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Using Media to Legitimize Terrorism

*Dabiq* and Islamic State

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays terrorism has become more and more important. Differently from the traditional terrorist organizations the new types have new tools that help them to reach their purposes. The thesis is mainly divided in four chapters. The first one is a short introduction to terrorism, history and different definitions of the term. The second chapter describes how media and social networks are at the basis of the Islamic State’s propaganda. The third chapter presents the legitimate domination theory theorized by Weber. The core chapter is the last and forth one, it analysis mainly the first issue of the Dabiq magazine. The chapter also applies Weber’s theory to the Islamic State and how thanks to its media propaganda it legitimates its power. After the examination of different texts the thesis concludes that Islamic State is reaching its legitimate purpose and it is emerging more and more on the international scenario.
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INTRODUCTION

After the Iranian Revolution, the contemporary radical Islamist terrorist groups have emerged. Every day, newspapers and news speak about different terrorist organizations. Hezbollah is a Lebanese organization whose leadership is inspired by Ayatollah Khomeini, with the former aim to spread the Islamic Revolution that follows the Iranian leaders’ Shī’a ideology. Hamas is a Palestinian political and paramilitary organization, with the aim to fight against Israel. Al-Qaeda and ISIS are two radical Islamic organizations, whose aim is to fight against both the “Near” enemy and the “Far” enemy.

According to Bruce Hoffman this new generation of terrorists, is not only characterized by more salient theological influences, but in some cases has embraced millenarian, if not apocalyptic aims (Hoffman, 2006). These new organizations are less cohesive entities; they have a more flexible structure with a more opaque command and control relationship (Hoffman, 2006). Differently from the traditional terrorist groups, which have a pyramidal, hierarchical structure these new terrorists are part of a far more amorphous, indistinct, and brad movement and they operate on a more linear rather than a hierarchical basis (Hoffman, 2006).

One of the main purposes of these new emerged terrorist groups is to create independent states. They try to undermine the existing governments, which are considered inadequate to respond to people’s need. The leaders of the groups suggest solutions to overcome these situations of crisis.

The thesis focuses on one of these organizations - the Islamic State - and it analysis its organization, development, structure and majors aim. In particular, the thesis looks at how this organization presents and legitimizes itself.

To impose its power ISIS uses recently developed technological means such as social-networks and Internet tools. Its on-line activities are designed to support its kinetic actions, which include collection of information
(intelligence), target selection, propaganda, recruitment and fundraising (Nissen, 2014). Social media are a very powerful instrument according to Pew Research, Center’s Social Networking Fact Sheet, 89% of adults between 18 and 29 years of age use social-media.¹ Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, and also YouTube, allow ISIS’s propaganda to have a global impact and to reach across the world in real time. More often ISIS’s posts on Internet web sites include sophisticated, production-quality video and images that incorporate visual effects (Blaker, 2015).

The purpose of the thesis is to analyse the theory of legitimate domination formulated by Max Weber, which distinguishes three types of legitimate domination: legal authority, traditional authority and finally charismatic authority.

To assess the ways these different types of authorities are mobilized by the Islamic State, the thesis uses at the Dabiq magazine, the official journal of the organization. The focus will be on the identification of al-Zarqawi, the founder of the terrorist group, as a charismatic leader and the way in which it is portrayed within Dabiq.

¹ http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/
FIRST CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION TO TERRORISM

Since ancient times terrorism has always existed in different forms and purposes. This first chapter is a brief introduction to terrorism, its definition, history and typologies.

1.1 DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

Terrorism is a multi-faced phenomenon. Yet, nowadays there is no scholarly agreement on its definition. The problem faced by an all-encompassing definition is the difficulty of taking into account special circumstances based on the type of action committed, the nature of the victims, or the type of method of the terrorist action (Sorel, 2003, p. 368). According to the Oxford English Dictionary it means:

Terrorism: A system of terror. 1. Government by intimidation as directed and carried out by the party in power in France during the revolution of 1789-94; the system of "Terror." 2. gen. A policy intended to strike with terror those against whom it is adopted; the employment of methods of intimidation; the fact of terrorizing or condition of being terrorized (Oxford English Dictionary, 1971, p. 3268).

However, these definitions are not wholly satisfying, they do not give the real imagine of what “terrorism” is today. The High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change appointed by the UN, which delivered its report on global security in December 2004, defined terrorism as:

Any action, in addition to actions already specified by the existing conventions on aspects of terrorism, the Geneva Conventions and Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act.
Why terrorism is so difficult to define? One of the predominant answers is that during the past two hundred years the meaning of the term has changed considerably.

At the end of the first chapter of his book, Inside Terrorism, Bruce Hofmann identifies some key features that define terrorist groups: they have an ineluctably political aim and motives; they try to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target, they are conducted either by an organization, with identifiable chain of command or by individuals; all terrorist organizations’ acts involve violence or the threat to violence (Hofmann, 2006, p. 63). People seem to agree on the methods used in terrorism, on the qualification of the acts, on its consequences and on its aims. Disagreements appear when causes, motivations, legitimization and the qualification of the perpetrators are taken into account (Sorel, 2003).

1.1.1 BRIEF HISTORY OF TERRORISM

Historical events have demonstrated that terrorism has always existed. Bruce Hofmann identifies eight historical phases in which the term has assumed different meanings, as shown below (Hofmann, 2006).

The word “terrorism” appeared for the first time during the French Revolution. With a positive connotation, it was meant as a way to establish order during the anarchical period following the revolution. The term was adopted to indicate the new government’s power. According to Maximilien Robespierre the word terrorism was closely associated with the ideals of virtue and democracy: during the revolutionary period virtue had to be linked to terrorism.

When in 1974 Robespierre and his terror regime ended also the term terrorism changed. It became associated with the abuse of office and power, with criminal implications. However, one impetus remained alive after French Revolution and spread through Europe: the antimonarchical sentiment. This led to a new era of terrorism, in which the term gained some
of the current revolutionary, anti-state connotations. Its founder was the Italian republican extremist Carlo Piscane. One of the first groups to put into practice Piscane's teaching, which consisted of the “propaganda by deed” (Hofmann, 2006), was the Narodnaya Volka (a Russian constitutionalists’ organization): they started killing in order to overthrow monarchical regimes, a practice that spread throughout Europe in the nineteenth century.

In the 1930s the meaning of the term changed again, it was less used to refer to revolutionary movements and violence directed against governments and their leaders. It was used to describe the practice of mass repression employed by totalitarian states and their dictatorial leaders against citizens. The term regained its former connotation of abuse of power by government and was applied to authoritarian regimes such as the Fascist Italy, the Nazi German and the Stalinist Russia.

After the Second World War, another change occurred, the term started to gain the revolutionary connotations which has also today. It was used to describe the violent revolts carried out by various indigenous nationalistic/anti-colonialist groups emerged in Asia, Africa and Middle East to oppose to the European control. It was always in this period, 1940s and 1950s, that the now so often used terms “politically correct” and “freedom fighters” appeared on the international scenario.

In 1960s and 1970s the real turning point occurred, even if the word terrorism was kept on being understood in a revolutionary context. The term was expanded to include the nationalist and ethnic separatist groups outside the colonial and neo-colonial context. In this period some left-wing political extremists groups started to create some terrorist organizations to oppose to the American intervention in Vietnam. During the middle of the decade there were some episodes of suicide bombings directed to American diplomats and militaries. Terrorism became associated with a type of covert or surrogate warfare whereby weaker states could confront larger, more powerful rivals without the risk of retribution (Hofmann, 2006, p. 39).
In the 1960s the term “terrorism” was associated with two new born buzzwords: “narco-terrorism” and the so called “grey area phenomenon”. The former one is defined as the “use of drug trafficking to advance the objectives of certain governments and terrorist organizations”; this type of terrorism was identified in particular in the Soviet Union, Cuba, Bulgaria and Nicaragua. While the latter term “grey area phenomenon” denoted “threats to the stability of nation states by non-state actors and non-governmental processes and organizations (Hofmann, 2006, p. 40)”. To describe violence affecting “immense regions or urban areas where control has shifted from legitimate governments to new half-political, half-criminal powers (Hofmann, 2006, p. 40)”. Terrorism was no more related to an individual phenomenon of subnational violence but to one of several elements, and part of wider patterns.


In 1979 there was the Iranian Revolution and it influenced all the contemporary radical Islamist terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah, Hamas and so on. It had also facilitated the development of the suicide bombings and the traditional glorification of the martyrdom. During the 1983 suicide attacks expanded significantly and reach the international ground. Finally, in 2001, classic terrorism reached the peak of its evolutionary stage; from that moment many counterterrorism operations began to overthrow the terrorist headquarters in Afghanistan.

Terrorist events are a constant in history and what is clear is that terrorists never saw horror and mistakes in their actions. They perceive themselves as reluctant warriors driven by the desperate attempt to change repressive
governments and lot of witnesses kidnapped by terrorist groups have confirmed this (Hofmann, 2006).

There is not an international acceptance of the definition of the term, but one aspect on which everyone agrees is that terrorism is a pejorative term, it has negative connotations, and it is generally applied to enemies and opponents, the use of the term implies also a moral judgement. Any person could call another one terrorist it depends for which side one sympathize. It is about the illegitimate use of violence (either directed against a legitimate government, or in the form of governments' abuse of power).

Looking at the definitions given by the different departments and agencies of the same government, such the American one, it is clear that everyone attribute to the term the priorities and the peculiar interests which they deal with. However, all the definitions have something in common, terrorism is a violent act used to threaten someone or something and this point is internationally recognized.

1.2 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “OLD” AND “NEW” TERRORISM

In the 21st century a new type of terrorism, the “leaderless networks”, appeared on the international scene and the traditional organizations and definitions did not fit with it anymore. This new type of structure has been adopted by emergent terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. It is defined with lot of new different terms: “leaderless resistance,” “phantom cell networks,” “autonomous leadership units,” “autonomous cells,” a “network of networks,” or “lone wolves” (Hofmann, 2006, p. 39).

“Leaderless networks” differ from traditional terrorist organizations, which were characterized by a hierarchical, pyramidal structure. There is a leader but it is more a titular position than a real one, he has less direct command and control relationship (Hofmann, 2006). According to Arquilla and Ronfeldt (2001), the organizational structure of these types of terrorists is quite flat. There is no single central leader or commander; the network as a
whole (but not necessarily each node) has little or no hierarchical structure. There may be multiple leaders. Decision-making and operations are decentralized and depend on consultative consensus-building that allows for local initiative and autonomy. The design is both acephalous (headless) and polysepalous (Hydra-headed), it has not precise heart or head, although not all nodes may be “created equal” (Arquilla & Ronfeld, 2001, p. 280).

This new structure is characterized by many autonomous local terrorist cells, which act and plan attacks independently from one another. But, anyway, at the end they try to reach a common aim that is in line with the goals of a wider terrorist organization. The single cells and the lone individuals are surely less sophisticated than the traditional organizations whose members were professionally trained, but are absolutely more lethal and bloody-minded (Burke, 2015).

The aim both of the “old” and the “new” terrorist organizations is more or less the same and is to pursue a political change. Terrorism wants to create power where there is a lack or very little power. Through their violent acts and the publicity generated by them, terrorists want to obtain visibility, influence and power to effect political changes at the local and international level.

1.3 RELIGION AND TERRORISM

In the past century the relation between religion and terrorism was overshadowed by ethno-nationalist/separatist motivated terrorism. However, the connections between religion and terrorism can be traced back more than two thousand years (Burke, 2015), many terms used today to describe terrorist actions come from the past. In the majority of the cases terrorism motivated by religion led to more violent acts, which produce high levels of fatalities than the one perpetrated by non-religion motivated groups (Burke, 2015).
In the wide range of terrorist organizations, today, the predominant imperative is linked to religion. The phenomenon of radical militant Islam is not the only religion extremism, but it is currently the most significant within the political movements claiming divine inspiration. At the end of the 1970s a new generation of radical Islamists emerged, their goal was to manipulate the excluded and marginalized segments of the Muslim society. Through this ideology, they seek to restore the ancient caliphate, the Turkish Ottoman Caliphate. The Iranian Revolution occurred in 1979, played a crucial role in the creation of this peculiar strand of terrorism, and in the 1980s it involved elements of all the world’s major religions and in some case also some small casts and cults.

1.3.1 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGION TERRORISM

Different value system, mechanism of legitimization and justification are at the basis of the justification and are the reasons why terrorists acting inspired by religion are more deadly than. For religious terrorists, violence is a blessed and holy act, through it they try to answer to some theological demands or imperatives. One of the main differences between secular terrorist and religious terrorist is that the former one rarely fulfils indiscriminate killing on a massive scale because it is seen as counterproductive and immoral. The former one often tries to eliminate a specific category of enemies and he finds mass killing morally justified and necessary to reach his goal, even if the same tactics were used by the Italian terrorist groups during the 1970s and 1780s. Religion in this case is used to justify violence and to legitimize it. The religious sanction and support is crucial.

The secular terrorist sees himself as part of a wrong political system and through violent acts he seeks to create a new system. Differently, the religious terrorist does not see himself as part of a system but he is an “outsider”, who fundamentally wants to change the existing order. This sense
of alienation leads him to contemplate more destructive and deadly actions (Burke, 2015).

This thesis focuses on Islamic groups, which perfectly embody these characteristics. As written before the 1979 Iranian Revolution played a crucial role into the advent of the modern religious terrorism. In 1980s the revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini encouraged all Muslims, throughout the world, to reassert the fundamental teachings of the Qur'an and to drive away the Western influence, in particular the United States, from Middle East. The Iranian Revolution has inspired all the major Islamic terrorist organizations, from Hezbollah to al-Qaeda up to the more recent ISIS. These groups find support in Muslim clerics, who fully support and encourage self-martyrdom, even if suicide is forbidden by the Islamic law. Religious terrorists are driven by the hate they feel for their enemies.

1.3.2 SUICIDE TERRORISM

Religious terrorism is also strictly related to suicide terrorism. Indeed, the latter boosted the former in particular after 9/11. Between the 2001 and 2005, 78% of the perpetrated terrorist attacks had a religious impetus (Hofmann, 2006, p. 179). After 1980 suicide terrorism spread along Middle East, and currently it is one of the core characteristics of Islamic terrorism.

Terrorist organizations and in particular the Islamic ones are more and more attracted by this type of attacks because of their unique tactical advantage, they are devastatingly effective, lethally efficient and have a great success, are relative inexpensive and are generally easy to execute (Hoffman, 2006). The choice of this type of tactic is completely rational and conscious. For radical Islamic terrorist groups religion and theological justifications have a critical role, it guarantee a constant flow of new members which are vital to keep the organization alive.

Suicide terrorist attacks have great advantages in comparison to other types of terrorist operations. Perpetrator's death is essential, in this way there is no
need to have an escape plan and there is no assailant to capture and to interrogate. As said before there are few costs and a huge media coverage is guarantee. Finally, suicide terrorist attacks are powerful psychological weapons and are precisely what terrorists look for; they want to intimidate governments and citizens to create a climate of profound fear and insecurity.

Qur’an explicitly forbids suicide, which is defined as “the greatest wrong-doings” a Muslim can commit. However, religion and theoretical justifications provided by Muslims religious authorities have played a crucial role to change the collective image of suicide attacks and to encourage self-sacrifice. In this particular context suicide attacks are seen as self-martyrdom actions, without the perpetrators’ death the attacks could not be successful; therefore death is justified and accepted. Among the most prominent Muslim clerics’ pronouncements there was the declaration of Ayatollah Khomeini who stated that he knew of no command “more binding to the Muslim than the command to sacrifice life and property to defend and bolster Islam (Hofmann, 2006, p. 209).”

Suicide terrorists are rewarded with the promise that after their death they would enter into the heaven, they would enjoy the pleasures of alcohol and sex. Moreover, they could choose seventy relatives who could join them. The enormous privilege of being a suicide terrorist is testified by the interviews with the parents of the death terrorists, who are completely convinced that their progeny is in the heaven seated aside Allah, and they applaud and prize the violent death of their sons because of their own impending salvation (Burke, 2015).

### 1.3.3 ISLAMIC MILITANCY

It is not simple to investigate the violent landscape of the Islamic militancy. At first glance it gives the impression of an impenetrable chaos. There are groups which seems to have the same aims and goals but have a different name, are located in different places with different strategies. In the recent Syrian war context, hundreds of new organization, groups and “brigades”
have emerged and none of them have neither static nor linear or uniform structure: the Islamic militancy is constantly changing (Burke, 2015).

In this apparent confusion, Jason Burke (2015) identifies three main categories of actors. The first type is the one of the big organizations, and only two could be counted: al-Qaeda and IS. Both are pre-eminent in the Islamic context, are very powerful and both are capable to attract lot of volunteers and funding. Despite the passing of the years, both have been able to adapt to changes and to develop new strategies and technologies.

The second category within the contemporary Islamic militancy is those active groups which have some degree of structural organization. Some of these have a formal relation with the two major groups cited above despite these links they act independently from the central leadership. In this second category appears also some independent groups, many of them are based in South Asia, India and Bangladesh. Nevertheless, all share the same broad world views of al-Qaeda and IS; the difference is that they do not focus on the international scenario but just locally. Many of these groups are merely coalitions of fragmented factions and not hierarchical organizations.

The last and third category is the one that worried most the counterterrorism officials and are the “inspired warriors”, the volunteers, the radicalised people in the West, who commit violent acts “in the name of God” in their home countries. In this category are included all the thousands of young European, who travelled to Syria to fight and to join the cause, though just a little portion of those returned have the courage to execute violent attacks. According to Burke, this third category is the living proof that terrorism is a social activity like many others, albeit a repugnant one. The lone wolves are not really lone but embedded within a much wider and deeper culture of Islamic militancy (Burke, 2015, p. 21).

To sum up, these three categories are helpful to understand how this contemporary phenomenon has evolved and the threat that the world is facing today.
1.4 ORIGINS OF RADICAL ISLAMISM

Since its dawn the history of Islam is characterized by violence. After the divine revelations of the Archangel Gabriel, in 610, Prophet Muhammad started to expand his empire. He was able to create the Muslim Empire ruled by the Islamic law and religion, at the time was the greatest known civilization to exist. After the death of Muhammad the Muslim society based its faith on the two major sacred texts, which were the Qur'an, composed by 114 suras which contain all the divine teaching transmitted by the Archangel Gabriel to Muhammad, and the hadith, which are all the sayings and the acts of the prophet. These two texts became the base for different interpretation which leads to the creation of the Qur'anic law, or Sharia.

Four main schools of interpretation emerged: the Hanafite School, the Malikite School, the Shaffite School and the Hanbali School. According to the Islamic thought, the Islamic state has no border, it is a geopolitical space belonging to God’s people, and it defines itself just in relation to the Muslim community. Islam is also based on five fundamental pillars: the first one is related to God “there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet”; the second one is salat, the prayer, which takes place five times a day; the third one is zakat, the alms-giving to the needy; the fourth is saum, that is the fasting during the sacred period of Ramadan; and the final one is hajj, that is the pilgrimage to Mecca that each believer has to fulfil once in his life.

The act of sacrifice life for Allah's will is present in the Islam culture since 624, when the Prophet with some men tried to take a caravan whose traveling from Damascus to Mecca. To galvanize his troops, which were in minority in comparison to the enemies, he told to his men that an angel was protecting them and who died would be rewarded with heaven.

Around the 850 the concept of jihad, to make an effort, was better defined. Two concepts were related to it: greater jihad and lesser jihad. The first one is the spiritual work that each Muslim must do in order to respect Islamic laws. The latter one is the duty that every Muslim had to protect his religion.
According to the Islamic scholars *jihad* comes from the Arabic root *jhd* which means strain, effort, struggle, endeavour or striving, against something, or sometimes someone, undesirable.

The renewed idea of modern *jihad* emerged during the war between the Soviet-backed Afghan government and the insurgent *mujahedeen*. The violent conflict, pitting Muslim fighters against the troops of an avowedly atheist power, prompted further calls for violent *jihad*. New *jihadist* ideologues appeared during this bloody period and they recall all the Muslim community to fight against the unbeliever enemy. Among those who answered to the call there was Osama bin Laden.

### 1.5 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AL-QAEDA AND ISIS

In the contemporary Islamic militancy two major groups have emerged: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

#### 1.5.1 AL-QAEDA

Osama bin Muhammad bin ‘Awaḍ bin Lāden, better known as Osama bin Laden, was born in Riyadh in 1957 or 1958 from a high-middle class family. He studied in Jeddah and he joined the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood, which is a traditional Sunni Islamist organization founded in Egypt and its aim was and is to reform all the existing political systems in the Arab world. While he was in college during the 1970s he became a follower of the radical pan-Islamist scholar Abdullah Azzam, he was one of the prominent jihadist ideologue to emerge during the Afghan war, who called Muslims to action. In 1979 bin Laden arrived in Afghanistan to serve the cause, he did not fight directly, but he used his connections to provide financial and moral support.

Al-Qaeda, founded by Osama bin Laden more than twenty-five years ago, emerged from the chaos of the last years of war between the Soviet Union and the *mujahedeen* in Afghanistan. The aim of the group is to unite and focus the different elements of different extremist groups in order to reform

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2 [https://www.history.com/topics/osama-bin-laden](https://www.history.com/topics/osama-bin-laden)
radically society, states and religion in Middle East. Bin Laden also wanted the restoration of the pan-Islamic caliphate that is idealized and venerated. The caliphate disappeared with the fall of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in 1924, and it remained in the collective imaginary as the “golden age of Islam”. The aim of al-Qaeda is to restore this idyllic period and to unite all Muslims under this caliphate. The United States are seen as the main obstacle for the achievement of this goal, according to bin Laden and his second in command al-Zawahiri, America is the “Far Enemy” (Hofmann, 2006, p. 144) that must be defeated. To achieve his aim in the 1990s he decided that the best strategy was to attack US.

Bin Laden and a small group of close associates orchestrated the most bloody and violent attack of the last decade. However, after the death of the charismatic leader also the terrorist organization has decreased its potential. The current leader Ayaman al-Zawahiri lacks bin Laden’s talent for the public relations, he has also changed the attention of the organization from the “Far Enemy” (US and Western countries) to the “Near Enemy” (local regimes in the Islamic world). Also the name has slightly change from al-Qaeda to “al-Qaeda central”, also known as “old al-Qaeda” or “al-Qaeda senior leadership” (Burke, 2015).

In the past years, the most important terrorist organization in the world of the Islamic militancy has become the Islamic State.

1.5.2 ISLAMIC STATE

The birth of the Islamic State was quite different; it was created by al-Zarqawi, in the Iraq-war context. The organization changed different names; at the beginning in 2003 it was born as Jamaat al- Tauheed wal-Jihad, the Union for Tauheed and Jihad.

Ahmad Fadil Nazal al-Khalayleh, better known as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, was born in 1966 in Zarqa, Jordan. He grew up in a modest working-class family, in a different economic situation in comparison to bin Laden, but as bin
Landen during high school was influenced by the propaganda of Abdullah Azzam and he travelled to Afghanistan to join the war. However, when he arrived it was too late, nevertheless he decided to stay and live in Peshawar with militants of the Islamist group. In 1999 he met bin Landen thanks to an intermediary. They did not share a lot and they were not very impressed by each other. In any case al-Qaeda’s leader decide to give to al-Zarqawi an opportunity, so he was sent to a rudimentary training camp in Herat, here he founded his Islamist group called the Union for Tauheed and Jihad. In 2003 he had moved from Afghanistan to Iraq.

Al-Zarqawi and bin Laden took distance from each other and acted separately. During the years the first was able to assimilate lot of small terrorist groups in his organization and he also attracted many volunteers coming from the Middle East to join his war against the American’s army which invaded Iraq. Thanks to some bombing attacks, kidnapping and killing of Western civilians he was able to raise his profile significantly. At this point bin Laden contacted him and the reasons were fairly transparent: al-Qaeda wanted to gain a more powerful presence on the ground of the theatre of extremist violence around the world. What al-Qaeda wanted was clear, however what was less clear were the benefits for al-Zarqawi, certainly he would gain a higher degree of respect within the extremist circles (Burke, 2015).

After a period of negotiations, in October of 2004, al-Zarqawi declared that his group had become the *Tanzim Qaeda al-Jihad fi Bilad al Rafidayn*, al-Qaeda Jihad Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers or al-Qaeda in Iraq. His main purpose was to seize and hold real ground for his militants. At the beginning the local communities were pleased to host the new “saviours”, which would defeat the “Far Enemy”. However, after a period of time, after the imposition of new rules which defined ways of living and behave, feelings of discontent started to appear.
In January 2006 al-Zarqawi unified some Iraqi rebel groups under his organization, but in June of the same year he was killed. In October a new chief was appointed: Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri, better known as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Under his leadership the Islamic State is born. In 2013 Islamic State leader decided to expand his military operation to Syria, and to do so he collaborated with the rebel group Jahbat al-Nusra. In the meanwhile al-Zawahiri, forced al-Baghdadi to leave Syria and to exercise his control only over Iraq. Because of the disagreement between the two leaders ISIS decided to formally separate from al-Qaeda in Iraq.

1.5.3 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State are part of the same terrorist category, they share values and they differ in others. Both are managed by individuals, who desire absolute obedience but they rarely obtain it. Both have an enormous quantity of resources to distribute and they have an unlimited access to funding and streams of recruitment.

According to Makrun Kholil although al-Qaeda was the forerunner of ISIS, many researchers argued that ISIS is superior to al-Qaeda. Ansyaad Mbai quoted Brett McGurk, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq and Iran, as follows: “They (ISIS) are more prepared and more advanced, they are considered more brutal, indiscriminate, and they have slaughtered their opponents mercilessly. ISIS has more trained members than al-Qaeda that we faced in Iraq (Makrun, 2016, p. 214)”.

However, when observed more closely IS and al-Qaeda differs enormously. The main difference lies in the main aim of the two organizations. The former one rejected completely the “Far Enemy” strategy, which is at the basis of the project of the latter on, and focuses more on the “Near Enemy”. Al-Baghdadi is more interested to expand his power and control on the local territory; he limits his actions against the West attacking tourists in Muslim-majority countries. However, he incited lone wolves and individual actions in Europe or US.
Another difference is that al-Qaeda’s leaders have always tried to minimise violence between Muslims and to unify them. By contrast, sectarian violence against co-religionists is fundamental to IS, it has also accused the counterpart group to be just interested in publicity and not to fight against unbelievers. Al-Qaeda tries to unify different groups and has four main affiliates around the Arab world managed by a central power. Whereas, IS in 2014 and 2015 announced that has founded a series of “governorates” in Libya, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and West Africa. In June 2014 al-Baghdadi stated that the Islamic State was created and his main purpose was reached, on the other hand according to bin Laden the creation of an Islamic State was a long-term aspiration.

Finally, the last main difference is about the final confrontation with the forces of unbelief, according to al-Qaeda it is a distant prospect and that is part of the popular traditional, while according to IS it is already taking place (Burke, 2015).
SECOND CHAPTER: MEDIA AND TERRORISM

In the last two decades technology has developed immensely, telephones are smaller and take professional photos. Computers and tablets have become indispensable in everyday life and help people to connect globally. The Islamic State has been very skilful to exploit these new technologies to spread its ideologies and to reach its members inside their houses. This chapter illustrate IS’s ability to use social-networks and Internet.

2.1 PROPAGANDA

To legitimate its power nowadays terrorist organizations more often use Internet and in particular social-networks to spread their message through a series of on-line activities. These actions are designed to support their kinetic actions, which include collection of information (intelligence), target selection, propaganda, recruitment and fundraising. This is also the case of the Islamic State, at a very high and professional level (Nissen, 2014). On June 2014 IS entered in the global scenario, with the aim to establish its religious authority under the caliphate driven by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It has tried to build credibility and to establish legitimacy. It has demonstrated capability for the propaganda, using social media and informatics technology to recruit fighters and to intimidate enemies. The final goal was to expand its influence using as the main mean, brute force. It has also tried to build credibility and to establish legitimacy. It has demonstrated capability for the propaganda, using social media and informatics technology to recruit fighters and to intimidate enemies.

After the establishment of the Islamic State, its propaganda is more often directed to western people and more specific it is focused at the “Millennial Generation” (Blaker, 2015, p. 1). Clearly social-media turn out to be a precious instrument for the terrorist organization and it is perfect for the audience it is interested to target. According to Pew Research Center’s Social Networking Fact Sheet, 89% of adults between 18 and 29 years of age use
Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, and also YouTube, allow ISIS’s propaganda to have a global impact and to reach across the world in real time. More often ISIS’s posts on Internet web sites include sophisticated, production-quality video and images that incorporate visual effects (Blaker, 2015).

IS is different from the other terrorist organizations for its sophisticated understanding of social media, which are used to reach its purposes. Its communication strategy wants to persuade all Muslims, who fight for the caliphate, that it is a religious duty (Farwell, 2014). The narrative of the group portrays ISIS as an agent of change, as a paladin of its perverse notions of social justice, and a collection of avengers bent on settling accounts for the perceived suffering of others (Richardson, 2006). IS has used Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to influence adversaries, friends and journalists.

Thanks to internet the group has been able to distribute powerful and emotional images. Some of these are coherent with its message of inevitable victory, and portray the members of the group as frightening fighters. These images could be used to create support for fellow travelers and to recruit new members. Images of gore, beheadings and executions have the purpose to intimidate adversaries. However, the group has also published images of soldiers who eat Snickers bars and nurturing kittens. These photos aim to communicate the message that even if it is strictly Islamic the Islamic State wants to promote the welfare of people and not murdering them.

Thanks to social-media ISIS is able to communicate to outsiders what is going on in Syria and in Iraq, which normally are places where there is low journalist coverage; also fighters consider it as a good thing. According to Clint Watts, a Foreign Policy Research Institute expert, they “want to communicate back to their communities that they are participating.”

Potential recruits can use Facebook and other social-media platforms to

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3 http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/
communicate with foreign fighters, who are engaged in battlefield to learn how the experience is and they also can contact facilitators who can explain how they can join the fight in Syria and Iraq.

2.2 AIM AND AUDIENCE OF ISIS’S PROPAGANDA

In Nissen’s opinion from the narration and associate messages results that the strategic aims of IS’s social-media campaign are: setting the agenda of the international media to obtain attention and visibility of their message(s); control the narrative; countering West, Shi’ite Muslims (rival jihadist factions) and the “propaganda” regime against IS. Contrast other jihadist groups and portray an image of power, greater than what actually is. Connecting supporters in on-line networks. Recruitment of new members and supporters. Intimidation and dissuasion of opponents (Syrian and Iraqi soldier and civilians). Demonstrate abilities and coherent command-and-control structures. Finally, fundraising (Nissen, 2014).

According to Nissen (2014), from the strategic point of view, IS has used social media to attract the attention of mass media and strategic audiences, amplify and control its messaging in support of its narrative and with the aim to recruit and radicalize its followers. This strategy also shows its understanding on how to exploit the users experience and the visual media (infotainment) to attract their followers’ attention and other audiences in an emotional way (Nissen, 2014). The Islamic State is able to build its “self-image” in a way that supports their narrative.

The propaganda wing of ISIS, al-Hayat, keeps on producing mass video that imitate Hollywood action films and music videos, obviously, the main audience are young Westerns. Videos often include music with texts translated in English and in other European languages. More recently they include jihadists who speak perfect English (Blaker, 2015). Professor Sean Heuston, who teaches English and film studies at The Citadel, writes about ISIS propaganda “It’s actually surprising how contemporary and hip-looking some of these things are, especially considering the fact that the messages
that they are promoting are essentially medieval." It is quite evident that the aim of these videos is to attract the Westerns Millennials.

IS’s strategy is also based on the notion of the “Force Multiplication” (Nissen, 2014, p. 2), through the use of social media IS seems to be more powerful than it may actually be. Partly its aim is to create a great volume of on-line output to assure their visibility through strategic audience, as well as gaining mass media attention and therefore additional exposition of their message. This has also the aim to create the impression of a great mass of followers, in turn to create social proof or fake peer endorsement, perhaps leading to a more “real” number of followers. This is obtained through the use of “disseminators” (Nissen, 2014), who might not be affiliated to IS, but they spread their tweet and other messages to thousands of followers.

According to Blaker in 2015 more or less 3.000 citizens of Western countries have migrated to ISIS territories to support extremists. Despite the distance, Internet and, more specifically social-media, permit to ISIS to connect themselves with thousands of people around the world. Thanks to social-mediias ISIS could implement the communication one-to-one using services of “chat” such as ChatSecure, TextSecure and Redphone.6

It is important to highlight that even if citizens do not leave for the Syria-Iraq border that is managed by ISIS, their support to the extremist organization threaten the national security, because the objective of terrorists could be realized within everyone’s own borders (Blaker, 2015).

The group’s use of Twitter has been particularly efficient; its Arabic – language Twitter app: “The Dawn of Glad Tidings” (or simply “Dawn”) (Farwell, 2014, p. 51), is publicized as a way to keep up with what the group is doing (ISIS's members use Twitter to document their experiences and to

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speak with other fighters). This app, however, allows thousands of activists to join the group and to repeatedly tweet hashtag so that they trend on the social-media. The app, which collects personal data on new users, allow the group’s social-media operators to post tweets, including links, hashtag and images, to users’ accounts in such a way to avoid triggering Twitter’s spam-detection algorithms (Farwell, 2014). While the group was marching on Mosul, its members produced up to 44.000 tweets per day, causing an image that the group had tweeted to pop up among the first results when someone searched Twitter for “Baghdad” (Farwell, 2014).

However, there is also a negative side in the strategic approach of ISIS. The ubiquity of smartphone has empowered each fighter to spread his own message and images, including atrocity videos, For example the chopping off of a man’s hand in Raqqa, whose filming was forbidden by ISIS’s leaders to avoid backlash. ISIS’s fighters could be proud to tweet and to praise about their experiences, but their behaviour provides fodder for group’s adversaries, who could use to discredit militants’ narrative while mobilizing opposition (Farwell, 2014).

ISIS’s leaders are aware that social-media could be dangerous. The group tries to protect its identity and the location of its leadership reducing electronical communications among top cadres and using couriers, who delivery, command and control messages by hand. Social-media are reserved just for propaganda.

### 2.3 The context in which propaganda occurs

Islamic State’s propaganda has not emerged recently, but its multiple multimedia products have antecedents in the *jihadist* communication, that could be trace back to 2004. The construction of the caliphate is a central theme in ISIS propaganda. IS’s videos tend to be full of rank-and-file members, in which potential recruits reflect themselves (Galloway, 2016).

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According to Shroder, high productions value act as initial lure, contrary to al-Qaeda videos, which were filmed with shaky handheld cameras, IS uses sound design, special effects rehearsed sequences and multiple-angle scenes, as well as high-tech 5D cameras and professional editing teams. These astonishing videos bring the audiences directly within the war zone, more or less as a videogame.

The best context to analyse this phenomenon is the role and nature of communication within the Islamic society. According to Mowlana “facts by themselves do not have meaning in Islam but, once placed in a proper social structure, constitute information leading to knowledge” (Mowlana, 2007, p. 25). He states that the tabligh (propagation) it is not the same of “the general concepts of communication, journalism, propaganda and agitation commonly used in contemporary literature” (Mowlana, 2007, p. 25). In contrast with the propagandists that need to believe to an ideology or to a doctrine, those people who are committed with the propagation, as understood by Islam, are distributing “some principle, belief or practice...”. Mowlana states that journalism as a production, gathering and dissemination of information, news and opinion is an extension of tabligh in its broadest sense (Mowlana, 2007). As theorized by Ibn Kaldun in 1957, propagation requests “groupfeeling”. According to him, communication is a social institution grown up according to community needs (Galloway, 2016).

In his book Mowlana keeps on relating tabligh with the concept of tawhid (unicity), and he describes it as a theory that implies all unity, coherence and harmony between all parts of the universe (Mowlana, 2007). Thanks to this concept another ethical consideration of tabligh becomes clear: the destruction of thought structures based on dualism, racialism, tribalism and familial superiority (Galloway, 2016). One of its functions is to destroy myths that can include “power”, “progress” and “modernization”. Mowlana

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9Ibid.
identifies other two principles that are related to *tabligh*. The first one is the individual and collective responsibility that Muslims have to guide one another into “commanding to the right and prohibiting from the wrong” (Mowlana, 2007, p. 29) and prepare the next generation to follow the Islamic norms. The second one is the concept of *ummah* that is the Islamic community that transcend the notion of modern nation-state. *Tabligh*’s role is to propagate, spread and maintain the *ummah* value system. On this base both *da’wa* (proselytism) and *tabigh* are appropriate descriptions of what the Islamic State is trying to do (Galloway, 2016). Its aims include the destruction of the antithetical though structures, different applications of force, if it is necessary also through the use of media, and to support and reinforce values of Salafist-jihadist community. This is possible through the communication that articulates a new social contract based in the intransigent application of its interpretation of the Islamic law (Galloway, 2016).

### 2.4 USE OF MEDIA TECHNIQUES

A persuasive element of the Islamic State’s propaganda is represented by its usage of the visual communication, in a 2015, study Zelin calculated that 88% of IS’s on-line publications were visual (Zelin, 2015). In his book Bolt states that “fast-moving, self-propelled imagery is transforming insurgency” (Bolt, 2012, p. 1), in particular the Islamic insurrection, which considers itself “in a battle and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media” (Bolt, 2012, p. 2). The images that Western people would consider as barbarities could be described as “Propaganda of the Deed” (POTD); it is the idea that terrorist organizations should fulfil extreme actions to gain world attention (Galloway, 2016). According to Bold the POTD is a weapon based on images that want to capture audiences’ interest, focusing their attention on IS’s information and distract from competing materials (Bolt, 2012).

Another technique is framing. Islamic State continuously intertwines reportage and comments that describe the undeniable progresses and the
enemies’ destruction, who are mock in a language that is constructed to discredit and dehumanize them (Zelin, 2015). According to some scholar the communication ability is intrinsic to this organization, independently from the technological advent and the social-media usage (Galloway, 2016). This though could be applied not only at international level but also within the caliphate borders. Most of outputs are directed to a local public, wheatears are friends or enemies and for the latter one the aim is to disseminate fear (Galloway, 2016). According to Milton, few things that happened within the IS’s territory do not have a media purpose.10

Even if some scholars have argued about the degree through which the Islamic Stata tries to increase its support, it is not debatable the fact that localized governance-related communication exist. In these kind of communication are included offline elements such as DVD, hard copies of IS writings, fliers, and also big screens located in parks to show videos.11 However, as far as the West is concerned, areas controlled by IS are difficult to quantify, are “black holes”.12

Bolt points out that often the terrorist act has been planned with extreme precision, rendering it strategy. In his opinion POTD become a communication act requests audience, quoting him “a tank that explodes under insurgent fire is a military tactical strike. But place a camera before it, and it becomes strategic POTD” (Bolt, 2012, p. 3). Propaganda of the Deed has become a communication mean that unlocks a group of population’s assumptions. It is similar to political marketing in the way in which it uses techniques of resonance symbolic associations of different constituencies (Bolt, 2012). The virtual dimension of the imagined Islamic community and shared values melted with actions on the operative battlefield. The virtual hosts the war of images, worlds and ideas in a context of strategic narrations (Galloway, 2016).

10 https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/twitter-and-jihad-communication-strategy-isis-13104
11 Ibid.
IS’s is able to combine the political violence as a still or moving image, over the local, military effect of slaughtering combatants and non-combatants (Bolt, 2012). It shows images of death that have to be spectacular because the mass communication requests a constant flow of drama to attract the attention of a vulnerable audience that has numerous other choices to satisfy.\(^{13}\) The result is so influential that insurgents don’t treat the images of their violence as marginal but as new strategic operating concepts (Bolt, 2012).

### 2.5 WHY TEENAGERS JOIN ISIS

In the article “ISIS excels at recruiting American teens: Here are four reasons why” Husna Haq, a correspondent for The Christian Science Monitor, identifies, as suggested from the title, four reasons why adolescents join ISIS organization. The focus is on American teens.\(^{14}\)

The first reason is that the group provides to young people a sense of identity. ISIS focuses its attention on those Western teens that are disillusioned and who have no sense of belonging or a purpose. This is also typical of the criminal gangs; they offer a sense of family and also an aim. In his report “Foreign Fighter in Syria” Richard Barrett wrote “The general picture provided by foreign fighters of their lives in Syria suggests camaraderie, good morale and purposeful activity, all mixed in with a sense of understated heroism, designed to attract their friends as well as to boost their own self-esteem”.\(^{15}\)

Secondly, ISIS manages a sophisticated machine of propaganda. According to Haq, Internet has a double effect, it is used by authorities to track terrorists and would-be terrorists, but it is also used by terrorist organizations to recruit fighters around the world. To support this thesis according to

\(^{13}\) [https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/the-islamic-states-theater-of-the-grotesque/](https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/the-islamic-states-theater-of-the-grotesque/)


Matthew Olsen, director of National Counterterrorism Centre, ISIS has become the most sophisticated propaganda machine between terrorist groups. According to Robert Hannigan, UK surveillance chief, “ISIS and other extremist groups use platforms like Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp to reach their target audience in a language it understands. Their methods include exploiting popular hashtags to disseminate their message.” Group’s social-media usage allows a rapid propaganda distribution and also invites a widespread following (Blaker, 2015).

Thirdly, ISIS propaganda appeals to a sense of religious obligation. Muslim leaders around the world have condemned ISIS actions stating that there is any Islamic justification to its actions. They have also launched a Twitter campaign against the group, #NotInMyName. Nevertheless, ISIS keeps on appealing to a wrong religious duty. According to Yasir Qadhi, a Muslim cleric in the U.S. and professor at Rhodes College in Memphis, the radicalization process occurs not in the mosques, but on-line, in secret. He states “...most parents are comfortable with a quieter Islam that tends to shy away from controversial matters, such as American policy in Muslim lands.” According to Aki Peritz, ex CIA official “They are often times searching for an identity, because what the jihadists are actually pushing is a specific narrative, which is: Your people (Muslims) are being oppressed in this place called Syria; your government is doing nothing; we’re the only ones who are actually going to help you out”.

Lastly, in Haq’s opinion the female-target recruitment drawn American adolescent teens. In 2014 the group launched a new propaganda campaign called “al-Zawra”, which uses a series of social-media platforms and videos as

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21 Ibid.
a sort of jihad for young women. According to the International Business Times, "Aside from cooking and sewing" (apparently two essential skills for a woman looking to join the jihad) the campaign aims to “to teach sisters software design and editing,” and “the physical side and ... the use of weapons.”

These campaign fits with the young American-Muslim women, who could feel isolated and removed from their non-Muslims peers. For girls being brought in a strict Muslim house, means live with a series of restrictions. The restrictions would still be compelled under the Islamic State law, Western girls may anticipate a welcoming Muslim community offering companionship, likeminded friends their own age, and the fulfilment and gratification of feeling valued. The “Girls Talk” blog states “the increased social media recruitment efforts of women in the Islamic State to get higher numbers of women to move to Syria indicate an agenda beyond militaristic goals. As such female-run social media accounts describe a purposeful life in Syria while also providing information explaining how to enter the state, it is learn that women view themselves not only as educators of the Islamic State’s youth, but also as crucial agents in adding to its population”.

Often the best way to recruit women is to use other women. In this case the best example is Umm Uwaydah, who is one of this recruiter (Blaker, 2015). She left Europe for Syria in 2014, publishes a blog where she encourages other women to undertake *hijra* (migrate), to join the Islamic State. Her posts include dome information about what they have to bring, what they have to wear, how much money are needed (which is bound to the time that they plan to stay in Turkey), and what to expect once there. Other posts offer support, relating the difficulties, yet necessity, of leaving one’s family (Blaker, 2015). According the Senior Counter Extremism Researcher for the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), Erin Marie Saltman, recruiter women have high

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probabilities of success to recruit other women because there is a level of comfort established when conversing with other women (Blaker, 2015). Communicating with a woman alleviates the anxiety to leave the family.\textsuperscript{24} According to the CNN report, TRAC (the Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium) established that nearly 1 on 6 ISIS foreign recruits are women.\textsuperscript{25}

In this period of changes and use of new technologies, the Iraqi government tried to close the access to Internet in the regions in which ISIS gained physical support and it has also cut traffic across Iraq by one-third.\textsuperscript{26} However, Baghdad government lacks the centralized control on the telecommunication infrastructure of the state, limiting its ability to obtain its own messages. ISIS has demonstrated to be more adroit, using the ability of providers in Turkey and Iran. Now, it will be interesting to see what the reaction of Ankara and Teheran will be (Farwell, 2014).

\textsuperscript{24} \url{http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2014/09/meet-the-female-recruiters-of-isis.html}
\textsuperscript{25} \url{https://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2015/02/20/tsr-dnt-sciutto-isis-girls-to-syria.cnn}
\textsuperscript{26} \url{http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/06/17/iraqi-government-takes-its-fight-with-isis-online/}
THIRD CHAPTER: THEORY OF LEGITIMATE DOMINATION

The third chapter put forward the importance of social-networks and the Internet for IS’s propaganda. Thanks to these new tools, the terrorist organization has been able to spread its propaganda and legitimize its power and its authority. This chapter presents theoretically the legitimate domination theory formulated by Weber. This is helpful to understand the last chapter in which both the use of media and Weber’s theory are combined to explain how the Islamic State legitimize itself.

3.1 THE TYPES OF LEGITIMATE DOMINATION

Maximilian Karl Emil "Max" Weber born the 21st April of 1864, in Prussia, he was a German sociologist, philosopher, jurist, and political economist. His ideas profoundly influenced social theory and social research. Weber with Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx are considered the founding fathers of sociology. Weber was a key proponent of methodological antipositivism, arguing for the study of social action through interpretive (rather than purely empiricist) means, based on understanding the purpose and meaning that individuals attach to their own actions.

Weber was dissatisfied with the intellectual traditions of the social sciences and laws in German and Western universities, Weber sought to develop a scientific approach that overcame their deficiencies.27

Weber originated the scientific study of organizations. In his work “Theory of Social and Economic Organizations”, published and translated by Calhoun, he examined the relationship between bureaucracy and modernization, where he attributed the rise of organizations to the expansion of markets, to developments in the law, and especially to changes in the nature of authority.28

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27 https://www.britannica.com/biography/Max-Weber-German-sociologist
28 https://www.britannica.com/science/organizational-analysis
When he was publishing his work on the Protestant ethic, the middle-class German culture began to disintegrate. The Protestant morality was under attack from the youth movement, from avant-garde literary circles such as the one centred on the poet Stefan George, from Neoromantic influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud, and from Slavic cultural ideals, exemplified in the works of Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. In this context of changes, Weber developed his political sociology, and he made the distinction between charismatic, traditional, and legal forms of legitimate domination.29

He defined the term domination as the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of people. He used the word domination as a synonym of “authority”. He classified the types of domination according to legitimacy and he identified three pure types if legitimate dominations, which are based on:

1. Rational grounds, defined by the legal authority, believe in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands. In this case obedience is owned by the legally established impersonal order.

2. Traditional grounds, defined by the traditional authority. These groups are based on the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them. In this case, obedience is owned by the chief who occupies the traditionally sanctioned position of authority and who is (within its sphere) bound by tradition. Obedience is a matter of personal loyalty.

3. Charismatic grounds, defined by the charismatic authority. Members are devoted to the sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him. In this case obedience is owned by the charismatically qualified leader, who is obeyed by virtue of personal

29 https://www.britannica.com/biography/Max-Weber-German-sociologist
trust in his revelation. People belief in his charisma (Calhoun, et al., 2012).

### 3.1.1 LEGAL AUTHORITY

Legal authority is a form of leadership in which the authority of an organization is related to legal rationality, legal legitimacy and bureaucracy; it is based on different mutually interdependent ideas. The authority is acquired from the law and constructed from the resilience of the rules and laws of the society. Every legal norm is established by agreement or by imposition, on grounds of expediency or value-rationality or both. Each body of law is a system of abstract rules which has been established intentionally. The typical person in authority, the “superiors”, is subjected to an impersonal order by orienting his actions to his own dispositions and commands. The person who is part of the organization obeys to the authority only in his capacity as a “member” and he obeys only to “the law”. The members of the rational group obey to the person in authority for his impersonal order.

The purest type of legal authority is the one that employs the bureaucratic administrative staff. The chief of the organization is in charge by virtue of appropriation, of election, or because he is designed for the succession. The leader has the authority to undertake the decisions and set the policies. The legal authority is at the basis of the modern democracies (Calhoun, et al., 2012).

### 3.1.2 TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

The traditional authority is based on beliefs and practices of society, it believed in the virtue of the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. This type of organization is built on the personal loyalty, the leader is designed by traditional rules and people obey to him because his traditional status. Differently from the legal authority the chief is not a superior but a personal master, people who are part of this group are not “members” but are either his traditional “comrades” or his “subjects”. The commands of the traditional leader are legitimized in two ways:
1. The first one is in terms of traditions which determine the content of the command; they are valid within certain limits that cannot be exceeded without endangering the master’s traditional status.
2. The second one is in terms of the master's discretion in the sphere that the tradition leave open to him; the obligations of person obedience tend to be essentially unlimited (Calhoun, et al., 2012).

There is a double sphere:

1. The one of action which is bound to tradition:
2. The one of action which is free of specific rules.

In the second sphere of action the master is free to do good turn on the basis of his personal pleasure and interest, in particular in exchange gifts; his actions are driven by ethical common sense, equality and utilitarian expediency. These principles are not formal as in the legal authority. In the pure type of traditional authority it is impossible for legislation to create laws or administrative rules. New rules can be legitimized only by the claim that they have been "valid of yore", are recognized only by the “Wisdom” (Calhoun, et al., 2012, p. 324).

### 3.1.3 CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY

Charismatic authority, or charisma, refers to the gift of spiritual inspiration underlying the power of religious prophets or extraordinary political leaders.\(^{30}\) The term is applied to certain qualities of the individual personality, which are considered extraordinary. Thanks to these mystic characteristics the individual is treated as a leader and he is defined as a supernatural or a superhuman. The leader and his or her followers must share basic beliefs and values in order to validate the leader’s charisma. Antiquities these qualities were based on magical powers and were given both to prophets, persons with therapeutic or legal wisdom, leaders in the hunt, or heroes in war.

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\(^{30}\) Ibid.
The leader is recognized by those subjects to the authority, they are decisive for the validity of charisma. The recognition is guarantee by what is held to be a proof, often a miracle, people are devoted to the revelation and they absolutely trust to the leader. The charisma is genuine but it is not at the basis of the legitimacy. The basis lies on the conception that is a duty of those subjected to charismatic authority to recognize its genuineness and to act accordingly, the recognition is a matter of personal devotion. The leader lost his charismatic authority, when seems to his followers that he is deserted by his god or his magical or heroic powers.

An organized group subject to charismatic authority will be called a charismatic community and it is based on an emotional form of communal relationship. Charisma is not related to economy, it constitutes a “call” in the most emphatic sense of the word, a “mission” or a “spiritual duty” (Calhoun, et al., 2012, p. 325).

3.2 THE CHARISMATIC LEADER

According to Weber, the concept of charisma includes all the forms of authority that derives its legitimacy not from rules, positions, or traditions, but from a "devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him" (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 638). Some political scientists and sociologists have identified some specific characteristics related to charismatic attributes as a transcendent vision and/or ideology, acts of heroism, an ability to inspire and build confidence, the expression of revolutionary and often "hazardous" ideals, rhetorical ability, and a "powerful aura", much of their work is centred on determining the locus of charismatic leadership. Some others have argued that social and historical contexts were the critical elements in the emergence of charismatic leadership. Whereas others claimed that attributes and relational dynamics between leaders and followers were responsible for the emergence of charisma (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 638).
3.2.1 Behavioral Components of Charisma

The behavior of the charismatic leader is interrelated and it is formed by a constellation of components. According to Conger and Kanungo (1987), the attribution of charisma to leaders is based on four variables:

1. The degree of discrepancy between the status quo and the future goal or vision advocated by the leader;
2. Use of innovative and unconventional means to achieve the desired change;
3. Realistic assessment of environmental resources and constraints for bringing about such change;
4. The nature of articulation and impression management employed to inspire subordinates in the pursuit of the vision (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

Visions are part of the charismatic leadership, more these visions are idealized or utopic, more discrepancy is relative to the status quo, but they have to remain within the acceptance of the followers. For the leader is important to be trusted, this happened when he advocated his position in a disinterested way, and he just claims for the needs of the followers. More the charismatic leader made personal costs or sacrifices for the common good, greater is the trustworthiness. Leaders in their decisions seem to be experts in their area of influence. The assignment of charisma is characterized by the experience of the leader in two areas. First, charismatic leader demonstrate the inadequacy of the traditional technology, rules, and regulations of the status quo as a means to reach the shared vision (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 642). Second, the leaders devise effective but unconventional strategies and plans of action (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 642). The charismatic leaders demonstrate experience in transcending the existing order through the use of unconventional or extraordinary means.
Table 1: 
*Behavioural Components of Charismatic and Noncharismatic Leaders* (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

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<tr>
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<th>Noncharismatic Leader</th>
<th>Charismatic Leader</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relation to Status quo</td>
<td>Essentially agrees with status quo and strives to maintain it</td>
<td>Essentially opposed to status quo and strives to change it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Goal</td>
<td>Goal not too discrepant from status quo</td>
<td>Idealized vision which is highly discrepant from status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likableness</td>
<td>Shared perspective makes him/her likable</td>
<td>Shared perspective and idealized vision makes him/her a likable and honourable hero worthy of identification and imitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Disinterested advocacy in persuasion attempts</td>
<td>Disinterested advocacy by incurring great personal risk and cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Expert in using available means to achieve goals within the framework of the existing order</td>
<td>Expert in using unconventional means to transcend the existing order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Conventional, conforming to existing norms</td>
<td>Unconventional or counternormative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Sensitivity</td>
<td>Low need for environmental sensitivity to maintain status quo</td>
<td>High need for environmental sensitivity for changing the status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation</td>
<td>Weak articulation of goals and motivation to lead</td>
<td>Strong articulation of future vision and motivation to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Base</td>
<td>Position power and personal power (based on reward, expertise, and liking for a friend who is a similar other)</td>
<td>Personal power (based on expertise, respect, and admiration for a unique hero)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader-Follower Relationship</td>
<td>Egalitarian consensus seeking, or directive</td>
<td>Elitist, entrepreneur, and exemplary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nudges or orders people to share his/her views</td>
<td>Transforms people to share the radical change advocated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attribution of charisma to leaders depends on the perception of the followers of their revolutionaries and unconventional qualities. Charismatic leaders use their innovative behaviours to run counter the established norms of their organizations, industries, and/or societies, while leading their followers to the realization of their vision. Charismatic leaders are active innovators. They engage in behaviours that are novel, unconventional, and counter normative, and involve a high personal risk or high probability to damage their own self-interest.

When a charismatic leader loses sight of reality and his unconventional behaviour does not reach its objective, the leader could be degraded from charismatic to ineffective (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). Charismatic leaders are sensible both to the abilities and emotional needs of their followers, and they understand the resources and the physical and social environment in which they operate. Charismatic leaders are engaged in realistic evaluations of the environmental resources and constraints affecting the realization of their visions. They realize innovative strategies when the environmental resource-constraint ratio is favourable to them (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

Charismatic leaders articulate their visions and strategies for actions in two processes. On one hand, they articulate the context including:

1. The nature of the status quo;
2. The nature of the future vision;
3. The way in which these future visions, if realized, eliminate sources of discontent and provide fulfilment of hopes and aspirations of the followers;
4. Plans of actions to realize the vision (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

In articulate the context, the verbal messages of the leader depicts positive images of the future vision and negative ones of the status quo. The status quo has been presented as intolerable, while the vision has been presented as the best and attained alternative in clear and specific terms. On the other hand, the charismatic leaders also communicate their own motivation to lead
their followers. Through expressive modes of actions, both verbal and nonverbal, the leaders communicate their convictions, self-confidence, and dedication, to give credibility to what they advocate. They also articulate their motivation to lead through the assertive behaviour and expression of self-confidence, expertise, unconventionality, and concern for the need of the followers.

Charismatic influence derive from the personal idiosyncratic power of the leaders rather than their power of position (legal, coercive, and rewarded powers) legitimated by organizational rules and regulations. Charismatic personal power derives from the elitist idealized vision, the entrepreneurial advocacy of radical changes, and the depth of knowledge and expertise to help achieve desired objectives (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). All these personal qualities appear extraordinary to their followers, and shape the basis for charisma. The influence of charismatic leader on his followers derives from the usage of his personal idiosyncratic power rather than the usage of his positional power inside the organization. Moreover, charismatic leader uses his personal idiosyncratic power on his followers through elitist, entrepreneurial, and exemplary behaviour rather than through consensus-seeking or directive behaviour (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

The charismatic leader is seen as an organizational reformer. According to Weber, the charismatic authority is essentially unstable and transitory. Once a new order is institutionalized, charisma fades. The charisma is seen in leaders only when they act as agents that lead to radical changes. The attribution is simply based on the actions taken to bring about change or reform. Charismatic leader transforms his followers and seeks radical reforms in them to reach idealized objective. He acts as reformer or agent of radical changes, and his charisma disappear when he acts as administrator (care-taker role) or manager (nudging role) (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

Sometimes contextual factors are so overwhelmingly in favour of changes that leader takes advantage of them. For example, when a system is
dysfunctional or when it faces a crisis, leader creates an advantage to advocate radical change, creating a charismatic image for himself. In quiet periods, leader plays an important role in creating the need for change in their followers. He anticipates future change and induces supportive conditions. In conditions of relative social tranquillity and lack of psychological distress among followers, the actions of a leader that favoured or support an attribution of charisma facilitate the emergence of that leader as a charismatic leader.

3.2.2 RISE OF THE CHARISMATIC BOND

The rise of the charismatic bond is a social process where group members came to identify with the leader and to attribute charisma to him (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014). In the creation of this bond, it is crucial the social process that Barker (1993) calls “charismatization”. The majority of people who join a charismatic group do not do so because they already recognize the charisma of the leader. After being exposed to the charisma of the leader, in ways identified by other members, new recruit gradually accept the charismatic authority. The charismatization process is a “slippery slope” that does not verify in lockstep, but through a process of gradual process of increasing devotion of the charismatic leader (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014). Members reinforce their belief through daily actions that respect the norms of the group and celebrate the extraordinary qualities of the leader. In this way members express their devotion to other members, reinforcing the spiral process of legitimization. Though this process the charisma of leaders is constantly created and recreated hand-in-hand with the socialization of the converts.

According to Roy Wallis (1982), in the “Social Construction of Charisma”, charismatic relations leader and his followers are linked by love, he called this relation *gemeinde*. Researchers on terrorism have long noted the strong role played by loyalty and fraternal love in accounting for the extraordinary
sacrifice of the individual terrorists and perpetuation of the group and the cause.

After the exposition to the *gemeinde*, new members are gradually exposing an esoteric body of knowledge about the charismatic aspects of the leader. These teachings are part of the “cult of personality” centred in the charismatic leader, followers try to emulate the leader. The charismatic leader is also central in the popular culture of the movement, stories about his abilities and his supernatural capacities circulate inside the group. When the followers come into contact with external information that seems to discredit and diminish the charismatic leader, they learn to employ certain rationalizations to protect the leader’s special status, and his identity.

The charismatization process depends also on the creation and the maintenance of some social and physical distance between the leader and his followers, too much exposition could lead to the de-legitimization. According to Barker (1993), a certain degree of distance allows the creation of the image of the charismatic leader. To construct this social and physical distance the charismatic leader should rely on an inner circle of trusted individuals. The charismatic leader has the exclusive access to the inner circle, and he decides who is worthy to be elevated his status among this restricted group. The privilege to be part of this inner circle induces its members to have a personal interest to elevate the status of the charismatic leader. As Wallis states “to secure recognition for the leader is thus to secure—in attenuated form—recognition for themselves (Wallis, 1982, p. 38).”

After the subjection to the charismatization process of the followers, the charismatic leader must keep on maintaining the charismatic bond, in great and in small ways. The impressions generated by the interactions between the leader and the followers must be carefully managed, because the charismatic authority is more precarious if compared to the traditional and legal authority. The charismatic leader must act in a careful balancing way, in
order to maintain the constant reaffirmation of his charismatic status, that it the primary source of his power. As Weber states:

The charismatic leader gains and maintains authority solely by proving his strength in life. If he wants to be a prophet, he must perform miracles; if he wants to be war lord, he must perform heroic deeds. Above all, his divine mission must “prove” itself in that those who faithfully surrender to him must fare well. If they do not fare well, he is obviously not the master sent by the gods (Weber, 1968, pp. 22-23).

If charismatic leader is not able to negotiate the challenges, he risks losing the authority over his followers. Dawson lists four big structural challenges that charismatic leader has to face:

1. Maintaining the leader’s image;
2. Moderate the psychological identification of their followers with the leader;
3. Negotiate the routinization of charisma;
4. Reach new successes.

If leader is not able to solve properly these problems some dysfunctional group dynamic can set in play, which encourages violence as a compensating mechanism.
FOURTH CHAPTER: APPLICATION OF LEGITIMATE DOMINATION THEORY TO ISIS

The previous chapter introduces the legitimization theory formulated by Weber. This chapter applies the concepts at the basis of the three types of authority and tries to relate them to the newly founded Islamic State.

4.1 EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Thanks to the appearance and modernization of new technologies Islamic State has been able, through time, to reach its audience and also enemy government and to spread globally its ideology. World is facing a type of terrorism that finds its roots in al-Qaeda’s online propaganda, but it has been able to recruit experts that make their message more fashionable and desirable for the young generations.

It needs of power legitimization is helped by social-networks, that play a fundamental role in the recruitment process. It also with Dabiq the super fashion, modern and glossy IS’s magazine. In their journal jihadists update their audiences with IS’s news and noteworthy events, but it is also the place where the founder and the leaders are praised, and the divine message is spread.

At the moment there are neither a lot of article nor lot of scholar that are interested to understand how the legitimization process theorised by Weber could be applied to the Islamic State. There are even fewer sources that investigate the application of the theory in the Dabiq magazine, which is the official journal of the Islamic State.

To explain the legitimization process occurred after the declaration of the Islamic State in 2014, the thesis focuses on the first issues of the magazine, where the basis of the law and the new formed caliphate are explained (see images in paragraph 4.3.2 Traditional authority).
Though the use, in particular, of the first number of the journal, with quotations taken from it and using the article written by Günther and Kaden *The Authority of the Islamic State*, this chapter attempts to illustrate how the Islamic State uses the new tools of social-networks and Internet to legitimize its power though its magazine.

### 4.2 DABIQ MAGAZINE

All the three types of legitimate domination are represented in the *Dabiq* magazine, which is the online glossy journal used by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Syria (ISIS) for Islamic radicalization and recruitment. It published the first issue in July 2014; the major aim of the magazine is to recruit new members and to inspire terrorist attacks (Colas, 2017). It is composed by fourteen issues, which are constructed roughly the same. Recent issues have included a foreword, an interpretation of current events, a devotional section, a summary of recent military events, biography of a martyr or martyrs, a women’s issues section, a summary of Western reports about ISIS, and an interview with a commander (Colas, 2017, p. 177).

The first issue, published in July 2014 started with the “explanation” of the title *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. This area, at the time of publication under the control of Syrian forces loyal to Bashar al-Assad, is a symbol of the great clash-to-come between the forces of the new caliphate and the West in which the forces of Islam will be triumphant. This prophecy is traced to a classic hadith and was used by Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi to the effect that the promised victory in Dabiq will be the first step in the conquest of the world as symbolized by the anticipated defeats of “Constantinople” and then “Rome.” In the apocalyptic tradition, Issa ibn Maryam (the Christian Jesus) will descend near Damascus to lead the army arriving from “al-Madinah of the best people.” “Al-Madinah” can
mean simply “city” as well as the city of that name in Saudi Arabia. By featuring this eschatology in such a prominent place, the magazine attempts to connect Islamic State and its new caliph to a cosmic purpose, obviously meant to have a romantic appeal to recruit young men looking for a cause.\textsuperscript{31}

The magazine is full of symbolisms that are meaningful for the jihadists. The recall to the “dog whistles” could signal to potential recruits that Islamic State is pursuing the various goals declared by different jihadist individuals and groups that might otherwise be considered rivals or enemies.\textsuperscript{32} For example, the term “\textit{Millah Ibrahim}” means the religious community or path associated with the patriarch Ibrahim (Abraham). The magazine has a vast discussion about the leadership entitled: “The Concept of \textit{Imamah} (Leadership) is from the \textit{Millah} (Path) of Ibrahim.” However, \textit{Millah Ibrahim} is also the Arab title of an influent 1984 \textit{jihadist} treaty, written by a famous Palestinian-Jordan ideologue Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. He was also an ex teacher of al-Zarqawi, he had broken any contact with the future IS’s leader because in his opinion was too violent. Consequently, al-Maqdisi was not a supporter of ISIS; instead, he is a follower of Ayman al-Zawahiri and al-Qaeda. Some scholars suggest that through this reference, the Islamic State is trying to appeal to al-Maqdisi’s followers and admirers over the head of al-Maqdisi himself.\textsuperscript{33}

The average length of the journal is sixty-one pages; there are many violent and relevant photos, which often are designed with photo editing software. Major themes are: biography/inspiration/advice, commendation of \textit{jihad} groups, criticism of \textit{jihad} groups, emigration, governance, interaction with West, military activities against the West, military activities against the inside and around the ISIS-controlled territory, religion, and others. It is important to note that covers not always reflect the contents within (Colas, 2017).

\textsuperscript{31} https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/islamic-state-22dc481biq-magazine-122.pdf.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
31 per cent of the issues are about religion discussions and descriptions of Islam. Another significant category is the non-military interaction with the West, which represent the 15 per cent of the issue. Military updates of the territory within and around the ISIS-control represent the 11 per cent. It is striking that the two less debates arguments are the celebrations and incitation to attack West (4 per cent), emigration (4 per cent) and celebrating the Jihadist groups that join the Islamic State (Colas, 2017). Through these numbers the general assumption is that the major aim of the Islamic State, and in this case of Dabiq, is to urge attacks against West and the Hijrah is denied.

4.2.1 DABIQ AUDIENCE AND AIMS.

Dabiq affirms that Islamic States is a synonymous with caliphal state. To emphasise this statement it presents sections of the public discourse that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi had done in Mosul, as the new self-declared caliph. These sections of the declaration have the purpose to demonstrate one of the major aims of the Islamic State that is to return dignity to the oppressed and humiliate Muslims. This theme is often used also in the propaganda made by al-Qaeda. Dabiq highlight the fact that the Islamic State is the place where all the races, ethnic groups and nationalities could gather together to fight as brothers.

Remembering al-Zawahiri’s message, in many occasions the new self-declared caliph has stated that “heavy boots” of Muslims “will cause the world to understand the meaning of terrorism... will trample... the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy, and uncover its deviant nature.”

This is a highly sectarian call for all Muslims to come and fight for the Islamic State. It claims to be the best way to liberate Mecca and Medina from the Saudi government and Jerusalem from the Jews.

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
Dabiq’s primary aim is to set the group boundaries and to change the Western policies toward ISIS. Because of the variety of content Dabiq’s reading is quite complicated, since, usually, magazines are written for a wide audience, which can be distinguished on an article-to-article. The magazine is confused and incoherent if read straight through, during the reading the two major audiences that appear are the would-be members and Western policymakers. There is also a third audience that are the marginal members of ISIS that are an important audience (Colas, 2017).

The magazine uses a lot of space for hadiths to explain how the imamah (leadership) imagined by the Millah Ibrahim is both political and religious, furthermore, it is the same leadership established by the Islamic State. Parallel to this argument it is introducing the question of democracy, which separates religious and political leadership.

Magazine’s audiences are English-speaking Muslims or converts who attend English-speaking mosques. Even if English is their primary language they are comfortable with the transliterated Arab terms that are present in the magazine. They are the same that the English-speaking imams use during their sermons. Dabiq is an ideological training tool for its readers.

Dabiq narrations are designed to supply its audience with a competitive system of meanings that convince them to use it as a “lens” through which they can perceive the world and take their decisions. The interactions between identity, solutions and crisis constructs are crucial in this dynamics (Ingram, 2017). In this context “identity” is understood as a set of values, rooted in a historical narration, built in a strategic way to respond to a sociohistorical specific reality (Ingram, 2017). Identity has a fundamental role in the way in which individuals and groups perceive the world, generating meaning and decisions. According to Ingram the strategic construction of identity is often shaped by a wider psychological and sociological profile (that is the psychosocial forces). During the radicalization period, identity construction processes could be influenced by the mix of two
psychosocial factors that are: “perception of a crisis” and “solution”. It is on these aspects that Dabiq leverage to attract all those people who feel in a situation of crisis and seek a solution.

Even if many hypothesis state that the magazine is written as a mean of recruitment, it is more complicated (Colas, 2017). After a careful reading it is possible to notice that IS is busy in circumscribing the limits of its organizations, and the problems described are similar to those that each growing élite organization have. Some of these issues are often repeated, one of the majors seem to be the role that the families have in derailing ISIS recruitment efforts. This problem is presented for the first time in the Issue 8, in the column “To Our Sisters”, where the author made a little complains against mothers, and this trend is then repeated in other numbers of the magazine36. The author explains how difficult is for Muslim women to convince their families that travel to the Islamic State is acceptable. In the Issue 10 the theme is repeated and the author states that a son must treat his parents well. But on the other hand parents are committing a sin if they impede to their son to join the Islamic State, because Allah is ordering them to go.37 According to Dabiq, the family unity is a strong deterrent for young men and women that want to join ISIS. According to Colas, U.S. State Department invested money and time on trying to outdo ISIS propaganda, but it was not enough because any attempt is not credible for the audience.

The first numbers of Dabiq were characterized by “Islamic State Reports” and “Islamic State News” sections often positioned at the centre of each issue with articles with politico-military and jurisprudential means (Ingram, 2017). Following numbers have dedicated more space to multipart articles, in this way the sections about the “Islamic State Reports” and “Islamic State news” resulted less prominent.

36https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/the-islamic-state-e2809cdc481biq-magazine-8e280b3.pdf
In many Issues ISIS feels the necessity to justify its behaviours, as when the Jordanian pilot, Lieutenant Yusuf al Kasasibah was burned. The article is written in a defensive way and tries to explain the reason why the organization feels the need to do it; this shows some degrees of concern about the public opinion.

Issue after Issue seems to the reader that the themes are constantly related to the fortune and misfortune of the Islamic States. The message contained in the magazine has changed through time to answer to the external events. It is also clear that ISIS expansion is still in place, not in geographic proximity of Iraq or Syria, in areas such as Bengal (McCants, 2015, pp. 154-155). The reading of Dabiq highlights the scarcity of unity within the organization. This is an organization competing for fighters and not just gaining fighters (Colas, 2017). ISIS has to do efforts to maintain them and this is a symptom of organizational weakness.

4.3 ISLAMIC STATE FROM A WEBERIAN PERSPECTIVE

Weber did not give a precise definition of domination; according to him powers and means of domination of social actors are dependent upon their followers. He defines domination as “the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons” (Günther & Kaden, 2016, p. 4). Applied to the Islamic State this means that it is necessary to identify and understand the ties that bound it to the groups that it controls and support, considering the various changes occurred over time.

Weber identifies two subgroups within the ruling group: the ruler or rules and the staff that is necessary to support his or their power. Günther and Kaden (2016), taking into consideration Weber, identify the recruits and the fighter of the Islamic State in addition to its clerics and the personnel it employs within its bureaucratic apparatus and its commanders as the “administrative staff” of ISIS.
As explained in chapter 3, Weber identifies three main forms of legitimate domination: legal authority, traditional authority and charismatic authority. In the Islamic State is possible to recognize all these three forms, and this reveal a surprisingly multi-faceted spectrum of sources of legitimacy (Günther & Kaden, 2016).

4.3.1 LEGAL AUTHORITY

According to Weber the legal authority is related to the legal rationality, legitimacy and bureaucracy (Weber, 1964). It “rests on the belief in legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority to issue commands (Weber, 1964, p. 372).” Exercising power is a duty that does not take into consideration personal feelings and everyone is treated in the same way according to the law (Weber, 1964).

Some of these characteristics could be applied to the Islamic State; in the legal authority the leader of an organization occupies its positions of power due to election or designation of succession. Because of the dead al-Zarqawi in 2006, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took power after consulting the leaders of the ISIS affiliated groups. Even if it is not clear which criteria were evaluated to choose him as a leader, this demonstrates that his elections were based on some kinds of dialogues. In the first issue of the Dabiq magazine is written the report of the assemblies of these tribes The Islamic State has an extensive history of building relations with the tribes within its borders in an effort to strengthen the ranks of the Muslims, unite them under one imam, and work together towards the establishment of the prophetic Khilafah. Its practice of attending tribal forums, addressing the concerns of the tribal leaders and accepting their bay’ah (is an oath of allegiance to a leader) is regularly met with success.38 At the end of the first meeting described in the first number several of the tribal elders and dignitaries in attendance announced their bay’ah to the Islamic State.39

39 Ibid.
Moreover, in Weber's theory the leader is subjected to some sort of legally established impersonal order, which limits his power (Weber, 1964). Within the Islamic State, this role is played by the *Shura* Council (MSC), which in theory has the authority to limit al-Baghdadi’s powers. As religious monitor, he makes sure that all the local councils and governors are sticking to ISIS' version of Islamic law and it is able to even censure the leadership and dismiss the caliph, if they are not in line with sharia law.40

Thanks to these characteristics, the Islamic State could be defined as a sort of developed bureaucratic state structure.41 It is divided in provinces to facilitate its administration and it is composed by the executive branch of the government (*al-Imara*), which consists in the commander in chief (the Caliph) and the *sharia* law and the *shura* council, as well as the deputies of Iraq and Syria, who are responsible for financial, media, military and other issues. This system is able to provide basic services.42 According to Cordall, the Islamic State has also established a central bank, the Muslim finance house, and it has also begun to micromanage the education and the preaching in the mosques.43

From the point of view of a sociological theory that employs the notion of rationality, each conscious human act in a way or another could be defined rational, because a goal should be achieved. Under this light the actions of the Islamic Statas's fighter could be considered rational, because they accept the exertion of violence and the perspective to be killed as a means to reach the salvation goods (Günther & Kaden, 2016).

In the first Issue of Dabiq, the authors emphasise the fact that al-Baghdadi is the legitimate caliph of the Islamic State. *The millah is the path that is followed in its entirety, and the path that Allah chose for Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam) and

41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
his progeny thereafter is the path of imamah – both religious and political – as much as they’re able to do.

And upon every scholar who calls to, or writes about, the obligation to follow the millah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam) is to not detest the imamah of The Islamic State today, and to not seek to undermine it or destroy it.

And upon them is to understand that The Islamic State – on account of what Allah has blessed it with of victory, consolidation and establishing the religion – is regarded as an unquestionable imamah. As such, anyone who rebels against its authority inside its territory is considered a renegade, and it is permissible to fight him after establishing the hujjah against him (i.e. clarifying his error to him with proof).44 This description of the new caliph could also be related to the second type of legitimate authority.

4.3.2 TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

According to Weber, the traditional authority is characterized by rules and powers based on the past. This form of domination is based on the assumption that the authority is legitimate because it has always existed (Weber, 1964). Historically the last caliphate was destroyed in 1924 by Atatürk, in this respect it has not always existed. However, al-Baghdadi to reintroduce the caliphate leveraged on the everlasting character of the Islamic community (umma) (Günther & Kaden, 2016). After the death of the Prophet Mohammad, the umma has always existed but without a guide.

Already through the choice of the name Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi reveals in two ways his link with the past. Abu Bakr was the first successor after the death of the Prophet Mohammad (khalifa, the Caliph), and al-Baghdadi firstly is the Abbasid Caliphate’s capital and secondly sets up a military conquest of his

home city as a re-enactment of Mohammed’s return to Mecca after the hijra to Medina.45

In the traditional authority, law is created according to the traditional sources (Weber, 1964). Legal system of the Islamic State traces its origins in the radical Islamic jurisprudence that is based on fatwa and dogmas of certain radical Islamic scholars. According to the legal tradition of the old caliphate, governor and state are not above the law, but are limited by it. Ruler’s powers derive and are defined by the sharia. This type of traditional authority of the Islamic State is compatible with the typologic criteria of Weber the charismatic authority could not be created through legislation and the legal decisions it could only refer to the traditional sources (Günther & Kaden, 2016). According to classical Islamic theory the election of a ruler is based on consensus (ijma’) and takes place through a pledge of allegiance (bay’a), which is a contract of obedience between the ruler and the ruled, … [which] includes consultation (shura) and proclamation (mubaya’a), ritualized by a handshake (musafaha) and exercised by ‘the men of resolution and contract’ (ahl al-hall wa-al-aqd), who are those formally qualified to elect or depose a ruler (Caliph or Amir or Sultan) on behalf of the Muslim community (umma) (Lohlker, 2012).

The Islamic State founded by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is based on these principles. According to the Islamic State “seniors” al-Baghdadi’s declaration of intents fulfil all the caliph’s requirements that are needed since 1400 years.46 All the other jihadist organizations should be abolished and must pledge the bay’a to al-Baghdadi, who himself is monitored by the shura council.47

According to Salzmann the Islamic State tries to follow the historical and religious traditions. The Prophet Mohammad founded Medina as the capital

of his state, and from there he started his campaign to conquer Mecca; in the same way IS is trying to scare away the Christian people, who live on its territory, destroying their churches and historical places, in the attempt to purify its territories. Also in its military attacks, the terrorist group tries to emulate the Caliph Abu Bakr, through the establishment of alliances with tribes and nomadic groups and focusing on the rural areas. Al-Baghdadi as his predecessors wants to unify under his control all the Muslims, the third issue of Dabiq states contemplate – may Allah have mercy upon you – the states that existed throughout history, both the Muslim states and the mushrik states. Were any of them established by the emigration of poor strangers from the East and the West, who then gathered in an alien land of war and pledged allegiance to an “unknown” man, in spite of the political, economic, military, media, and intelligence war waged by the nations of the world against their religion, their state, and their hijrah? And in spite of the fact that they did not have any common “nationality,” ethnicity, language, or worldly interests, nor did they have any prior acquaintance! This phenomenon is something that has never occurred in human history, except in the case of the Islamic State.48

Through the traditional authority and the recall of a past sacred order the Islamic State tries to claim power. It tries to exercise the traditional authority over its followers to the extent that they regard it as a legitimate representative of the prosed order (Günther & Kaden, 2016). According to Hans Bakker,49 the Weberian concept of “patrimonial prebendalism” fits with the traditional form of authority of the Islamic State. In Bakker’s opinion the “patrimonial prebendalism’s” characteristics that could be applied to this terrorist organizations are: political legitimacy is concentrated within one group, which is itself organised around a leading figure; authority in peripheral areas is directly linked to the ruling group; the main sources of material wealth are land and labour with no, or very rudimentary, financial

structures; individuals are treated as liable for their communities; the existence of slave labour; and decision-making is ad hoc and there are no rational-legal administrative codes. According to Günther and Kaden (2016), these characteristics have been developed by the Islamic State at least in a rudimentary way.

In its initial declaration, in 2006, the Islamic State presented itself as the restoration of caliphate in the prophetic method (khilāfa ‘ala manhaj al-nubūwwa); it recalls the ideal-typical role-model of the early Islamic history (Günther & Kaden, 2016). Related to Weber’s opinion the new state is based on the sanctity of the tradition and on the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them. To promote its legitimization it quotes many traditional Islamic sources as well as medieval and modern scholars.

In the first issue of Dabiq the section titled The Concept of Imamah (Leadership) is the perfect example of traditional authority applied to the Islamic State, al-Baghdadi is the direct successor of, he has been elected by, Prophet Mohammad.

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50 Ibid.
Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all that exists. As for what follows:

Abdullah ibn ‘Amr narrated that the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “Indeed a man’s Iman (faith) becomes worn out within him just as a garment becomes worn out, so ask Allah to renew the Iman in your heart.”

Al-Hakim reported it and said that its isnad (chain) was authentic.

Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) says, (And do not be like the one who undoes the thread which she has spun after it has become strong, by taking your oaths as a means of deception among yourselves when one group is more numerous than another group. Allah tests you by this. And on the Day of Resurrection, He will certainly clarify that which you differed over.) (An-Nahl: 94)
in explaining this verse, the scholars of tafsir stated, “This was a foolish woman in Makkah. Every time she spun some thread and made it strong, she would undo it again.”

Indeed the millah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salām) has strongly re-emerged within the soul of the young Muslim muwahhid (monotheist), such that he believed in it; loved it, declared it openly, and worked in accordance with its requirements. By doing so, this young Muslim muwahhid was simply following those who had preceded him in iman from amongst the scholars whose knowledge and religious practice he trusted.

As such, these scholars guided him with shari’i evidence to the reality of this great millah, and authored a number of works that bore its name, insisting on the obligation to follow it and call others to it.

It reached a point where the echoes of this great millah reverberated amongst the young Muslim muwahhidin in just about every corner of the world, including the European nations.

Many of these youth began directing others to it, embracing it as a defining characteristic, speaking about it and explaining its meaning inside the masjid, centers, and places of gathering. Some would even express their love for it by singing Islamic anashid in English and in various other European languages.

The secret behind all of this – and Allah knows best – is that this millah quenched a thirst within this young man’s soul and restored his confidence in his religion and creed, especially with respect to the issue of openly disassociating oneself from the kuffar and mushrikin (polytheists). This is in contrast to those who for so long have bowed and prostrated submissively before the mushrikin and began preventing the people from openly displaying their religion in the midst of those who oppose them, falsely claiming that this was for the sake of global peace which the United Nations and the “divinely revealed faiths” called for.

Then after some time had passed, this millah was afflicted within the souls of its proponents by the same thing that afflicts the iman in a man’s heart, and it started to become ragged and worn-out just as a garment becomes ragged and worn.

This even reached the extent that some of the very individuals who had spun this “garment”, written about it and openly declared it, were now setting out to undo it with their own hands like the foolish woman of Makkah.

So it became incumbent upon us to revive the characteristics of this millah that had decayed within the people’s souls, and attempt to advise those individuals working to undo the thread they had spun after it had become so strong.

All this, in the hopes that Allah would lead them to repent and that they would return once more to the guidance they were upon, supporting the truth and following the millah.
PART 2:
EXAMPLES OF NARRATIONS REPORTED INTERPRETING IMAMAH TO MEAN POLITICAL IMAMAH

Abdullah bin Umar (radiyallahu ‘anhumah) narrated that the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Indeed every man is a shepherd and every shepherd is responsible for his flock. So the imam of the people is a shepherd and he is responsible for his flock.” [Reported by Al Bukhari]

In a part of the hadith of Hudhayfah (radiyallahu ‘anhi), the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Stick to the jam’aah (congregation) of the Muslims and their imam.” I said, “And if they have neither a jam’aah nor an imam?” He said, “Then avoid every group, even if you have to bite onto the root of a tree until death reaches you while you’re in that condition.” [Reported by Al Bukhari and Muslim]

Qays ibn Hauml narrated that Abu Bakr entered in on a woman from Ahl Mis‘a called Zaynab and saw that she wasn’t speaking to anyone. He asked, “Why isn’t she speaking?” They said, “She vowed to perform Hajj without speaking to anyone.” He said to her, “Speak, for this is not permissible. This is from the deeds of jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era),” so she began speaking and asked him, “Who are you?” He said, “A man from the muhajirin (emigrants).” She asked, “Which muk北方? He said, “Quraysh.” She asked, “Which branch of Quraysh are you from?” He said, “You ask too many questions. I am Abu Bakr.” She asked, “How long will we remain in this good state of affairs that Allah has brought to us after jahiliyyah?” He said, “You’ll remain like this as long as your amimah (leaders) treat you with justice.” She asked, “And what are the amimah?” He said, “Didn’t your people have leaders and nobility whose orders they obeyed?” She said, “Yes.” He said, “They are the amimah of the people.” [Recorded by Al Bukhari]

From the evidences used to assert that the imamah referred to in the verse includes political imamah, is that the scholars of tafsir use this verse as evidence for a fundamental attribute that is a necessary condition of the imamat al-kubra (i.e. the Islamic caliphate).

That attribute is uprightness. When Allah (azza wa jal) granted Ibrahim (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa salam) this lofty position of imamah, he understood how
tremendous a favor it was to receive such a position, so he immediately requested it for his descendants as well. (Habib ibn Ibrahim) pleaded, ‘And also (leaders) from my offspring.’

However, Allah informed him of a principle condition that must be present in anyone assuming this position after him. (Allah) said, ‘My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.’

Al-Qurtubi (rahimahullah) said, ‘A number of scholars used this verse as evidence that the Imam must be a man of justice, good conduct, and virtue, and have the strength to fulfill his role. [They say that] such an Imam is the one whom the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) commanded the Muslims not to rebel against, as mentioned earlier.

As for the sinful, unjust, immoral tyrant, then such an individual doesn’t qualify for this position on account of the statement of Allah. (My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.)

It was for this reason that Ibn Az-Zubayr and Al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali revolted.

Likewise, the best of the people of Iraq and their scholars revolted against Al-Hajjaj, and the people of Madina expelled the tribe Bani ‘Umayyad from Madinah and then revolted against them (the Umayyad ruler), resulting in the massacre of Al-Hiwarah which Muslim ibn Ubbah brought down on them.” [Al-khadm al-Qur’an, 2:108]

So we use statements such as this as evidence that the position we’ve taken on the meaning of imamah — that it includes both political and religious leadership equally — is correct.1

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1. Note: Al-Qurtubi then goes on to say, ‘The majority of scholars adopt the opinion that being patient with the oppressive ruler is more correct than rebelling against him, because rebelling against him means meeting with many unfavorable outcomes, including losing life, losing property, and making enemies, all of which are unfavorable outcomes. But what is worse is that it is also against the clear guidance of the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) and the opinion of the scholars.’ Therefore, it is not correct for an oppressive Muslim ruler to obey the orders of an oppressive Muslim leader, but it does not authorize rebellion against him after his attainment of power.
From amongst the aspects of this great millah that have begun to fade from within the souls of many people and be viewed as nothing more than fantasy, is the notion that the Muslim Ummah (nation) should strive to be united behind a single Imam (leader), fighting under his banner and empowering him to guard the landmarks of this religion and implement the Shariah (law) of Allah.

This, in reality, was a result of secularism pervading the people’s intellects in our era, separating between religion and state, and between the Shariah and governance, and treating the Qur’an as a book of chanting and recitation rather than a book of governance, legislation, and enforcement.

This environment had an effect on the du’at (callers to Allah), who began continually reassuring the people that the sincere ones amongst them had absolutely no aspirations towards positions of rule and authority. It was as if being a da’iyah (caller to Allah) subjugated in the prison of a taghut (tyrant, ruling by man-made law) was a role to be satisfied with, as long as one was making takfir of the taghut and takfir of those fighting for the cause of taghut. This subjugated da’iyah would begin to favor this role over living freely in the shade of a Muslim Imam, calling others to him, and helping to consolidate his position.

These du’at couldn’t grasp the idea that Islam could have a state and an Imam, nor could they begin to understand what it would cost to achieve this.

It was as if they’d never studied the history of Islam and learned what this endeavour would require of us in terms of blood.

It was as if they weren’t aware that amongst those who are liable to have their blood shed for the sake of this cause are fellow Muslims who testify that la ilaha illallah.

However, these Muslims are renegades whom it’s permissible to fight, and for no reason other than the fact that they refuse to give bay’ah (allegiance) to one Imam or another.

Moreover, had the Imam left them alone after having been appointed to his position and let them continue their rebellion and division, he would be sinful and would not be acting sincerely towards his Muslim citizens.

Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) bestowed Imamah upon his khalil (close friend) Ibrahim (‘alayhi-salâm) as a gift. He says, (And remember) when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with certain words (i.e., commands) and he fulfilled them, (Allah) said, ‘Indeed, I will make you a leader for mankind.’ (Ibrahim) pleaded, ‘And also (leaders) from my offspring.’ (Allah) said, ‘My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.’ [Al-Baqarah: 124]

So the reward he received from Allah for fulfilling the commands he was tried with, was that he was granted the position of Imamah, and was favored by Allah and
honor by him through this position.

Moreover, the imamah mentioned in the above verse isn’t simply referring to imamah in religious affairs, as many would wish to interpret. Rather, it’s inclusive of imamah in political affairs, which many religious people have shunned and avoided on account of the hardship it entails itself and on account of the hardship entailed in working to establish it.

Furthermore, the people today have failed to understand that imamah in religious affairs cannot be properly established unless the people of truth first achieve comprehensive political imamah over the lands and the people.

As for an individual from this Ummah attempting to enjoy some limited freedoms in da'wah (preaching) under the rule of the tawaght (kafir tyrants), or seeking protection from them for the purpose of conveying his da’wah, then he’s merely jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire. This is also akin to one who stretches his hands toward water (from afar, calling it) to reach his mouth, but it will never reach it (such).

What leads us to include both types of leadership, political and religious, when defining the imamah granted to Ibrahim (alayhi-salam) in the aforementioned verse is that there’s no doubt that the Arabic language and the Shariah have presented both meanings.

As such, interpreting a single word to include the numerous, non-contradictory meanings that it can carry is without a doubt the correct approach here.
PART 4:
THE COMMANDS OF ALLAH TO IBRAHIM

The noble verse we’ve discussed makes it clear that Ibrahim’s fulfillment of Allah’s commands is the direct reason he achieved imanah, so it would only be fitting that these same commands become the reason for his descendants after him to attain this tremendous position.

Ibn Kathir (rahimahullah) states, “His (subhanahu wa ta’ala) statement: [with certain kalimat], means with laws, commands, and prohibitions. The term “kalimat” can be used to refer to statements concerning the qadar (divine decree) of Allah. An example of this is the statement of Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) about Maryam, (and she believed in the kalimat (words) of her Lord and His scriptures and was of the devoutly obedient) [At-Tahrim: 12].

It can also be used in a shari’i context, as in the statement of Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala). (And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can alter His kalimat (words)) [Al-An'am: 115], meaning His shari’i kalimat which include things that Allah informs us of and commands that He requires us to obey.

An example of the shari’i usage of the term kalimat is the noble verse in discussion, (And remember) when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with certain kalimat and he fulfilled them), meaning he carried them out, (Allah said, “Indeed, I will make you a leader for mankind,”), meaning as a reward for his actions.

On account of obeying Allah’s commands and avoiding His prohibitions, Allah made Ibrahim an imam for mankind and an example to be followed.” [Tafsil Ibn Kathir: Volume 1]

Ibn ‘Abbas explained the term “kalimat” as follows, “The kalimat with which Allah tried Ibrahim and he fulfilled were, firstly, the command to separate from his people for the sake of Allah.

Likewise, his debate with Nimrud where he brought to his attention the seriousness of the issue that Nimrud opposed him on.

Likewise, the patience he displayed—as terrifying as it was—when Nimrud threw him into the fire and he was about to be burned alive for the sake of Allah.

Likewise, his hajj (emigration) thereafter from his land for the sake of Allah when he was commanded to leave his people.” [Tafsil Ibn Kathir: Volume 2]
THE ISLAMIC STATE
IS A TRUE IMAMAH

PART 5:  

Through the course of this discussion, we can see that the Islamic State is the entity that most emulates the milhah of Ibrahim with regards to imamah in the areas where it exists.

It has carried out the command of Allah — as much as it can — in the best possible manner. It established the religion in the areas where it exists and continues to pursue this effort vigorously.

All this, after Allah had granted the imam of the Islamic State the blessing of performing hijrah and fighting jihad in His cause, on top of already having been characterized by his noble lineage, sound intellect, and a prestigious level of knowledge and religious practice.

As such, it is not fitting for anyone, whoever he may be, to seek to demolish the building that the sincere men of the Umrah made so much effort to construct and strengthen over the course of many years.

Furthermore, no one — regardless of his virtues — even dreams of convincing the lowest ranking, sincere soldier of the Islamic State to abandon this mission for the sake of some ambiguous initiatives or for the sake of nothing at all. It is not even the right of Amirul-Mu'minin himself to order that the Islamic State be nullified and for the situation to return to what it previously was.

Allah (azza wa jall) states in the Qur'an after granting imamah to Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam), (And who would turn away from the religion of Ibrahim except one who makes a fool of himself. Truly, We chose him in this world, and indeed in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.) [Al-Baqarah: 130]

So we can see from the context of these verses that imamah is from the milhah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam), and that whoever turns away from it is turning away from something that’s a part of this great milhah.

The milhah is the path that is followed in its entirety, and the path that Allah chose for Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam) and his progeny thereafter is the path of imamah — both religious and political — as much as they’re able to do.

And upon every scholar who calls to, or writes about, the obligation to follow the milhah of Ibrahim (‘alayhis-salam), is to not detest the imamah of the Islamic State today, and to not seek to undermine it or destroy it.

And upon them is to understand that the Islamic State — on account of what Allah has blessed it with of victory, consolidation and establishing the religion — is regarded as an unquestionable imamah. As such, anyone who rebels against its authority inside its territory is considered a renegade, and it is permissible to fight him after establishing the hujjah against him (i.e. clarifying his error to him with proof).
This is the position that The Islamic State adheres to in spite of facing many tribulations as a result, which keep getting fiercer and fiercer.

‘Abdur-Rahman ibn ‘Abd Rabbi-Ka‘bah narrated, saying, “I entered the masjid and there was ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn Al-‘As sitting in the shade of the Ka‘bah with people gathered around him, so I came to them and sat before him. Then he said, ‘We were on a journey with the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and we stopped at a place.

Some of us were setting up our tents, others were competing in shooting arrows, and others were grazing their animals, when an announcer of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) called us to gather for prayer. We gathered around the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) and he said, ‘Indeed, no messenger has come before except that it was his duty to guide his people to what he knew to be good for them, and warn them against what he knew to be bad for them.

The wellness of this Ummah of yours is in its beginning. In its end, it will be afflicted with tribulations and with things that you disapprove. There will be tribulations, each one eclipsing the one before it in severity. There will be tribulations [so severe] that the believer will say, ‘This is what destroys me.’ Then it will end, and another tribulation will follow, and the believer will say, ‘This is the one [that will actually destroy me]. This is it.’

Whoever wishes to be saved from the fire and enter paradise should die believing in Allah and the Last Day, and should treat people the way he wishes to be treated. Whoever pledges allegiance to an imam, giving him his hand in sincerity, should obey him as much as he is able to. And if another man comes forward disputing his legitimacy, then strike that other man’s neck.” [Recorded by Muslim]

This hadith was difficult on those who heard it from amongst the salaf (pious predecessors), specifically the part having to do with the issue of imamah and the ruling on the one who rebels against the leaders of the Muslims.

The reporter of the hadith says, “So I came close to him and said, ‘I beseech you in the name of Allah, did you hear this from the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)?’”

So he extended his hand to his ears and his heart, and said, ‘My ears heard it and my heart fully grasped it: So I said to him, ‘Your cousin Mu’awiyah is ordering us to consume...”
one another's wealth unjustly and to kill one another, whereas Allah says, "Oh you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful." So he was quiet for some time. Then he said, 'Obey him concerning what is obedience to Allah, and disobey him in matters involving disobedience to Allah.'" [Recorded by Muslim]

Therefore, we will continue to obey the imam as long as he orders us to obey An-Rahman (the Most Merciful). But if he orders us to disobey Allah, then we won't obey those orders. Likewise, we will strike the neck of anyone — whoever he may be — that attempts to usurp his leadership, and we will remain patient in the face of such tribulation with the help of Allah Al-Hakim (the Most Wise) and Al-Manun (the Most Gracious).

So let those inclined to such [sin], leave us to our affairs, for we will remain upon our pledge of allegiance, neither revoking it nor requesting to be released from it.

May peace be upon Muhammad, the warner and bringer of glad tidings, and upon all of his family and companions.
4.3.3 CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY

The third and last legitimate domination identified by Weber is the charismatic authority. Leader’s power to exercises his authority is based on alleged knowledge or divine powers. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi established himself as governor “by order of God” calling himself “Commander of the Faithful”. He also claims to be the successor of the Prophet Mohammed, in this way he proclaims his supernatural status.51

The charismatic authority does not necessarily request the juridical paradigm, because the legitimacy is given by a divine order. Weber states that in this type of domination any type of hierarchy exists. This perfectly fits with the structure of ISIS, the “leaderless networks” (Hofmann, 2006). Exhaustive studies about the hierarchical structure of the organization have not yet been conducted. However, some scholars have supposed that the governors and other state agents are elected for their charisma or their personal relation with al-Baghdadi and this is line with Weber.

The charismatic authority could be identified in the representation of the Islamic State through two main areas, the way in which its leader is represented, the caliph, and the way in which it represents its fighters. Both seem to have extraordinary personal qualities that guarantee their respective claims to power, even if these qualities are strictly bound to the traditional authority (Günther & Kaden, 2016).

The charismatic authority is based on a “certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities (Weber, 1964, p. 241).” The case of the Islamic State does not perfectly fits with this definition because the order that is envisaged by its adherents already exist as a traditional order, within which a designed leader exert authority through his supernatural and charismatic qualities.

51 https://english.alkhabar.com/node/20378.
Every type of charisma that could be found within a traditional order is hence “routinized” (Weber, 1964). Charisma could be routinized in different ways, but the Islamic State uses two specific means to attribute to the caliph his extraordinary qualities while maintaining his connection with the established traditional order (Günther & Kaden, 2016). Both means could be found in *This is the Promise of Allah* written by Abū Muhammad al-ʿAdnānī, in 2014, above all the text clarifies that whatever the qualities of the caliph are, they are determinate within, and are guaranteed by, the actions of “people of authority”. They obtain power from the traditional order in which are incorporated. Then the text lists some personal qualities of the caliph, many of them are just personal traits. However, these qualities are listed before the caliph is referred by name. This implies that while the caliph must have these qualities they still are the qualities of the (office of the) caliph, not the qualities of (the person) Abu Bakr (Günther & Kaden, 2016).

The first form of charismatic authority that the Islamic State attributes to his leader is the “charisma of office”, that is based on “a dissociation of charisma from a particular individual, making it an objective, transferrable entity (Weber, 1964, p. 283).” This is a justification to change the actual caliph if he should fail or killed, without endanger the ruling structure. The second means that al-ʿAdnānī uses, is to present the caliph as a direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammad and his nephew Ḥusayn (Günther, 2015); it is the “hereditary charisma”.

### 4.3.4 CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP IN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Like the ongoing debate over the definition of terrorism, charisma and charismatic authority are difficult concepts to define. The situation is worsened by the widespread and vague use of word in contemporary popular culture (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014). In this case charisma is a quality attribute to people who possess exceptional abilities, in particular they influence an inspire others, and are not accessible to the rest of us. The

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52https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/14242/ADN20140629.pdf
charismatic authority is the accepted power to lead and command others stemming from the recognition of this quality.

Charismatic authority is defined as “a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader (Weber, 1968, p. 48).”

The charismatic authority owed to an office by virtue of law or custom, but to particular individuals that Weber describe as “holder of specific gifts of body and spirit (Weber, 1968, p. 19).” These charismatic leaders operate outside the norms of the rational society. Differently from the traditional and rational authority, the charismatic one is free from conventional or traditional constraints and it is not restricted in its scope.

Weber describes the charismatic authority as a revolutionary force crucial for social change. According to Bernard Bass, charisma carries with it a challenge to the old order, a break with continuity, a risky adventure, continual movement, ferment, and change (Bass, 1985).

According to Weber, the ideal type of charismatic authority, “pure charisma”, is connected to religion, some gifts and powers of the charismatic leader are perceived to be divine in origin. Many charismatic leaders see their mission as God-driven, or divinely inspired. This is absolutely the case of Islamist extremism. When charismatic leaders fail to fulfil the expectations of their followers it is invariably thought that they have been abandoned by the gods or God.

Weber's description of charisma refers to “certain quality of an individual personality” but underlines that “it is the recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma (Weber,
Charismatic authority is validated by others that recognize some qualities associated with charisma in a leader. Charismatic authority is something that is attributed to a leader, and it is not something that a leader possesses.

The focal point is the relation between the charismatic leader and his followers, and not the individual psychological qualities of the leader. This relation is also called “charismatic bond” and it is constructed after a long process of negotiation (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014). It is based on a mutual exchange of needs, where the charismatic leader is granted the authority by the followers in return of recognition, affection, and reinforcement of worth. The study of charismatic bond is based on three social processes. The first one examines the macro-sociological conditions that give rise to the charismatic authority. The second one is the social construction and the management of the charismatic authority. The final one is the “routinization of charisma”, which include the motivations and the conditions that lead to the transformation of the charismatic authority into more stable forms of traditional or legal authority. All these processes are very pertinent to the study of origins, nature and demise of the terrorists groups (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014).

According to Weber, “in times of psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious, political distress” the natural leaders have been charismatic ones (Weber, 1968, p. 19).” The majority of scholars agree with Weber that charismatic leaders emerge thanks to crisis, and the social context in fundamental. Dawson identifies five factors that are crucial for the emergence of the charismatic authority. Three are situational factors that support the attribution of charisma to a leader, and two are more strategical, focusing on how truly charismatic leaders exploit the social crisis. There are strategical aspects to all five points, which explain why many people aspire to be charismatic leader but only few succeed. These factors are:
1. The crisis in question must be perceived as “acute” (for a short period) or “chronical” (there is not the perception of a rapid resolution), but also “ultimate” (bringing complete and irrevocable change). On these cases, leaders often play a role in causing others to see the crisis as ultimate;

2. The crisis must lead to the breakdown of the existing forms of legal and traditional order. This is part of the “ultimate” crisis and leaders could play a creative role in fostering this view. When traditional, rational, and bureaucratic means are not able to solve the crisis, people become “charisma hungry”;

3. For charismatic leaders is easier to arise in societies that encourage their appearance;

4. The message of the charismatic leader must resonate with a mass audience if he or she is to make a plausible claim to special authority.

5. Charismatic leaders believe to be the ones capable to solve the crisis, and among all are able to persuade others. The charismatic leader is salvationist or messianic in nature (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014).

These conditions are at the base of the rise of a real charismatic leader. These characteristics are applicable to the situations in which the charismatic terrorist leaders have arisen; one example is Osama bin Laden.

The relation between the nature and operation of charisma in the new religious movements and the study of terrorists groups and the process of radicalization is quite obvious, however, charismatic leadership in terrorist groups have not been directly examined. According to Hofmann and Dawson, this lacuna has been noted, in their opinion a better understanding of some qualities of leadership, focusing on charisma, would enhance our grasp the dynamics of terrorist groups and radicalization (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014). Many times when term “charisma” is used associated with terrorism, the discussion often cleaves to the limited popular understanding and little awareness is demonstrated about the social scientific research on the
charismatic authority. Moreover, the failure to pursue the term has led to a widespread and inadequate use of it in terrorist studies.

4.3.5 AL-ZARQAWI AS CHARISMATIC LEADER IN DABIQ

According to the members of the Islamic State both Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi embody the qualities of the charismatic leader. But, al-Zarqawi is considered the founder of the organization, he is celebrated and associated to the Prophet Mohammad in all al-Baghdadi speeches and he is also celebrated by the authors of Dabiq. Al-Zarqawi is mentioned multiple times with prophet-like reverence in the news periodical Dabiq that discusses the terror organizations goals and ideals.53

The magazine describes the rise of IS and the construction of the caliphate as a transcendent step that signs the “end times” and the inevitable destruction of the apostate and crusaders forces.54 After the death of al-Zarqawi in 2006, he started to appear in IS’s publications as the “martyred” Jordanian jihadist, he was portrayed has a cult hero, whose exploits, ideology and warfare strategy are venerated (Celso, 2014). In Dabiq the actions of the new leader Caliph Ibrahim Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his victories are represented as the realizations of the ambitious plan started by al-Zarqawi that is to build a Mideast Sunni jihadist state.55 The magazine reifies his memory and he serves as inspiration for the organizations aspirations for its takfiri and sectarian violence.

The first Issue begins with the words of al-Zarqawi “The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify-by Allah’s permission-until it burns the crusader armies in Dabiq”, are used to sanctify his contribution to IS.

55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
In the book *The Management of Savagery* Abu Bakr Naji’s states that the Islamic insurrection progress from localized to a global *mujahidin* movement. According to him the insurgent rural rebellions where the government forces are weak and they establish the *sharia* law. After they have gathered the local support, *mujahidin* use their rural safe haven to build capacity to weaken Muslim apostate governments until they collapse (Celso, 2014). In Naji’s opinion the Islamist insurrection will be global, and at the end the victorious *mujahidin* unite in a caliphate to conquer the world. In this new global context *Dabiq* present al-Zarqawi as a divinely sanctioned political leader and religious authority.

In the first issue of *Dabiq* the authors state that al-Zarqawi wanted to initiate a wider and more complex series of attacks in Iraq to consolidate the areas that are managed by *jihadists* in a state, and using Naji’s term to establish an Islamic State, *tamkir*. This phase was put in place by al-Zarqawi successor al-Baghdadi, who declared the creation of the Islamic State.

Using hadith, *qur’anic* quotations and the military tactics, speeches and martyrdom of al-Zarqawi the magazine endorses his efforts to consolidate the *mujahidin* under a single organization. Confronting the life of the Prophet Mohammad with the actions of al-Zarqawi and al-Baghdadi, the Islamic State hopes to establish a divine lineage, demonstrating that the IS is the mean elected by Allah to release the Muslim world (Celso, 2014). In this perspective the Caliph Ibrahim’s declaration in Mosul in July 2014 is presented has a fundamental historical event to inaugurate the resurrection of Islam (Celso, 2014). Using a “prophet methodology” the caliphate of the Islamic State is presented as the purifier of the Muslim world of apostasy and avenger of crusader justice. IS requests the *hijra* or emigration to all Muslims to the caliphate and it also requests their completely loyalty.

58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
Both al-Zarqawi and al-Baghdadi criticize the Shi’ite and Kurds apostasy and they celebrate the killing by the “lions” of the Islamic State. *Dabiq* depicts a Muslim world anguished by the *shirk* (polytheism) with pious Sunnis oppressed by Shi’ite and *Alawiti* (tawaghit) tyrannical leaders and their Zionist-Crusader masters (Celso, 2014). Based on *hadiths* and *qur’anic suras* the first number of *Dabiq* sees the Islamic State as Allah’s prophesied vanguard to rejuvenate Islam by restoring *tawid* [unity], purging it of apostasy [*shirk*] and fortifying the true *ummah* [community] by integrating political and religious authority under caliph Ibrahim (Celso, 2014).

According to Vergani and Bliuc researches in the fields of political leadership psychology have demonstrated that the success of a leader depends on a correspondence of personal characteristics, the historical context and the psychological characteristic of the followers. The psychological structure of a text could generate identification in the audiences that recognize themselves in such structures and motives (Ingram, 2017). It is probable that it is thanks to this mix of characteristic that ISIS has been able to reach its actual popularity.
CONCLUSION

As al-Baghdadi was a master in the use of the new powerful social-networks and Internet tools, the Islamic State has been able to reach a wide audience, differently from other terrorist organizations. Thanks to Facebook, Twitter and also YouTube, the Islamic group could reach its members in their houses and speaks to them in their language. Through the perfect use of Qur’anic and religious quotations in Dabiq magazine, ISIS has been able to communicate to English-speaking, and other European language speakers, Muslims.

Thanks to these new means, ISIS’s fighters communicate directly with their audience, they can tweet what they are doing and they can also show how the life is in the caliphate. As explained in the third chapter this has a huge impact in particular on teen-agers. Husna Haq identified four main reasons in his article “ISIS excels at recruiting American teens: Here are found four reasons why” to describe this phenomenon. The reasons are: provide sense of identity, management of a sophisticated machine of propaganda, propaganda appeals to a sense of religious obligation, and care for the female audience.

Through the use of propaganda ISIS is also able to establish its power and its authority. Some scholars such as Günther and Kaden (2016) have been able to identify Weber’s teachings of legitimate domination’s theory within the Islamic State. According to Weber, legal authority is based on legal rationality, legitimacy and bureaucracy (Weber, 1964). Al-Baghdadi embodies the characteristics of the legal authority leader; because he was elected after the consultation of the leaders of the ISIS affiliated groups. More in general Islamic State reflect some Weber’s characteristics because it is based on norms and rules, which are applied in all aspects of the daily life of the caliphate. Moreover, according to Weber the leader should be subjected to some sort of legally established impersonal order, which limits his power (Weber, 1964). This role is played by the Shura Council.
The second type of legitimate domination is the traditional authority, which is characterized by rules and powers bases on the past. In the Islamic State the law is based on the principles dictated by the Prophet Mohammad and according Salzmann, it tries to follow the historical and religious traditions. One of the major aims of the ISIS is to present itself as the restoration of "caliphate in the prophetic method" (Günther & Kaden, 2016, p. 8). Dabiq magazine emphasizes the legitimization of the state through the quotation of many traditional Islamic sources and also many modern scholars.

Finally, the last type of legitimate domination is the charismatic authority, in which the leader exercise his power though the alleged which the leader's power to exercises his authority is based on alleged knowledge. Al- Baghdadi declared himself as governor "by the order of God"; he also claims to be successor of the Prophet Mohammad.

To conclude, both al-Zarqawi and al-Baghdadi embody the three types of leaders and the Islamic States represents lot of characteristics of the legitimate domination. These similarities are heighted and emphasized by the authors of the Dabiq magazine. In particular al-Zarqawi, after his death, has become a martyr and in the journal his life is compared to the Prophet Mohammad's life. He is considered the founder of the Islamic State and his successor has followed his precepts to establish the Islamic State in 2014. Finally he embodies many characteristics of the charismatic leaders also because of his similarities with the Prophet.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of research on the topic, the thesis could not rely on a vast literature. However, after the recent terrorist attacks carried out by ISIS, more and more scholars have begun to examine the issues dealt with in the thesis. In this sense, the thesis contributes to suggesting a path for further scientific investigations, which would be important for both terrorism scholars and for policy makers.

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60 https://english.alkhbar.com/node/20378
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