ فَإِنَّهُ

A.3 The Clashing of Swords

نَشِيدُ الْأَبَاةِ
 طَرِيقُ الْحَيَاةِ
 يُبِيدُ الطُّغَاةَ
 جَمِيلٌ صَدَاهُ
 وَذَلَّ الْبُغَاةَ
 لِذُرْبِ الْكَمَاةِ
 تَسْرُ الْهُدَى
 يُغَيِّظُ الْعُدَاةَ
 لِذُرْبِ النَّجَاهِ
 نَصْدُ الْغُزَاهِ
 وَنُغْلَى جِبَاهِ
 لِعَايِرِ الْإِلَاهِ
 دَعَانَا لِوَاهِ
 لِحَرْبِ عِدَاهِ
 فِدَا عَنْ جِمَاهِ
 سَيَغْدُوا عِرَاهِ

صَلِيلُ الصَّوَارِمِ
 وَذُرْبُ الْقِتَالِ
 فَبَيِّنُ اقْتِحَامِ
 وَكَاتِمِ صَوْتِ
 بِهِ عَزَّ دِينِي
 فَيَا قَوْمِي هُبُّوا
 فَلِمَا حَيَاةُ
 وَإِمَامَاتِ
 فَكُمُ يَا أُخِيَّةُ
 لِنَمُضِي سَوِيًّا
 وَنَرْفَعُ مَجْدًا
 أَبْتُ أَنْ تَذِلَّ
 إِلَى الْحَقِّ هَيَّا
 لِسَاحِ الْمَنَابِيَا
 فَمَنْ مَاتَ مِنَّا
 بِجَنَاتِ خُلْدِ

A.4 Be Pure with God

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ صَائِرٌ نَحْوَ الزُّوَالِ
 خَالِياً مِنْ كُلِّ حَالِ ذَاتِ بَالِ
 مُحْكَمِ النَّسْجِ وَمِنْ أَقْوَى الْجِبَالِ
 فَأِغْتَنِمْ وَإِسْعِدْ بِذِيكَ الْوَصَالِ
 دُونَكُمْ خَوْضُوا مِيَادِينَ الْقِتَالِ
 فَارْ مِنْ لَبِيٍّ وَضَحَى كُلُّ غَالِي
 يَسْمَعُ الْهَمْسَ بِذَرَاتِ الرِّمَالِ
 وَغُرَاةً فَأَكْسِنَا نُوبَ الْمَعَالِي
 تَلْقَاهُ يُنْجِبُكَ فِي سُودِ اللَّيَالِي
 ثُمَّ يَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّي ذُو الْجَلَالِ

كُنْ مَعَ اللَّهِ نَقِيًّا لَا تُبَالِي
 عِشْ قَنوعاً بِالرَّضَى مُسْتَسْلِمًا
 إِنَّ حَبْلَ اللَّهِ يَا هَذَا مَتِينٌ
 إِنْ تَصَلَّهُ فَهُوَ لِلْعَبِيدِ وَصُولٌ
 إِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ عِزَّةً فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
 ذَرُّوا الْأُمْرَ جِهَادًا فَارْتَقُوا
 كُلُّ مَنْ يَدْعُوهُ يَلْقَاهُ قَرِيبًا
 يَا إِلَهَ الْكُؤُنِ جُنُوكَ خُفَاءُ
 رَبُّكَ الْحَامِي فِاسْأَلْهُ خَالِصًا
 كُلُّ مَا فَوْقَ الْبَرَابِرِ زَائِلٌ

A.5 Our Shari'a is a Beacon and Example

وَمَشْكَاهُ الْهُدَايَةِ وَالْكَمَالِ
وَبَاءَ بِخِزْيَةِ الْكُفْرِ الْمُدَالِ
وَفِسْطَاطِ بِهَا هَاجَ الضَّلَالِ
سَوَاسِيَةً بِهَا اِنْتَصَفُوا وَتَالُوا
يُطَاوَلُهَا الْقَمِيءُ وَلَا يُطَالُ
سَنَامُ جِهَادِهَا عَالٍ طَوَالُ
بِهَا تَسْمُو الْمَكَارِمُ وَالْخِصَالُ
لِمَنْ تَاهَتْ مَرَائِكِبُهُمْ وَمَالُوا
تَجَذَّلَ دُونَ سَاحَتِهَا الرِّجَالُ
بِشْرَعِ اللَّهِ قَدْ صَلَّوْا وَجَالُوا
وَقَامَ الْعَدْلُ وَانْتَضَمَ الْمَجَالُ
بِهَا الْأَمْوَالُ تَزْكُو وَالْغِلَالُ
وَتُسْتَلُّ الضَّغَائِنُ وَالْكَلالُ
فَقَحَّتْ ظِلَالِهَا تَسْمُو الْفِعَالُ

شَرِيْعَتُنَا الْمَنَارَةُ وَالْمِثَالُ
هِيَ الْحَقُّ الَّذِي زَهَقَ الدِّيَاجِي
فَفِسْطَاطِ بِهَا الْإِيْمَانُ يَغْلُو
حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فِيهَا قَدْ أَفِيْمَتُ
وَأَرْكَانُ الشَّرِيْعَةِ رَاسِيَةٌ
هُنَا دَارُ الْخِلَافَةِ وَالْمَعَالِي
شَرِيْعَةٌ رَبُّنَا نُوْرٌ تَجَلَّى
شَرِيْعَةٌ رَبُّنَا يَا قَوْمَ مَنْجِي
زَهَتْ دَارُ الْخِلَافَةِ فِي جِهَادِ
دُعَاةِ لِلْهُدَى الصَّافِي أَبَاةُ
أُصُوْلُ الدِّيْنِ تُزْهِرُ بَعْدَ يُبْسِ
فَبَايِرُ يَا أَخِي وَادْفَعْ زَكَاةُ
يُضَاعَفْهَا لَكَ الْمَوْلَى وَيُرَبِّي
فَعُضُوا بِالنَّوْاجِدِ وَاعْتَمُوا

A.6 Praise be to God

وَاسْتَبَشَرَ الْكُونُ وَالذُّنْيَا أَغَارِيذُ
مُصَدَّقَةَ الْعَهْدِ أَنْ النَّصْرَ مَوْعُودُ
عَزَمَ الرِّجَالُ فِيَسْمُو الْبَدَلُ وَالْجَوْدُ
عَلَى الرِّقَابِ وَكَمْ تَخَلُّو الْأَنْشَايِدُ
وَأَخْصَبَتْ مِنْ نَدَى نِعْمَانِيهَا الْبَيْدُ
ظَلَّ الشَّرِيْعَةَ فِي الْأَفَاقِ مَمْدُودُ
وَعِدَّةُ الْحَرْبِ تَسْبِيحُ وَتَخْمِيدُ
وَالْأَرْضُ تَخْضَعُ لَهُمْ وَالْحَوْضُ مَوْرُودُ
نَحْنُ الْبَنُونَ وَهُمْ أَجْدَادُنَا الصَّيْدُ
وَيَسْتَقِيمُ لِرَبِّ الْكُونِ تَوْحِيدُ
يَخَافُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حُلُوفُ رَعَادِيدُ
وَتُفْلِقُ الْهَامُ وَالصُّمُّ الْجَلَامِيدُ
مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ تُنَادِيهِ الْمَوَاعِيدُ
وَالْتَّبْرُ ضَاءٌ وَفَاحُ الْمِسْكَ وَالْعُودُ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ هَلَّ النَّصْرُ وَالْعِيدُ
الْمَجْدُ يَشْدُو عَلَى أَنْعَامِ مَلْحَمَةِ
مُهَاجِرُونَ وَأَنْصَارُ يُسَابِقُهُمْ
يَسْتَطْرِبُ الطَّعْنَ إِنْ غَنَّتْ صَوَارِئُهُمْ
هَذِي النَّبَاتِيْرُ قَدْ هَلَّتْ سَحَابُهَا
عَدْنَا إِلَى الْمَجْدِ إِذْ عَادَتْ جَحَافِلُنَا
شُمَّ أَبَاةُ إِذَا الدَّاعِي دَعَى انْطَلَقُوا
تَبْكِي السَّمَاءُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِبْطَةً فَرِحَا
عَدْنَا وَعَادَتْ لَنَا بَدْرٌ وَعِرَّتْهَا
حَيَّ عَلَى الْمَوْتِ كَيْ نَحْيَا بِجَنَاتِهِ
جَيْشُ مِنَ الْأَسَدِ لَا يَخْشَوْنَ عَادِيَةً
تُنْقِذُ بِالسَّيْفِ دَلَا كُلَّ نَاصِيَةٍ
يَا أُمَّتِي ابْتَهَجِي أَسَادُنَا انْغَمَسُوا
مِيْعَادُهُمْ جَنَّةُ تَرْهُوَ الْجِسَانُ بِهَا

A.7 At your Service O Sister

لَبَّيْكَ يَا أختاهُ هَاكِ الرُّوحُ تَفْدي طَهْرُكَ
لَبَّيْكَ إِنَّ عَجْزَتْ يَدَايَ: فدى فُؤادي عِزَّكَ
لَبَّيْكَ إِنَّا لَا نَهَابُ الموتِ أَوْ نَخْشى السَّرْدَى
لَبَّيْكَ إِنَّ نَدَاءَكَ الأحرارَ لَمْ يَذْهَبْ سُـدى
يَا أختاهُ مَنْزِلَةُ الحَرائرِ عِنْدنا كَالنَّـدْرَةِ
وَشَبائِبنا الأحرارُ قَدْ صاغوا مَعانِي النِّخْـوَةِ
أَنْتِ السَّنْـاءُ لَنَا حِماكَ اللهُ مِنْ شرِّ العِـدا
إِنَّ صَحَّتْ يَوْمًا سوْفَ نَمضي لَنْ يَضِيعَ لِكَ الصَّـدى
يَا مَنْ لَهَا مَهْجُ الكِرامِ تَنوُدُ عَنْ شَرَفِ الجِـمى
لَا لَنْ نَخَيِّبُ حُرَّةً نادَتْ شَبابِئاً مُسْلِماً
إِنَّا هُنَا نَمضي نَباتاً شامِخاً مِثْلَ الجِـبالِ
لَسْنَا نَخافُ الظُّلمَ يَوْمًا أَوْ قُيُودَ اللِّـعقِـالِ
فَلْتَعْلَمِ الدُّنيا جَمِيعاً أَنَّنا نَفْدي الحَرائرُ
بِالروحِ بِالدِّمِّ، لَيْسَ فِينا غَـائبٌ خَوْفاً وَخائِـرُ
إِنَّ الفِـتاةَ بَدِيننا مَعزُوزَةٌ وَمُـكْرَمَةٌ
وَلِنَصْرِها هَبَّتْ أَسودُ سَطَرَتْ ذِي المَـلِحْمَةِ
هِيَ نُصْفُ مَجْتَمَعِ بِها قَدْ أَزْهَرَتْ أَحْـلامُنا
هِيَ أَختُنا أَوْ أُمَّنا رَبَّتْ لَنَا عِـلامُنا
هِيَ ابْنَةُ تَحْكي البِـرَاءَةِ تَحْتِ ذِي إِقْدامِنا
هَذِي مَكانِئُها الرِّفِيعَةُ صاغِها إِسْـلامُنا!
طَهَّرُ الحَرائرِ فِي الشَّامِ لَتَسْتَحْيِ مِنْهُ السَّـحابُ
حِصْنَ مَذِيعِ طالِما قَهَرَ الدُّبابُ مَعَ الدُّنابِ
وَعلَى حُدُودِ الحِصْنِ قَدْ نَزَفَتْ يَماءُ زاكِياتِ
تَفْديهِ عِزْماً مِنْ وُحُوشِ ضارِياتِ عادياتِ
ذِيكَ لَا يَبْدُو عَجِيباً يا أختي- أَوْ مُسْتَحِيلِ
إِنَّ الشَّبَابِ المُسْلِـمِ الوُضْـاءُ ذُو أَصْلِ أَصِيلِ
إِنَّ ماتَ مُعْتَصِماً فَكُلُّ شَبابِ شامٍ لَهُ حَفِيدُ
أَلْفٌ وَأَلْفٌ ثُمَّ أَلْفٌ مَعَ الوُفِّ بَلِّ يَزِيدُ!
لَبَّيْكَ يا بِنْتَهُ أُمَّهاتِ المُؤْمِنينَ وَثارِنا
مِثْلُ الجِمارِ بِهِ يُنْفِـعُ نَخْـوَةَ أحرارِنا
يَا أختِ إني ابْنُ الشَّامِ وَأَرْضُنا مَهْـدُ الكِرامِ
وَشَبائِبنا الأحرارِ دِيدَنُهُمُ فِداءً مَعَ شِهامِ
قَرِي أيا أختاهُ عَيناً لَنْ تُعاني مِنْ هِـوانِ
قَرِي .. فَإِنَّ الأَسَدَ تَعَدُو بَيْنَما هَتْرَبَ الجِـبانِ
يَا أَيُّها الأَشْرارُ فَارْتَعِدُوا إِذا مِنْ عَضْبَتِي!
لَا لَنْ تَنالَ ذُنُوبَكُمُ فِي غَدْرِها مِنْ نَخوتِي!
أنا مُسْلِمٌ عِزِّي فَتِي لَسْتُ أَرْضِي بِالدُّنْـايا
أنا صولتِي بِالحَقِّ كَي أُنجي مِنَ الظُّلمِ البِـرايِـيا
وَلأَجْلِكُنَّ حَرائرَ الإسلامِ أَمْضِي لا أَلينُ
وَأصْبِحُ: لَبَّيْكَ إني ها هُنَا أَحْمِي العَرينِ
قَدْ ثَرَتْ صِدِّ نِظامِ شَرِّ حارِبِ المَجْدِ الرِّفِيعِـما
وَغَدَا ظِلَماً حاقداً بَلِّ مُجرِماً وَغَدَا وَضِيعِـما

قَدْ حَارَبَ الْإِسْلَامَ وَالْأَخْلَاقَ مَعَ نَهْجِ الْكَتَابِ
 نَشَرَ الْمَفَاسِدَ وَالرَّذَائِلَ كِي يَنَالَ مِنَ الْحِجَابِ!
 هِيَهَاتَ تَنْجَحُ أَيُّهَا الْجُرْمُ الْمَلْطُخُ بِالسُّخَامِ!
 أَنْسَيْتَ أَنَا مِنْ سَلَالَةِ مَجْدِ أَبِيطَالِ عِظَامِ!!
 إِنْ كُنْتُ شَرِيحَةً مِنَ الْإِفْسَادِ وَالْخُلُقِ الْمَشَائِنِ
 فَالشَّبَابُ إِسْلَامِي شَرِيفٌ طَاهِرٌ عَلِي الْجَبِيْنِ!
 بَيْنَ الثَّرِيَا وَالنُّعْرَى فَرَّقْ كَمَا الْأَفَقَ الْبَعِيدِ
 فَالزَّمْ حُدُودَكَ لَا تُغَادِرْهَا أَيَا جِنْسِ الْعَبِيدِ
 إِنَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ لَا نَخْشَى وَلَا نَرْجُو سِوَاهُ
 قَدْ فَازَ مَنْ يَحْيَا عَلَيَّ حَقًّا وَيَمُضِي فِي هُدَاهُ

A.8 My Umma was not Satisfied with the Weakness

أُمَّةٌ كَانَتْ مِنْ خَيْرِ الْأُمَّةِ
 هُمُهَا يَسْمُو وَيَعْلُو لِلْقَمَمِ
 كَانَتْ الدُّنْيَا لَهُمْ تَحْتَ الْقَدَمِ
 وَشِعَارٌ وَفُؤَادٌ وَعَالَمٌ
 وَقِتَارٌ وَبِحَارٌ وَتَهَمٌ
 يَرْتَدِي الذَّلَّ وَيَمْشِي كَالنَّعَمِ
 وَرَجَالٌ مِنْهُمْ مَالٌ مِنْ عَنَمِ
 وَحَمَوُ الدِّينِ كَمَا تُحَمَى الْخُرَمِ
 فِي زَمَانٍ قَادَ عَرَبَهُمْ عَجَمٌ
 وَيَقُودُ النَّاسَ أَبْلَهُ قَزَمٌ
 وَأَقْتَلُوا الْبَاغِي وَمَنْ لَهُمْ عَصَمٌ
 عَمَرُ الْفَارُوقِ حَمَزَةُ الْعَلَمِ
 جَعْفَرٌ يَمْضِي وَلِلْمَوْتِ لَيْتَمٌ
 أَحْمَدُ الْهَادِي وَسَيِّدُ الْأَمَمِ

أُمَّتِي كَانَتْ لَا تَرْضَى الْوَهْنِ
 هُمُهَا دِينٌ لَا هَمَّ النَّعَمِ
 يَوْمٌ كَانَ الصَّحْبُ يَرْجُونَ لِلجِنَانِ
 نَصَرَ بَيْنَ الْمَوَالِي لَهُمْ دِثَارِ
 سَيْفٌ دِينِي قَدْ عَلَيَّ شَرْفُ الْجِبَالِ
 أَرْعَمُوا الْكَافِرَ يَعْלוهُ الصَّغَارِ
 وَنِسَاءٌ لَهُمْ سَبِي لَنَا
 حَمَلُوا النَّفْسَ عَلَى كَفِّ الْمَنُونِ
 يَا أَسْوَدَ الدِّينِ يَا زَمَرَ الْجِهَادِ
 فِي زَمَانِ عَصَاةِ الْأَنْثَى تَسُودِ
 صَوْلُوا صَوْلَةَ الصَّحَابِ فِي النَّزَالِ
 وَ أذْكَرُوا الْأَمْجَادَ أَمْجَادَ الصَّحَابِ
 سَيِّفٌ رَبِّي وَالزُّبَيْرُ وَالرَّوَاحِ
 وَاقْتَفُوا هَدْيَ رَسُولِنَا الْإِمَامِ

A.9 The Life of Humiliation is Not Acceptable

وَحُبُّ الْمَوْتِ بِالْعِزِّ مَرَامٌ
 فَمَا لِلْعَبِيدِ فِي الدُّنْيَا مَقَامٌ
 لِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ
 لِحَبِّكَ لَا أَكَلُ وَلَا أَنَامُ
 خُذَلْتُ مِنَ الْبَرِّيَّةِ أَوْ الْأَمِّ
 سَابِقِي تَابِتًا مَهْمَا أَسَامُوا
 وَفِي الْأَسْوَارِ أَحْرَارٌ تُضَامُ
 فَذَعَوَاتُ اللَّيَالِي لَكُمْ سِيهَامُ
 وَجَيْشٌ فِي الْعِرَاقِ لَهُ إِخْتِدَامُ
 وَجُنْدُ اللَّهِ لِلدِّينِ أَقَامُوا

حَيَاةُ الذَّلِّ لَا، لَا أَرْضِيهَا
 فَلَا وَاللَّهِ لَا أَحْشَى الْمَنَابِيَا
 وَإِنَّ الْمَوْتِ فِي دَرْبِ الْجِهَادِ
 فَيَا دَرْبِ الْجِهَادِ هَلُمَّ إِنِّي
 سَابِقِي وَاقْبَا بِالْعَهْدِ مَهْمَا
 وَمَهْمَا سَامَنِي الْأَعْدَاءُ قَهْرًا
 فَلَا وَاللَّهِ مَا فِي الْعَيْشِ خَيْرٌ
 فَصَبِّرْ يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ صَبْرًا
 لَكُمْ بِالشَّامِ جَيْشٌ كَالْأَسْوَدِ
 فَاصْبِرْ اللَّهُ أَتَى لَا مَحَالَا

A.10 Let the World Verily Witness that I am a DĀ'ISH Member

أزهارها تقوى بشوك خادش
فهو الدليل على الثبات (العائشي)
كالنور يسطع في الضباب الغابش
فعدا عليها كل حقد طائش
فمحت أكاذيب الهراء الناهش
فالدن دستور وليس بهامش
فعدا الكذب أمامها كالزاعش
كالماء بيدو صافياً للعاش
رغماً على شر أثير فاحش:
فلتشهد الدنيا بأني داعشي

يا دولة الإسلام كوني دوحه
ولتصمدي إبان ظلم غادر
كوني علي كل أتهم باطل
(د) دعست رؤوسهم بكل بسالة
(ا) أرسق قواعد ديننا في عزيمة
(ع) عصفت بكل مكيدة حكمت لها
(ش) شملت جموع المنهكين بيزها
فلتسمعوا إخلصنا في قولنا
إن كان حب الصالحين تدعشاً
أذتهم بخصائنها وثباتها

A.11 My Soul is Free and Far from Them

ولليل بولي وثم يعود
دواماً يافق السجون يسود
يعادي القران ورب الوجود!
لنخضع للذل مثل العبيد!
ولا تحسبوا أنني قد أحيذ
وتنشد لحن الثبات الوطيد
خذلتكم جراحي كحال الجود
أوان أختفي من جمانا الأسود
ودكوا السجون، وفكوا القيود!
فإن الجود قريب اللحد!
وأنتم أسارى بفكر القعود!
بغير الجهاد وبذل الجهود
أسطر للناس سفر الصوم
دمائي نار تذل الحقد
فروحي تخلق نحو الخلود
فروحي طليق وعنه بعيد!
بإذن العزيز الكريم المجيد
أجر لربي طليقاً سجود

إذا كان يومكم من نهار
فإن الأسير يقاسي ظلاماً
وما ذاك إلا لأن العدو
ويسعى لطمس الحقيقة فينا
أيا قوم لا تحسبوني أليئ
فإن المعالي بقلبي تدوي
ولكنكم قد رأيتم أساري
خذلتكم نساء عدون بأسر
الإم التخاذل؟! قوموا وهبوا!
وإن ما جبنتم وكنتم حيارى
فخنن الأسارى بقبيل وسجن
ولن ينجلي ليل ظلم طويل
لتعلم جموع الطغاة بأني
جراحي جمار تدك الأعدى
وإن كان جسمي رهين القيود
وأهزأ يوماً بلذع السياط
وأعلم أن إنتصاري قريب
غداة تهدم أسوارهم:

A.12 You were Free

فِي بِلَادِ زَادَهَا الْمَوْلَى مَزَايَا
 قَدْ أَضَعْتُمْ كُلَّ هَاتِيكَ السَّجَايَا
 كَيْفَ تَرْضَاهَا وَتَجْتَرُّ الرِّزَايَا
 نَاسِيَا صَحْبًا تَنَادَاوَا لِلْمَنَايَا
 نَحْوَ دَارِ الْكُفْرِ أَسْرَجَتْ الْمَطَايَا
 نَازِحًا يَرْضَى فِتَاتًا وَالْبَقَايَا
 غَارِقًا فِي قَعْرِ بَحْرِ بِالْخَطَايَا
 قَدْ خَلَعْتَ السُّمْتَ قَدْ بَعْتَ الْقَضَايَا
 فِي بِلَادِ سَادَهَا سُوءَ الطَّوَايَا
 كَيْفَ أَصْبَحْتُمْ عَنَاوِينَ الْبَلَايَا
 سَوْفَ يُخْرِزِي تُمْ تُخْفِيهِ الْخَفَايَا
 وَاطْلُبُوا الْعِزَّ بِتَجْهِيزِ السَّرَايَا

كُنْتُ حُرًّا شَامِخَ الرَّأْسِ أَبِيًّا
 مَا لَكُمْ بِرُؤْمِكُمْ إِلَى الْأَعْدَاءِ طَوْعًا
 يَا أَخَا الْإِسْلَامِ لَا تَرْضُضَنَّ الدَّنَايَا
 كَيْفَ تَتْرُكُ دَارَ عِزٍّ عَشْتُ فِيهَا
 كَيْفَ غَادَرْتِمْ وَ سَافَرْتِمْ بَعِيدًا
 كَيْفَ تَرْضَى الْعَيْشَ يَا هَذَا ذَلِيلًا
 تَائِبًا فِي أَرْضِ كُفْرٍ لَا أُنَيْسُ
 فِي شُرُوطِ الْعَارِ قَدْ أَصْبَحْتَ عَبْدًا
 وَصَمَّةً صَرْتُمْ وَأَشْتَاتًا رِذَالًا
 كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ الْوَرَى فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
 مَنْ رَأَى دِينَنَا سِوَى الْإِسْلَامِ يَوْمًا
 وَارْجِعُوا لِلدِّينِ إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِزٌّ

A.13 The Land is Witnessing Them as Builders

عَمَرَ الْخِرَابَ بِشَرِّعِهِ الْأَبْرَارُ
 قِصْفٌ وَلَا نَارٌ وَلَا إِحْصَارُ
 حَتَّى الْعَدُوَّ بِشَأْنِهِمْ يَخْتَارُ
 لَمَّا تَنَاهَى فِي الْمَدَى "اسْتِنْفَارُ!"
 جَيْشٍ كَمِّيَّ بِاسِئْلِ جِرَارُ
 وَجِوَارَ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ اخْتَارُوا
 وَنَقَشْتُمْ فُخْرًا بِهِ الْإِكْبَارُ
 خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ ظَنَّ الْخِلَافُ بُصَارُ
 نَصَرَ الشَّرِيدَ إِلَهَهُ الْقَهَّارُ
 رِوْمًا وَقِرْسًا بِالْوَعَى كَرَّرُ
 لِتَمَحَّصِ الْأَطْهَارَ مِمَّنْ خَارُوا
 فَحَنَّتْ عَلَى الْأَسَدِ الْعَضَابُ قِفَارُ
 دِينًا بِهَذَا طَمَآنَ الْجَبَّارُ
 بَيْتٌ تَهْدَمُ هَذِهِ الْكُفَّارُ
 أَوْ جُرْحٍ جَسَمٍ قَدْ كَوَّنَهُ النَّارُ
 يُبْشِرُ الْبَدِيلُ لِمَثَلِهَا وَيُعَارُ
 نَصَرَ النَّقْيُ لِنَبَاتِهِ الْبِتَارُ
 مَا خَافَ حِينَ حَوَاهُ ذَاكَ الْعَارُ
 مَعَهُمْ! وَعَقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ تَبَارُ

الْأَرْضُ تَشْهَدُ أَنَّهُمْ عَمَّارُ
 مَا صَرَّ أَرْضَ الْبَادِلِينَ لِرَبِّهِمْ
 تَبَيَّنُوا ثَبَاتًا لَا ثَبَاتَ كَمِثْلِهِ
 هَا مَوْصِلَ الْأَخْبَارِ تَشْهَدُ فِعْلَهُمْ
 فَتَوَافَدَ الْإِبْطَالُ نَحْوَ تَغُورِهَا
 لَبَّيْوا نِدَاءَ إِمَامِهِمْ يَوْمَ الْوَعَى
 فَبَدَلْتُمْ جُنْدَ الْخَلِيفَةِ جَهْدَكُمْ
 وَخِتَامُ مَعْرَكَةِ الْأَسْوَدِ تَكْشَفَتْ
 مَا خَيَّبَ الْمَوْلَى رَجَاءَ عَبِيدِهِ
 قَدْ كَانَ يَحْكُمُ بِالْكِتَابِ مُصَاوِلًا
 سُنَّنَ الْبَلَاءِ الْمُرَّ تَجْرِي دَائِمًا
 فَتَنَكَّرَتْ صَحَوَاتُ أَمْرِيكَالَهُمْ
 وَلَيْنُصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ جُنْدًا نَاصِرُوا
 يَا أَيُّهَا الْأَعْلُونَ لَا تَبْكُوا عَلَى
 أَوْ إِخْوَةَ ذَهَبُوا لِعِنْدِ مَلِكِهِمْ
 كُلُّ الصَّنُوفِ وَإِنْ تَفَرَّدَ حُسْنُهَا
 إِلَّا الْعَقِيدَةُ لَا بَدِيلَ لِفَقْدِهَا
 يَا أَيُّهَا الْأَعْلُونَ إِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا
 إِنَّ الْعَزِيزَ مُؤَيَّدٌ أَنْصَارُهُ

A.14 The Banner of Monotheism

وَأَحْرِي اللَّيْلَ وَسَعَى كَوَكْبَا
 أَيْقُضِي الشَّرْقَ وَأَحْيِ الْمَغْرِبَا
 مَا نَبَا السِّيفِ وَلَا اللَّيْثُ كَبَا
 وَسَقَوْهَا أَرْجَوَانَا مَخْضِبَا
 وَأَقْتَدَى الْإِبْنَ جُدوداً وَالْأَبَا
 وَهَدَاةَ الْعَالَمِينَ النَّجْبَا
 زَمَجِرَ الْأَبْطَالِ أَسَادِ الْأَبَا
 أَسْرَجُوا الْخَيْلَ وَهَبُوا هِبَةً
 إِنَّهُ الْإِسْلَامَ إِنْتَهَضَ بِهِ
 مَجْدُنَا فِيهِ وَفِيهِ عَزَّنَا
 وَنُدَاوِي بِالْعَوَالِي مِنْ أَبِي

رَايَةَ التَّوْحِيدِ شَقَى الْعَيْهَبَا
 وَأَنْشَرِي الْحَقَّ بِأَرْجَاءِ الدُّنْيَا
 كَمْ فَدَهَا الْغَرَمِينَ أَهْلَ النَّقْيَا
 أَطْعَمُوها حَبَّةَ الْقَلْبِ نَدَى
 قَدْ تَوَلَّوْهُهَا وَصَانُوا رَسْمَهَا
 أُمَّةٌ تُنْجِبُ فُرْسَانَ الْوَعْيَا
 كَلَمَا حَامَتِ غَرَابِيبَ الْوَرَى
 هِبَةَ الْبُرْكَانِ يَزْمِي اللَّهْبَا
 فَهُوَ وَاللَّهِ السَّبِيلَ الْمَجْتَبَى
 دُونَهُ تَبْقَى غَنَاءَ خَلْبَا
 وَصَعِقَ الْأَعْدَاءُ صَعَقًا بِاللَّظَى

A.15 When the War Starts, We will March towards It

نَحْوَضُ لَطَاها وَأَهْوَأُهَا
 وَقَوْدُ يُضْرَمُ إِشْعَالُهَا
 فَسَلَّ أُمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ مَا نَالُهَا
 وَقَدْ شَتَّتَ الْحَقُّ أَحْوَالُهَا
 وَنَلْبِسُ لِلْحَرْبِ سِرْبَالُهَا
 وَنَقْطَعُ بِالسِّيفِ أَوْصَالُهَا
 وَتَنْفِي عَنِ الدَّارِ خِذَالُهَا
 لِنَتَلْقَى النِّوَاصِي لَتَغْتَالُهَا
 نَرُومُ الْحَسَانَ وَأَمْثَالُهَا
 لِنَتَلْقَى الْكِرَامَ وَمَنْ نَالُهَا
 عَشَقْنَا شَذَاها وَسَلْسَالُهَا
 وَنَرْجُو الْقَبُولَ قَوَاهَا لَهَا

إِذَا الْحَرْبُ شَبَّتْ مَشِينَا لَهَا
 فَتَحْنُ الْأَبَاءَ وَنَحْنُ لَهَا
 سَقَيْنَا السِّيُوفَ دِمَاءَ لَهَا
 نُحَسِّدُ لِلرُّوعِ أَنْذَالُهَا
 نَقْدَمُ لِلسَّاحِ أَبْطَالُهَا
 نَدُكُ الْقِلَاعَ وَأَطْلَالُهَا
 خِيُولَ تَسَابِقِ خِيَالُهَا
 تَبِيدُ الْمَخَازِي وَأَرْذَالُهَا
 إِلَى الْخَلْدِ قُمْنَا وَسَرْنَا لَهَا
 نَتَّقُ اسْتِيقَا وَحِبَا لَهَا
 شَرِينَا الْجِنَانَ وَأَفْضَالُهَا
 بِتَوْحِيدِ رَبِّي سَمُونَا لَهَا

A.16 By the Breaking of Skulls

وَعَزَفَ الْكَوَاتِمِ
 لِنَيْلِ الْمَكَارِمِ
 يَكْفُ الْقَشَاعِمِ
 الْأَبَاةِ الضِّيَاعِمِ
 وَتَهْوَى الْمَلَاجِمِ
 فَذَوْمَا نُهَاجِمِ
 بِعُودِ الْبِوَاسِمِ
 بِأَحْنِ مُلَائِمِ
 بِسُمْرِ الْأَهَائِمِ
 لَذِيذِ وَقَائِمِ
 بِصِدْقِ الْمَعَارِمِ
 لِزُورِ الْمَزَاعِمِ
 لِخَرِّ الشَّرَائِمِ
 صَحِيحِ الْمَعَالِمِ
 وَفِيرِ الْمَغَانِمِ
 جَمِيلِ الْخَوَاتِمِ

بِكَسْرِ الْجَمَاجِمِ
 سَبِيلِ سَدِيدِ
 وَحَدِّ الْمَوَاضِي
 سَبِيلِ الْأَسُودِ
 تَخُوضِ الْحُرُوبِ
 وَتَأْبَى خُنُوعاً
 وَتَعَزَفُ لَحْناً
 وَدَفِّ الْمَوَاضِي
 وَتَقْطِفُ رَأْساً
 وَتَشْرَبُ دَمًا
 وَتَهْوَى طِعَانًا
 وَتَأْبَى أَنْجَارًا
 دَعُونَا نُبَايِزُ
 لِأَصْرَةِ دِينِ
 فِيمَا لِنَصْرِ
 وَإِمَّا لِقَتْلِ

A.17 We Came like Eagles

طِعَانًا بَعَيْنَا
 سِرَاعًا مَضَيْنَا
 كُيُودًا قَرَيْنَا
 كُفُورًا سَقَيْنَا
 أُسُودًا سَرَيْنَا
 غِضَابًا سَعَيْنَا
 طِعَانًا بَعَيْنَا
 سِرَاعًا مَضَيْنَا
 شِرَارًا رَمَيْنَا
 عَبِيدًا صَالَيْنَا
 كِلَابًا شَوَيْنَا
 كِرَامًا أَنْيْنَا
 جِنَانًا شَرَيْنَا
 سُهُوبًا طَوَيْنَا
 خُضُوعًا أَبَيْنَا
 لِرِمَامٍ عَلَيْنَا

صُقُورًا أَنْيْنَا
 خِفَافًا مَشَيْنَا
 نُحُورًا بَرَيْنَا
 زُؤَامَ الْمَنَايَا
 بِبَعْثِ السَّرَايَا
 لِسَحْقِ عِدَانَا
 صُقُورًا أَنْيْنَا
 خِفَافًا مَشَيْنَا
 هُنُورَ الْبَلَايَا
 سَعِيرًا نَسَامِي
 بِعَصْفِ لَطَانَا
 بِدِفْقِ دِمَانَا
 نَحْبُ خُطَانَا
 بِعَزْمِ ثِرَانَا
 لِنَقْدِي رُبَانَا
 فَتَعَالَى لِيُونَا

A.18 We have Risen Up

بُرُوقاً رُعوداً
 نُسُوراً أَسُوداً
 سَيُولاً جُنُوداً
 وَفُوداً وَفُوداً
 رَدَمْنَا الحُدُودَ
 حَطَمْنَا البُنُودَ
 نَفَكُ القُيُودَ
 نَدَكُ الحُشُودَ
 نَفَكُ القُيُودَ
 يَفُكُ الحَدِيدَ
 نَفَكُ القُيُودَ
 نَشَدْنَا الصُّعُودَ
 جَرَدْنَا الصَّدِيدَ
 مَلَأْنَا الصَّعِيدَ
 فَكُونُوا الشُّهُودَ
 بِأَرْضِي عُهُوداً
 وَكُونُوا حَصِيداً
 ذَهَبْتُمْ بَعِيداً
 طَرِيداً شَرِيداً
 كَسَرْنَا العُغُودَ
 نَصَرْنَا الجُدُودَ

نَهَضْنَا نَهَضُنَا
 مَشِينَا مَشِينَا
 أَتِينَا أَتِينَا
 مَضِينَا مَضِينَا
 هَدَمْنَا الحُصُونِ
 صَدَمْنَا المَنُونِ
 نَقَوُ المَطَايَا
 نَسَوُ المَنَايَا
 نَهَبُ سِرَاعاً
 نَخُوضُ قِرَاعاً
 نَهَبُ سِرَاعاً
 قَطَفْنَا الرُّيُوسَ
 رَشَفْنَا الكُيُوسَ
 دَبَخْنَا الجُنُودَ
 وَكَنَّا الوُقُودَ
 أَرَدْتُمْ بَقَاءً
 فَذُوقُوا قَنَاءً
 حَلَمْتُمْ مَزِيداً
 عَدَوْتُمْ عَبِيداً
 قَرِينَا التُّحُورَ
 شَقِينَا الصُّدُورَ

A.19 My Brother in Religion

أَبَاءَ مِثْلِ مَا كُنَّا
 يَزِيدَ هَبَاءَهُمْ وَهَنَا
 وَيَأْخُذُ كُنَانَنَا
 سَيُشْبِعُ ظَهْرَنَا طَعْنَا
 يُوَاكِبُ لَفْظَهَا المَعْنَى
 لِنَكْمُلَ قُوَّةَ المَبْنَى
 عَسَى الرَّحْمَنُ يَرْحَمُنَا
 أَخُوهُ بِأَهْلِيهِ حُسْنَى
 تُحِيلُ نَخْوَفِي أَمْنَا
 لِسَانَا أَوْ يَدَا صَنَا
 لِنُؤْتِبَ مَا حَكِي عَنَا
 لِنُبْقَى مِثْلَ مَا كُنَّا

أَخِي فِي الدِّينِ لَأَزِلْنَا
 تَحَالَفْنَا عَلَى الأَعْدَاءِ
 يُوَالِي بَعْضُنَا بَعْضَا
 تَأْخُذُنَا قِمَا أَحَدِ
 فَجِينِ أَقُولُ أَنْتَ أَخِي
 كَجِسْمٍ وَاجِدِ صِرْنَا
 وَنَحْنُ لِبَعْضِنَا رَجْمٌ
 وَيَخْلَفُ مَنْ عَزَا مِنَّا
 فَرُؤْيَةُ إِخْوَتِي حَوْلِي
 وَفِي سِلْمِي لَهُ سِلْمٌ
 أَلَا يَا إِخْوَتِي قَوْمُوا
 بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ فَاعْتَصِمُوا

A.20 In My *umma* the Lions are Courageous

مَثَلًا لَنَا أَضْوَاءُ عَزَّ تَطْهَرُوا
بِدِمَائِهِمْ صَفْحَاتٍ مَجْدٍ سَطَرُوا
سُحْبُ أَظْلَلَتْ بَعْدَ قَحْطِ تَمَطْرُ
بِسُيُوفِهِمْ سِيرَ الصَّحَابَةِ كَرَّرُوا

فِي أُمَّتِي أَسْدُ كُفَاهُ أَصْبَحُوا
لَمْ يَرُكِنُوا لِمُفَاخِرِ الْأَجْدَادِ بَلْ
بِدِمَائِهِمْ يَحْيَا الْجِهَادَ كَأَنَّهُمْ
بِكِتَابِهِمْ ظَلَمَاتٍ عَصْرِي بَدَّوْا

A.21 Finally, Our Lord has written the Permission

وَقَدْ صَافَحْتُ يَا صَحْبِي السَّلَاحَا
وَأُحْسَسْتُ الْهِنَاءَ وَالْإِنْتِشِرَاحَا
يَفْضُلُ اللَّهُ تَمْتَشِقُ النَّجَاحَا
وَتَسْحَقُ كُفْرَ مُرْتَدِّ بَوَاحَا
وَكَمْ نَشَرْتُ بِدُنْيَانَا الصَّلَاحَا!
ضَرَّاعُمَهَا لَكُمْ صَالَتْ ذِبَاحَا!
وَلَيْسَ تُبِيدُ أَوْ تَهْوِي إِنْطِطَاحَا
كَرِيهَا خَاسِرًا وَالطَّمَّ نَوَاحَا

أَخِيرًا رَبُّنَا كَتَبَ السَّمَاهَا
وَقَدْ عَشَتْ الْخِلَافَةَ وَالْمَعَالِي
سَتَّقِي دَوْلَةَ الْإِسْلَامِ دَوْمَا
وَتَحْكُمُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَفَقِ دِينِي
فِيَا اللَّهُ كَمْ رَعَتْ الرَّعَايَا
وَكَمْ قَهَرَتْ كُفُورًا بِإِذْتِصَارِ
وَلَيْسَ تَخَافُ أَوْ تَنْهَارُ ذَلَالًا
فِيَا كُفْرَ الرَّزَايَا مُتَّ وَضِعَا

A.22 We Took it Forcibly at the Point of a Blade

أَعَدْنَاهَا مُغَالِبَةً وَغَضَبَا
وَقَدْ ضَرَبْتُ رِقَابَ الْقَوْمِ ضَرْبَا
وَجُنْدٍ لَا يَرُونَ الصَّعْبَ صَعْبَا
وَقَدْ شَرَبُوا دِمَاءَ الْكُفْرِ شَرْبَا
وَدَوَّلْنَا بِصَرْحِ بَاتِ صَلْبَا
وَقَدْ مَلِينَتْ قُلُوبَ الْكُفْرِ رُغْبَا

أَعَدْنَاهَا بِحَدِّ السَّيْفِ قَهْرًا
أَقَمْنَاهَا وَقَدْ رُغِمَتْ أَنْوْفُ
بِتَفْخِيخٍ وَتَفْجِيرٍ وَتَسْفِ
وَأَسْدٍ فِي الْمَعَامِعِ ظَامِينَا
لَقَدْ عَادَتْ خِلَافَتُنَا يَقِينَا
وَقَدْ سُفِيَتْ صُدُورُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَا

A.23 Rejoice O Infidel at the Frontiers of our Bayonets

وَلْتَنْسَ يَا مُسْكِينُ أَيَّ مَلَاذٍ
وَدِمَاكَ أَرْحَصُ مِنْ قَلِيلِ رَذَاذٍ
أَعَنْتَ وَلَا تَسْطِيعُ مِنْ إِنْقَاذٍ
بِنَعِيمِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا الْأَخَاذِ!!
سَيَكُونُ رَدُّ الْأَسَدِ كَالْفَوْلَاذِ
وَصَنْبِعُهُ إِنْ قَامَ لِإِلْتِفَاذِ
أَنْتُمْ لَهُ كَالْعَلِجِ وَالشَّحَاذِ
فَخَذُوا لَكُمْ دَرَسًا بِقَتْلِ <مَعَاذِ>

أَيْشُرُ أَيَا عَلِجٍ بِحَدِّ جِرَابِنَا
فَدِمَاءُ أَطْفَالِ الْعَقِيدَةِ جَوْهَرُ
تَعَدُّوا بِإِجْرَامِ لِأَمْرِيكَا فَمَا
أَحْسَبْتُمْ أَنَّ الْجِرَانِمَ لُغْبَةُ
كَلَّا أَيَا جَمْعِ الْأَرَاذِلِ إِنْمَا
مَا زِلْتُمْ لَا تَعْرِفُونَ زَنْبِنَا
يَا وَيْلَكُمْ يَا وَيْلَ جَلْفِ كَافِرِ
بِعْتُمْ عَقِيدَتَكُمْ وَبِعْتُمْ أَهْلَكُمْ

A.24 Kindle the Fire with the Iron

وَأَشْفِي الْمَدَى بِالزَّرِيدِ
مِنْ فَاطِمَاتِ الْحُسُودِ
بِبَارِقَاتِ الرُّعُودِ
وَلَأَهْبَاتِ الْكُبُودِ
وَصَائِدَاتِ الْجُنُودِ
بِزَمْجَرَاتِ الْأَسُودِ
وَأَكْسِرَ جَمِيعَ الْقَيْودِ
مُسْتَمْتِعاً بِالصَّنِيدِ
فِي ظِلِّ حُكْمِ الْقُرُودِ
فِي ظِلِّ عَيْشِ رَعِيدِ

أُورِ اللَّظَى بِالْحَدِيدِ
أَشْبِعْ وَحُوشَ الصَّعِيدِ
زَلْزَلْ جَمِيعَ الْحُسُودِ
بِقَائِمَاتِ الْوُقُودِ
بِنَاسِفَاتِ الْخُدُودِ
هَيَّا إِنْتَقِمِ بِالرُّدُودِ
أَشْعِلْ لَهَيْبِ الْوَعِيدِ
يَا دُلْ سَيْفِ الْعُمُودِ
يَا بُؤْسَ عَيْشِ الْعَبِيدِ
يَا نَعْمَ عَيْشِ الْأَسُودِ

A.25 I Pledged Allegiance to Whom According to Religion was a Judge

وَلِجُزْمِ كُفْرِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ الرَّادِعَا
وَالْقَوْلِ مِنْهُ لَقَدْ يَفُوقُ مَدَافِعَا
جَعَلَ الْأَمَانِي التَّوَاضِعَا
حَمَلَتْ لَهُمْ كَأْسَ الْمَكَارِمِ رَاتِعَا
أَوْ مَنْ سَعَى نَحْوَ الْأَعَادِي رَاكِعَا؛
أَنْ يَشْرُقَ الْإِسْلَامُ نَوْرًا سَاطِعَا

بَايَعْتُ مَنْ بِالذِّينِ كَانَ الصَّدْعَا
شَيْخُ حَسِينِي؛ سَدَادُ فِعْلُهُ
قَدْ شَادَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ صَرْحَا عَالِيَا
وَدَعَا جَمِيعَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لِدَوْلَةِ
مَا ضَرَّهُ جِدْلَانُ مَنْ عَادَى الْهُدَى
فَالْحَقُّ مُنْتَصِرٌ وَأَمْرُ الْهَوَا:

A.26 O People, I am Thin and Friendly

وَلِي بَصَمَةٌ فِي رُبُوعِ الْمُحَافِلِ
وَلِكِنِّي فِي أَتُونِ التَّوَازِلِ
لِلْأُرْدِيِّ الشَّرُورِ وَأَحْمِي الْفَضَائِلِ
وَلَا لِمُ تُصَدِّقُ أَكَاذِيبَ جَاهِلِ
بَعِيدَا عَنِ الزُّورِ، عَنْ كُلِّ بَاطِلِ

أَيَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي رَقِيقٌ لَطِيفٌ
وَأَسْتُ ظَلُومًا وَأَسْتُ خَوْنًا
أَعْدَا لِأَعْدَاءِ رَبِّي الْقَنَابِلِ
وَذِي قِطَّةٌ لَمْ تَخَفْ مِنْ سِلَاجِي
فَيَا لَيْتَكُمْ تَعْرِفُونَ الصَّوَابِ

A.27 Do Not Let His Blood be Shed in Vain

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّارِيُّ بِيخُ سَجَلٌ حَادِثًا بِشَعْبَا وَمُـرَّـرَا
 عَن مَجْرُومِينَ تَعَوَّلُوا جُرْمًا وَقَدْ عَذَّبُوهُ دَهْرًا
 عَن بُرْعَمِ حُلُو صَغِيرٍ قَلْبُهُ يَنْسَابُ طَهْرًا
 طِفْلٌ بَرِيءٌ يَرْتَجِي أَنْ يَرْجِعَ الْإِنْسَانُ حُرًّا
 فَمَضَى مَعَ الشَّعْبِ الْأَبِيِّ، بَعَزْمَةً قَدْ تَارَ ثَوْرًا
 وَرَنَا إِلَى الْحُلْمِ الْعَظِيمِ بِلَهْفَةٍ يُخْتَارُ حَيْرًا
 خَرَجَ الْمُجَاهِدُ حَمْزَةً لِيَقُولَ لِلظَّلَامِ: صَبْرًا
 إِنَّ إِنْصَارَ الْحَقِّ آتٍ، لَنْ يَرُومَ الْيَوْمَ مُرًّا
 كَفُّوا عَنِ الظُّلْمِ الْأَثِيمِ وَعَمَّرُوا الْأَوْطَانِي طُرًّا
 حَتَّى نُشِيدَ بِلَادَنَا عِلْمًا وَتَحَنَانًا وَإِبْرًا
 فَإِذَا بِجُنْدِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ عَدَا عَلَى الْأَطْفَالِ جَهْرًا
 قَتْلًا وَخَطْفًا وَأَعْتَقَالًا وَأَنْتِهَاكَاتٍ وَأَسْرًا
 عَصْفُورُنَا قَدْ غَابَ، لَا لَمْ نَسْمَعْ الْإِيَّامَ خُبْرًا
 مِنْ بَعْدُ: عَادَ لِأَهْلِهِ مَيْتًا بِجَسْمٍ مَارَ مَوْرًا
 وَشَهِدْنَا طِفْلًا صَغِيرًا كَانَ فِي الْأَفْلَاكِ بَبْرًا
 يَا وَيْحَ قَلْبِي! مَا أَقُولُ وَقَدْ سَبَانِي الْحُزْنَ قَهْرًا؟
 يَا عَيْرَةَ الرَّحْمَنِ قَدْ قَتَلُوا صَغِيرًا كَانَ زَهْرًا
 قَدْ كَانَ طِفْلًا يَأْفَعُ، مَا عَاشَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ عُمْرًا
 ضَرْبُوهُ قَدْ كَسَرُوا الدَّرَاعَ وَحَطَمُوا عُنُقًا وَصَدْرًا
 قَدْ شَوْهُوهُ وَحَرَقُوهُ وَعَذَّبُوهُ فَمَاتَ غَدْرًا
 أَوَاهُ مَا أَشْقَاهُمْ!، يَا وَيْلَهُمْ قَدْ كَانَ طَيْرًا
 حُلْمَ الطُّفُولَةِ غَابَ خَلْفَ عَذَابٍ تَشْوِيهِ تَعَرَّى
 وَحَكَى عَنِ الْحَقْدِ الْعَجِيبِ لِبَطْعَمَةٍ تَشْتَارُ شَرًّا
 لَا تَنْزُكُوا دَمَهُ الطُّهُورَ بِضَيْعِ بَيْنِ النَّاسِ هَدْرًا
 قَوْمُوا أَيَا أَحْرَارًا لَبَّوْا صَوْتَهُ عَزْمًا وَتَبَارًا
 قَوْمُوا بَعِيرَ تَهَاوُنٍ، فَكُّوا الْبِلَادَ، كَذَاكَ أُسْرِي
 قَوْمُوا فَلَنْ تَجِدُوا أَيَا أَحْرَارًا بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ عُدْرًا
 لَهْفِي عَلَيْكَ أَيَا أَخِي يَا قَاهِرَ الْأَشْرَارِ قَهْرًا
 رَغَمَ الْعَذَابِ فَيَسْمَهُ النُّعْمَى تَلَوَّحَ عَلَيْكَ بِشَرِي
 وَتُشِيْعُ فِي أَبْوَيْكَ تَحَنَانًا وَإِعْرَازًا وَقَهْرًا
 رَبَّاهُ يَا رَحْمَنَ أَلْهِمِ أَهْلَهُ سَكَنًا وَصَبْرًا
 عَوِّضْنَهُمْ فَرْحًا وَأَنْسَأْ يَمَسَّحُ الْأَحْزَانَ طُـرًّا
 يَا بَيْنَ الْخَطِيبِ عَلَى خَطَاكَ تَسِيرٌ نَحْوَ النَّصْرِ سَيْرًا
 لَا نَسْتَكِينُ وَلَا نَخْشِي، لَنَا الْإِلَهُ يَمُدُّ أَجْرًا

A.28 O Brave Soldiers of the [Islamic] State

أَحْرَقُوا جُنْدَ الطَّوَاغِيَتِ النَّامِ
جَرَّعُوهُمْ مِنْ أَطَى الْمَوْتِ الزُّوَامِ
أَسْمَعَ الْجَمْهُورَ مَسْعُورَ الْكَلَامِ
مُرْفِقاً أَقْوَالَ زُورٍ بِابْتِسَامِ
عَاكِسَا أَقْوَالَهُ، يَا لَلْفَصَامِ!
رَجَّهْمُ فِي حَرْبِ خُسْرِ وَأَنْهَزَامِ!
وَعَدُوا عَنْ كُلِّ عَيْشٍ فِي صِيَامِ
عِبْرَةَ تَرَوِي لَكُمْ حَالَ الطَّغَامِ
هَلْ يَرَى الْمُرْتَدُّ أَثَارَ اصْطِلَامِ؟!
بَلْ قِصَاصُ الْحَقِّ أَمْضَى مِنْ حُسَامِ

يَا جُنُودَ الذُّوَلَةِ الْعَرَّاءِ سَلَاماً
شَرَّدُوا مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ فِي حُكْمِ عَدْلِ
"أَرْدُغَان" سَاقٍ وَعَدَا فِي انْتِخَابِ
زَاعِمَا لِلتُّرْكِ سَعْدَا وَأَزْدِهَارَا
وَإِذَا الْأَمْرُ أَنْجَلَى مِنْ بَعْدِ هَوْلَا!
جَرَّهْمُ صَوْبَ الْبَلَايَا وَالْمَنَايَا
جُنْدُهُ دُلُّوا لَدَى خَيْرِ الْكِمَاةِ
وَبَدُّوا مِثْلَ الْكِلَابِ الْبَابِاسَاتِ
حُرِّقُوا نَاراً لِالْأَلَامِ الْبَرَايَا
دَوْلَتِي لَنْ تَتْرَكَ الْكُفَّارَ هَمَلَا

A.29 Blow Up the Eroded Cross with your Suicide Vest

وَلْتَنْتَثِرْ جُنَّتُ بِأَفْطَعِ حَالِ
رَفَعَ الْإِوَاءَ بِسَيْفِهِ الْجَوَالِ
بَيْتِ الْعَيُورِ وَمَلْعَبِ الْأَطْفَالِ
وَيُحْطَطُونَ بِهَا لِكُلِّ قِتَالِ
جَمَعُوا بِهَا قِطْعَ السَّلَاحِ الْغَالِي
وَلْتَتْرَكُوا حَرْباً لِدِينِي الْغَالِي
وَبِإِذْنِ رَبِّي فُجِّرُوا بِصِيَالِ
أَنَّ الصَّلِيبَ وَأَهْلَهُ لِيَزُولِ
وَسَيُجْرِي نَهْرًا مِنْ دَمِ سَيَالِ

فَجَرَّ بِسُنَّتِكَ الصَّلِيبِ الْبَالِي
قَدْ أَجْلَبُوا بِالْخَيْلِ قِتْلًا لِلَّذِي
وَتَتَابَعَتْ أَحْقَادُهُمْ حَتَّى عَلَى
هَذِي الْكِنَائِيسِ تَحْتَفِي بَعْدَابِنَا
أُوْتَادُ إِبْلِيسِ الْأَعِينِ بِأَرْضِنَا
سَبَقَتْ مَقَالَتُنَا لَهُمْ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا
فَأَبُوا فَهَاهُمْ قَدْ تَنْتَثِرَ شِرْكُهُمْ
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ! بِشَرُّوْا أَحْلَافَهُمْ
عَسَى سَيَنْزِلُ كَاسِرًا لِصَلَابِكُمْ

A.30 You Were Still Lofty O 'Adnānī

حَتَّىٰ ارْتَقَيْتَ إِلَىٰ رُحَابِ جِنَانٍ
 أَنْعَمَ بِطُوبَىٰ وَالْمَقَامِ الْهَانِي
 بِبِقَيْنِ صَدَقَ مُخْلِصِينَ وَبَيَانٍ
 فَالْحَقُّ سَيْفُ الْقَهْرِ لِلطُّغْيَانِ
 وَرَسَمْتَ دَرْبَ الْعِزِّ لِلْفِرْسَانِ
 هُوَ غَايَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ وَالْإِيمَانِ
 ثَأْقَىٰ بِلَا عَمَلٍ وَلَا بُنْيَانِ
 وَرَمَاهُمْ شَلْوَا بِلَا أَرْكَانِ
 خَطَّتْ بِهِ الدَّعَوَاتُ فَمِىٰ إِتْقَانِ
 نُسِجَتْ وَشَائِجُهَا بِسَدْمِ قَانِ
 فَإِذَا الْأَسْوَدُ تَنُّنٌ مِنْ قَضْبِ
 وَتَفَكُّ أَسْرَ الْحَرِّ مِنْ سَجَّانِ
 وَأَزَلَّتْ مَا حَاكُوا مِنَ الْعِدْوَانِ
 وَخِلَافَةُ تَقْفُو خَطَا الْعِدْنَانِ
 فَعَلَّتْ بِنَا تَكْبِيرَهُ السَّجْدَانِ
 وَتَلَالُ الشُّوْحَيْدِ كَالْمِزْدَانِ
 فَهِيَ الدَّلِيلُ وَمَنْقَذُ الْحَيْرَانِ
 تَجْلُو الْعَمَىٰ وَالشَّرَّ عَنْ أَذْهَانِ
 وَتُزِيلُ عَنْهُمْ وَصْمَةَ الْأَدْرَانِ
 ذُخْرَ الْعِزَائِمِ فِي جَوَى الْوُجْدَانِ
 تَلْقَاهُ إِذْ تَزْكُو جَنَى الْأَعْصَانِ
 فَتَجَلَّدُوا بِالصَّبْرِ لِأَخْزَانِ
 يَا قَائِدَ الْأَبْطَالِ وَالشُّجْعَانِ
 كَالنُّورِ يَصْرُغُ كَالْحَاتِ دَخَانِ

مَا زِلْتِ تَسْمُقُ أَيُّهَا الْعِدْنَانِي
 ذِيكَ مَا تَرْجُو الْإِلَهَ بِفَضْلِهِ
 قَدْ طَالِمَا زِلْتِ عَرْشَ طَغَايِهِمْ
 وَصَعَقْتَهُمْ وَمَقَحْتَ شَرَّ كَذُوبِهِمْ
 وَرَوَيْتِ مِنْ دَمِكَ الطُّهُورَ مَدَائِنَا
 أَضْرَمْتَ فِينَا الشُّوقَ لِلخُلْدِ الَّذِي
 فَجِهَادَكُمْ مَا كَانَ مَحْضَ عِبَارَةِ
 بَلْ كَانَ رَعْدًا شَلَّ أَرْكَانَ الْعِدَا
 فَحُرُوفَكُمْ لَيْسَتْ مِدَادًا بَلْ دَمَا
 أَبْلَغَ بِمَا تَحْوِيهِ خَيْرُ رِسَالَةٍ
 لَّهٗ مَا أَذَكَيْتِ مِنْ نَارِ الْحُمَى
 وَتَتَوَّقُ فِي شَغْفٍ لِإِرْسَاءِ الْعِلَا
 وَكَسَّرْتَ حَقْدَ حُدُودِ كُفْرٍ أَحْمَقِ
 أَعْلَنْتَهُمَا: "اللَّذِينَ قَامَتْ دَوْلَةٌ"
 وَلْتُبَشِّرُوا يَا مُسْلِمُونَ بِبِعِزِّهَا
 وَتَصَاعَرَ الْكُفْرُ اللَّئِيمُ تَسْخَاذِلَا
 وَدَعَوْتَ كُلَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لِنُورِهَا
 وَبَقِيَتْ فِي الذَّبِّ الْأَشْمَ مَصَابِرًا
 وَتُبَصَّرَ النَّاسَ الْعَلِيْلَةَ بِالْهَدَى
 ذِيكَ لَيْسَ يُضَيِّعُ بَلْ يَبْقَىٰ لَنَا
 وَإِذَا يَغُورُ الْمَاءُ فِي جَوْفِ الثَّرَى
 وَالدِّينُ يَصْنَعُ غَيْرَهُ يَا قَوْمَنَا
 هُنَاكَ رَبِّي فِي الْجِنَانِ وَخُلْدِهَا
 جَعَلَ الْإِلَهَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَمِدَادَكُمْ

A.31 Glad Tidings of the Conquest

أَسْقَى الثَّرَى بِدِمَائِهِ الشَّيْثَانِي
 يَتَقَدَّمُونَ الصَّفَّ دُونَ تَوَانِي
 سُمِّرُ السِّنَانِ لَهُ بِخَيْرِ بَيَانِ
 وَبِضَرْبِ هَامِ الْكُفْرِ لَا الْأَوْزَانِ
 بِالْبِأْسِ وَالْإِبْرَازِ فِي الشَّجْعَانِ
 بَعِيرِ بَحْرِ الْحِزْنِ لِلشَّطْرَانِ
 كَيْفَ الْبُكَاءِ عَلَىٰ نَزِيلِ جِنَانِ؟
 فَرَحِيلَهُمْ صَدَقَ مَغِيضِ جِبَانِ؟
 فَمَضِيهِمْ لِلوَاحِدِ الدِّيَانِ
 يَا قَوْتَةَ فِي هَامَةِ التَّيْجَانِ
 نَجْمًا مَضِيئِنَا مِنْ حِلَا الْمَرْجَانِ
 حَتَّىٰ نَسْرَىٰ فِي إِثْرِهِ لَجْنَانِ

بُشِّرَاكُمْ بِالْفَتْحِ يَا إِخْوَانِي
 بُشِّرَاكُمْ قَادَاتِنَا فِي حَرْبِهِمْ
 أَعْيَىٰ الْكَلَامِ رِثَاؤُهُ فَتَقَدَّمَتْ
 فِرثَاؤُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ حَوْضَ غِمَارِهَا
 شَهَدَتْ لَهُ سَاحَ الْعِرَاقِ وَشَامِنَا
 قَوْقَازَ تَرْتِيْبِهِ وَتَرْتِيْبِي صَحْبِهِ
 يَا إِخْوَتِي فَدَرُوا الدَّمُوعَ رُوَيْدُكُمْ
 إِنَّا نَبَشِّرُ بَعْضِنَا بِبِحَرْبِهِمْ
 وَإِذَا مَضَىٰ مِنْهَا هَزْبٌ مَقْدَمِ
 إِنْسِي أَرَىٰ عَمْرًا الْهَمَامِ كَأَنَّهُ
 إِنْسِي أَرَاهُ فِي أَعَالِي صَرْحِنَا
 يَا رَبَّ فَارْحَمْهُ وَسَهِّلْ دَرَبِنَا

A.32 Shake the Throne of the Cross

أَطْفَنُوا نَارَ الْمَجُوسِ
وَأَقْطَفُوا تِلْكَ الرَّؤُوسِ
لَا تَخَافُوا مِنْ يَهُودِ
دُونَ دِينِي لَنْ تَعُودُوا!
بِالْفَسَادِ وَبِالسَّلَاحِ
وَأَسْتَلْدُوا بِالْجُرَاحِ
أَلَمْتُ شَعْبِي الْكَلِيمَا!
دَامِيَا وَغَدَا أَلِيمَا
يُرْجِعُ الْمَجْدَ السَّلِيمَا
يُنْصِرُ الدِّينَ الْحَبِيبَا!
إِنَّ بَعْدَ اللَّيْلِ فَجْرَا
وَأَنْتِصَارُ الْحَقِّ بَشْرَا

زَلْزَلُوا عَرْشَ الصَّلَيبِ
وَأَصْرَعُوا كُلَّ الْخُطُوبِ
لَا تُبَالُوا بِالْأَعْيَادِ
إِنَّ أَمْجَادَ الْبِلَادِ
طَالَمَا جَارُوا عَلَيْنَا
أَضْرَمُوا فِيْنَا الْمَاسِي
كَمْ مَظَالِمَ دَامِيَاتِ
سَامَهُ الطُّغْيَانِ شِرًّا
مَنْ يَسْوَكُمُ يَا أَسُودُ!
يَصْرَعُ الْكُفْرَ الْحَقُودُ
إِنَّ بَعْدَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرَا
لَنْ يَدُومَ الْحَالُ مُرًّا،

A.33 Indeed, Whenever the Rulers Deviate, They Disappear

دَيْكَ حُكْمٌ صَارِمٌ مَعْقُولُ
الْمُلُكُ مُلْكُ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ يَحْوُلُ
مَعَ حَاكِمٍ عَنِ حَقِّهَا مَسْئُولُ
وَيُطَبِّقُ الْأَحْكَامَ لَيْسَ يَمِيلُ
لَا فَرَقَ بَيْنَ الشَّعْبِ رَاحٍ يَجُولُ
ثِقَةٌ حَكِيمٌ صَادِقٌ وَجَلِيلُ
فِي الشَّعْبِ هُمْ سَامَهُ وَدُبُولُ
فَقَرُّ يَهْدُ بِلَادَهُ وَتُحْوَلُ
بِالْحَبِّ نَبْعٌ بِالْفِعَالِ أَصِيلُ
وَ لَهُ قُلُوبُ الْعَالَمِينَ تَمِيلُ
كَانُوا فَسَادًا يَعْتَلِيهِ جَهُولُ
وَلَقَدْ بُمَيْتِ الشَّعْبِ وَهُوَ ضَلُولُ
وَلَقَدْ بِرَأْيِي الصَّحْبِ وَهُوَ عَمِيلُ
وَلَقَدْ يُكَابِرُ... وَالْأَسَى مَوْصُولُ
مَالُوا إِلَيْهَا حَيْثُمَا سَتَمِيلُ!
وَالظُّلْمُ شَرٌّ مَاجِقٌ وَوَبِيلُ
لَكَانْنَا أَسْرَى لَهُمْ تَكْبِيلُ
أَيُّنَ الْجَمَالِ لِيَتَرْتَدِيهِ حُقُولُ!
هَذِي بِلَادِي مَا السُّوَالُ فَضُولُ!
فَلِمَ الْبِنَاءُ بِأَرْضِهَا مَشْلُولُ!
بَيْنَ الْبِلَادِ؟! فَمَا هُوَ التَّغْلِيلُ!
وَرَجَاوُ رَشَادًا تَشْتَهِيهِ سُهُولُ
خَيْرًا، وَإِنَّ الصَّبْرَ فِيهِ تَقْبِيلُ
مَلَكُوا الْعِبَادَ لِمُدَّةٍ سَتَطْوِلُ
ظَلَمْنَا بِهِ شَعْبِي أَنَا مَغْلُولُ
رَعَدَ الرَّئِيزِ بِهَا وَرَنَّ صَهِيلُ

إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا تَجَوْرُ تَزُولُ
أَطْعَ الْإِلَهَ كَمَا يُرِيدُ قَلِيمَا
إِنَّ الشُّعُوبَ تَرُومُ عَيْشَ كِرَامَةٍ
يَخْشَى الْإِلَهَ وَيَنْتَقِي حُرْمَاتِهِ
يُعْطِي الْجَمِيعَ حُقُوقَهُمْ بَعْدَالَةٍ
هُوَ حَاكِمٌ شُهُمٌ أَرِيْبٌ عَادِلُ
لَا تَعْمَضُ الْعَيْنَانُ مِنْهُ إِذَا بَدَا
أَوْ يَهْتِنِّي عَيْشًا رَغِيدًا إِنْ سَرَى
فَهُوَ الْأَبُّ الْحَانِي الَّذِي وَجَدَانُهُ
هَذَا الرَّئِيسُ الْحَقُّ كَمْ يَفْدُونَهُ!
لَكِنَّ حُكْمَ السُّورَى يَا لِيْلَاسَى
فَلَقَدْ تَجَوْرُ عَلَى الْبِلَادِ وَأَهْلِهَا
وَلَقَدْ يُمَارِي الْحَقُّ وَهُوَ عَدُوُّهُ
وَلَقَدْ يُخَادِعُنَا لِيَسْلِبَ حَقَّنَا
تِلْكَ الْمَصَالِحَ حَرَكَتْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ
كَمْ عَانَتِ الدُّنْيَا وَبِيلَ عَذَابِهِمْ!
كَمْ غَابَتِ الْبَسْمَاتُ عَنْ أَوْطَانِنَا
وَالْقَحْطُ صَالٌ بِأَرْضِنَا وَرَبُوعِنَا
أَيُّنَ النَّمَاءِ يَجُولُ فِي عَمْرَانِنَا!
هَذِي بِلَادِي حُبُّهَا سَكَنُ السُّورَى
أَمْحَرَّمُ أَنْ تَسْتَعْبِدَ مَكَانَهَا
صَبَرَ السُّورَى إِيَّانَ ظَلَمَ غَادِرِ
أَعْطَوْهُمْ فُرْصَ الصَّلَاحِ تَأَمَّلُوا
وَإِذَا رُؤُوسَ الشَّرِّ طَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ
زَادُوا الْفَسَادَ وَبَغَّيْهُمْ سَامَ السُّورَى
فَالثُّورَةَ الْغَرَاءُ شَبَّ أَوْارَهَا

لَا مَا لَنَا غَيْرَ الصَّوَابِ سَبِيلُ
 إِيَّاهُ نُبْعِي، لَيْسَ عَنْهُ بَدِيلُ
 شَرُّ عَظِيمٍ عَزَّ فِيهِ مَثِيلُ
 وَجُنُودُهُ الْفُرْسَانُ فِيهِ خِيُولُ
 جُرْدَانُ ظَلَمَ خَائِبٌ، وَعَجُولُ
 وَحَصَادُهُمْ كَجُنُونِهِمْ مَرْدُولُ
 فَهُمْ الْفَسَادُ الْمُرُّ وَالتَّنْكِيلُ
 شَعْبِي أَبِي، لَيْسَ فِيهِ دَلِيلُ
 طَوْلُ السَّنِينِ، وَكَلْنَا مَجْبُولُ:
 وَالْعَدْلُ نُورٌ فِي الدُّجَى مَأْمُولُ
 أَغْنَاكُمْ يَوْمَ الرَّدَى تَبْجِيلُ؟!
 أَمْ أَنَّهُ لَقِنَاكُمْ تَعْجِيلُ؟!
 فَهُوَ السَّبِيلُ وَلَيْسَ عَنْهُ مُحِيلُ
 أَمْرًا بَعِيدًا لَيْسَ فِيهِ مَهُولُ?!
 تَبَّتْ يَدَا الإِجْرَامِ يَا مَذْهُولُ!
 سَخَقًا لِحُرْمِكَ أَيُّ هَذَا الْغَوْلُ!
 وَعِبَاءُهُ إِذْ إِنَّهُ مَسْطُولُ?!
 فَكَمَا تُدِينُ نُدَانُ يَا مَخْبُولُ
 هَيْهَاتَ يَبْقَى فِي الْكِرَامِ ضَلُولُ
 تَبَّتْ يَدَاهُ وَإِنَّهُ الْمَرْذُولُ
 قَاسَتْ أَدَى مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ تَزُولُ
 وَالظُّلْمُ عَاتٍ يَا أَخِي وَوَبِيلُ
 وَالْحُكْمُ نَارٌ، ظُلْمُهُ، وَصَلِيلُ!
 وَالْحَالُ فِيهَا أَدْمَعٌ وَعَوِيلُ
 وَالشَّرُّ قَهْرٌ فَاجِرٌ مَرْدُولُ
 وَالْحَزْنُ فِينَا دَائِمٌ وَتَقِيلُ
 طَلَبَتْ حُقُوقًا مَا لَهَا تَأْجِيلُ
 لِلشَّعْبِ فِي وَطَنِي، وَذَلِكَ قَلِيلُ
 بِمَكَارِمِ ذَهَابَتْ لَهْنٌ عَقُولُ
 فَالظُّلْمُ يَا وَطَنِي هُوَ الْمَشْلُولُ
 بَلْدٌ عَظِيمٌ رَاسِيخٌ وَجَمِيلُ
 قَدْ قَادَهُمْ سَيْفُ الْهُدَى الْمَسْلُولُ
 وَالشَّعْبُ شَعْبٌ صَادِقٌ وَجَلِيلُ
 لَا قَبِيدَ نَمَّ وَلَا فَسَادَ يَجُولُ
 فَجُرًّا يَسْطُرُ حُلْمَنَا وَيَقُولُ:
 وَالْمَجْدُ فِيكُمْ قَائِمٌ وَأَثِيلُ
 فَالشَّعْبُ يَحْيَا وَالنِّظَامُ يَزُولُ
 جَاءَتْ بِهَا الْآيَاتُ وَالتَّنْزِيلُ
 وَالشَّرُّ فَنانٌ، وَالْإِلَهُ وَكَيْلُ
 لَمْ يَنْفَعِ التَّقْدِيرُ وَالتَّنْبِجِيلُ
 وَإِلَى الْمَقَاصِلِ حُكْمُهُمْ سَيُؤُولُ
 وَالْقَبْدُ حَطْمُهُ فَتَيُّ مَغْلُولُ
 إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا تَجَوَّرَ: تَزُولُ

دَوَّتْ بِأَرْجَاءِ الدُّنَا نُورَانُنَا
 الْحَقُّ مَطْلُبُنَا وَدَيْدُنُنَا الْهُدَى
 إِسْلَامُنَا صَانَ الْحُقُوقَ وَأَهْلَهَا
 هُوَ غَيْثٌ عَطَشَى وَإِتِسَامَةٌ حَائِرِ
 وَالْفَاسِدُونَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ وَجَمْعُهُمْ:
 يَجْنُونَ مَا زَرَعُوا أَوْانَ شُرُورِهِمْ
 مَا عَادَ شَعْبُ الْمَكْرَمَاتِ يُطِيقُهُمْ
 وَالتَّوْرَةُ الْعُظْمَى بِنَاهَا شَعْبُنَا
 ذِي سُنَّةٍ الْقِيَوْمِ مُذْ بَرَأَ الْوَرَى
 الظُّلْمُ مَوْتُ وَأَعْتِدَاءُ مَهْلِكُ
 فَلْتُخْبِرُونِي يَا رُؤُوسَ الشَّرِّ هَلْ
 أَجْمَاكُمْ ظَلَمَ الْأَنَامُ وَقَهْرُهُمْ؟!
 (زَيْنُ الْقَسَادِ) هَرَبْتُ دُونَ تَرْدُدِ
 (حُسْنِي) ثَرَاكَ حَسِبْتُ هَذَا طَرْفَةً
 وَسَقَطْتُ مِنْ فَرْطِ انْصِدَامِكَ ذَاهِلًا
 (أَمْعَمَرٌ) يَا ظَالِمًا أَهْلَ الْهُدَى
 أَقَهَرْتَ شَعْبًا عَافَ ظَلَمَ رَئِيسِهِ
 أَرَاكَ رَبِّي إِذْ ظَلَمْتَ بِلَيْبِيَا
 (يَمَنٌ) أَطَاخَتْ بِالضَّلُولِ وَلَمْ تَهِنِ
 (بِشَارٌ) ذَا إِبْلِيسَ عَصَرَ قَاتِمِ
 وَلِطَالِمَا عَانَتْ بِلَادِي قَهْرُهُ
 قَدْ حَارَبَ الْأَحْرَارَ ظَلَمَ فَاجِعُ
 وَالتَّنَاسُ فِينَا كَالْأَسَارَى حَقْبَةُ
 وَالْأَرْضُ كُلُّ الْأَرْضِ تَسْبِجُ بِالْأَمَا
 كُلُّ الْحُقُوقِ تَبَخَّرَتْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا
 قَدْ فَاضَ فِينَا الْكَيْلُ مِنْ طَوْلِ الْأَسَى
 وَإِذَا بِتُّورَاتِ الْإِبَاءِ تَحَرَّكَتْ
 الْحَقُّ نُورٌ وَالْكَرَامَةُ مَطْلَبُ
 صَمَدِ الشَّبَابِ أَمَامَ ظَلْمِكَ عَزْمَةٌ
 يَا مُوْطِنِي صَبْرًا عَلَى طَوْلِ النَّوَى
 شَامَ الْجِهَادِ رِبَاطُ حَقِّ دَائِمِ
 شَهَدَتْ فُنُوحَ الْغَابِرِينَ أُولِي الْعُلَا
 اللَّهُ جَلَّ اللَّهُ حَرَكَ شَعْبَنَا
 أُخْرَى بِهِ حُرِّيَّةٌ يَسْمُو بِهَا
 مَا أُرُوعَ الْأَوْطَانِ فِي نَصْرِ بَدَا
 بَوْرُكُنُمْ أَهْلَ الشَّمَامِ تَحْيَةً
 هَذِي نِهَائِيَّةُ ظَالِمٍ مُسْتَكْبِرِ
 هَذِي نِهَائِيَّةُ ظَلْمِكُمْ، يَا سَعْدَنَّا
 فَالْحَقُّ بَاقٍ لَا يَزُولُ مَدَى الْمَدَى
 لَمْ يَنْفَعِ الطُّغْيَانَ وَالْإِجْرَامَ، لَا
 فَإِلَى الْهَلَاكِ مَصِيرُ أَرْبَابِ الْخَنَا
 حَمْدًا إِلَهِي، ذِي بِلَادِي حُرَّةً
 فَلْتُحَذِّرُوا حُكْمَانَا مِنْ ظَلْمِكُمْ؛

A.34 The Lands of Truth are my Home

بَنُو (الإِسْلَامِ) إِخْوَانِي
 بِإِصْفَاءٍ وَإِحْسَانٍ
 وَتَوْجِيهَاتٍ قُرْآنِي
 لِقَحْطَانٍ وَعَذْنَانٍ
 كَذَا فِي أَرْضِ بَلْقَانٍ
 بِبِلَادِ الْعُرَبِ شَيْشَانٍ
 وَنَادَتْ أَرْضُ أَفْغَانٍ
 وَأَسْمَاءٌ وَقَطَانِي:
 يَثُوقُ لِنَصْرَةِ الْعَانِي
 بِهَذَا الدِّينِ أَوْصَانِي
 يَقُومُ عَلَى الْهُدَى الْهَانِي
 وَيَمْسَحُ دَمَهُ الْقَانِي
 إِلَى لُغَةِ وَالْوَانِ
 عَلَى التَّقْوَى بِإِيمَانٍ
 لَتَشْتَاتِ وَغُدُونِ
 بِرُغْمِ جُنُودِ شَيْطَانِ

بِلَادُ (الْحَقِّ) أَوْطَانِي
 إِلَهُ الْكُوفِ يَأْمُرُنَا
 وَلَائِي وَفُقِ إِيْمَانِي
 وَلَيْسَ تَعْصِي يَوْمًا
 أَخِي فِي الْهُنْدِ أَنْتَ أَخِي
 وَفِي الْأَحْوَارِ وَالْأَقْصَى،
 إِذَا صَاحَتْ فِلِسْطِينَ
 وَعَانَتْ كُوسُوفُوظْمَا
 رَنَا قَلْبِي لَهُمْ شَغَفَا
 وَمَا قَرَفْتُ بِبُرْهَانِهِمْ
 فَلِأَكُنَّا جَسَدًا
 يُكْفِكِفُ مِنْ مَوَاجِعِهِ
 فَلَا عِزُّ يُقَرُّنَا
 كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَجْمَعُنَا
 لِنُخَسِّ كُلَّ أَمَالِ
 سَنَبَقِي إِخْوَةَ نَوْمَا

A.35 At your Service, Supporters of Shari'a

لَمْ نَنْسَ جُرْحَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْأَحْمَرَا
 تَزْدَادُ فِينَا النَّارَ عَزْمًا مُجَمَّرَا
 تُدْمِي فُؤَادَ الْمُخْلِصِينَ الْأَخْضَرَا
 كَيْدًا خَبِيثًا مَدْلَهْمَا أَبْخَرَا
 مِنْ حُكْمِ تُونِسَ فَانْبِرِي مَتْبَخْتَرَا
 كَانَ الْفَسَادَ بِعَيْنِهِ مُتَجَبِّرَا
 بَلْ كَانَ سَوَاطِئًا دَامِيًا مُسْتَنْسِرَا
 إِلَّا عَيْنًا لِلظُّلُومِ وَمُخْبِرَا
 قَتَلَ الْبِوَاسِلَ وَالْمَعَابِي الْأَطْهَرَا
 فَالْحَالُ أَمْسَى مُؤَلَّمًا مُتَكَدَّرَا
 أَتْرَاهُ مَجْنُونًا؟! أَجِيبُوا يَا تَرِي!
 مَتَأَسَّلَمُ هَيْهَاتَ يَفْقَهُ أَوْ يَرِي!
 وَكَأَنَّهُ ثَمَلٌ أَحَاقَ بِهِ الْكَرِي!
 أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ بِمَا يَدُورُ وَمَا جَرِي
 أَوْهَ خَلَّفَ فَيُودِيهِ أَسَدُ الشَّرِي!
 أَسَدٌ عَلَى مَنْ بِالشَّرِيعَةِ قَدْ سَرِي
 فَالْحَقُّ يَبْقَى أَبْلَجًا بَلْ أَنْوَرَا
 ذُودُوا عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ مَا بَيْنَ الْوَرِي
 لَتَكُونُ رَابِتُكُمْ عَلَى شَمِّ الذَّرِي
 وَيُؤَوَّبُ فِي ذَلِ كَنْيَبِ مُجَبَّرَا

لَبَّيْكَ أَنْصَارَ الشَّرِيعَةِ؛ إِنَّا
 لَمْ نَنْسَ فُرْسَانَ الْبُطُولَةِ إِنَّمَا
 فِي تُونِسَ الْعَرَاءَ أَلْفَ جَكَايَةِ
 قَدْ عَاثَ فِيهَا الظَّالِمُونَ وَأَجْمَعُوا
 وَتَمَسَّكْنَا حَتَّى تُمْكِنَ رَأْسُهُمْ
 قَدْ جَامَلَ الطُّغْيَانَ وَالْإِفْسَادَ بَلْ
 لَمْ يُرْسَ شِرْعَةَ رَبِّنَا حُكْمِهِ
 لَبَّى الْأَعَادِي بِالْجَرَائِمِ لَمْ يَكُنْ
 قَهْرَ الْأَبَاةِ بِخِيسَةِ فِيهَا الْأَذَى
 مَنَعَ النَّقَابَ أَبَاحَ كُفْرًا مُلْجَدًا
 يَتَوَسَّلُ الرِّضْوَانَ مِنْ كُفْرِ الْعَدَا!!!
 يَتَمَسَّحُ الْمَسْحَ الدَّلِيلُ بِكَافِرِ
 لَكَانَ مَسَاقًا قَدْ تَخَبَّطَ عَقْلُهُ!
 يَا رَبِّ خَلِّصْ تُونِسًا مِنْ شَرِّهِ
 إِخْوَانِنَا يَشْكُونَ حَالًا بَائِسَا
 فَهُوَ النَّعَامُ أَمَامَ جُرْمِ عَدُونَا
 تَبَّتْ يَدَاؤُهُ وَلَنْ يَطُولَ ظَلَامُهُ
 أَبْطَلْنَا أَنْصَارَ شِرْعَةَ رَبِّنَا
 وَبِاللَّهِ يَحْمِيكُمْ وَيُنصِرُكُمْ مَدَى
 وَيَزُولُ كَيْدُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ وَجَمْعُهُمْ

A.36 To al-Baydā'

عَلَى إِعْمَالِهَا سَيْفَ السَّرَايَا
 تُقَطِّعُ جَذَرَ شِرْكِ الْخَزَايَا
 تُعْشَعِشُ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْبَلَايَا
 عَنِ الْغَايَاتِ وَاتَّضَحَّتْ خَبَايَا
 تَعَجَّلُ أَسْدُنَا نَحْرَ الصَّحَايَا
 فَرَاخُوا يُرْسِلُونَ لَنَا الْمَطَايَا
 يُحَاصِرُ جَمْعَنَا كُلَّ الرُّوَايَا
 تُقَطِّعُ كُفْرَكُمْ مِمَّا السَّطَايَا
 تَسُوسُ بِشَرِّهِ كُلَّ الْبَرَايَا

إِلَى الْبَيْضَاءِ مَوْفُورُ النَّحَايَا
 تُجَرِّدُهَا مِنَ الْأَعْمَادِ حَتَّى
 أَقَامُوا بَيْنَ أَظْهَرِنَا زَمَانَا
 أَرَادَ اللَّهُ تَطْهِيراً فَجَلَّوْا
 إِذَا مَا الدِّينُ جَابَهُ كُفْرَ قَوْمٍ
 يَظُنُّ كِلَابُهُمْ أَنَّا ضِعَافُ
 وَمَا عَلِمَتْ كِلَابُهُمْ بَأَنَّا
 قَرِيباً تَنْزَلُونَ لِأَرْضِ قَوْمِي
 فَمُوتُوا إِنَّ "بَاقِيَةَ" أَتَتْكُمْ

Appendix B

B.1



استشهاد الشيخ أبو عمر الشيشاني

بشراكم بالفتح يا إخواني ... أسقى الثرى بدمائه الشيشاني
بشراكم قاداتنا في حربهم ... يتقدمون الصف دون تواني
أعنى الكلام رثاؤه فتقدمت ... سمر السنان له بخير بيان
فرثاؤه بالحرب خوض غمارها ... وبضرب هام الكفر لا الأوزان
شهدت له ساح العراق وشامنا ... بالبأس والإبراز في الشجعان
قوقاز ترثيه وترثي صحبه ... بعبور بحر الحزن للشيطان
يا إخواني فذروا الدموع رويدكم ... كيف البكاء على نزل جنان؟
إنا نبشر بعضنا برحيلهم ... فرحيلهم صدق مغيض جبان
وإذا مضى منا هزير مقدم ... فمضيههم للواحد الديهان
إنني أرى عمرا الهمام كأنه ... باقوتة في هامة التيجان
إنني أراه في أعالي صرحنا ... نجما مضيئا من حلا المرجان
يا رب فارحمه وسهل دربنا ... حتى نرى في إثره لجنان



أبو قتادة الحضرمي

B.2



ما زلت تسمُقُ أيُّها "العدناني"

بقلم: أحلام النُصر

حتَّى ارتقيتِ إلى رحابِ جنانِ
أنعم بطوبى والمقام الهاني!
ببقيين صدق مخلص وبيان
فالحق سيف القهر للطغيان
ورسمت درب العزِّ للفرسانِ
هو غاية الإخلاص والإيمان
تلقى بلا عمل ولا بنيان
ورماهم شلوا بلا أركانِ
خطت به الدعوات في إتقانِ
نسجت وشائجها بدم قان!
هإذا الأسود تثن من قضبان
وتفك أسر الحر من سجانِ
وأزلت ما حاكوا من العدوانِ
وخلافة تقفو خطا العدنانِ
فعلت بنا تكبيرة الجذلان!
وتلأل التوحيد كالمزدانِ
فهي الدليل ومنقذ الحيوانِ
تجلو العمى والشُر عن أذهان
وتزيل عنهم وصمة الأدرانِ
ذخر العرائم في جوى الوجدانِ
تلقاه إذ تركو جنى الأغصانِ
فتجلدوا بالصبر للأحزانِ
يا قائد الأبطال والشجعانِ
كالنور يصرع كالحات دخانِ

ما زلت تسمُقُ أيُّها العدناني
ذيالك ما نرجو الإله بفضله
قد طالما زلزلت عرش طغاتهم
وصعقتهم ومحقت شر كذوبهم
ورويت من دمك الطهور مدائننا
أضمرت فينا الشوق للخلد الذي
فجهاذكم ما كان محض عبارة
بل كان رعداً شل أركان العدا
وحروقكم ليست مدادا بل دما
أبلغ بما تحويه خير رسالة
لله ما أذكيت من نار الحمى
وتتوق في شغف لإرساء العلا
وكسرت حقد حدود كفر أحمق
أعلنتها: للذين قامت دولة
فلتبشروا يا مسلمون بعزها
وتصاغر الكفر اللئيم تخادلاً
ودعوت كل المسلمين لنورها
وبقيت في الدب الأشم مصابراً
وتبصر الناس العليلة بالهدى
ذيالك ليس يضيغ بل يبقى لنا
وإذا يغور الماء في جوف الثرى
والدين يصنع غيرة يا قومنا
هناك ربّي في الجنان وخلدها
جعل الإله دماءكم ومدادكم



B.3



ولتنتثر جثث بأفضع حال
 رفَع اللوَاءَ بسَيْفِهِ الجَوَالِ
 بَيْتِ الغِيُورِ ومَلْعَبِ الأَطْفَالِ
 ويحْطَطُون بها لِكُلِّ قِتَالِ
 جَمَعُوا بها قِطْعَ السِّلَاحِ الغَالِي
 ولتتركوا حربيًا لديني الغَالِي
 وبإذن ربِّي فُجِّرُوا بِصِيَالِ
 أَنْ الصَّلِيبِ وأهْلَهُ لِزَوَالِ
 وسيُجْري نَهْرًا من دمِ سِيَالِ

فَجَزْ بَسْطَرْتِكَ الصَّلِيبِ البَالِي
 قَدْ أَجْلَبُوا بالخَيْلِ قِتْلًا للذِي
 وتتابعت أحقادُهُمْ حتى على
 هذِي الكِنَائِسُ تحتفي بعدابنا
 أوتادُ إبليس اللعين بأرضنا
 سبقتُ مقالتنا لهم أن أسلموا
 فأبوا فهاهُمُ قد تنثرَ شِرْكَهُمُ
 اللهُ أكبرُ! بِشَرُوا أحلافهم
 عيسى سينزلُ كاسرًا لصليبكم

نظم: شهادة

الأحد ١٢ رجب ١٤٢٨ هـ

البتار

B.4



مجلس الشورى الإسلامي
الجمهورية الإسلامية الإيرانية

لبيك أنصار الشريعة

| شعور: أحلام النصر |

أترأه مجنوناً؟!، أجببوا يا ترى!
متأسلم هــيهات يفقه أو يرى!
وكأنه ثـمّل أحـاق به الكرى!
أنت العـلـيـم بما يدور وما جرى
أواه خلف قـيـود أسد الشرى!
أسد على من بالشريعة قد سرى
فالحق يبقـى أبلجاً بل الأورا
خودوا عن الإسلام ما بين الورى
للكون رايـتكم على شمّ الذرى
ويـؤب في دل كئيب مجرباً

يتوسل الرضوان من كفر المحارر
يتمسح المسخ الدليل بكافر
لكن مسماً قد تحط عقله!
يسار رب خلوص تونس من شره
أخوانك يا يشكون حالاً بانسا
فهو النعم أمـام جزم عدونا
تبت يداه ولن يطوون ظلامه
أبطالنا أنحصار شرعة ربنا
والله يحكمكم وينصركم مدى
ويزول كيد المجرمين وجمعهم

لم تنس جرح المسلمين الأحمر
تزداد فينا الأزرع زماً ومجراً
تدمي هؤلاء المخلصين الأخضر
كجداً خبيثاً مدلهماً أنجراً
من حكم تونس فانبرى متبجراً
كان الفسك بعينه متججراً
بل كان سوطاً دائماً مستنسراً
إلا عيوننا للظلم ومخبرنا
قتل البواسل والمصائب الأظهربا
فالحـال أمس مؤلماً متذكراً

لبيك أنصار الشريعة، أيتها
لم تنس فرسان البطولة إنما
في تونس الفـسـكـاء ألف حـكـية
قد عث فيها الظالمون وأجمعوا
وتمسكوا حتى تمكن رأسهم
قد جامل الطفيل والإفسك، بل
لم يرس شرعة ربنا في حكمه
لبي الأعدى بالجرائم، لم يكن
فهر الأبله بخسة فيها الأذى
منع الأتية لب، أباح كفرًا ملحدًا

مؤسستنا البتار الإعلامية

B.5



(تعليقاً على إصدار "درع الصليب")

شعر: الثَّغْرِيَّة

يا جنودَ الدَّولةِ العَرَّا سلامًا
شَرِدُوا مَنْ خَلْفَهُمْ فِي حَكْمِ عَدْلِ
"أَزْدُعَانُ" سَأَقِي وَعَدًّا فِي انْتِخَابِ
زَاعِمًا لِلتُّرْكِ سَعْدًا وَأَزْدَهَارًا
وَإِذَا الأَمْرُ انْجَلَى مِنْ بَعْدِ هَوْلًا!
جَرَّهُمْ صَوْبَ البَلَايَا وَالْمَنَايَا
جَنَدُهُ دُلُّوا لَدَى خَيْرِ الكِمَاةِ
وَبَدُّوا مِثْلَ الكَلَابِ البَائِسَاتِ
حَرَّقُوا ثَأْرًا لِأَلَامِ البَرَايَا
دَوْلَتِي لَنْ تَتْرَكَ الكَفَّارَ هُمْلًا
أحرقوا جندَ الطَّوَاغِيَتِ اللُّثَامِ
جَرَّعُوهُمْ مِنْ لُظَى المَوْتِ الرُّزَامِ
أَسْمَعَ الجَمْهُورَ مَعْسُولِ الكَلَامِ
مَرْفَقًا أَقْوَالَ زُورٍ بِابْتِسَامِ
عَاكِسًا أَقْوَالَهُ، يَا لَلْفِصَامِ!
زَجَّهُمْ فِي حَرْبٍ خُسْرٍ وَانْهَزَامِ!
وَعَدُّوا عَنْ كُلِّ عَيْشٍ فِي صِيَامِ
عِبْرَةً تَرْوِي لَكُمْ حَالَ الطَّغَامِ
هَلْ يَرَى المَرْتَدُّ أَنَارَ اصْطِلَامِ؟!
بَلْ قِصَاصُ الحَقِّ أَمْضَى مِنْ حِسَامِ

البتار

B.6

إلى التبيضاء

[تهنئة بانتصارات جند الخلافة في ولاية البيضاء على الوثئة]

<p>على إعمالها سيف السرايا تقطع جذر شرك للخزايا تُشعشعُ في قلوبهم البلايا عن الغايات و اتضحت خبايا تُعجلُ أسدنا نحر الضحايا فراحوا يُرسلون لنا المطايا يُحاصرُ جمعنا كل الزوايا تقطع كُفركم منا الشظايا تسوس بشرعه كل البرايا</p>	<p>إلى البيضاء موفور التحايا تُجردُها من الأعماد حتى أقاموا بين أظهرنا زمانا أراد الله تطهيراً فجأوا إذا ما الدينُ جابه كُفر قوم يظنُّ كلابهم أنا ضعافُ وما علمت كلابهم بأننا قريباً تنزلون لأرض قومي فموتوا إن "باقية" أتتكم</p>
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الثلاثاء
٨ / ٦ / ١٤٣٨هـ

بقلم : شهادة

البتار

B.7



عمَرَ الخرابَ بشرعِهِ الأبرارُ
 قصفَ ولا نارَ ولا إحصارُ
 حتَّى العدوُّ بشأنهم يحتارُ
 لما تناهى في المدى "استنفارُ"
 جيشٌ كميٌّ باسلٌ جرارُ
 وجوارَ ربِّ العالمين اختاروا
 ونقشتمُ فخراً به الإكبارُ
 خيرٌ وإن ظنَّ الخِلافُ يُصارُ
 نصرَ الشريدِ إلهه القهارُ
 رُومًا وفُرسًا بالوغي كرارُ
 لتُمحَّصَ الأطهارَ ممنَ خاروا
 فحنَّت على الأسدِ الغضابِ قفارُ
 دينًا بهذا طمأنَ الجبارُ
 بيتَ تهديمٍ هذه الكفارُ
 أو جرح جسمٍ قد كوته النارُ
 يُشرى البديلُ لثلثها ويُعارُ
 نصرَ التقيِّ ثباته البتارُ
 ما خاف حينَ حوَاهُ ذاكَ الغارُ!
 معهم! وعقبى الكافرين تبارُ

الأرضُ تشهدُ أنهم عمَّارُ
 ما ضرَّ أرضَ الباذلين لربهم
 ثبتوا ثباتًا لا ثباتَ كمثلِه
 ها موصلُ الأخيارِ تشهدُ فعلهم
 فتوافد الأبطالُ نحو ثغورها
 لبوا نداءً إمامهم يومَ الوغى
 فبذلتُم جندَ الخليفةِ جهدكم
 وختامُ معركةِ الأسودِ تكشفت
 ما خيبَ الولي رجاءَ عبيده
 قد كانَ يحكمُ بالكتابِ مُساولاً
 سننُ البلاءِ المرَّ تجري دائماً
 فتنكرتُ صحواتُ أمريكا لهم
 ولينصرنَ اللهُ جُنُداً ناصروا
 يا أيُّها الأعْلَوْنَ لا تبكوا على
 أو إخوةٍ ذهبوا لعندِ مليكهم
 كلُّ الصنوفِ وإن تفرَّدَ حسنُها
 إلا العقيدةُ لا بديلَ لفقدها
 يا أيُّها الأعْلَوْنَ إنَّ محمداً
 إنَّ العزيزَ مؤيدٌ أنصاره

• خلاف النصر: الهزيمة.

البتار

B.8



B.9

فخذوا لكم درساً بقتل «معاذ»

أبشّر أيا عليّ بخدّ حراينا *** ولتسن يا مسكين أيّ ملاذ
 فدماء أطفال العقيدة جوهراً *** ودماك أرخص من قليل رذاذ
 تعدو يا جرام لأمريكا فما *** أغنت ولا تستطيع من إنقاذ
 أحسبتم أن الجرائم لعبة *** بنعيمها وجمالها الأخاذ!!
 كلاً أيا جمع الأراذل إنما *** سيكون ردّ الأسد كالقولاذ
 ما زلتُم لا تعرفون زئيرنا *** وصنيعه إن قام للإنقاذ
 يا ويلكم يا ويل حلف كافر *** أنتم له كالعلج والشحاذ
 بعتم عقيدتكم وبعتم أهلكم *** فخذوا لكم درساً بقتل «معاذ»

❦ معاذ الكساسبة؛ العلج المرتد المجرم سحقه الله هو ومن يدافع عنه، قبضت عليه الدولة الإسلامية فجر اليوم بفضل الله تعالى، بعد أن أسقط الله عز وجل طائرة هذا العلج - التابعة للتحالف - على يد فرسان الخلافة.

وقد شهدتُ بنفسِي ورأيتُ بعيني جرائم هذه الطائرات الكافرة بحق أهلنا المسلمين، ولا سيما الأطفال والنساء.

ثم يأتي صفيقون وقحون كالشياطين؛ يدافعون عن هذا العلج المرتد، ويطالبون بسلامته!!! ناسين متناسين اتهاماتهم للخلافة بأنها تسترخص دماء المسلمين ولا تأبه بها!! بينما هم أولاء يدافعون عن السفاحين المجرمين المرتدين! ودمون الخلافة

B.10



B.11



B.12

.. حين تكون القسط أعقل من كثير من البشر..

- شعر: أعلام النصر -

أيا قوم إلي رقيب حبيب
ولي بصفة في ربيع المحافل
ونسف ظلمونا ونست خثونا
ولكنني في آتوني النوازل
أجك لأعداء ربي التنابلي
لأروني البسور وأحمي النضال
وذي قطة لم تخف من سلاحي
ولا لم تملق أكاذيب جامل
شيا ليبتكم تيرشون المصواب
بعبدا عن الزوب عن كل باطل

نصر

B.13

سلاوا السيوف ترجل العدناني .. ذاك الهزبر محطم الصلبان
هاتو المنيا نرتوي من كأسها .. ونشب في دار العدا النيران
العين تدمع يا حبيب انها .. في وسط نار قوتها الاحزان
لله درك مت احسن ميتة .. لم تنحني لخيانة الأزمان
نبيك أم نبيكي على أحوالنا .. والفجر لحكم قبضة الجردان
يا رب اقبل من اتاك مضرجا .. بدمائه كي يحصد الرضوان
مهلا عبيد الغرب ان سيوفنا .. عطشى سيروي نصلها الميدان

كم قتل الكفر من قادتنا سابقًا ..
هل ماتت دولة الإسلام ؟! ..
هل مات الإسلام نفسه ؟!
أم صارت خلافة على منهاج النبوة ؟!

المنابغ
CONSTANCY

#امشاهل الشيخ العدناني

B.14



B.15

يا دولة الإسلام كوني دوحَةً أرهاها تقوى بشوكٍ خادشٍ
 ولتصمدي إبانَ ظلمِ غادرٍ فهو الدليلُ على الثباتِ (العائشي)
 كوني على كلِّ اتِّهامٍ باطلٍ كالنورِ يسطعُ في الضبابِ الغابشِ
 أدتَهُمْ بِمُضَائِهَا وَثَبَّتْهَا فَخَدَا عَلَيْهَا كُلَّ حَقْدِ طَائِشِ
 (د) دعستُ رؤوسَهُمْ بِكَلِّ بَسَالَةٍ فَمَحَتْ أَكَادِيْبَ الْهَرَاءِ النَّاهِشِ
 (أ) أرسَتْ قواعِدَ ديننا في عَزْمَةٍ فالديُّنُ دستورٌ وليسَ بهامِشِ
 (ع) عصفتُ بكلِّ مكيدةٍ جيكتُ لها فَخَدَا الكذوبُ أمامَها كالزراعِشِ
 (ش) شملتُ جموعَ المنهكينَ بيِّزها كالماءِ يبدو صافياً للعايشِ
 فلتسمعوا إخلاصنا في قولنا رغمًا على شرِّ أئيمٍ فاحشِ :
 إن كانَ حبُّ الصالحينَ تَدْعُشاً فلتشهدِ الدنيا بآئِي داعشي

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 المركز الإعلامي لشبكة شعوب الإسلام

فلتشهدِ الدنيا
 بآئِي داعشي
 | شعر : أحلام النصر |

مؤسسة البتار الإعلامية

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Litkon

Hg. von Verena Klemm, Sonja Mejcher-Atassi, Friederike Pannewick und Barbara Winckler

Vol. 44: Die jungen Kosmopoliten

Prozesse von Aneignung und Abgrenzung
in der zeitgenössischen türkischen Literatur

Von Katharina Müller

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Der Blick auf ausgewählte Werke türkischer Gegenwartautorinnen und -autoren offenbart eine Literatur mit kosmopolitischem Anspruch, die sich den thematisch wie sprachlich engen Grenzen einer national beziehungsweise idealistisch aufgeladenen Literatur verweigert. Der Roman soll nicht länger im Dienste einer Nation, einer Idee stehen, soll nicht Grenzen ziehen, sondern diese in Frage stellen und so auch einem neuen,

von globalen Vernetzungen geprägtem Lebensgefühl Ausdruck verleihen. Exemplarisch analysiert die vorliegende Arbeit Texte von Esmahan Aykol, Ash Erdoğan, Hakan Günday und Elif Şafak und stellt diese in den Kontext sowohl gesellschaftspolitischer Entwicklungen in der Türkei, als auch in Bezug zu Konzepten und Theorien um Prozesse der Kosmopolitisierung.

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Vol. 43: Die Entblößung der Wörter

aš-Šidyāqs literarische Listen als Kultur- und Gesellschaftskritik im 19. Jahrhundert

Von Christian Junge

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Aḥmad Fāris aš-Šidyāq (1805/1806–1887), einer der bedeutendsten arabischen Intellektuellen des 19. Jahrhunderts, veröffentlichte 1855 in Paris as-Sāq ‘alā as-sāq fī mā huwa al-Fāriyāq (Bein über Bein. Was es bedeutet, al-Fāriyāq zu sein), ein schillerndes Meisterwerk der modernen arabischen Literatur, das seine Leser mit zahlreichen literarisch-lexikographischen Wortlisten konfrontiert. Die literatur- und kulturwissenschaftlichen Studie untersucht erstmals ausführlich aš-Šidyāqs Listen. Sie entwickelt ein eigenes Analyseinstrumentarium, das die epistemisch-ästhetische „Entblößung der Wörter“ in aš-Šidyāqs Werk und in der arabischen Literatur und Lexikographie sichtbar und verständlich macht. Dazu zählt etwa die Poetik des enumerativen Prosareims oder der Synonymlisten, die innerhalb der vor- und frühmodernen arabischen Tradition einen großen Stellenwert einnehmen, von der literatur- und kulturwissenschaftlichen Forschung bislang aber kaum ernst genommen und diskursiv untersucht wurden. Im Dialog mit Theorien u.a. von Assmann, Barthes und Cixous liest meine Arbeit aš-Šidyāqs literarische Wortlisten als fundamentale Kultur- und Gesell-

schaftskritik des 19. Jahrhunderts. Dabei spielen die zeitgenössischen Diskurse von Geschlecht, Lust und Sprache eine zentrale Rolle, die über die Aufzählungen archaischer arabischer Wörter in vielfacher Hinsicht verhandelt und ‚gegen den Strich‘ gebürstet werden. Im Kontext einer „Rückkehr zur Philologie“ (Edward Said) entdeckt diese Studie in aš-Šidyāqs Sprachdenken eine intellektuelle Radikalität und künstlerische Experimentfreude, die ein neues Licht auf die Nahḍa, die arabische Erneuerungsbewegung an der Schwelle zur Moderne, wirft. Im Rahmen der Shidyāq-Forschung liefert diese Studie darüber hinaus einen substanziellen Einblick in seine mittlere Schaffensphase von 1848 und 1857 in London und Paris. Durch die Einbeziehung neu entdeckter Quellen verortet sie aš-Šidyāq in Netzwerken arabischer und europäischer Wissenschaftler und Literaten und arbeitet erstmals die historische arabische und europäische Rezeption von as-Sāq auf. Der umfangreiche Anhang stellt eine Auswahl arabischer, französischer, englischer und deutscher Paratexte aus dem 19. Jahrhundert zur Verfügung, die für das Verständnis von aš-Šidyāqs Leben und Werk wichtig sind.

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Der Band ist die erste Studie, die das Werk des libanesischen Autorenfilmers Ghassan Salhab umfassend und medienübergreifend untersucht. Das Werk entsteht im gedanklichen Umfeld einer Krise der Repräsentation, wird jedoch nicht ausschließlich in seiner Auseinandersetzung mit dem libanesischen Bürgerkrieg (1975-1990), son-

dern vor allem auf seine ästhetische Dimension hin untersucht. Hierbei werden die Vorrangstellung des mündlichen poetischen Vortrags in der arabisch-islamischen Tradition und die melancholischen Stimmungslagen berücksichtigt, wie sie in Epochen von Verunsicherung durch Kriege und Neuorientierung entstehen.

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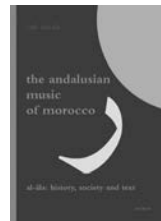
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DECODING DĀ'ISH investigates how jihadist groups like the self-named 'Islamic State' exploit the symbolic world to establish social domination upon its Arabic-speaking populace. This book proposes that if one wants to understand how the insurgent group managed to highjack the hearts and minds of its recruits, one has to delve deep into the ancient past and reread the jihadist group in the light of the tribal cultures that for over a millennium have expressed themselves in poetry and have attached great value to their cultural traditions. DECODING DĀ'ISH offers a contextualised insight into the controversial manifestation of religiously-inspired political violence by showing how discourse is weaponized with gruesome perfection to legitimate brutality as virtue, concentrate bigotry, eulogize violence, and sugar-coat reality on the battlefield. This unique approach presents the group through its own eyes and voice, thus providing a deeper insight into the group's laudatory slogans, poetic verses, political culture, self-images, and guiding myths.

