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Al-Baghdadi and the Art of Terrorist Persuasion

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AL-BAGHDADI AND THE ART OF TERRORIST PERSUASION

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the rhetoric used by ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to persuade thousands of young Muslims around the world to join the organization and defend it until the end. The dissertation concerns the innovative methods used by the organization to reach thousands of young people around the world, and the role of misinterpretations of the Qur'an in supporting al-Baghdadi's rhetorical arguments. In order to provide a reasonable explanation for these speeches, the dissertation used Aristotle's rhetorical methodology, Gamal Abdel Nasser's rhetorical concept, Burke's concept of identity and social identity theory. The arguments focused on studying rhetoric within the Isis organization, particularly the rhetorical methods of al-Baghdadi, and analyzing the persuasive elements in the extremist discourse. Four speeches of ISIS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi were selected for analysis. The dissertation included (1) investigating the gap in interpretations of the Qur'an that extremists exploit to persuade Muslim youth; (2) examining Al-Baghdadi's rhetorical methods and the slogans he used in his speeches; and (3) shedding light on extreme appeals to identity problematic in the Islamic world and the Middle East in particular.

Keyword: Islamic identity, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the organization of ISIS, interpretations of the Qur'an, Islamic discourse, rhetoric in Islam, persuasion.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

According to Tracy (2017), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world. Browne (2018) suggested that the crimes of ISIS have spread to many countries worldwide, and the group remains an international threat. Liang (2015) explained how ISIS is an extreme threat to international security in stating that it is a distinctive organization that depends on years of leadership experience, and warning it has the capacity for intimidation, recruitment, training, and even extortion. Tracy stressed that the organization has substantial economic resources that are not typically available to extremist organizations.

After the Arab Spring that swept many countries in the Middle East from 2010-2014, which toppled multiple authoritarian governments, the phenomenon of terrorism and Islamist extremism has emerged in an unprecedented way. This phenomenon exists due to a combination of factors, most notably the collapse of governments and sectarian conflicts that have grown in that climate of instability. The emergence of several terrorist organizations was noticeable, such as Dahesh, al-Qaeda, the Nasra, and Fatah al-Sham, groups fighting in the name of the extreme interpretations of the Islamic religion. According to Holbrook (2010), these groups use verses from the Koran, and some of the teachings of Islam, such as the Prophet Muhammad's hadith, to justify their crimes and hostile acts against innocent people in the Middle East and throughout the world. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace Global Terrorism Index (2016), four organizations were responsible for 74% of the world's terrorist operations in 2015, namely ISIL, Bukharram, the Taliban, and Al Qaeda and its various branches.

Hoffman (1999) defined Islamic terrorism as an organized hostile act by an individual or an organized group to harm civilians and innocents, where the motive serves the purposes of God or Islam as interpreted by the extremists involved. Jackson (2007) asserts that many Muslims regard the term Islamic terrorism as inappropriate. They demand that Islam not be linked to terrorism because Muslims make many efforts to combat terrorism. This assumed link serves the propaganda of terrorist organizations that promote the notion that the West considers the whole of the Islamic religion as a terrorist organization, which revives the conflict between the West and the Muslims around the world.

According to Liang (2015), ISIS successfully recruited 45,000 foreign fighters, which was an unprecedented number. Experts and critics in the Middle East argued that the Islamic caliphate intended to control Arab and Islamic countries and establish an extremist union to fight the West. Essentially, ISIS has attempted to bring about the return of the Crusades with a modern twist of aggressively fighting them off. They consider that they are better suited to lead the world.

According to the American envoy to combat ISIS under President Obama, Brett McGurk, "40,000 foreign fighters came from 110 countries who joined ISIS and crossed the Turkish border for the sake of al-Baghdadi." This observation accounts only for the countries from which participants originated. The full impact of al-Baghdadi's influence includes the large numbers of ISIS members from these many countries; for example, there were tens of thousands of Syrians, Iraqis, and other Arabs involved in the extremist organization. These figures show al-Baghdadi's ability to persuade thousands of young people worldwide to dedicate themselves to the group and fight, even to the point of

suicide, for the founding of a caliphate state. No other modern-day leader or organization has persuaded such large numbers of people from all over the world to join an extremist army. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, whose real name is Ibrahim al-Badri, was born in 1971 in Samarra, central Iraq. He obtained a baccalaureate degree in Islamic studies from the University of Baghdad in 1996. Also, he obtained a master's degree in 1999 and a doctorate in 2007 from Saddam Hussein University for Islamic Studies. He emerged as a leader of ISIS in Iraq several years later. Al-Baghdadi expressed leadership rhetoric in Arabic, the primary language of Islam, because the Prophet Muhammad spoke only Arabic, and the Qur'an was written in Arabic. Consequently, the focus of this study is on the Arab Islamic discourse, which dominates the teachings of the Islamic religion. Al-Baghdadi did not use any language other than Arabic in his speeches. Still, he had a vast media apparatus that exploited social media to translate his sermons and spread his principles in many languages.

The driving rationale for this dissertation is that Islamist extremism has become a complex and challenging issue to address. Few studies that focus on terrorism include the goal of understanding the foundations and origins of organized terrorism. Terrorism begins with extremism. Extremism is a state of persuasion that has its roots in hardline Islamic discourse, which is based on misunderstandings of the verses of the Qur'an and the words of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, this study concerns the main elements of extremism and extremist discourse. For example, understanding the foundation and success of al-Baghdadi's speeches could prevent the emergence of another Baghdadi or new terrorist organization. As is well known, the elements that Osama Bin Laden, the al Qaeda leader, used are the same ones that al-Baghdadi relied upon.

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This dissertation helps to highlight the importance of fighting extremism intellectually through rhetoric in parallel with military action because understanding Islamic discourse and involved rhetorical techniques could support persuasive counter-messages to refute extremism and combat its spread. Unfortunately, terrorism cannot be defeated only through military solutions. This project could bridge the gap in knowledge concerning the methods of persuasion and communication adopted by extremist Islamic organizations. Researchers who study the Middle East have suggested that the battle of ideas is just as important as the military battle in defeating extremism and terrorism.

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze Islamist extremist discourse to understand why these groups are attractive and successful in recruiting thousands of young people around the world. It is a vital strategy to dismantle and refute this discourse. The arguments here focus on studying rhetoric within the Isis organization, particularly the rhetorical methods of al-Baghdadi, and analyze the persuasive elements in the extremist discourse. These groups use various persuasive methods that are enlightened by a neo-Aristotelian methodology and use of the identity concept to create division and conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims. Additionally, the aim of this study is to explore how Islamist extremism as a persistent and integrated case of persuasion and rhetoric from the leader to the public; i.e., it is an ongoing phenomenon.

The arguments focus on studying rhetoric within the Isis organization, particularly the rhetorical methods of al-Baghdadi, and analyzing the persuasive elements in the extremist discourse. The aims of the dissertation are to (a) investigate the gap in interpretations of the Qur'an that extremists exploit to persuade Muslim youth, (b) examine al-Baghdadi's rhetorical methods and the slogans he used in his speeches, and

(c) shed light on extreme appeals to identity problematic in the Islamic world and the

Middle East in particular.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many definitions of persuasion; a broad definition is that persuasion can influence others to achieve a particular goal. A persuasive process aims to change the positions, beliefs, and behaviors of others. The basis of the persuasion process is the interaction between the interlocutors through a nested and flexible process founded on logic and science (Oinas-Kukkonen & Harjumaa, 2009). The context of an interpersonal relationship defines the manifestation of persuasion. These exchanges can occur in diverse contexts such as relationships between a man and woman, friendships among co-workers and neighbors, and members of religious groups in their places of worship. These relationships have the power to withstand distinctive and changing life circumstances and are often unconditional with the consent or will of all parties. (Heath & Bryant, 2013).

Persuasion in personal relationships is not just about what we say, but also what we do during interactions (Kirmani & Campbell, 2004). For example, non-verbal communication may be more effective than verbal communication. Personal care, smile, and physical gestures can be just as compelling as a conversation. It is essential to realize that persuasion among people does not always mean winning or defeating the other; instead, it provides an appropriate response to ensure a common interest or goal. For example, persuasive arguments can be useful in marital dialogues, between brothers and sisters, and friends. In other words, objectives of persuasion in personal interactions include reinforcing compatibility and satisfaction among parties as they continue their relationships (Kirmani &Campbell, 2004; Peters, 2007).

The goals and strategies of persuasion in personal relationships can vary across contexts, as do persuasion strategies in public communications. Theories of persuasion and communication can be used in many areas of research, including marketing, advertising, politics, education, health, and personal relationships. With the advent of social networks, persuasion processes became widely available. Social networks have contributed to the transmission of persuasion messages to many people simultaneously in many countries and with different languages. The structures of persuasive speeches have become more straightforward due to social media (Colliander & Dahlén, 2011). These means of communication have also contributed to the rise in protest and social movements, which have included demands for change worldwide.

Social Media and the Arab Spring

Many Arab countries have witnessed an unprecedented rise in social protests in recent years. Social movements have grown such that the people are expressing their opposition to ruling political regimes and international policies. These movements have crystallized various forms of protest by taking advantage of social media techniques and networks based on different forms of material and symbolic resources. These movements have become unprecedented and have spurred the Arab revolutions that the region has known (social, 2017). In Arab nations, the year 2011 marked the emergence of global interest in social movements, protests, and strikes. The so-called "Arab Spring," a vast protest movement against the Arab ruling regimes, was aimed at fighting dictatorial regimes and creating better and independent lives for the people. Demonstrators in Europe also staged protested austerity, and the "Occupy Wall Street" movement took over a park in New York City. These events prompted communication scientists to study

these social movements and the role of the media in their emergence (Foust & Hoyt, 2018).

Recent years have included a wave of many studies, contributing to a better understanding of social movements, social media, and persuasive concepts. Calls have emerged from many researchers to combine the best approaches to critical and media rhetoric environments to study and interpret social movements. These calls include recognizing movements as rhetorical achievements and forces strengthening social identity bonds (Foust & Hoyt, 2018).

Social movement researchers defined these action groups as mostly informal organizations, based on shared beliefs, such as freedom of expression, healthcare for all, and fighting corruption. These groups are mobilized and use all kinds of protests to bring about changes (Della Porta & Mattoni, 2015). Historically, social movements have succeeded in using persuasive messages as influential tools to turn the grievances of marginalized classes into the interests of dominant groups. Activists have used the media as a tool to influence public thinking and feelings about their issues effectively (Lane et al., 2019). Some findings of social movements suggested that their messages may be more convincing when they come from the dominant ethnic groups rather than marginalized groups (Lane et al., 2019).

Most researchers studying social movements have suggested that behind all movements are the convincing speeches and means of their communication that disseminate rhetoric. Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have provided more opportunities for activism and social movements. Twitter hashtags serve as a framework for many protest movements, allowing activists and those interested in a topic

to interact, thus, contributing and enriching these issues and protest movements. For example, the hashtag "Black Lives Matter" is the umbrella for millions of supporters tweeting this movement. Using this hashtag and others, the supports have renewed momentum for this movement and raised interests in racial incidents in the United States (Moscato, 2016).

The social media give protest movements the space to spread issues away from traditional media filters (Moscato, 2016). Social media provide a means of forming global networks driven by angry citizens, who are vital to mobilizing international support and nurturing global public discourse (Zhu, 2017). Social media provide a unique space for protest movements to present a vision, spread their discourse, and present arguments in a way that the mainstream media could not provide. Kavada (2016) argued that digital media further facilitates decentralized, dispersed, transient, and individual forms of political action. These often appear to oppose the concept of the community. The importance of social media for contemporary protest movements has been highlighted from different perspectives, and much of the focus has been on the functions of social networks for sharing information and reaching a broad audience. The goals of using these media include convincing the users of a cause and organizing protests (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012).

All over the world, young people are taking advantage of new media to engage in civic issues and protest movements. This move initially indicated the enormous potential for change at the global level. The emergence of new political actors and new forms of social movements such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street movement, Black Lives Matter, March for Our Lives, and the Global Climate Strikes provide examples of

creative ways which people use new media. Using these media, they exchange

information, persuade new members, communicate with peers, and mobilize to advance

their causes and create social mobility challenging to control (Lee, 2020).

Researchers describe the relationships between social movements and the media

as a complex and dynamic interaction. It is well-known that all social movements need

the media to attract the necessary attention to their cause, and in return, the media interest

in controversial social and protest movements adds attention to the media sources and

attracts the masses. For these protest movements to be influential in the political process

and cultural practices, these movements need the support and attention of the public.

These media offer opportunities to attract new members and exert pressure on their

opponents, whether these be governments or regimes (Malinick et al., 2013).

Social movements are increasingly using social media to organize collective

action and social movements. The growth of protest movements has shown how social

media can mobilize support and momentum; a prime example is the Black Lives Matter

movement. Social media provide a forum or space where those interested in protest

movements can compete and struggle over the essence, meaning, and direction of the

social movement (Wilkins et al., 2019). Scholars have suggested that social media can

perform the rhetorical functions of social movements by determining the scope and

agenda of protest movements. For instance, the media can shape who is part of the

movement and the external objectives (Wilkins et al., 2019). Social media helps form the

political discourse of protest movements, as defined by the strategies used to create

persuasive arguments. Social media can structure the argument and develop the group's

functions. Speech is the tool used strategically by leaders and activists during social

movements to build causes, convince the crowd, and counter the counter-rhetoric to achieve their goals. A rhetorical perspective on social media activity can provide insight into activists' discussions of their movement's methods. For example, how do the members manage the movement beyond the immediate members of the target group, and how do those who formed the group maintain control? (Wilkins et al., 2019).

The Beginning of Extremism in Islam

Khan (2014) presented a logical explanation for the early beginnings of Islamist extremism. Khan described Islamist extremism movements as beginning in the 7th century with the Kharijites as the first movement. This group had political aims and ambitions. This movement adopted a dangerous approach—whoever was against them was an unbeliever and must be killed.

In contrast, Moore (2015) monitored the progression of terrorist movement timelines. Based on that research, he contends that the genesis of extremist movements arose in the early 1960s after the failure of the Western colonialism of the Arab and Islamic countries. During that period, revolutionary and popular anti-Western movements grew, but these were not religious. In the early 1960s, after the emergence of Israel in the Middle East, secular armed movements emerged. According to Moore, the Palestinian movement, Fatah, was the first armed group that targeted civilians outside the conflict zones. In 1979, the Iranian revolution broke out, which further destabilized the Middle East. The situation worsened after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. This invasion fomented the emergence of Islamist extremist movements in Central and South Asia and the broader Greater Middle East. The war between these radical movements and the Soviet invaders continued from 1979 to 1989, ending with a victory

for the Islamic groups in Afghanistan. After this victory, these groups, specifically al-Qaida, began attacking targets outside the battle zones and bombing US embassies. According to Moore, these attacks culminated in the suicide attacks that destroyed the Twin Towers and part of the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Liang (2015) continued explaining the development of other branches of terrorist groups following Moore's (2015) logic. Liang pointed out that after the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003 2, al-Qaeda in Iraq emerged under Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's leadership. In the evolution of the movement, al-Qaeda became the nucleus of the ISIS organization, which took control of large areas in Iraq and Syria in 2014-2015. Allendorfer and Herring (2015) defined ISIS as a militant and violent group that claimed to have revived the Islamic caliphate or Islamic Empire based on the group's control of large areas of Iraq and Syria, which lasted from 2015-2018. These authors explained that the organization relies on its professional religious propaganda.

The establishment of ISIS. The Middle East is a conflict arena for several different competing forces, including Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, and Iran. The Arab Spring of 2010-2011 produced chaos and emptiness in that region because they have conflicting goals in using the Arab Spring for gain. These conflicts have supported the emergence of extremist organizations (Abouzeid, 2014). One of the most dangerous of these was ISIS, which exploited the flaws and territory left empty by the governments in Syria and Iraq and dominated large areas in that region. Observers suggested that the emergence of ISIS and its rapid control of vast territories in Iraq and Syria were shocking to the world. ISIS exploited chaos and emptiness, and the state of the Islamic caliphate was proclaimed through a speech by al-Baghdadi in 2014 (Abouzeid, 2014).

ISIS's control over vast areas was not born of the moment, and the speeches and declarations of the leader of ISIS were not created in a vacuum. These resulted from a long struggle over many years and was accompanied by conditions of suffering in the Middle East (Knights, 2014). Cronin (2015) suggests that ISIS began as a small extremist Sunni organization after America's occupation of Iraq in 2003. At this point, it was known as Al Qaeda in Iraq. The organization's central idea was that of resisting what they referred to as the American Occupier. At that time, the organization was called al-Qaeda in Iraq and was led by Zarqawi, who owed allegiance to Osama bin Laden, but was killed by a US airstrike in June 2006.

Wood (2015) stated that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was the leader of the organization beginning in May 2010, but al-Baghdadi made a dramatic appearance in his famous 2014 speech in Mosul, Iraq. This speech became famous because it is the first official appearance of al-Baghdadi after his disappearance for years, although al-Baghdadi released some short audio records before appearing publicly for the first time. Several security services were tracking him. After the organization achieved its goals, al-Baghdadi thought it was the right time to emerge and announced the establishment of the new Islamic state. His appearance was remarkable and gave a morale boost to his followers. He created influential rhetoric at that time. Wood identified a clear message from al-Baghdadi: it is the time to act because he was no longer a gang leader, but was now the leader of all Muslims. Wood (2015) concluded that al-Baghdadi might have felt a vacuum after the killing of Bin Laden; thus, he aimed to fill the gap and show Islamic leadership.

Georges (2016) indicated the timing of al-Baghdadi's 2014 speech has multiple meanings because it came in the month of Ramadan, a holy month for Muslims when believers are committed to fasting during some the days of the month. Notably, this speech was the first in which al-Baghdadi appeared to the public. Al-Baghdadi frequently made short audio recordings before he appeared in public, and these recordings contributed to people recognizing him. The organization showed videos of speeches on social media and the organization's websites. He wore religious clothing and chose Friday prayers to deliver it, as Muslims gathered to pray every week. He gave the speech in the Mosul Grand Mosque after ISIS gained control of Isis Zhi, a city where more than two million people lived. The significance of giving the speech during Ramadan was that it was the month in which Allah revealed the Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammad achieved a decisive victory during that month against a tribe, the Quraish, who had rejected his prophecy. According to Georges (2016), the appearance of al-Baghdadi in a US-controlled city in Iraq was more daring than Osama Bin Laden. He thus dramatically appeared in Ramadan as a spiritual leader of Muslims.

The division between ISIS and Al Qaeda had occurred before Baghdadi's famous speech made in 2014 amid a sharp split between ISIS and al-Qaeda, at a time when historians considered ISIS in Iraq as only one of many al Qaeda affiliates, such as those in Yemen and Somalia. O'Shea (2016) explained the historical disparity between the two organizations when the split between the organization of ISIS and Al Qaeda appeared in 2013. At that time, the ISIS group was under the command of Abu Ayyub al-Masri until al-Baghdadi overturned Zawahiri's orders and took control of the organization (Birke, 2013). Al-Baghdadi announced the establishment of the Islamic caliphate state in Iraq

and Syria in 2014 and accused al-Zawahiri of surrendering to the West. Al-Baghdadi declared the caliphate after he dissolved al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Levant in 2006. However, the declaration of the caliphate state in Iraq and Syria came after the organization's takeover of the Iraqi city of Mosul in 2014 (Knights, 2014).

Al-Baghdadi took advantage of the Syrian revolution and the collapse of the regime in large parts of Syria, succeeding in extending control of Iraqi territory near the Syrian border. Gerges (2016) stated that at that time, the Iraqi regime, under the leadership of former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, was suffering from limited central authority amid the spread of the sectarian approach adopted by the government. Georges explained that this led to the accession of thousands of Sunnis to the organization of ISIS. Georges described the conditions as critical in the Middle East, especially after the failure of the Arab Spring in Syria and Iraq, the outbreak of sectarian wars, the flight of tens of thousands from conflict zones, and the displacement of at least 7 million Syrians amid the absence of justice. The decline of the US role in the Middle East under the leadership of former President Obama was a political stalemate to the international community. The Obama administration ignored the conflict in Syria and the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, which allowed Isis to expand in those areas." ISIS, for a while, managed to preserve the territory al-Baghdadi controlled, unlike other extremist organizations that hide in remote places around the world (Knights, 2014).

Extremism and the Destruction of Heritage

Sullivan (2016) defined cultural heritage as the material artifacts and intangible qualities of a society or group inherited from previous generations. According to Sullivan, cultural heritage includes a material culture such as old buildings, monuments,

books, and even documents, while intangible heritage includes folk habits, folklore, and possibly old languages. About the reasons for preserving the heritage, Thomas (1998) asserted that heritage is essential for knowing human history because it provides a logical basis for verifiable ideas and preserves the past so that people know their stories. Cignoni and Scopigno (2008) stated that preserved objects maintain the validity of memories and the accuracy of history, which are concrete evidence that must be preserved. Lowenthal (1985) affirmed that in human history, the reality of the object or thing attracts people and gives them literal ways to touch the past.

Recently, heritage has been subjected to a campaign of extermination by extremist organizations, especially in the Middle East, amid the weak response of the international community to the crimes such groups commit. According to al-Taie (2015), ISIS destroyed a total of 28 religious and historical buildings in Mosul between 2014 and 2015, and ISIS deliberately targeted the destruction of cultural heritage, including historical artifacts and theft of priceless antiquities. According to MacEoin (2014), the real disaster is the destruction of the Mosul archive by ISIS. According to Newsweek magazine (Iraq digitating Baghdad national library, 2015), ISIS burned the archive of the old Mosul Library, destroying about 100 thousand documents, manuscripts, and old books. After this disastrous campaign against heritage, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova remarked that such attacks on heritage were an unprecedented cultural cleansing. MacEoin (2014) revealed that the ISIS organization uses select units to identify the targets of archaeological sites to destroy them.

Pal (2014) suggested that Islam may be subject to deliberate confusion on both sides, extremist organizations, and Western media circles. Baghdad in the Abbasid era

was a beacon of culture, rhetoric, literature, philosophy, and mathematics. Pal suggested that the destruction of the cultural heritage by extremist organizations is aimed at igniting cultural conflicts to accompany the successful religious conflicts they began. Many researchers perceived that ISIS's radical ideas are based on the abolishment of other ideas. The goal of these efforts is the complete elimination of other cultures. Appiah (2012) argued that these conflicts created by Islamic extremist organizations between Islam and the West are the goal. Appiah reviewed the cultural development reached by the Islamic nation in the Abbasid and Umayyad eras and stressed that the Islamic organizations are strictly against the crimes toward heritage as these are contrary to the Islamic religion. He called for the creation of a unified cultural framework between the West and Muslims to respond to these crimes and work on archiving old statues and symbols of civilization and protect them from tampering by extremist groups.

Researchers have made multiple interpretations of the attacks by extremist organizations against heritage. Shahab and Isakhan (2018) interpreted the movement for the destruction of cultural and civilizational heritage carried out by extremist organizations as a ritual of loyalty among these groups. The process of destroying heritage also shapes the identity of the recruits to ensure cultural and ideological loyalty. This process contributes to the creation of an extremist cultural framework destructive to cultural symbols. The extremists may think maintaining traditional heritage represents a tolerant historical discourse that runs counter to their reactionary thinking. Shahab and Isakhan described how the Heritage Destruction Movement creates an enthusiastic jihadist discourse that attracts passionate young people in those areas and promotes recruitment.

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In *The Guardian*, Chulov (2014) wrote that there are significant practical objectives behind the destruction of heritage in Iraq and Syria. The most important of these is that others could be easily attracted to the movement by destroying the legacy in those countries. The destruction of heritage eliminates all cultures and opens the way to the culture of radical ISIS to consolidate its culture in history. According to Martin and Solomon (2017), ISIS destroys shrines, sells precious statues, and smuggles them out of conflict areas to make large profits. They described the operation as one of the strategies of extremist organizations to fund their terrorist operations.

Al-Azm (2014) emphasized the idea of using the heritage and relics in prohibited trade to finance extremist groups, especially in examples such as Syria, with its ancient civilization. Al-Azm called for concerted cultural and rhetorical efforts to fight this organization and described the ISIS terrorist group as the worst criminal organization in modern history against heritage and culture and humanity. In Al-Azm's view, the destruction of cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq may cause significant damage to the social fabric of the population.

Klein (2017) described the destruction of the ancient Assyrian statue of Nimrod as a serious attempt by ISIS to erase the sites of historical cultures deliberately. The process is similar to the destruction of the 1,500-year-old Buddha statue in Afghanistan by the Taliban in 2001. Klein explained that there was weak media coverage of these events but that some media outlets contributed by recalling the symbolism of these destroyed statues and trying to recreate them in the minds of viewers who do not know the cultural and civilizational meanings of these statues. He stressed that the media is a partner in the fight against extremism and must play its cultural role to preserve the heritage and archive

efforts to recall and replicate it. In 2015, Eakin argued in the New York Times that the media had played a significant role in publishing the details of the destruction of heritage and archival in Iraq and Syria by Isis. However, Eakin considered that the Security Council and the US's condemnations of the destruction of heritage and archives were insufficient and did not stop the ongoing destruction of the archives and legacy in Iraq and Syria. He described the plight of the monuments in Syria by saying that six archaeological sites in Syria have been destroyed by ISIS bombings, along with mosques more than 1,000-year-old, archives, antiques, and relics of the Assyrian era sold while the international community only condemned it.

Shorthose (2003) mentioned an extreme cultural context that accompanied the campaign of destruction of statues and flagellation by the Taliban during its control of Afghanistan. Singing was forbidden, and music was a kind of debauchery for which war should be declared. The writer stated that the Taliban considered these shrines as alternatives to the worship of God, considered by this terrorist movement as dangerous and cannot be allowed. There have been frequent cultural wars against the Afghan heritage in all its diversity. To address the idea of heritage destruction, Shorthose said, we must first understand the cultural and rhetorical contexts of the Taliban and the ideological and intellectual dimensions of the extremist movement.

Winter (2014) predicted that the next step is to develop internationally recognized methods for preserving the cultural heritage of countries suffering from ethnic, cultural, and sectarian conflicts. Winter's view is that future conflicts in the coming decades may center on cultural heritage, archives, and historical symbols that have become the

civilizational symbolism of developed nations. Preservation of this history provides hope

for the lives of those who were oppressed in earlier times (Houdek, 2016).

This dissertation should bridge the gap in knowledge concerning the methods of

persuasion and communication adopted by extremist Islamist organizations. Researchers

who study the Middle East have suggested that the battle of ideas is just as important as

the military battle in defeating extremism and terrorism. The organizations like Isis

certainly relied on traditions of Islamic discourse, which are explored next.

Islamic Discourse

Islam is one of the most widely practiced religions in the world, with about 1.5

billion followers. Moreover, it includes some broadly used rhetorical forms from around

the world. However, Baghdadi's Islamic discourse has received little attention from

Western researchers. The reasons for the lack of examination are likely based on

historical religious divisions, differences in languages, and the historical significance of

the Crusades (Merriam, 1974). The high level of ambiguity and lack of understanding of

Islamic discourse is ongoing; thus, rhetorical study on Islamic discourse is in its infancy.

Although there is also a paucity of studies on Islamic discourse, there is some significant

work that deals with Islamic rhetoric (Suleiman, 1967).

Before Islam became a topic of public rhetoric in the Arabian Peninsula, rhetoric

was about spinning, love, amusement, and the novels of legend. After the introduction of

Islam, the cultural rhetoric was radically changed because the Holy Qur'an contained a

linguistic prowess that Arabs had never heard. Therefore, rhetoric in the Qur'an

dramatically affected public discourse in the Arab region (Murphy, 1966).

Merriam (1974) maintained that the rhetorical method of the Qur'an is revolutionary in the world of rhetoric. More pointedly, the Qur'an's discourse is clear, and everyone can understand most of its terms. It contains multiple stories, invitations, appeals, warnings, interpretations of cosmic accidents, metaphor, simile, interconnectedness. The Qur'an is the same version for all Muslims, meaning the last unified version of 1,400 years ago has not changed. Therefore, whoever uses the verses of the Qur'an in speeches becomes more influential, especially among Muslims. The rhetorical art of the Qur'an led many Arab scholars of rhetoric to push for research into the Arabic language and rules for rhetorical discipline in the Arabic language. Schools and disciplines of rhetoric have emerged, such as the Kufa School in Basra and Baghdad in Iraq, and the Alexandria school in Egypt. These schools have developed the Arab discipline in rhetoric and have drawn clear boundaries to understand rhetoric in the Arabic language (Hamod, 1963).

Murphy (1966) suggested dividing the rhetoric into three components that remain in Arab thought in contemporary times: The first element is meanings; concerning the grammatical and other language forms. It is a system that emphasizes the overall unity of the text, regarding ideas and sentences and the proper linking of these ideas and sentences with each other, and it is concerned with different methods of speech. The second element is the statement. The statement provides a focus on the investigation of the methods of expression. It is one of the arts of Arabic rhetoric, and this system is concerned with rhetorical images in the text. One of the pillars of this field is a simile, for example, "Jake is as fast as the wind;" here is likening Jake to the fast wind that does everything quickly. For example, "Jake is a lion," and here it describes Jake as brave,

reliable, and a leader. Statements mean in the Arabic language that the rhetorical picture in the text is based on a system of simile. The third part is the system of metaphor and is concerned with the style of speech. The discipline of metaphor includes the decoration of speech using schemes and tropes.

Moreover, a definition of metaphor is the symbol used in which the relationship between the meaning and the transferred meaning is similar. Therefore, metaphor is based on the similarity of the relationship between one symbol and its referent. For example, when someone says, "I met a sea that gives to the poor and the needy," the meaning here is a similar understanding between a generous man and the sea.

Merriam (1974) suggested that some scholars held that after the death of the prophet, especially in the Abbasid period in the year 750, rhetoric had been made complete. They considered that the existing rhetoric had been fully numbered and classified in the basic Islamic curriculum using the Arabic grammar, the vocabulary of speech, literature, and lexicography of Quranic studies. The oldest and most universally respected Islamic university among Muslims, Al-Azhar University in Cairo, pioneered Islamic rhetoric. Researchers were interested in studying the details of the rhetoric, such as emotional appeal, lament, sound knowledge, fluency, gestures, rhythmic sounds, and clarity. These detailed studies are ongoing and taught in most Islamic universities (Hamod, 1963).

Suleiman (1967) stated that Arabs have shown great interest in rhetoric and have been at the center of scholarly conversations because it is not just a theoretical framework, but it is of practical value for the people and authors. Some have suggested that even before the advent of Islam, Arabs were highly appreciative of rhetoric. For

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example, an Arabic proverb expresses that "the beauty of a person lies in his tongue" when referencing an ability to speak eloquently and convincingly (Murphy, 1966). Before Islam, Arab tribes considered the ideal person's qualities in rhetoric, archery, and horse riding. The high esteem with which they held rhetoric made it a symbol of integrity and modernity at the time (Merriam, 1974).

Scholars of Islamic rhetoric are of two types. The first type prefers to use rhetoric in the curriculum, poetry, literature, prose, and other non-religious arts. The second type links rhetoric to religion and the Qur'an. These scholars encouraged the dominance of religious rhetoric in the last decades of the history of Islam (Clark, 2007). They contend that Islamic discourse is entirely different from the Western discourse and is not negative even in painful times (Suchan, 2014).

The metaphor has dominated Islamic rhetoric, causing many scholars of language to neglect logic as a distinguishable part of persuasion for Islamic cultures. Khaldun, one of the most prominent language scholars in the 13th century, supported linking logic with persuasion and defined rhetoric as a kind of logical reasoning that can influence the public and serve the goals of speech (Murphy, 1966).

In the Abbasid period, 750-1285 CE, the expansion of the Muslim world had reached the borders of Europe and the Mediterranean. In that period, Muslims knew of the Greek achievements in rhetoric, including the philosophical works of Plato and Aristotle. Greek philosophy was a significant revolution in Arab culture with all its literary and scientific ramifications, which led language scholars to name that era as golden in Muslim history (Salazar, 2016).

Islamic traditions have fostered respect for rhetoric and the principles of productive discourse. In Arabic culture, rhetoric is present in all fields, including traditional education in the Arab world, and the social and political dynamics (Clark, 2007). On Friday of each week, there is a sermon dominated by rhetorical ornamentation to influence the audience. This sermon originated as God's will and was carried out by the Prophet Muhammad; thus, it remains present in contemporary times (Hamod, 1963).

Islamic rhetoric did not contain a unified tone. However, by its nature, this rhetoric carries a convincing tone intended to impact the lives of millions of people. Since Muslims believe that the Qur'an is a directive from God, its appeals, requests, warnings, statements, and interpretations have a strong influence on Muslims (Salazar, 2016). Merriam (1974) suggested that Islamic rhetoric has commonalities with the Greco-Roman tradition. Both traditions have grown in rhetorical methods. Al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldoun stressed the complexities of rhetoric, especially in its use to seek the truth. Scholars have asserted that the persuasive system in Islam demands more criticism and scrutiny.

In the present era, much Islamic rhetoric is a lament for the glories of the past. Current religious rhetoric has evolved into patterns using new persuasive strategies of action and reaction. In other words, Muslims are eager to restore the former glories; therefore, calls to unite and work as one nation are reliable and productive as they were in the past. There are many appeals to revive the divided Islamic nation and unify it to grow out of its crises and backwardness. (Clark, 2007). Language researchers are aware that religious rhetoric dominates, and this type of rhetoric is a tool for some extremist organizations (Rogan, 2010).

The rhetoric used by the late al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was not new in the history of Islamic discourse. He relied on the same messages revealed from the beginning of Islam, such as the conflict between truth and falsehood. He linked his speeches to the verses of the Qur'an that related to ancient events. However, differences have emerged among many Muslim entities, which have erupted into internal religious conflicts. Rhetoric related to these differences has emerged to influence the public through persuasion (Pierce, 2014). Researchers have concluded that Bin Laden benefited from his understanding of Islamic studies and language when making influential speeches. bin Laden used rhetorical decorations in his speeches, and comprehensively used the main elements of persuasion in his speeches (Rowland & Theye, 2008). Although 10 years of war have continued since Bin Laden's time, al-Qaeda remains active. Despite the death of bin Laden, al-Qaeda continues to promote his speeches and focus on the rhetoric and persuasive elements in his speech. For example, Bin Laden focused on uniting the nation in the face of the Crusader war on Islam (Pierce, 2014).

ISIS's organization in Iraq emerged with a similar ideology as that of al-Qaeda. The same rhetorical patterns used by Bin Laden are used by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS. There is a vast religious rhetorical machine in the Muslim world that has been exploited by extremist groups to recruit youth. For clarification, religious discourse is widely practiced among Muslims, and there are speeches every week, mainly on Friday. There are five daily prayers. Verses of the Qur'an are read in every prayer. These recurring messages may be viewed as the foundation of a vast religious rhetorical machine in the Muslim world that has been exploited by extremist groups to recruit youth. For example, in their sermons, extremists describe the power of Muslim youth as a

flood that will sweep the world and not stop them about resolve, strength, and toughness. They also describe the jihadists as being able to uproot the mountains from their roots, their vigor, and activity in the service of Islam. Consequently, religious discourse is fertile content used by extremists to provide more radical interpretations of Islam.

McCants (2015) claimed that ISIS's leader devoted most of his interests in spreading rhetoric to the largest audiences in the world. Modern technology was available to al-Baghdadi, which did not exist during the time of Bin Laden. ISIS created a magazine called *Dabig* to publish the speeches of al-Baghdadi and other extremist rhetoric on an ongoing basis. Most of the rhetoric of al-Baghdadi bore the old spirited slogans, such as Islamic Nation, the victory of Muslims, the fight against infidels, and defending the honor of the Islamic Ummah, which he claimed Zionist Americans had invaded. This dissertation sought to pursue understanding of how this was done, suggesting the second question:

RQ1: What are the persuasive elements and arguments on which al-Baghdadi 's rhetoric was based?

So much argument in the Islamic world relates to the Qur'an, which is explored next.

Interpreting the Qur'an

The Qur'an contains many speeches and dialogues that Allah addressed to Muslims. These are characterized as directives, and clergy interpret the directives in many diverse ways. For example, hardline clerics focus on a forceful approach and view it as the most effective way of achieving the goals of Islam. These hardline interpretations support a radical discourse that thrives on the interpretation that the goals are best achieved through force. Many Muslims are victims of these radical

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interpretations of Islamic discourse. On the contrary, there are more tolerant

interpretations of Islamic discourse and the directives of the Qur'an. These less radical

views are reflected in the clergy's weekly speeches on Fridays, holidays, Ramadan, and

hajj seasons.

Parsaei (2013) defined the Holy Quran as orders from God sent to people through

the Prophet Muhammad to the Arab region and Hijaz, with these directives issued on

different occasions between the period 610 - 632 CE. Muslims also believe that the

Quran is a revelation from God to the Prophet Muhammad, and Muslims must follow the

approach of the Koran. Parsaei (2013) emphasized that the Quran is a divine and dynamic

text. According to Parsaei, the history of the Quran dates to the beginning of the 7th

century. Arya (2017) confirmed that the Qur'an was completed at the beginning of the

seventh century, and he believed that the descent of the Quran accompanied a period of

development of Arabic poetry when it reached its peak. Ancient Muslim scholars have

established an interpretive book of the Quran that explains the text's ambiguity.

Mufti (2017) defined tafsir as a classical knowledge that explains and interprets

the Qur'an. The interpretation treated the Qur'an as the word of God and a divine

revelation to the Prophet Muhammad. The interpretation also describes the Qur'an as a

unique divine miracle. To understand some of the leading principles of the Islamic

religion, Paçacı (2013) explained the sources of legislation in the Islamic religion in order

of importance: The Quran is the primary source of Islamic legislation, the Hadith (Hadith

of the Prophet or [Sunna]) is the second source of legislation, and then QIYAS, (IJMA,

consensus) and ijtihad. The meaning of the Sunnah is considered the Prophet's Hadith

and his approach to applying the Islamic religion, which Muslims view as a definitive

source in controversial issues. The QIYAS resolves recent issues by comparing them to stories or conversations of the Prophet and sometimes the views of those who lived with the Prophet Muhammad. The IJMA or consensus also means that former and current clerics agree on a unified view on one of the legitimate issues. Paçacı (2013) defined Ijtihad as the views of the clergy in recent controversial cases, which do not have provisions from the four previous sources. Intisar (2009) is not far from this definition, where Ijtihad is defined as a mental and perhaps physical effort to carry out a particular activity. Esposito (2014) explained the concept of ijtihad by treating it as an Islamic term that usually refers to independent thinking or independent judgment on a contemporary issue in Islam. Ijtihad requires several conditions, including knowledge of religious science (theology), proficiency in the Arabic language, and comprehensive knowledge of jurisprudence (faghy). With the beginning of the eighteenth-century, Muslim scholars began to demand the transition from traditional judgments and open the door to ijtihad to address contemporary issues.

Hallaq (1984) viewed the definition of ijtihad as the exertion of mental energy in the search for a legal opinion to the extent that the faculties of the jurist become incapable of further effort. In other words, ijtihad is the maximum effort expended by the jurist to master and apply the principles and rules of typical Muslim opinion. However, Jannati (2010) has another opinion that there is no consensus on the definition of the term ijtihad by Muslim scholars. He observed that the interpretations of the term ijtihad, which he reviewed in-depth, do not seem true. Jannati explained that most of the definitions fail to determine the meaning of ijtihad technically and logically, and considers that explanations may be needed to clarify the term in general. Some of the definitions appear

to contradict verses of the Koran, and sometimes the contradictions are created by citing verses from the Koran, which is an act thought by some to be sinful (Jannati, 2010).

The issue of ijtihad raises much controversy in research circles, particularly with Islamic and Western researchers, many of whom consider it the authoritative source on which extremists rely to interpret verses of the Quran. In this regard, Venkatraman (2007) explained, based on the Quranic principles of ijtihad that terrorists interpret the Quran's principles on violence and perform their "holy interpretations" as a legitimate premise for using excessive aggression. Venkatraman supported that the extremists use the ijtihad in providing unique interpretations appropriate to their extremist agenda. Venkatraman also stated that terrorists use ijtihad to emphasize Quranic clauses that sanction violent Jihad as a design ordained by God to preserve the Shariat in an Islamic community. However, Hallaq (1984) considered strict conditions to fulfill before the case for ijtihad is made. These conditions are not available to extremist leaders such as al-Qaeda and others. According to the article, the conditions of ijtihad are stringent and must consider several elements before interpreting it, such as the Quran (the Guide), the Hadeeth (Sunnah), the analogy (qiyas), and the unanimity of scientists (ijma). If a similar provision is not found in these elements, it is not viewed as a legitimate interpretation. Parsaei (2013) argued that the ijtihad made significant contributions to the improvement of the Quranic text. Parsaei called for maintaining diligence as a valid element in harmonizing the text of the Quran with contemporary issues that did not exist before, considering that the mujtahid and faqhi discover the relation between the variable and constant needs. Parsaei demanded that legitimate researchers who can continue their efforts to interpret and adapt the verses of the Quran through the gate of ijtihad do so.

Regarding the credibility of the Koran, most Muslims believe in the truth of the

Quran but many scientists have raised several questions about the Quran's text and

stability from over 1400 years ago. Scientists asked about the sources that wrote or

quoted from the Quran and the criteria they adopted in their writing of the Qur'anic text.

Infante (1980) argued that a valid approach should be applied to ensure credible sources

that transmit texts. He called for specific measures to be applied to sources that list

narratives or write historical texts. Infante supports the general idea that the credibility of

the source, experience, and dynamism must be considered to verify the text validity, and

that the credibility of the source may be affected by the circumstances and the state of

communication. He argued that there are also five other criteria to consider in the source:

the physical characteristics of the source and message, inferred source attributes, source

functions for receivers, receivers' criteria for judging sources, and receivers' beliefs and

behaviors.

According to Saeed (2008), the current debates on the Quran and its

interpretations and meanings are often complex and controversial. Fortunately, Muslims

have unanimously agreed on the oneness of the Quranic text that will never change.

Unfortunately, differences lie in its interpretation; there are dozens of books of analysis

due to the diligence and depth of scholars' perceptions. Although the Prophet

Muhammad has interpreted many verses of the Quran, another issue has arisen: the

credibility of those who convey the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. This issue of

credibility has become a significant problem for Muslims. Nevertheless, if the opinions

differ in a critical case, the real reference to the resolution is the Quran and its

interpretations, where the ijtihad will be present in some contemporary issues (Bakhtiar, 2010).

        According to Arya (2017), the debate has intensified after the recent terrorist attacks perpetrated in the name of Islam and the continued spread of extremism. Specifically, the debate has strengthened after the emergence of leaders of international terrorist organizations reading the Qur'anic verses during terrorist operations to justify their brutal actions in the context of religion. These actions led to the emergence of the term "Islamic terrorism" in the press and research studies. Supporting Arya's claim, Piazza (2009) stated that the Islamist terrorist groups are indeed more lethal. Over the period 1968 to 2005, Islamist groups were responsible for 93.6% of all terrorist attacks by religiously-oriented groups and were responsible for 86.9% of all casualties inflicted by religiously-oriented terrorist groups (Piazza, 2009). Arya (2017) attributed the wave of extremism to the misinterpretation of the Qur'an by extremist organizations despite the existence of other sub-causes. Arya held that Arab and Western scholars recently realized that Muslim extremists and moderates rely on different interpretations of the Quran. There has been a renewed interest in understanding the literary and rhetorical devices of the Quran and how they influence its message (Arya, 2017).

        Saeed (2008) categorized research on Muslim attitudes in interpreting the Qur'an into categories. "In this respect, most Muslims can be loosely grouped into one of three main categories: textualists, semi-textualists, or contextualists. These categories give a useful insight into the general trends of today's Qur'anic interpretation" (Saeed, 2008, p.1). Saeed continued in detailing these categories. Textualists argued for a "literal" reading of the Quran and believed that its message should remain "pure" and should not

be subordinated to the demands of modern society. Semi-textualists differ from textualists in that they make some minor concessions to the conditions of modernity and are often associated with an apologetic discourse. Contextualists are "those who believe that certain teachings of the Quran could be applied differently depending on the specific time and place" (Saeed, 2008, p.1). For clarification, there are some interpreters who believe that the interpretations of the Qur'an should be updated according to today's development. It may be modified according to need, but some hard-liners believe otherwise and want to keep strict interpretations of the Qur'an.

Holbrook (2010) stated that the reason for the surge in extremism in the Middle East is the insistence of extremist groups on the literal interpretation of the Quran to serve their religious and political agenda. The author identified three groups that embrace this approach in interpreting the Qur'an, the Muslim Brotherhood, through the ideas of Mr. Qutb, the New Wahhabis, and the Islamic Movement in Jordan led by al-Maqdisi. Holbrook provided a powerful example by explaining the interpretation of the Quran by extremists according to their agenda. He writes;

> The declaration from the 'World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders,' issued in February 1998, announced the ambition of the group that later became known as Al-Qaeda to 'kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military.'

The declaration, which is now seen as one of the more important public messages from the Al-Qaeda leadership, began by quoting Sura At-Taubah (9): 5, urging Muslims to recognize their duty to "slay the idolaters" wherever they were found. However, the verse, as it was written by bin Laden and his co-signatories, quoted only half the ayah,

commanding Muslims to besiege idolaters wherever they could be found as soon as the

months wherein fighting was prohibited had passed. Left out was the second part of the

ayah— "but if they repent and fulfil their devotional obligations and pay the zakat, then

let them go their way, for God is forgiving and kind." This is demonstrative of bin

Laden's selective application of the Qur'an to fit his specific ambitions. (p. 7)

Lumbard (2017) confirmed this incident and stated that extremist organizations

misled people based on the fragmentary interpretations of the verses of the Quran and the

words of the Prophet Muhammad. He added that Muslims of all denominations believe

that the diversity of interpretations for the Qur'an is a mercy for the people, and this is

one of the reasons for the diverse interpretations of the Koran.

Terrorist groups have presented misleading interpretations of the word jihad in the

Quran to implement their agenda. This is an issue raised by many researchers. The word

jihad itself is controversial in Islam and the world. According to Bansal (2009), jihad is

perhaps the most loaded word in the lexicon of Islam's relations with the West. One of

the most congested areas of debate is whether the Qur'an sanctions jihad in all instances

or only in particular circumstances. Bansal mentioned that many scholars agree with the

meaning of the word jihad in that it does not necessarily mean religious war. The word

jihad does not literally mean fighting or war at all: a translation truer to the original

Arabic would be "effort" (Bansal, 2009).

Burkholder (2002) further argued the meanings of the word jihad by stating, "In

the Quran, jihad is frequently followed by the expressions 'in the path of God' and 'with

your wealth and your selves." For some Muslims, the term jihad has also come to mean

the "sacralization of the combat." Burkholder explained that despite its popular meaning

as a sacred armed struggle or war, Muslims have always understood the term jihad to embrace a broader struggle to transform oneself and society. The Quran uses the word in its various meanings ranging from warfare to contemplative spiritual struggle and even exhortation (Burkholder, 2002). For his part, Yahya (2015) warned that the interpretation of the word jihad does not mean war. The use of ambiguous interpretations has distorted the term jihad. In Islam, Jihad has many definitions: wars, exerting all efforts, obstacles, and to strive for Allah's cause using materials and souls. The problem is that the term Jihad has been judged commonly as a word of war. However, Islam has been revealed as a religion conveying peace upon human beings (Yahya, 2015). Arya (2017) asked, "Is the Qur'an a spiritual text that links human existence to divine benevolence? Or does the Qur'an advocate martyrdom and justify violence against non-believers?" (p.1).

Lumbard (2017) stated that to counter radical ideology effectively, there must be an understanding of classical Islamic traditions. The Qur'anic interpretation is of fundamental importance in this endeavor. Lumbard added that the interpretation of the Quran is key to distinguishing between most moderate Muslims and other militant organizations such as al-Qaeda and ISIS (Lumbard, 2017). So many key appeals from the Qu'ran were evident in al Baghdadi's rhetoric, that such strategy suggested the third research question:

RQ2: How did al-Baghdadi exploit the interpretations of the Qur'anic text to support his arguments?

Then, it is to appeals to social identity that appear in such rhetoric the text turns to next.

The Concept of Identity in the Middle East

During the 1960s and 1970s, nationalism dominated the Arab majority states, and several such countries, including Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, united to become a single state under the slogan: "Be united in one country." This agreement had broken down by the end of the 1970s (Khalil, 2017). At that time, Arab intellectuals and researchers sought a framework to define the meaning of identity under the guise of nationalism. In other words, religious influences on identity were absent, and Arab provincialism was the primary determinant of identity. (Anderson, 1989). Leaders of Arab countries and the citizens they governed had relied on the concept of an independent state as their identity. A religious revolution, which called for a focus on inclusive Islamic identity and the abolition of state borders, had yet to emerge.

More recently, there are still sharp debates among scholars on the purpose and meaning of that national identification (Feghali, 1997). Commonly, many Arabs believed there was a link between identity and national culture, and they did not consider a difference between the two. Intellectuals considered that the identity of a nation manifests in its culture, literature, architecture, music, and other cultural determinants (Khalil, 2017). Lewis (1998) explained the complexities surrounding Arab identity by stating that people in the Middle East had an old and deeply rooted identity that has recently undergone profound changes. Lewis suggested that in some cases, Arab identity can center on a small group with shared memories of a collective past and events that were crucial to them. The long-standing sense of Arabs as being far from an historical identity changed entirely after the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in the late 1970s. The Iranian revolution changed the cultural landmarks of the Middle East. After the

advent of the revolution, religion played a central role in identity. Since this time, religious identity has emerged in the Middle East as a substitute for national and state identities. Arab intellectuals have pondered this subject for over 100 years (Telham, 2004).

A religious concept of identity spread across the Middle East and became dominant; concomitantly, Islamist movements became more influential on the streets of Arab and Islamic neighborhoods. Islamic revolution occurred in Iran because the interest of many people turned to religion (Al-Abdeh, 2016). Clerics presented an integrated and comprehensive identity based on the Islamic Ummah. These religious leaders posited no difference between Arab, non-Arabic, white, and black as long as they are all Muslims (Al-Abdeh, 2016). They successfully abolished the political and ethnic boundaries that had previously set identity and redefined identity as religious. At this time, radical ideologies emerged and began to spread in the Middle East. Some Muslims felt that they were superior to the West and should lead the world.

The Arabs across the Middle Eastern region were affected by the Iranian religious revolution. An Islamic religious awakening began to emerge and brought forward consideration of Islam as a comprehensive framework for Arab identity regardless of the ethnic and cultural differences in the region (Feghali, 1997). As the concept of brothers in Islam has emerged, the borders of nations have become perfunctory. According to Khalil (2017), all Muslim countries should be as one nation and united by one culture.

According to Nairn et al. (2015), religion is an interconnected system of symbols that promotes a specific identity and provides a specific understanding of the world. Using the concept of identity, its ramifications, and uncertainties, Islamic extremist

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organizations have exploited blind adherence to Islamic identity. Moreover, they began to

create a state of civil conflict, putting forward the idea that other non-Muslims are a real

threat to this nation and Islam. Muslim identity was one of the central axes used by Abu

Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamist extremist terrorist group, the Islamic State of

Iraq and Syria (ISIS), to persuade and recruit members.

Identification and persuasion. The question of identity is common to all human

beings. When questions about identity coincide with a person's moments of fragility, this

may lead to a personal rift that violent extremist movements exploit to persuade the

individual (Sen, 2006). Every human being has multiple identities; these identities are

neither fixed, nor are they equally important over time because their meanings can

change according to events and circumstances (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Although

scholars have different definitions for the word identity, the most portray it as meaning a

sense of belonging to a group, suggesting that it is part of an individual's perception of

self, often linking it to nationality, religion, or race (Bone, Griffin, & Scholz, 2008).

Individuals and societies tend to classify the world into the "us" and "them" communities.

Those in power and the public opinions can sow the seeds of favoritism and tolerance

toward a reference group in part by exaggerating the negatives of the "other" or out-

group (Howard, 2000). Mere affiliation with a specific group in conditions of war,

competition, and conflict of interest may be sufficient grounds for the emergence of

intolerance against another group. In other words, groups and individuals tend to classify

others in categories that are either preferred because they support the group identity, or

not preferred because they are different from the reference group (Pager & Shepherd,

2008). This identification process occurs with individuals and groups or communities under specific circumstances (Howard, 2000).

Kenneth Burke described Aristotle's key persuasive appeals and other less recently defined forms of rhetoric based on persuasion with a focus on identity (Yan et al.,2012). Burke perceived his theories as a contribution to the newer discourse about persuasion. Communication scholars have suggested that identification should be the principal concern of the new discourse (Burke, 1969; Hansen, 1996). Hansen stated, "Whereas the old rhetoricians placed identification as a means for persuasion, the new rhetoricians reversed the proposition. They argued that persuasion is but one means for identification within rhetorical discourse" (Hansen, 1996, p. 51).

Many scholars have agreed that identity is a persuasive strategy that motivates positions and actions (Hogan, 2012; Stiff & Mongeau, 2016). Yan et al. (2012) argued that Burke's "concept of rhetoric as identification" broadened "the traditional view of rhetoric as persuasion" to include virtually any means of "inducing cooperation and building communities" (p. 279). Persuasion is a term that includes influence. The process of persuasion encompasses the influencing of beliefs, motives, and behaviors. Persuasion is a complicated process requiring some or all the elements of spoken words, a meaningful discourse, a compelling argument, and visual tools for conveying information and stirring emotions (Sornig, 1989). Discourse is a means by which a political leader conveys messages to the community. To be persuasive, a leader must persuade the audience often by appealing to the theoretical and methodological commitments the listeners already hold (Hogan, 2012).

An in-depth awareness of collective group identity can become a powerful weapon directed brutally against another group (Sen, 2006). When a person or group has an inflated sense of identity, leaders or authority figures could direct these individuals to commit acts of violence and terror. A sense of identity can be a source of pride, joy, strength, and trust (Sen, 2006). Many experts and researchers have agreed that defeating ISIS and the ideals of jihadist organizations are not merely military and security issues. They have also agreed that this is not a physical war, but primarily, a battle of ideas (Corman et al., 2006). However, despite this general agreement, there are differences over the meaning of the phrase "battle of ideas." Some believe that extremist organizations have a cross-border religious identity; for example, some Muslims are invoking a shared Islamic identity with Islamic separatists in the southern Philippines and sympathizing with them in the face of the infidel Philippine government. The situation is similar among the separatists in China, where Muslims have united against the authoritarian state (Al-Abdeh, 2016). The researchers acknowledge the difficulty of finding alternatives to the radical cross-border identity. Academics have argued for the revival of Arab nationalism. They espouse that the state-based identities of the past are irreparably damaged, and a newer version of Arab nationalism could be a unifying factor for the divided region as well as an alternative identity. (Abdo, 2016).

Nevertheless, identity need not be singular; it may be multiple and include cultural and religious or ideological elements. The most dangerous is an identity based on intolerance toward the others; a duality of right and wrong, and good and evil, are the basis for such identity (Abdo, 2016). Extremist groups exploit the collective religious identity as a means of persuasion. These groups use strategies to involve their targets

emotionally and manipulate their deep faith, religious ignorance, and confusion about identity or anger at injustice. These are vital steps in the process of extremism that can lead to violence. By accepting a concept of identity under these conditions, many people become victims of the temptations provided by these movements, and they adopt strict interpretations of faith, race, and gender to assert superiority over others (Abdo, 2016; Al-Abdeh, 2016).

Identity Theory Development

Tajfel et al. (1979) contributed to the construct of social identity by defining it as an individual's sense of self-based on membership in a group (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). Tajfel suggested that groups such as castes, families, and soccer teams are essential sources of pride and self-esteem. In Tajfel's view, a sense of belongingness to groups gives people social identity and belonging to the social world. The author espoused that the world is divided into "us and others," meaning that the world classifies people based on their social identities. Tajfel et al. suggested assigning the public into groups is based on a natural human cognitive process, that is, the tendency to group things. Thus, people tend to exaggerate the differences among groups and the similarities within groups to reinforce the assigning of people to groups. The central premise of the theory concerns the idea of an in-group and out-group or the "us and them" mentality. Members of a specific group sometimes define those in other groups negatively, and thus, enhance their self-image and group image (Tajfel et al., 1979).

Social identity theory includes the idea that people derive their self-concept from their membership in a group or groups, and that individuals place importance and emotional value on the groups to which they belong. Thus, they have a bias against other

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groups' behaviors and attitudes (Greene, 1999). Often, people prefer the groups to which they belong and identify with other related external groups. Those seeking to influence group members with such biases can be appealed to using persuasion. Biased views of the culture of others can lead to racism, and racism and in its extreme forms can lead to wars and genocides, such as that promoted in Germany toward the Jews, Rwanda among the Hutus and Tutsis, and between Sunnis and Shiites in the Islamic world (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019).

In providing contemporary explanations for group behavior, social identity theory has become the most influential theory regarding group relations. The theory evolved from explanations of intergroup behavior, and the central tenet became that group identity is the primary cause of intergroup behavior. (Hogg, 2016). Social identity theory has been developed to include individual theories that focus on social influence, group norms, leadership within and between groups, self-promotion, individuality, social behavior, social mobilization, protest, marginalization, and deviation within groups. The theory was also developed to explain organizational phenomena and the dynamics of language and speech style as identity symbols (Hogg, 2016).

Social identity theory is most useful in exploring intergroup dimensions and determining the details that generate group and identity dynamics (Hogg et al.,1995). According to the theory of social identity, social identities differ in strength and content; for example, one may be strongly united with Muslims, Christians, and others. The content of social identity is determined by the group's features, such as Muslims celebrate Ramadan and fast for 30 days, also the colors associated with a soccer team, and the slogans of religious and ethnic groups. Social identity also determines feelings about

group outcomes, such as depression after losing a favorite team (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). In general, positive correlations were found between social identity and self-esteem (Kaye et al., 2019). Since its original formulation, social identity theory has expanded from its focus on group relationships to encompass a wide range of phenomena. The social identity approach has become one of the most widely used perspectives in contemporary social psychology (Brown, 2020). The application of this key theory to al Baghdadi's Isis rhetoric suggested the fourth research question:

RQ3: How does al-Baghdadi exploit the concept of identity to persuade thousands of young Muslims?

In summary, I discussed in the literature review the concept of persuasion, the contribution of social media in supporting protest revolutions, the main concepts embodying persuasion in Islamic extremist discourse in general, and radical discourse by al-Baghdadi. I have highlighted the rhetoric of Islam, identity, interpretation of the Qur'an, the relationship between extremism, destruction of heritage, and some secondary matters that explain how persuasion occurs in radical Islamic discourse. This project seeks to bridge the gap in knowledge concerning the methods of persuasion and communication adopted by extremist Islamist organizations by exploring critical questions about extremist rhetoric in the person of al-Baghdadi. To reiterate the study's four research questions:

RQ1: What are the persuasive elements and arguments on which al-Baghdadi 's rhetoric was based?

RQ2: How did al-Baghdadi exploit the interpretations of the Qur'anic text to support his arguments?

RQ3: How al-Baghdadi does exploit the concept of identity to persuade thousands of young Muslims?

Next, I examine the ways to analyze and critique al-Baghdadi 's primary four discourses and appeals that began in 2014 and occurred in various circumstances until the last speech before his death in 2019 before actually doing so. Following the methodology chapter, I use Aristotle's traditional methodology and identity theory and the identification concepts of Kenneth Burke to analyze the discourses. Gamal Abdel Nasser's concepts were used for discourse analysis and the theory of social identity. I then examine the speeches and focus on invention, integration of arguments and logic into speech, and the existence of evidence. Also, I focus on arrangements, especially the structure of the discourse presented, the body, and the conclusions in the discourse seeking enthymemes the audiences were expected to supply. The style is the subject of much discussion, such as understandable and simple language and strong and connected ideas. Finally, I analyze al-Baghdadi's speeches and his intellect in using words at appropriate times and linking them to the verses of the Qur'an. The dissertation will also analyze how social identity played a role in al-Baghdadi 's speeches.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

Four major approaches were taken to analyze al-Baghdadi 's rhetoric: the neo-Aristotelian approach, Gamal Abdel Nasser-style rhetoric, Burke's identification concept, and social identity theory. First, neo-Aristotelianism is explored.

The Neo-Aristotelian Approach

Arabic literature is influenced by Greek literature. During the ninth and twelfth centuries, Ibn Rushd translated and transmitted Aristotle's studies, including rhetoric. Moreover, these works were studied in Arab learning centers. Ibn Rushd was working according to the Prophet Muhammad (seek knowledge even in China). Ibn Rushd had argued that the study of Greek logic and philosophical discourse complemented the teachings of Islam rather than contradicted them (Clark, 2007). Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and Al-Farabi presented extensive studies on the book of Aristotle's rhetoric and transferred them to the Arabic language, which was affected by this addition (Ezzaher, 2015). The entry of Aristotle's logic into the Islamic intellectual environment led to creating what was termed "the linguistic obstacle in Aristotle's logic." This concept raised disparities regarding structure and meaning in the Arabic and Greek languages. Ibn Rushd succeeded in addressing this obstacle through his commentaries on Aristotle's logic. Ibn Rushd had a great appreciation for Aristotle's philosophy, and this admiration was reflected in Averroes's treatment of questions of logic and his adoption of Aristotle's views on these issues. (Borrowman, 2008).

To examine al-Baghdadi's ISIS rhetoric, Aristotle's methodology was chosen to fit with key appeals to the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. The Qur'an is a 1,400-year-old book with the inherent goal of persuading people to enter

Islam. The rhetoric of the Qur'an depends on warnings, promises, and carrots. The Arab tribes agreed that the Prophet was a virtuous and righteous man, who did not drink wine and engage with women and was honest. Indeed, these attributes supported the Prophet's position as a gentleman calling for a new religion, raising slogans of self-cleansing, and calling for good deeds. He proclaimed the avoidance of ugly deeds such as lying, theft, and adultery, and reminded people of the greatest reward, heaven. The Prophet Muhammad succeeded in spreading Islam based on the Qur'an's discourse and the ongoing, persuasive processes backed by hadiths that explain the Qur'an's approach. Today more than 1.2 billion people have converted to this Islam.

Under these auspices, al-Baghdadi adopted the approach of the Prophet Muhammad, and as such, al-Baghdadi 's speeches were mainly supported by the verses of the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. al-Baghdadi 's appeals were for a return to the natural Islam of Muhammad, and he likened a strategy for a state to that of the Prophet. He raised the slogan of restoring the glories of credible Islam. On his first appearance, al-Baghdadi's words wore the same clothes that those of the Prophet Muhammad wore. Al-Baghdadi's speech even mimicked the speeches of the Prophet Muhammad using the same words. Typically, al-Baghdadi's rhetoric was a classic based on the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad.

Aristotle believed that discourse produces persuasion through the speaker's personality, the emotional state of the listener, or the content of the argument and slogans. Aristotle affirms that the discourse is closely related to dialectic, and in some respects, the aim is to attack or defend an argument. Others, through the years, argued that rhetoric is necessary only for those who want to hide the truth from their audience,

and these scholars suggested that a person who states the truth does not need rhetorical tools. However, Aristotle believed that even those with just and real ideas needed rhetorical tools to persuade an audience. Aristotle believed that a spokesperson would be more persuasive by choosing the persuading sides of a particular issue.

The choice of rhetorical lens depends on the rhetorical critic's appreciation of the piece he wants to analyze. "The rhetorical critic is free to see the discourse historically, relatively, publicly or in isolation," according to Black (quoted in Abel, 1993). Burgchardt (2005) also held that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is one of the essential books influencing rhetorical scholars through history. He holds that Aristotle is relied upon by scholars in most rhetorical treatises, and argued that Aristotle's definition of rhetoric means that it is not a specific technique with fixed procedural rules but merely the ability to find elements of persuasion in a particular speech. Aristotle also noted that rhetorical speech is not limited in scope by the actual means of persuasion used, but can contain all the means of persuasion available to the speaker, whether all the means are used. Aristotle intended that scholars consider the content of the speaker, what the situation calls for, and the resources are available. This process refers to a careful analysis of the situation motivating the discourse, the surrounding circumstances, and the problem the discourse was intended to solve. Through scholarly reviews of the rhetorical approaches in 20th and 21st century America, Burgchardt (2005) found that Black noted that the prevailing form of rhetorical criticism was neo-Aristotelianism. Black supported the argument by stating that about 38% of essays in the seminal work "A History and Criticism of American Public Address" were fundamentally derived from the Aristotelian study of rhetoric:

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The proportion of neo-Aristotelian essays becomes even more striking when we

note that of the twenty-five essays [of 48 totals] . . . employ only one or two of

Aristotle's canons to serve for the entire critical apparatus, interpretation, or

appraisal and some are appreciations, eulogies, or of dubious character (p.55).

Burgchardt (2005) also pointed out that "Only *eight* of the essays attempt an examination

and appraisal of rhetorical discourses by the employment of techniques which are

singular or which represent unconventional interpretations or applications of traditional

rhetoric." Thus, Black argues that the dominant form of rhetorical criticism in the US was

neo-Aristotelian. Based on the previous, I believe Aristotle's methodology is quite fitted

to analyzing the classical Islamic discourse of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which relies

mainly on the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet.

Researchers agree in the fields of literature and rhetoric that the first theories of

discourse extend long ago to before the first centuries, but the methodologies or

guidelines that researchers use to analyze rhetorical texts did not exist before the

twentieth century. In 1925, Wichelns identified some of the basic features of the first

method of rhetorical criticism, or what is known as the neo-Aristotelian approach.

Wichelns defined the speech as a mechanism of persuasion, and he perceived the need to

distinguish between literary criticism and rhetorical criticism. Wichelns considered

rhetorical criticism as a unique means because it concentrates on the influences of

discourse on the audience. Alternatively, literary criticism is more concerned with

identifying the aesthetic attributes associated with the written texts.

The Neo-Aristotelian methodology provides a reasonable explanation of the

methods of persuasion and answers why a discourse was convincing and why a speech

influenced people. The rhetorical strategy offers a hidden vision in the discourse that the average person does not realize. The traditional or neo-Aristotelian approach is based on the ancient Greek and Roman critics. The approach assumes that the discourse acts to expose rational and sincere appeals to the masses. In this methodology, the critic focuses on the ethical, logical, and motivational elements in which the discourse works to achieve persuasion. According to Black's perception of the value of Aristotle's methodology, it is appropriate to analyze al-Baghdadi's radical discourse, in which he uses appeals to show himself as a virtuous cleric who promises a great future for Muslim youth. Consequently, it is not easy to apply the narrative, feminist, or other methodology to al-Baghdadi 's speech because the feminist methodology is suitable for feminist rhetoric and movement. In other words, each rhetorical methodology fits better with varying specific rhetorical types.

Every critic or researcher has a specific view of the artifact; in other words, there is no right or wrong reading (Foss, 2004). Neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism consists of two constituents: historical and judicial. First, the critic seeks historically to reconstruct the context within which the rhetoric was operative. Second, the critic attempts to judge the effectiveness of the speaker's use of the principles of rhetoric in accomplishing a goal (Hendrix, 1968).

Aristotle's rhetoric suggested three critical pathways to persuasion; the methods of ethos, pathos, and logos. Aristotle defined these modes of persuasion as (a) ethos or the credible personal characteristics of the speaker, (b) pathos or the emotion the speaker projects to the listeners, and (c) logos or the use of compelling arguments to support facts and make a specific case (Allen, 2007). In Aristotle's' framework, ethos is the public

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assessment of the credibility of appeals made by an authority figure, such as political, lawyer, cleric, and others. As suggested above, pathos is an emotional appeal that convinces and provokes the audience; for example, these appeals might be in the form of metaphors, descriptions, or allegations of injustice (Tollefson, 2017).

Among the components of ethos, which include language and credibility, the enthymeme is the main component of the logical appeals for the speech. Enthymemes use implied or hinting phrases in the speech that can convey the message without directly speaking them. The point becomes clear and understandable to the listener, even if it is not pronounced directly. It is considered vital because it allows the audience to supply conclusions and clarify the speaker's argument or hypothesis. The method is standard in politics, advertising, and literary discourse. It is an effective method used to persuade the audience through suggestion or implication. Aristotle deemed the enthymeme the main body of persuasion. The focus of his methodology is on the internal elements of a discourse. Using these components, discourse is examined using the core qualities such as ideas, organization, reasonable use of language, and delivery (Urbanski, 2016). Through the analysis of al-Baghdadi 's speeches, I expect to see these elements of al-Baghdadi 's speeches. Al-Baghdadi was very interested in persuasion and would use many such arguments and rhetorical elements to persuade the audience.

Aristotle's methodology focuses on the persuasive elements of a discourse. When reviewing the artifact, the researcher should answer five key points to read the artifact accurately. The first point concerns invention. How was the artifact built? What is the argument? Does the piece focus on emotion, logic, or credibility? The second point is, how is the artifact arranged and organized? In other words, what is its structure? Point

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three concerns style: what language was used? Is the piece creative or lacking inspiration, or is it professional and sophisticated? The fourth point is, did the rhetoric seem to be in control? The issue of control includes a review of awareness and ability. The fifth point includes the connection between speaker and audience and how the speech was delivered and the circumstances surrounding the speech. In this case, an analyst must consider the speaker's attractiveness, insight, confidence, and quality, as well as other traits (Urbanski, 2016). In a study in which the traditional Aristotelean methodology was applied to public diplomacy in the mixed-motive situation, Zhang (2010) concentrated on five elements in the speeches which were included in the discussion. These were an invention, organization, style, delivery, and memory. These are the same elements to be analyzed in the rhetoric of the leader of ISIS. The analysis also focused on credibility appeals and ethics in the speech.

The Gamal Abdel Nasser Rhetorical Style

I also invoke the rhetorical style of Gamal Abdel Nasser, who ruled Egypt from the years 1952 to 1961. He was known for his speeches, which dazzled the Arab world. Nasser had a militant Arab ideology and supported Arab nationalism with a socialist approach. Nasser perceived the necessity of uniting the Arab countries as one entity, i.e., the United States of Arabia. This concept of an Arab state aligned with al-Baghdadi 's later vision of creating an Islamic empire. Nasser succeeded in persuading Syria and Yemen to join Egypt under one country and flag. Some suggested that Libya tried to join this union under the leadership of Muammar Gaddafi, who supported the ideology of the Nasserists. However, the Arab Union quickly ended after a military coup in Syria resulted in its separation from Egypt. Abdel Nasser raised the slogans of social justice as

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a banner for his rule, and these slogans became associated with his biography and that of his country that sought the elimination of class so they might start transforming the world.

Under the slogans of social justice, Nasser enjoyed widespread popular support and imposed tight restrictions on the rich. He implemented many socialist laws, such as free healthcare and education. These are the same ideas that al-Baghdadi later had. For example, al-Baghdadi ordered that gold money be distributed to all followers of his state monthly, and he also ordered free healthcare and education while using the slogans of fighting corruption and classism, and upholding social justice. Nasser's speeches were directed to all Arab nations and not only to the state of Egypt. This is similar to al-Baghdadi's calls for the Islamic nation. An interesting device that Gamal Abdel Nasser used in his speeches was pronouns that imply a plural form for the speaker, such as "We, we are accustomed, we are believers, we can all ..." His speeches were impressive, and it was said that the Arabs did not love any person like Nasser.

The principles of Gamal Abdel Nasser's revolution focused on the association of the Egyptian national identity with the Arab identity, and that should be no preference for the identity of the homeland over the identity of the Arab nation. Secondly, he emphasized linking Arab identity and Islam as a religion to unite the Arabs. That is why Abdel Nasser saw himself as an Arab and Islamic leader, not only as president of Egypt. The third principle is the centrality of the Palestinian cause in the Arab struggle to liberate the state from the Israeli occupation. The fourth underlying tenet was Nasser's preoccupation with the hardships of the poor and those with limited income; he believed in improving the conditions of the poor and considered them equal to the rich. He sought

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not to let the poor die poor; for example, Nasser granted farmers free lands and accessible loans to develop agriculture and Egyptian pastoral production by nationalizing all state institutions. Abdel Nasser had a conceptual framework for building an independent Arab society that did not need to rely on the West while achieving social justice. He created strong relations with the Soviet Union and pushed back relations with the West because he believed the Western countries subverted the destiny of Arab nations. These principles were embodied in Nasser's speeches, and thus, his speeches were influential; Arabs tended to be "attached to" their radios when Nasser gave a speech.

Identification in Rhetoric

Burke's identification methodology restructures the idea of communication with the public. Identity has always been a key principle in Burke's interpretations of eloquence. For a speech to persuade the audiences, the message of interest to the public must be defined. Day Dennis (1960) argued that Burke's approach was critical not because Burke viewed identity as a means of persuasion, but because he considered it the only way to achieve persuasion. According to Burke, the identification process is focused on "identifying " the discourse with the audience. He assumed that the more individuals' ideas and arguments are in line with the audience, then the more they might identify strongly and feel a connection to the leader. Identification builds bridges. Fundamentally, identification is a way of considering the audience's awareness and appeal. The discourse must project content that is congruent with the audience and attracts them such that they identify with the speaker, and identification is the most powerful means to attract and persuade them. Burke believed that the rhetorician might succeed in shifting public thinking toward a specific opinion. However, it can only succeed by conveying ideas in

ways that motivate the audience to accept an opinion as consistent with their own. When speeches tailor the message to an audience, then the public can be encouraged at the moment to accept what is presented. The acceptance depends on what is being presented and its consistency with what the public wants (Head,2016). There are three tools of identification of Burke: material, idealistic, and formal. Head (2016) described Burke's perspective of "[m]aterial identification results from goods, possessions, and things." The perspective stems from material well-being and economic standing. Head further described Burke's idealistic identification as it "results from ideas, attitudes, feelings, and values." Social norms of a cultural group and individuals' expression of these underlie the idealistic identification. Finally, Littlejohn held that Burke's "[f]ormal identification results from the form or arrangement of the act" (p. 17).

Burke chose *identification* as a critical term to distinguish his rhetorical perspective from the tradition of persuasion. However, this focus on identification does not mean that Burke rejected the traditional focus on persuasion (Bernard, 1999). Burke suggested that interactions in the contemporary world are more complex than persuasion as intentional and deliberate actions directed by discourse to a specific and known audience. In Burke's definition, identification provides a rich resource for those interested in convincing or joining a group. Burke perceived that if an individual is isolated, driven to perfectionism, and in a turbulent state, they can become vulnerable to those who practice the art of influence for good and evil (Bernard, 1999). One of the parties must recognize the person who is a target for persuasion (Burke, 1969). Burke stated that identity is a part of the discourse of persuasion when arguing that common interests underlie identity. Burke indicated that when some individuals begin to identify

with a group, then divisiveness is created. Because individuals are engaged in conflicts with other individuals and groups, identifying with the discourse becomes a form of persuasion; it may even become the most persuasive rhetoric. Also, common interests serve to persuade and overcome conflicts with others through mutual identification (Bernard, 1999). Burke has successfully designed a broad and useful approach to various rhetorical theories that concern how people use language within social contexts. The approach includes language as more than logical discourse and grammatical structure. In other words, Burke's rhetorical system introduces grammar rules that depict the dynamic aspects of creative expression. Burke's rhetorical theory provides a systematic way of tracking the importance of distinct ways of speaking in various contexts (Hansen, 1996).

Ehninger (1975) argued that the focus on rhetoric as persuasion is inhumane and criticized the use of an old form of rhetorical criticism, suggesting that it turns people into subjects manipulated through words. Scholars considered that contemporary rhetorical theory offers a more holistic context for studying how people use language in all aspects of social life, including the study of discourse as a means of solving social problems (Hauser, 2002). The discourse persuades others to think as they believe and work as they prefer (Hogan, 2012).

Burke presumed that divisions occur because humans are born as individuals, but each person seeks to form an identity through communication. Under the perspectives of contemporary rhetoric, Burke argued that human interaction is more complicated than the term of persuasion and defined the process of identification is more effective for understanding human communication (Quigley, 1998). Burke's approach to identification proposed a new perspective on the study of discourse within groups. Burke's views

extended to the aesthetic qualities of words because he treated words as real entities. Conceptually, the view of words as entities is consistent with contemporary rhetorical theories in which knowledge is socially constructed (Heath, 1984).

Charland (1987) held that discourse based on identification is continuous and not restricted to an isolated speech; it is part of a socialization discourse. According to Sloane (2011), Poite, the founder of the constitutive rhetoric theory, assumed that language creates a collective identity for the audience. That is, symbols, literature, and narrative are all critical to the process of collective identity. This sort of discourse requires action to strengthen identity, and it includes the art of character formation, community, culture, and identity. There are two ways to convince the public that they are part of identity persuasion and deceptive manipulation. Using persuasion, speakers try to persuade the audiences of a collective identity, honestly and frankly. By using manipulation and deception, they create a sense of belonging to an identity (Cheney, 1983; Sloane, 2011). Postmodern rhetoricians have used ideology, a coherent set of beliefs that people use to understand events and identify others. Ideologies can shape individuals' identities, but these identities are not stable (Hogan, 2012). Charland (1987) stated that the existence of ideological themes in discourse strengthens identity, and hence, the impact of the discourse. Nevertheless, collective identity is uncertain and changeable regarding its borders, nature, and members, making controlling it nearly impossible.

Rhetorical scholars assume that Black's concept of the second person has contributed to analyzing the shared beliefs and values imagined between the speaker and the audience. The "second person" means that the persons in the audience obtain another identity through the speech. (Keith & Lundberg, 2008). Researchers and scholars must

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analyze the imagined beliefs and values shared by the speaker and the audience. The discourse influences the audience and moves them from one identity to another during the speech. The assumption of another identity is called the second person (Black, 1970). The second identity is not age, temperament, or different position; it is rooted in ideology (Black, 1970). In a rhetorical study, Muñiz (2012) applied Burke's methodology and definition of rhetoric to understand the motivation of the fictional character, Dr. Who. The analysis initially focused on Dr. Who's attempt to find his identity and girlfriend. The author explained,

> Granted, the basic plot of the episode is evident as the viewer can see that The Doctor is searching for his identity, his soon-to-be companion Amy is as well; we hardly need Burke for that. What we need Burke for is analyzing what this surface level, and the explicit plot, does symbolically which, in this case, opens the door to establishing consubstantiality with the audience. (p. 46)

Dr. Who then begins the journey of searching for factors common to himself as well as those people around him. Muñiz describes, "Burke wrote that identification fuels all motivation and links people between themselves and others, something that DW seems to do very well and, in turn, create the opportunity to influence the audience" (p. 46). Thus, Muñiz's example illustrated that Burke's definition feeds all the emotional impulses and drives some rhetors to seek to connect with the others. As another example, in a 2015 article titled *"Power & persuasion: constructing identity in religious communications,* Nairn et al. (2015) employed Burke's methodology to analyze some Greek Orthodox church speeches to members of the diaspora to preserve the identity of the members. The authors relied on identification in Burke's theory. These authors stated:

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Cheney's (1983) rhetorical identification typology provides tools for exploring the identity construction that occurs in persuasive communication. The typology operationalises Burke's (1969) theories of identification, which are based on the concept of 'consubstantiality'" (p. 21), and derives from an idealistic view of the power of communication to bring about cooperation. Burke (1969) suggested that rhetors could achieve identification using three main ways by (a) creating common ground with the audience, (b) encouraging the disassociation of groups from one another, and (c) subtly merging the interests of disparate groups and the rhetor under an "assumed we". Cheney's (1983) typology deploys all three of Burke's strategies of identification, and includes a fourth category: unifying symbols. In this paper, we understand the typology as a tool-in-trade for practitioners of persuasion (p 3).

In summary, Burke's approach of identification proposed a new perspective on the study of discourse within groups. Burke's views extended to the aesthetic qualities of words because he treated words as real entities. Burke argued that human interaction is more complicated than the term of persuasion and defined the process of identification as more useful for understanding human communication.

Social identity theory applied to rhetoric. According to social identity theory, we categorize people into groups and believe that the group to which we belong is different from other groups. People also exaggerate the similarity within their groups. Social identity theory includes three stages of mental processes involved in evaluating others using the mindset of us versus others. That is, members of a group pit themselves against an external group. These steps take place in a specific order; the first stage is

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categorization, in which people classify things and people to identify and understand them. They also position themselves to understand the social environment. For example, people use social groups such as Muslim, Christian, and Hindu, and they classify unknown people in groups, such as Black and White, student, and teacher. They expect that classifying others is useful in identifying and understanding others. Similarly, people discover things about themselves when considering their membership in a category. Often people determine appropriate behavior based on the criteria of the groups to which they belong (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019; Yingrui & Bin, 2006).

The second stage is social identification. Usually, people adopt the social identity of the group with which they identify for themselves. For example, if a person identifies himself as black, he then sympathizes with issues related to race, racism, social grievances, and systemic racism. Also, if someone classifies himself as a Muslim, he sympathizes with all the injustices toward Muslims. There is an emotional significance when identifying a person with a group, and self-esteem is associated with the individual's group identity. The third stage in social identity is social comparison. After people classify themselves as part of a group and identify the group, they compare that group with other groups. For individuals to remain in a group in which they have pride, they need to compare their group with other groups positively. This comparison process is essential for understanding bias. Once two groups compare themselves as competitors, this leads to intensifying competition among individuals within each group to maintain self-esteem based on belonging. Thus, competition between groups is not a competition for resources and a consequence of competing identities (Scheepers, & Ellemers,2019) (Yingrui, & Bin, 2006). (McLeod, 2019).

There are identifiable links between Burke's concept of identity and social identity theory. Burke asserted that the speech is ineffective unless the audience identifies with the speaker and the audience. Burke's concept concerns the common ground between the speaker and the audience. Social identity theory holds that individuals sympathize with issues of the groups to which they belong; for example, individuals exaggerate the similarities between one group and overestimate the differences between their group and others. Individuals are influenced by the issues of their groups and society, and some seek the feeling of superiority they gain by defending their group from other rival groups. These are concepts that al-Baghdadi focused on because he relied on the Muslims' yearning to unite under one state and restore the Islamic empire.

Summary of Methods

In this study, I applied traditional or neo-Aristotelian approaches that originate from ancient Greek and Roman critics. Bizzell and Herzberg (2001) argued that the history of rhetoric is the story of a long struggle to understand the relationship between discourse, knowledge, communication, as well as the effects and language of rhetoric and how people experience it. Aristotle understood and was well-practiced with discourse intended as persuasion. (Glynos et al., 2009). A rhetorical methodology can provide a clear scope for the study of al-Baghdadi 's rhetoric and recognize how these speeches succeed in attracting youth around the world. Rhetorical criticism provides transparent methodologies for analyzing al-Baghdadi's rhetoric. According to Gehrke (2009), the use of rhetoric is an art, and therefore inconsistent with the scientific methods of analysis. However, criticism is also an art and is suitable to examine the rhetorical arts. Kuypers (2009) suggested that criticism is a means of generating knowledge. Even as critical

thought is required for the scientific method for producing knowledge, it has

comprehensive and profound potential for use in the analysis of rhetoric. Rhetorical

criticism is used to study and analyze the structure of discourse, the purposes of words,

the effect of words on the masses, sources of strength, appeals, and other elements. It is

an intellectual practice that dates to the era of Plato, i.e., the fourth century BC. By

improving understanding, a critic can offer practical and rich ways for others to see the

world. It is through such a critical understanding that scholars produce knowledge about

human communication. In theory, rhetorical criticism helps us understand and manage

our interactions with others (Kuypers, 2009).

Rhetorical criticism explores the relationship between context and text, and

because the purpose of the discourse is to be convincing, the level at which the discourse

in question persuades its audience must be analyzed and then criticized. One guiding idea

is that rhetorical criticism is a personal perception and is best when less structured than

the typical scientific method (Kuypers, 2009). Black (1978) argued that critics could best

use rhetorical methods flexibly and combined with multiple methods. This dissertation

research relied on rhetorical criticism to analyze the speeches of the ISIS leader. This

methodology allows disassembling of the rhetoric in detail and understanding of the

methods of persuasion that Baghdadi uses in rhetoric, given that he ties these to

interpretations of the Qur'an messages.

The dissertation contains the following components in the analysis of al-Baghdadi

's rhetoric: the meanings, statements, and metaphors based on classic studies of Arabic

rhetoric that appeared in al-Baghdadi 's speeches. Five elements of Aristotle's

methodology for examining discourse drive the analysis. The first of these elements is

invention, which concerns how the artifact and the argument were built. Critics and researchers using the Aristotelian approach must then ask added questions that center on: does the discourse focus on logic, on emotion, and is it credible? The second of five key points are, how is the artifact arranged and organized? In other words, what is its structure? Point three concerns style; what language was used? Is the piece creative or lacking inspiration, or is it professional and sophisticated? The fourth point is, did the rhetoric seem to be in control? The issue of control includes a review of awareness and ability. The fifth point includes the connection between speaker and audience and how the speech was delivered and the circumstances surrounding the speech. In this case, an analyst must consider the speaker's attractiveness, insight, confidence, and quality, as well as other traits (Urbanski, 2016). Throughout al-Baghdadi 's speeches, the focus was on ethos, pathos, and logos, emphasizing his appeals.

Another focus of the study was the political and environmental frames from which the speeches arose. The circumstances surrounding each speech and its historical context are discussed. Thus, the relationship of the speech content to the past and the present can be examined. Finally, I plan to consider the audience al-Baghdadi aimed to persuade. This examination includes their beliefs and values; for example, what do they care about? Furthermore, why are they a target for al-Baghdadi, and why does al-Baghdadi try to persuade them? What enthymemes will the audience be expected to supply? Circumstances such as the occasion and timing of the speech are described in the context of al-Baghdadi 's underlying motivations for speeches. Also, Nasserian style rhetoric was used as a lens for analysis because Nasser was influential in the Arab world,

and he emphasized the slogans of social justice in the Arab nation. In particular, he implemented and made promises of healthcare and free education for all.

In this study, social identity theory and the concept of identification was applied to examine the ISIS leader's appeals and focus on identity in ideological speeches. Burke intended the concept as a means of interpreting identity and as a vital tool for persuasion. Burke applied this approach to analyze National Socialist German Chancellor Adolf Hitler's ideological rhetoric and proposed an explanation for the use of identity as a persuasive device (Burke, 1969). Burke's identification theory remains a popular theory of rhetoric, and scholars have used it to interpret key concepts of persuasion (Nairn et al., 2015). Burke (1969) suggests that to be convincing, the concept of identity must be invoked and conveyed until persuasion becomes valid; one of the parties must identify with the other so that the persuasion function can work. Furthermore, he stressed that words could generate identity in three main ways, the first of which is creating common ground with the audiences. Al-Baghdadi stated his goal was to save Muslims from division and weakness. In his speech, he sought to unify the Islamic nation and prepare it to lead the world. The second is by separating groups from each other. Al-Baghdadi proposed that infidels are Muslims' real enemies and that it is a shame for Arab and Islamic governments to ally themselves with the infidels. He encouraged Muslims to sever relations with all the infidels, an ideal that he sought to install in a Muslim state. The third is by merging the interests of disparate groups. Al-Baghdadi has stated that all armed extremist groups must unite under one banner to fight the infidels. In his speeches, despite his hostility to al-Qaeda, al-Baghdadi refused to fight that organization and called on it in several speeches more than once to reconcile its differences with ISIS.

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Al-Baghdadi's Speeches

Four speeches were the focus of analysis here. These are the only four speeches fully preserved as given by al-Baghdadi and were widely shared via media worldwide, especially among Isis members. The four speeches, all delivered in Arabic, were chosen because they represent the summit of the rise of ISIS led by al-Baghdadi, and the height of al-Baghdadi's influence before his death, which occurred after his last speech. The first speech was a historic declaration of a new country over large areas of Iraq and Syria. However, al-Baghdadi's second and third speech followed significant setbacks that the organization suffered. In the fourth and final speech, al-Baghdadi appeared publicly after the organization lost all the territories it had controlled. In other words, these presentations tell the story of the rise and fall of one of the most substantial Islamic extremist organizations.

The first speech. Al-Baghdadi made his first public appearance when giving a speech on June -July, 2014, in the Great Mosque in the Iraqi city of Mosul after ISIS had seized the city. In this well-known speech, al-Baghdadi presented two main messages: first, a dominant Islamic state must be established based on Islamic identity, and second, this goal of an Islamic state could be achieved by continuing jihad and fighting the infidels who pose a threat to the Islamic identity. The speech contained a religious invitation from a clergyman who considered himself as the leader of the Islamic Ummah. At the time, large parts of Syria and much of Iraq were under the control of ISIS, and the international coalition against terrorism had not yet been formed. Conditions were favorable for al-Baghdadi to expand his power faster than he had expected.

The second speech. Al-Baghdadi's second speech came two years later, in

October –November 2016, just after the liberation of Mosul from ISIS, which was the

most critical loss for ISIS at the time. The speech was preserved as an audio recording

without appearing in public or on video. Mosul is described as a human reservoir for the

ISIS organization—it is the largest city in Iraq and inhabited by more than 2 million

people. The organization was retreating at all levels, and the losses were increasing, but

ISIS suicide attacks against the Iraqi forces and the Kurdish fighters increased to

hundreds in Syria and Iraq.

The third speech. The third speech of al-Baghdadi came after the organization lost

most of the lands it controlled. The speech was given in August 2018 and lasted 55

minutes. Also, it was an audio recording without visual or public appearance. The event

occurred on Eid al-Adha, the most important holiday for Muslims. The speech was

motivated by rumors that al-Baghdadi had been killed. Its text is considered the most

extended letter to be published by al-Baghdadi. During that period, reports revealed the

emergence of the organization in Iraqi cities even after the organization lost 98% of the

lands it controlled. However, ISIS appeared to be taking its last breath.

The fourth and final speech. In 2019 the self-proclaimed leader of the "Islamic

State," al-Baghdadi, reappeared in public for the first time since July 2014. The message

appeared in a video clip sent out to the world, showing that ISIS still existed, and its

leader was alive. Al-Baghdadi stated that ISIS is determined to intensify attacks across

the globe. The video was an 18-minute production by Al-Furqan Foundation, which

specializes in publishing organization messages. Because Muslims celebrate Ramadan

from May 6th to June 3rd, sending the message for publication before the start of the

month of Ramadan meant it was intended to reach an audience at the time when jihadists usually mount their attacks and propaganda campaigns. At the beginning of his speech, al-Baghdadi welcomed new entrants to the "Caliphate State" in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Sri Lanka. Many researchers in the field of extremism believe that this appearance was the last before his death.

This dissertation analyzes these most famous speeches of the ISIS leader from 2014 until his death in 2019 by focusing on rational and emotional appeals and the rhetorical context in which they were delivered in a neo-Aristotelian approach, followed by applying the concepts of Nasserian style, identification, and social identity. These concepts fit well and are unique lenses to provide a clear understanding of the persuasive practices that Baghdadi used in his speeches seeking to enhance the worldwide appeal of ISIS.

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CHAPTER IV – RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FOUR SPEECHES

Analysis of each speech sets the context for each and then suggests neo-

Aristotelian, Nasserian, and identity/identification elements found in each.

The First Speech

To analyze the content and form of a discourse, the historical context and the

circumstances of a speech should be explored. For example, the historical setting for the

rise of al-Baghdadi and ISIS was one of turmoil for the Middle East. Al-Baghdadi had

become known to Muslims across the area through recorded audio speeches. That is, the

speech is often considered as the "first" address to the public by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as

the leader of ISIS but was not his first. Many audio recordings were used to convey al-

Baghdadi's speeches during the organization's rise in Iraq, and some of these preceded

this first speech in which he appeared in public. Thus, the so-called first speech is

considered the speech that brought al-Baghdadi directly to the public for the first time.

From the audio recordings, the public could quickly identify his voice and rhetorical

style. The early victories for the organization prompted the choice of making a physical

appearance for this specific speech. ISIS had, in the recent past, taken control of vast

areas in Iraq and Syria, gaining control of territories that exceeded the land areas of Syria

and Iraq.

The Middle East and Syria were described as in chaos. Syrians were living in a

struggle between the dictator Bashar al-Assad and protesters who wanted a better future

without dictatorship. The Syrian conflict had turned into an armed battle. Many countries

were involved in supporting one of the parties in this conflict; however, the major lines of

supporters were Iran and Russia, which chose to support the Assad regime, and the Arab,

European and American countries choosing to support the demonstrators. Security systems had collapsed in most of Syria, leaving ways for many different armed groups to enter the stage. In Iraq, the situation was not better than Syria; protests broke out to call for a revolution and a better life. Under these conditions, with the absence of stable governments and the collapse of services, Isis emerged and gradually filled the void by becoming a unifying organization. Much of the world was preoccupied with the devastation in Syria and the massive waves of Syrians who were displaced. Thus, ISIS took the opportunity to seize much of the area in disarray using violent tactics, oppression, and torture to control the troubled areas.

After ISIS came to the fore, countries in the Middle East experienced this organization as a broad danger that expanded across the borders of countries. Middle Eastern countries considered the organization as a viable threat to all in the region without exception. The fears stemmed from the ISIS dogma that Arab regimes were agents of the West, and they should be removed. The organization had an appetite to expand and control even more land by toppling Arab regimes and taking advantage of the Arab Spring. The latter issue is salient because al-Baghdadi sought to take advantage of the despair of youth in the region; thus, much of his discourse was aimed at youth. During this period, the Iraqi authorities leaked information that al-Baghdadi was killed or seriously injured from an airstrike, making his appearance in-person all the more striking to his young followers.

One of the characteristics of Islamic discourse is that it begins with praise for the Lord and the Prophet Muhammad and ends with the same appreciation for the Lord and the Prophet Muhammad. The more the speaker praises the Lord and the Prophet

Muhammad, the more he draws in and impresses the listeners. Thus, true to expectations at the beginning of the sermon, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi praised the Lord and the Prophet Muhammad, but importantly, he did so in ways similar to those Osama bin Laden used in speeches. In most Islamic speeches, whether in Friday prayers or public speeches, the speaker begins with praise because it is a discursive religious practice that began during the era of the Prophet Muhammad and continues today. Al-Baghdadi said,

> All praise is due to Allah. We thank him and seek His assistance and His
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> forgiveness. O Allah, defend us from the evil of ourselves and the evils of our
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> actions. Whoever is guided by Allah will never be misguided, and whoever is
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> made lost by Allah will never be guided (Al Baghdadi, 2014)

However, by invoking the memory of Osama bin Laden, al-Baghdadi created continuity with the past cause of al-Qaeda and bin Laden's discourse directed to youth.

With this classical religious and preaching style, al-Baghdadi focused on building credibility as a religious man, preacher, and expert in Islamic teachings, who wanted to display virtuous morals by appealing to the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad and linking them to his new rhetoric. In Islamic teachings, presenting an impression of being religious is key to a person holding integrity and credibility before the public. In other words, the more religious persons portray themselves, the more profound the impact of persuasion on the listeners. Using these emotional appeals, al-Baghdadi was keen to show people that he is the opposite of the Arab regimes, which he presented as secular and full of corruption. Al-Baghdadi used the duality of truth and falsehood by summoning his image as a pious cleric who could lead his new state in a strictly religious approach against corruption, tyranny, and secular regimes. Al-Baghdadi viewed the Arab regimes

mired in corruption and as having no legitimacy. Thus, people revolted against them, as happened in the Arab Spring.

Consequently, al-Baghdadi portrayed these regimes as evil and positioned himself as a reformer and leader who can fight these evils and chart a better future. In this presentation, he used the style of speech, as did Gamal Abdel Nasser; al-Baghdadi directed the speech to a broader audience, in this case, the Islamic nation, just as Abdel Nasser aimed beyond just the state of Egypt by directing speeches to Muslims in the Arab nations. Al-Baghdadi used the same slogans that Nasser promoted, with themes such as social justice, fighting corruption, and concern for the youth and the working class, which are attractive messages in the Arab world. He expressed, "O Muslims, reaching Ramadan is a great blessing and great grace from Allah. The beginning of the month is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is protection from the fire "(Al Baghdadi 2014). He also implied the need to change wealth distribution among the population and provide free education and healthcare. Muslims do not believe in taxes, and there are hadiths about the Prophet Muhammad in which he cautioned about taxes. Instead of taxes, a condition of Islam is that money is paid by merchants and the rich to benefit the poor. These funds are called zakat and are paid annually in the month of Ramadan.

Al-Baghdadi continued the talk by recalling the virtues of Ramadan, a holy month for Muslims. During Ramadan, Muslims are obliged to fast from dawn to sunset for the 30 days. The Prophet Muhammad stressed that during this month, Muslims must be careful with acts of worship so they might receive God's rewards. Following this tradition, al-Baghdadi used many Qur'anic verses and prophetic hadiths urging Muslims to give their best in this month. In the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Ramadan was

considered the month of victories because he defeated his opponents in the first battle, and it was in Ramadan. Therefore, al-Baghdadi and other extremists use these older oratory practices to describe modern era victories to revive these older traditions for the audience. As al-Baghdadi mentioned the virtues of Ramadan and the work of worship, he was linking Ramadan to jihad by connecting the call to jihad with the Prophet Muhammad's actions when fighting his opponents. He described Ramadan,

> It is a month in which for Allah we are protected from hell, and this is every night – nights during which the marketplace of jihad is opened. The Messenger, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, would hold in it the brigades and arm the armies to fight the enemies of Allah to do jihad against the polytheists (Al Baghdadi, 2014)

Al-Baghdadi was deliberately using religion to convince Muslims to join ISIS by comparing the Prophet Muhammad's approach to his, which included running the ISIS state as based on jihad. In this example, al-Baghdadi demonstrated the concept of identity by creating common ground with the public and speaking about the virtues of Ramadan and its importance to Muslims.

Al-Baghdadi used an enthymeme by declaring Ramadan as the month of jihad and mentioned that during Ramadan, the Prophet Muhammad had prepared armies to fight the enemies of God and non-Muslims. Al-Baghdadi was leading the audience to conclude that they must join ISIS during Ramadan to fight against the enemies of God and the non-Muslims because their reward is doubled during this time. The historical event represents the Prophet Muhammad's time for preparing for jihad. The message was implicit that if a person is a Muslim and a lover of the Prophet Muhammad, then they should join ISIS and

declare jihad against the enemies of Allah. Recently, jihad has raised considerable controversy among Muslim scholars, especially concerning its conditions, motives, and timing. In his narrative, al-Baghdadi needed to resolve the issue and emphasize that jihad is one of the constants of Islamic identity; he considered it the first defense of the Islamic identity of external threats. In this slogan, al-Baghdadi mentioned the virtues of jihad and the necessity of fighting non-Muslims to protect the Islamic identity from threats.

Al-Baghdadi took these implicit messages further and launched a new appeal to Muslims that he explicitly supported using verses of the Qur'an. Al-Baghdadi simplified the logic he used to sway the audience to join ISIS by convincing people that God created them to believe him and establish his religion. Al-Baghdadi further declared that God had ordered the fight against enemies and jihad to achieve God's goal and establish religion linked to al-Baghdadi. Again al-Baghdadi used an enthymeme that when people engage in jihad or fight along with ISIS, they abide by Allah's orders. Therefore, they are moving away from the category of sinners who do not care about Allah's orders.

Al-Baghdadi extended the argument for forming a new country by stating that power is the key to applying Islamic law as God has ordered Muslims to follow; thus, holding power serves Islamic law. This discourse began the official declaration from al-Baghdadi that the new state will differ from secular and corrupt Arab regimes. He emphasized that in the new state, Islamic law will be applied vigorously, thus, making his call to extremists and hardliners to support the formation of this state. Al-Baghdadi stated that the basis of religion is a book that directs and a sword to support the book;

> O people, the religion of Allah, blessed be He, is not established and this goal for
> which Allah created us is not achieved but by empowering the Shariah of Allah

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and being judged by it and establishing the restrictions, and this is only done with

power and authority. This is the establishment of the religion: a Book that guides

and a sword that supports (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

In this message, al-Baghdadi emphasized the sword because it was an important symbol for Muslims during the reign of the Prophet Muhammad, who triumphed over his opponents and spread Islam. These statements were al-Baghdadi's attempts to link his approaches to those of the Prophet Muhammad directly.

Al-Baghdadi described the actions of ISIS; he began by telling the story of the group's decisive victories and widespread control over parts of Syria and Iraq. He pointedly referred to Syrians and Iraqis as brothers. In this story, al-Baghdadi invoked the symbolism of brothers in Islam and the need to support and help brothers in their jihad and struggle. Al-Baghdadi developed the argument by describing that his jihadist strategy successfully achieved significant victories on the ground after many years of jihad and patience. He resounded that ISIS achieved their most important goal: creating the so-called Islamic caliphate and the appointment of an imam for the state, who would be al-Baghdadi. He described these actions, specifically jihad and the establishment of the caliphate state, as religious duties for all Muslims. Al-Baghdadi was creating a foundation for his country by demanding the support of all Muslims. He insisted they demonstrate their support by denouncing Muslims who disregarded their "duty" to join him. These messages were an implicit call for jihad and to join the new caliphate state that he founded on behalf of Muslims, thusly, positioning himself as a caliph of Muslims.

Extremist Muslims believe that there will be a caliphate state, a large country composed of all the Islamic countries. Al-Baghdadi focused their belief that the time was

now to create this so-called central state based on the prediction of the Prophet Muhammad. Playing on these beliefs, al-Baghdadi urged the audience to support the caliphate state that he established using the words of the Prophet Muhammad. In these passages of the speech, al-Baghdadi strengthened his position as a virtuous man entrusted with much responsibility, that is, the management of the new caliphate. To emphasize his commitment and need for the assistance of others, al-Baghdadi insinuated that the task of heading the caliphate was a plague and a challenge he did not want:

> I have been plagued with this great matter, plagued with this responsibility, and it is a heavy responsibility. I was placed as your caretaker, and I am not better than you. So, if you found me to be right then help me, and if you found me to be wrong then advise me and make me right and obey me in what I obey Allah through you. If I disobey Him then there is no obedience to me from you. (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

By emphasizing the difficulties, al-Baghdadi puts forth an image of an ordinary person called to duty. The aim was to address the likely questions from the masses concerning his background and qualifications to be the caliph of Muslims. Al-Baghdadi was begging the question: what is the difference between him and the leaders of the Arab regimes? In his rhetorical response, al-Baghdadi humbled himself by stating he is no better than ordinary people, and he went further to indicate he would not invent a new constitution or governance—he intended to rely on God and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. He explained that the aim was to apply Islamic law as the Prophet Muhammad did, an approach that Muslims believe is successful. To identify himself with the tradition of transfer of power within Islam, al-Baghdadi repeated the saying of leader Abu Bakr, who

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was appointed leader of Muslims after the Prophet Muhammad died. In an approach to project the image of a humble man, he called on Muslims to support him if he did the right things and advise him if he made mistakes. In this display of faux humility, al-Baghdadi appears as a virtuous man as he attempts to persuade Muslims by linking his administrative state to God and calling Muslims to obey him as a caliphate only when he follows God's orders, but not when he violates Allah's laws. These words are intended to guarantee Muslims that al-Baghdadi would be a virtuous leader who differs from the leaders of the Arab regimes. Al-Baghdadi then continues the process of persuasion by linking his approach and his state to God's laws and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammed. Al-Baghdadi devoted his speech entirely to Muslims, and his speech was directed to create common ground with the public and strengthen social ties with Muslims.

Through the discourse described above, al-Baghdadi seeks to persuade the masses that his leadership of the state reflects God's orders. He equated the establishing of the state as one of the promises of God that he fulfilled withs patience and hard work. The central message was that God's promises are fulfilled for the people who obey Allah and abiding by al-Baghdadi's orders. Al-Baghdadi repeatedly reminded Muslims of the importance of jihad for the sake of God, and he incited Muslims to jihad by urging them to be patient and steadfast because jihad is hard and tiring. He emphasized that God's reward is great for the mujahedeen, whether in this world or the day after death, the reward will be paradise. Recalling the virtues of jihad and its importance to Allah was an explicit attempt to recruit more Muslims to join his new country.

Al-Baghdadi then concluded this first sermon with a classic ending that all Muslim clerics use in their sermons on Friday. The closing was also used by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers in their sermons as well. Al-Baghdadi asked God for forgiveness for himself and all Muslims, and he urged Muslims to pray to God with confidence that God will fulfill their wishes. Al-Baghdadi then began the second sermon (considered part of the same "first speech" he delivered in public) after a few minutes of silence, an Islamic tradition applied in Friday prayers. The second sermon is usually given more quickly and concisely than the first, and it begins with praise to God and the Prophet Muhammad while reminding Muslims of the need to obey God alone and follow the orders of the Prophet Muhammad, who facilitates obedience to Allah. In this second sermon, Al-Baghdadi did not depart from the tradition to praise God, the Prophet Muhammad, and the friends of the Prophet Muhammad and those who applied their approach. Then he praises Allah again.

As the speech progressed, al-Baghdadi started a new appeal to Muslims, describing them as servants of Allah, and calling them to establish religion in fear of God. He stated the message as:

> There is no god but Allah alone without a partner. He was honest with His promise, supported His soldiers, and defeated the Parties alone. There is no god but Allah alone without a partner, and loyalty is to Him with the religion even if the disbelievers hate it. O worshipers of Allah, establish your religion and fear Allah, so that He may dignify you in this world and the hereafter. If you want security, fear Allah. If you want a living, fear Allah (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

In these words, al-Baghdadi was implicitly suggesting that the Arab regimes do not apply the Islamic religion correctly, and do not rightly adhere to it. Al-Baghdadi implies that returning to true Islam is the solution to all the problems of Muslims; thus, making a vigorous argument that is also used by extremists to recruit Muslims. Al-Baghdadi reiterates the use of the term jihad and links it to a right and sound life, and making clear it is one of God's orders that should not be ignored. He then stated that Allah has called for the unification of Muslims and used this to invoke an argument to form an Islamic state. The argument is consistent with some concepts from social identity theory, i.e., the aims of self-restoration and group pride. Al-Baghdadi's goal for his state was to restore the dignity of the Islamic nation. H set out to revive the Muslim sense of belonging to Islam rather than nation-states. Al-Baghdadi also exaggerated the differences between Muslims and non-Muslims as he called for a fight against them. One of the concepts of the social identity theory includes that when categorizing people, a communicator will attempt to overstate differences between groups.

Al-Baghdadi concludes the second sermon (and his first public speech) by praying to God to remedy the Muslim issues, which is traditional in Muslim sermons. The prayer included that the people asked Allah to correct the circumstances of Muslims, and in using this call, al-Baghdadi equates the declaration of a caliphate to correcting the miserable situation of Muslims. Al-Baghdadi used a brilliant lyricism to achieve this task, which demonstrated his religious background and strengthened his position as a virtuous and renewed religious man. Thereby again, he suggested he only wants to support the completion of the mission and unite the states of Muslims.

Emotional appeals can have powerful effects on message targets. These emotional appeals are sometimes used in terrorist propaganda; research on terrorist messaging suggests that terrorist actors primarily seek to arouse four emotions: fear, anger, guilt, and pride (Braddock, 2020). For example, al-Baghdadi was proud of the mujahideen's achievements in a crushing victory and declared the caliphate state when stating,

> As for your mujahideen brothers, Allah has bestowed upon them the grace of victory and conquest, and enabled them, after many years of jihad, patience, and fighting the enemies of Allah, and granted them success and empowered them to achieve their goal. Therefore, they hastened to declare the Caliphate and place an imam, and this is a duty upon the Muslims (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

In this passage, al-Baghdadi used a strategy of emphasizing pride and strength by implying that jihad is a duty for every Muslim. He called for participation in this sacred Islamic duty to establish the Caliphate or the Islamic Empire:

> This is a duty upon the Muslims - a duty that has been lost for centuries and absent from the reality of the world and so many Muslims were ignorant of it. The Muslims sin by losing it, and they must always seek to establish it, and they have done so, and all praise is due to Allah (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

Al-Baghdadi's choice of his first appearance at the mosque and Friday prayers is closely linked to his ethos as a religious man trying to establish a religious state with values distant from corruption. He only mentioned other Arab regimes by insinuation and did not directly criticize them. He was interested in the political gains that could be made from the speech than specific criticisms that might lead to reform within existing states. The speech consisted of many appeals to Muslims, including emotional appeals by

calling for doing good and acting obediently. As he declared the so-called caliphate, he credited his jihad and his followers for the many years of persistence needed to reach the goal and pledged to apply the sword of justice to everyone in the new state, all while promoting self-image. To make clear the message in his speech, he made a public appearance to declare a caliphate. When making emotional appeals, such as calling for jihad and supporting the new state established by ISIS, al-Baghdadi projected pride in his achievements. His message also focused on inciting jihad using evidence from the Qur'an and the words of the Prophet Muhammad, which came in different previous contexts.

In this speech, al-Baghdadi sought to enact a role model of Islamic identity and emphasized the restoration of dignity for the Islamic nation to persuade the audience. In his rhetoric about Ramadan, al-Baghdadi referred to the religious symbolism of the month of Ramadan. He wanted to invoke the symbols of Ramadan for the listeners because these are cultural symbols unique to Muslims. In this way, al-Baghdadi tried to create unity with the listeners. According to Cheney (1983), creating a unity with the audience is an essential element of creating common ground, such that he can draw on the shared beliefs and perceptions that strengthen his discourse for the audience.

Consistent with Aristotle's canons, the speech did not invent anything new; it was a classical religious discourse. As in classical Islamic discourse, he began by praising God and the Prophet Muhammad and doing the same. The construction of the speech was logical as he began a religious sermon by announcing the establishment of a caliphate under his leadership. He also suggested he had great honesty in as much as he did not desire to carry out these tasks but felt called by God to do so. He emphasized the virtues of jihad and the need to support the caliphate state. By concluding the speech with praise

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to God, the overall structure of the speech maintained the mood he intended to create in a strict and precise method. The arguments were logical and supported by evidence from the Qur'an and the words of the Prophet Muhammad. He read from a sheet of paper, and although he was gazing at the crowd during the speech, he was careful not to depart from the written text to uphold his firmness in presenting the message. He raised his voice to create a sense of strength and influence; the tones of his voice changed at several stages of the speech, and he used meaningful gestures toward the audience as he mentioned the arguments meant to link jihad to the orders of Allah. Overall, the speech was surprisingly persuasive, given it was al-Baghdadi's first appearance in public. The speech propelled him as a catalyst for the masses, likely due to his religious eloquence and persuasive authority in-person.

The Second Speech

The circumstances surrounding the second speech of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi were quite different from those of the first speech. At the time of the second speech, an international coalition against terrorism, which was established by the Obama administration, launched an intense military campaign to liberate the cities that were controlled by ISIS. The coalition forces launched the battle to liberate Mosul in Iraq in October of 2016, and large Iraqi areas were liberated. ISIS was gradually collapsing due to strikes by the international anti-terrorist coalition. These circumstances were reflected in al-Baghdadi's second speech; thus, this speech differed significantly from the first. One key difference from the first speech was that al-Baghdadi did not appear in public. The speech was presented in an audio recording distributed to media outlets, the Internet, and on the organization's websites. The recording was 31 minutes long. It was a complete

speech and not a sermon for Friday prayers. Al-Baghdadi used the most powerful of slogans and forceful emotions to motivate the group members to continue the fight. A portion of his speech was also devoted to inciting terrorist attacks on coalition countries such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The speech was a mobilizing and rallying tool for the members of the Sunni community, mainly supporters of the Isis organization, and incitement to revolt against all Arab and Islamic governments. The content contrasted with his first speech in which he did not mention the Arab regimes.

Several things were remarkable in this speech, which is considered the most important after his first speech in the Grand Mosque in Mosul two years prior, in which he declared the establishment of the caliphate state. Although it was not a sermon, the speech began with the classic Islamic beginning of any discourse, which is praise to God and the Prophet Muhammad, with mention of verses from the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadiths related to the fighting in that period. The introduction is consistent with all religious speeches in which the speaker cites Quranic verses connected to an event or a topic that the speaker aims to address. After these opening remarks, Al-Baghdadi quickly moved to speak to his supporters, facing the international coalition forces consisting of Iraqi militias, Kurdish forces, and a mixture of tribes. He encouraged the followers to be patient about jihad and hardship. He called for the use of suicide operations, as he appealed to his fighters by describing them as "martyrs convoys" and urged them to turn Mosul into "rivers of blood" (Al Baghdadi, 2016).The allegorical use of the river of blood referred to a fight to the death.

Al-Baghdadi called on the ISIS fighters not to withdraw from Mosul, but to fight until their last man. He warned them, "Oh, Mujahideen, beware of being weak from

fighting and pushing your enemy." He added, "The price of staying in your land with

your pride is a thousand times stronger than the price of withdrawing from it while you

are humiliated" (Al Baghdadi, 2016).There is an explicit call to continue fighting and not

to surrender at any cost. Al-Baghdadi blatantly called on his supporters to die rather than

withdraw and surrender. Al-Baghdadi used emotional appeals to pride and defense of the

land that belonged to them. Al-Baghdadi's emotional appeals did enact the key four

types; fear, pride, anger, and guilt. These types of emotional appeals were most useful in

recruiting extremists.

To boost the morale of the fighters, Al-Baghdadi reminded them of the success in

declaring a caliphate, which came after bitter fighting. After launching the battle to

liberate Mosul, he stated, "This raging battle and the all-out war today make us, God

willing, only a firm belief, and a firm certainty, that all this is only a prelude to victory"

(Al Baghdadi, 2016).In these phrases, al-Baghdadi attempted to lift morale even though

the international coalition attack on Mosul included aircraft and tanks, and his supporters

were fighting with individual weapons. Al-Baghdadi realized that the battle was lost, but

he urged his followers to fight to the death and not surrender, thus pinning their hopes on

outlasting their enemies.

Al-Baghdadi used the slogans of victimhood and defending the land in the face of

the aggressors to persuade his followers that they were fighting occupiers and that they

are protecting their territory. He made a special appeal to suicide bombers, calling on

them to carry out terrorist operations in non-Muslim countries and those Arab countries

that participated in the international coalition. He called for "turning the night of the

infidels into the day," adding, "O Mujahideen, you must destroy their homes, and make

their blood like rivers" (Al Baghdadi, 2016). Al-Baghdadi directed his sympathizers to carry out major terrorist operations in the countries participating in the international coalition against terrorism. A most important message that al-Baghdadi wanted to convey to the coalition was that he could harm these countries through terrorism.

Al-Baghdadi called for an invasion of Turkey by declaring war, as well as attacking Saudi Arabia. He asked his supporters to show the "fire of anger" at the Turkish forces fighting in Syria and to take the battle into Turkey. Al-Baghdadi indicated that on that day, Turkey had entered the circle of war and became an enemy. Al-Baghdadi called on his fighters to invade and "make its security a scare," (Al Baghdadi, 2016).which references implementing terrorist operations. This speech was the first time al-Baghdadi had called for the organization's fighters and supporters to carry out operations against Turkey. He stated, "It entered the circle of your jihad," adding, "Seek the help of God, invade it, and then include it in your fiery conflict zones "(Al Baghdadi, 2016).This call foretold a bid to remove Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, his government, and the stability of his country.

Al-Baghdadi did not forget the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the ruling family. He incited his supporters to assassinate princes and police officers, ministers, media professionals, and writers in the Kingdom. This threat was new. Bin Laden did not threaten writers, journalists, and others the way that al-Baghdadi did. Using this provocative language, al-Baghdadi exemplified one of Burke's identity concepts, i.e., the division of groups. He spoke for the first time in a sectarian tongue, which divided the Islamic Ummah. He emphasized that the Sunnis, who are most Muslims, neither understand nor learned from their mistakes, and due to this, he incited a fight against the

Kurdish and the Shiite minorities, who had united with the international coalition against ISIS. He also attacked the Sunni countries Saudi Arabia and Turkey, and called for fighting against these countries. In doing this, al-Baghdadi divided the Muslim groups based on ethnicities and ruling regimes with what he saw as no legitimacy. The calls were attempts to justify the fight, even if the targets were Muslims.

In another attempt to strengthen the resolve of his fighters, al-Baghdadi stated that "the caliphate has not stumbled" (Al Baghdadi, 2016), even after the killing of some of the top commanders, specifically Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, al-Baghdadi's deputy. In these words, al-Baghdadi reminded the fighters of the caliphate and that it is still in place despite the crusader invasion. In this recording, al-Baghdadi confirmed that the organization was waging its fiercest war and stressed it as a fateful war due to the defense of its most vital stronghold in Mosul. Al-Baghdadi's speech appeared to "motivate" his supporters, encouraging them to stay and not leave Mosul.

As related to Aristotle's approach, al-Baghdadi's invention in the discourse was apparent as he used rigorous arguments, the most prominent of which was that his Islamic state was exposed to an American invasion. The logic was that the property and land must be defended with honor rather than the humiliation of surrender. The structure or arrangement present in this discourse was a classic arrangement in Islamic discourse. The classic style contains an introduction that begins with praise to God and the Prophet Muhammad, then the essential main argument or body of content, and finally the conclusion, which also ends with praise to God and the Prophet Muhammad.

The organization of the speech patterns and use of emotional calls allowed al-Baghdadi to instruct and persuade the audience to fight to the death with a promise of

paradise. The use of Qur'anic verses created concordance between the speech messages

and the discourse of the Qur'an to convince the masses. The structure of the speech was

useful to set the audience's attention, and the tone of al-Baghdadi varied with the verses

of the Qur'an to present them in higher quality. Overall, Al-Baghdadi's tone of voice was

raised when he pleaded with his followers to fight to the death, encouraged them not to

surrender, and warned of a dangerous fate if they did. In some respects, the speech

resembled the speeches of Osama bin Laden in the use of Qur'anic verses; however, there

was a fundamental difference, as al-Baghdadi was proficient in the study of the Qur'an,

and most of his speech content contained Qur'anic verses recited in a melodious voice.

This style of delivery and content was not surprising given that al-Baghdadi holds a

doctorate in Islamic sciences. Al-Baghdadi focused on inciting suicide operations and

describing the perpetrators as martyrs who sacrifice their lives to defend the caliphate. He

elevated these fighters to have a significant role in the battles of Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa

in Syria.

Al-Baghdadi attacked Sunni leaders in Iraq, accusing them of practicing "the most

despicable images of treason" throughout history, criticizing the "Sunnis" as "not

learning, and attacking their silence, declaring a sectarian war against the members of the

Shiite community." The tone of the speech, which seems more similar to a "Friday

sermon" than a political speech, reflects the problematic circumstance facing the Isis

organization. At that time, the Iraqi forces, supported by the Kurdish peshmerga forces

and protected by American air cover, were advancing to remove ISIS from Mosul, the

center of ISIS activities. However, the speech does not imply that al-Baghdadi was

agitated or afraid, but rather the opposite. He did not address the Kurds and their role in

the war nor details of the course of the battle, and the lack of details could be explained if al-Baghdadi was unaware of some events because he was outside Mosul, likely in Syria, perhaps in Al-Raqqa city.

Al-Baghdadi stressed the need for unity, saying, "The internal conflict is the cause of failure, the domination of enemies, and differences are a cause of evil and enmity between you" (Al Baghdadi, 2016). Al-Baghdadi concluded his speech on the need to unite behind the organization, linking the Sunni majority and armed groups to the future of his organization. Burke's concept was used to advocate unification in the face of enemies. Al-Baghdadi warned of internal conflicts and abandoning the conflict because it is the cause of the domination of enemies and the cause of all evil. Al-Baghdadi realizes that the organization is facing a fateful battle, and they must circumvent the leaders and obey them.

The Third Speech

Before the third speech, rumors were rampant that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was dead because he had not been seen for more than a year. The speech came after the complete collapse of ISIS, as the organization lost nearly 98% of the territory it controlled. However, the speech coincided with reports of the emergence of groups affiliated with ISIS in Iraqi regions such as Diyala, Salah al-Din, and Kirkuk, which the organization recently lost. During that period, the organization's branches in Egypt and Afghanistan were more lethal and more active in the months preceding the speech. These circumstances suggested that al-Baghdadi decided to abandon the concept of a cohesive state and moved to the stage of rebellion while preserving the organization's identity and ideas. Al-Baghdadi recalled the history of the organization's previous struggle against the

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US and its success after years of fighting to form a country that extended between Syria and Iraq.

The third speech issued by al-Baghdadi came almost four years after his first famous speech in Mosul. The speech was 55 minutes long and was also only an audio recording. In the third speech, al-Baghdadi assumed the strategy of pathos as a last resort, as al-Baghdadi carried a sad, unassuming voice that lacked the enthusiasm of the first speech. Al-Baghdadi did not mention, as he had in his first and second speeches, the concept of the state, the organization's recent difficulties, and the loss of many of the areas under his control. He complained about the international war waged by superpowers against his nascent state. Al-Baghdadi used religious terms that were popular among his followers to convince them that "We are being destroyed by infidels who do not want a strong Islamic state. This injustice creates a new stage of revenge against these countries through terrorist actions" (Al Baghdadi, 2018).

Al-Baghdadi efficaciously used the concept of identity as he talked about Muslims as being subjected to extermination at the hands of non-Muslims. He sought to ignite anger and stir awareness of injustice among Muslims. The argument was based on one of the concepts of social identity theory: persons who identify with a group, such as Muslim or Christian, will sympathize with all issues and grievances of their group. Moreover, they will exhibit bias in favor of their group. In this speech, al-Baghdadi focused on the notion of an oppressed group being killed and exterminated. Al-Baghdadi cast his call for battle as a crusade by invoking the history of the Crusades between Christians and Muslims. The recollection of the Crusades creates anger even among moderate Muslims.

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Al-Furqan, the media arm of ISIS, published this new speech by al-Baghdadi and entitled it "Saberin," an Arabic word meaning the urge to patience. The message was that patience to endure hardships is an Islamic principle. He also wanted to inspire the idea that "we will overcome" this difficult stage together. Another implied message to the international coalition was that "we are steadfast, and you will not be able to defeat us" (Al Baghdadi, 2018).

Al-Baghdadi described the enemy of his country as America, which he accused of carrying out a malicious policy for years against Islam: "If the examiner looked at the truth, he would realize what the protector of the Cross of America had achieved after entering the arena of confrontation with the people of Islam for almost two decades" (Al Baghdadi, 2018). Al-Baghdadi used an angry tone announcing the imminent end of America two decades after its war on Islam: "Now America is living the worst stage in its modern history" (Al Baghdadi, 2018). He used the same terminology as found in the extremist rhetoric of Osama bin Laden. He wanted to assure his followers that Muslims were under attack but would prevail and that the end of America was imminent when he stated, "This is not my prediction; this is the statements of American politicians, yes now America to the demise, God willing" (Al Baghdadi, 2018). With these words, al-Baghdadi had responded to Trump's remarks about the U.S. spending billions of dollars in the Middle East and achieving nothing. He commented, "America has returned to hide its regret over the money spent in the region and only get a sense of regret and stagnation" (Al Baghdadi, 2018).With these words, al-Baghdadi was informing his followers that America would withdraw from the region and that this defeat was an

achievement of God's promise to defeat infidels. Using these predictions, Al-Baghdadi encouraged his followers not to lose faith.

Because the U.S. destroyed al-Qaeda, it has long been the main enemy of extremists; thus, the debate about its end impresses extremists and motivates them to continue fighting. In his speech, the leader argued the U.S. has, for years, suffered losses due to its conflict with Islam. He expressed that the cause of America's failures is jihad, and he injected words in the speech to convince his followers that jihad should continue toward the impending goal of defeating America. Al-Baghdadi provided multiple events as evidence of America's imminent defeat. For the first time, he brought up the issue of the Turkish-American dispute. He argued that the Turkish refusal to release a U.S. pastor is disrespectful to the U.S., which no longer frightens other countries.

Al-Baghdadi provided other arguments concerning the decline of the American role in the region. He described the Russian-Iranian insurgency in Syria against U.S. interests as disregard for American influence. However, this was the point at which al-Baghdadi contradicted himself. He had long described Russia as a communist state with hate against Islam, but he was now in a complicated situation where he was suggesting that any enemy of the U.S. is a friend, even if they are anti-Muslim. However, al-Baghdadi invoked controversy by contradicting his strict religious doctrine. As additional evidence of the collapse of the American role, al-Baghdadi invoked North Korea's position and relationship with the U.S., which is unusual in radical Islamic discourse. Al-Baghdadi remarked, "Even North Korea is showing a lack of commitment to the agreement with America," and he describes America's behavior as that of "a gangster, a sign of America's decline and inferiority" (Al Baghdadi, 2018).In these statements, al-

Baghdadi argued that even North Korea's weak and isolated state could confront America amid its inability to respond. He asserted that America no longer intimidates anyone, and the reason for this position is the ongoing Islamic jihad. In Islamic extremist discourse, a non-Muslim country is seldom praised, and all non-Muslim countries are described as enemies. Perhaps al-Baghdadi violated this rule as an attempt to suggest that his recently declared state has different ideas for dealing with non-Muslim countries.

Al-Baghdadi paid tribute to the efforts of the mujahedeen, "The Mujahedeen failed to appease what America dreamed of controlling" (Al Baghdadi, 2018). He then argued that Russia's crusader state had a dispute with America after perceiving it was weak and was retreating. Referring to interference in Syria, al-Baghdadi pointed out that the crusader countries were all against Islam and served their interests. He said, "I am trying to protect your interests from this crusade so you must support me and continue jihad." (Al Baghdadi, 2018) Al-Baghdadi knew that there was growing anger in the Muslim world over Russia's role in Syria, which protected Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad. Muslims recognized the heinous crimes of al-Assad, including the use of chemical weapons against his people with the help of Russia. He emphasized the description of the crusade for the second time, and he appealed to the religious sense of Muslims by stating that "Muslims are insulted, and we must defend our religion and our interests." As noted, he argued that Russia faced down America and no longer feared it despite the sanctions the U.S. imposed on Russia. However, he contradicted himself by attacking Russia. On this point, the leader of ISIS used a new strategy of "religious emotion" to bring in recruits. He said,

we attacked by a crusade against Islam with the support of the leaders of some Arab and Islamic countries. We tried to establish an Islamic religious state, but they broke this dream. We must continue the jihad and revenge of this campaign against us (Al Baghdadi, 2018).

Al-Baghdadi directed part of his speech to the armed groups in Syria to gain support from these groups even though he had collided with them and executed their leaders. He found himself in an awkward position but had nothing to lose. The leader invited these groups to unite against America to restore confidence in ISIS. He warned against internal fighting and what he described as sedition. In contrast to his first speech, this leader of Isis revealed that he had become the leader of a group resembling the armed groups that deployed in Syria, rather than presenting himself as superior to these groups and threatening to slaughter them. At the end of the speech, Burke's concept of identification figured prominently. Al-Baghdadi was seeking to unify rival groups. Al-Baghdadi appealed to the soldiers of the armed opposition factions to "leave their traitorous leaders" and unite behind his leadership to confront enemies at home and abroad. He called on the extremist military factions to unite and warned against divisions that serve their enemies.

Al-Baghdadi appeared to prolong the speech, making it about 55 minutes long. The long duration of the speech reveals al-Baghdadi's eagerness to persuade his followers to continue the armed rebellion. The invention was evident in the discourse, as al-Baghdadi became an analyst of the events that occurred in the caliphate he founded. Al-Baghdadi discussed the crusades and the Russian intervention in Syria, and he also presented a vision about the American state of mind, which was tired of fighting abroad,

and he expected its fall and demise. The timing of a speech is a crucial component of persuading an audience. This third speech was given on Eid al-Adha, an important religious holiday for Muslims; thus, insinuating religious overtones. As for the arrangement, arguments made through the speech were organized as religious sermons, containing an introduction to praise to God, followed by narrated arguments supported by the verses from the Quran. He ended with conclusions from his arguments. These are the methods that al-Baghdadi used as he made a persuasive argument. In one example, he expected America to retreat into itself using the statements of U.S. President Donald Trump when he declared his intention to withdraw from wars that do not appear to expire.

As for style, al-Baghdadi was keen to present the speech to stir the feelings of Muslims and noted for them that the dream of an Islamic state has fallen into the hands of the non-Muslim invaders. Al-Baghdadi invoked the history of righteous wars to arouse emotion and anger among Muslims. To support such memory, al-Baghdadi used a speech written on paper to ensure he delivered a coherent and coordinated recitation. This 55-minute speech was the longest al-Baghdadi had given, and he used many verses of the Quran that are incredibly difficult to remember. Because the speech was audio and previously recorded, body language and other tools to affect the audience were unavailable to the speaker. However, he effectively used tone of voice changes as he moved through the changing arguments and positions. The emotion was evident in the voice. Al-Baghdadi used verses of the Qur'an in a beautiful voice to support his arguments, a classic type used by preachers in classical Islamic discourse. Al-Baghdadi again used the concept of identity, warning against division, and calling for small armed

groups to unite behind the organization. He also separated groups by describing the Arab

fighters with the coalition as traitors and enemies. He called for nine bullets to fire at

those he called traitors with one bullet for the international coalition.

The Fourth Speech

In the last speech before his death, al-Baghdadi appeared in a video for the first

time since his appearance at the Mosul mosque in 2014, five years earlier. The Isis

organization published a propaganda video on its Telegram channel. In the video titled

"In the hospitality of the Commander of the Faithful," Al-Baghdadi was shown for 18

minutes as lying on the ground next to others whose faces were hidden, and the leader of

the organization appears with a long white beard and wearing a black handkerchief on his

head.

The circumstances surrounding this speech were utterly different from past

speeches. Al-Baghdadi announced the end of one battle of the war due to the fall of the

city of Al-Baghouz in Syria as it had been the last stronghold of ISIS. There were reports

of the ill health of al-Baghdadi in the confessions of his cousin Rabah Ali Al-Badri, who

testified before the Iraqi judiciary about the extent of al-Baghdadi's health problems.

There were also reports of severe disagreements and splits within the organization. In

response, al-Baghdadi made an appearance in the video to confirm his presence and

ability to lead the organization in its most dangerous existential crises.

As previously, al-Baghdadi began the speech with the classic beginning of Islamic

discourse, with praise to God and the Prophet Muhammad. In a turn of style, he

continued the speech by acknowledging the defeat of the organization as a state, accusing

the U.S. and the crusader states of waging war on them. Al-Baghdadi attacked the U.S.

by expressing, "Washington has sunk into the mud and declared its inability to protect its partners" (Al Baghdadi, 2019). Al-Baghdadi mentioned what he called the "empty promises" that Washington made to its allies, indicating that the U.S. will leave someday, and that victory, in the end, will favor those who were against cooperating with the U.S. Al-Baghdadi celebrated the half-decade of declaring the caliphate in 2014 and emphasized the point by repeating the phrase "half a decade since its establishment" about eight times.

ISIS referred to this new audio recording of al-Baghdadi under the title "Say and do," which is a verse from the Qur'an urging work and diligence. The verse was used within the recording as consistent with the content of the speech. The phrase was used as part of the call to continue jihadist operations until the "supreme goal" of establishing a caliphate is met. Using these strategies, al-Baghdadi attempted to convince the followers that the organization remains focused on its primary goal, and the apparent defeat of the caliphate state was only temporary. In other words, he promoted the idea that the organization will overcome its losses by using the conviction that "it is a loss of a battle, not war;" (Al Baghdadi, 2019). al-Baghdadi framed the retreat as a temporary stage on the long road to victory.

In this context, al-Baghdadi used phrases that supported the meanings described above while continuously maintaining persuasive undercurrents in his speeches. By supporting that "The Khilafah state is crowding out nations, is on its way, certain of its victory," (Al Baghdadi, 2019). he emphasized that the organization was still in existence, and reframed the current situation as an "expansion of ISIS and then the contraction . . . as a test from God." The study of the history of ISIS does reflect its ability to overcome

losses and return to their goals. As in other speeches, al-Baghdadi appealed to his fighters

and followers to continue the battles of attrition, and he reviewed the organization's

activity as he spoke about "The Battle of Sham" which means the battle of Syria that

targeted eight countries. The operations reached about 92 skirmishes within four days. He

also recited some details from what he called the "battle of attrition," an operation

targeting 11 countries. The number of military encounters reached 61 for three days.

Additionally, there was the second battle of attrition that included a total of 152

operations within ten days. Al-Baghdadi repeated his appeals, in the audio recording, to

the fighters to redouble their efforts, stressing the necessity of continuing "attrition"

operations on various fronts.

From this last speech, it becomes clear that al-Baghdadi and his organization have

learned lessons from their defeats and previous battles. The geographical and military

defeats suffered by the organization prompted it to adopt new tactics in the field of

attrition warfare or guerrilla warfare. Al-Baghdadi realized that his geographical and

military presence within expanses of land made it easier to target him. Therefore, he

resorted to changing his tactics by directing surprise strikes to city security forces in weak

areas while avoiding entering a decisive battle with the regular armies, thus, creating the

"war of attrition."

Al-Baghdadi welcomed recruits to the organization, noting that although the

organization lost the battle, the recruits still flocked to the organization. This result shows

that his speeches were succeeding because more young people were persuaded to join the

organization. He welcomed what he called the delegations of *recruits,* but it was unclear

whether he was referring to recruiting new people to join ISIS or pledging allegiance with

existing armed groups. For example, in July 2019, ISIS elements in Libya published a video clip to announce their renewed loyalty to al-Baghdadi. On June 18, 2019, the Boko Haram announced a renewed pledge of allegiance to al-Baghdadi and called on all Muslims to join the organization's mandate. On June 22, 2019, a group of operatives calling themselves the East Asia Province announced that they would renew allegiance to al-Baghdadi and work under the banner of ISIS. According to the Egyptian Center for Thought and Strategic Studies, on June 26, 2019, ISIS members launched a video to declare allegiance to al-Baghdadi and renewed a pledge of allegiance under the name of the Caucasus Province. They also reported another group known as the Wilayat of Azerbaijan had declared allegiance to the ISIS Caliph on July 2, 2019.

To broaden religious divisions and rancor, Al-Baghdadi attacked the idols and gods of ignorance, which means non-Muslims. He warned against nationalism and democracy, describing these concepts as dangerous movements that contradict the principles of the Islamic religion. Al-Baghdadi attacked the international coalition against ISIS led by America and called it the crusade. He stated, "The battle of Islam and its people with the cross and its people is a long battle ... and there will be major repercussions." Using these words, he aimed to stir emotions of anger among Muslims. Al-Baghdadi called for the Arab countries participating in coalition with the West to be considered infidels who must be fought. Some of these countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, were named in the audio recording. This statement might have been an invitation to the organization's members to carry out operations in those countries.

Al-Baghdadi called for jihad against Arab governments and labeled them as agents and disbelievers who did not defend other Muslims. He stated, "We tell them and

remind them that the only way to deal with these tyrants is by jihad in the cause of Allah"
(Al-Baghdadi, 2019) .He encouraged the restoration of the dignity of Muslims as a reason
to call for jihad against Arab governments by describing that "Jihad suppresses the
tyrants, and with jihad, Muslims gain dignity, because these tyrants will only benefit the
sword." He then changed his style from calling for fighting and betraying Muslims to
advising them as an Islamic leader. He remarked, "The Muslims have acted in legitimate
ways to change regimes and tyrants, about jihad, and all religion should be for God" (Al-
Baghdadi, 2019). Al-Baghdadi urged Muslims to wage jihad against governments rather
than revolutions and demonstrations, the latter of which he described as futile. Burke
(1969) argued that the creation of discord and division followed with the declaration of
unity is a kind of persuasion through identification, and by then focusing on unity, the
speaker could achieve the desired goal.

Al-Baghdadi demanded that his supporters regain his followers and their families
by attacking the prisons and camps where they were being held. At that time, thousands
of ISIS members were in overcrowded prisons in Iraq and Kurdish fighters' control areas
in northeastern Syria. These camps also housed tens of thousands of terrorist families
who were Syrians, Iraqis, and foreigners. This phrase was his vow to avenge them,
"Prisons, prisons, oh soldiers of the caliphate . . . your brothers and sisters in prisons,
strive to rescue them and break the walls that cuff them" (Al-Baghdadi, 2019) He also
called for targeting security personnel, investigators, and judges in prisons where ISIS
members are located.

Al-Baghdadi addressed the women associated with the organization's members
and likened them to the mujahidin during the era of the Prophet Muhammad. He called

on them to be patient, persevere, and fight. Within the organization, women had diverse tasks as a part of their participation, from supporting husbands and raising a new generation of extremists, to working with propaganda and promoting the organization's ideology and extremist ideas through social media. Furthermore, due to the military pressure on the organization and the loss of large numbers of fighters, ISIS had resorted to relying on women to conduct suicide operations during the battle of Mosul in Iraq and the battle of "Al-Baghouz" in Syria.

In summary, the fourth speech included raising the morale of ISIS members, given the frequent reports of the deteriorating health of al-Baghdadi, as well as the escalated discussion of an internal rift in the organization. Hence, al-Baghdadi deliberately issued this recording to attract and recruit new extremist individuals and groups, especially considering the group's loss of many fighters and unifying the home front of the organization. The speech showed that al-Baghdadi continued developing a pattern in his speeches even after the defeat of the organization. To reframe their defeats, he turned to a different argument that the battles had been only part of a more comprehensive and ongoing war. He pointed out that ISIS had emerged after facing similar circumstances previously. He emphasized the success of establishing an Islamic state despite these difficult circumstances. In its arrangement, the speech began with the classic religious introduction, which is the praise of God and then the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Baghdadi refuted the rumors of his death and arguments that the organization had disbanded by stating that ISIS had lost a battle but not the war. Al-Baghdadi tried to remind followers of the organization's previous circumstances. He concluded by directing his appeals to sympathizers to launch separate retaliatory attacks

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against the countries that participated in the coalition. He also directed calls to attack the prisons where the organization's elements reside to liberate its elements.

The style of speech was embellished and elaborated; he used classical Arabic as usual with his calls supported by verses from the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet. These characteristics of the discourse reflected his religious background and qualifications to lead the organization. The patterns in speech content included reciting statements declaring that the organization would not be broken and would persist. The speech was like a military statement in which it was keen to show the facts on the ground. By using religious vocabulary persuasively, al-Baghdadi suggested that God had commanded ISIS to fight on, and therefore the members must fulfill God's commands. The tone of the speech was serious about motivating the elements of the organization not to surrender and continue the resistance. He used rises and falls in the volume of his voice to entrain the audience's attention and maintain an emotional timbre. Al-Baghdadi preserved efficiently pronouncing difficult words and Quranic verses. Although al-Baghdadi's language was ornamental, he was precise with no hesitation or stutter, suggesting that he was reading the message from a written version. Overall, al-Baghdadi appeared quite prepared and well-practiced to deliver the speech.

To summarize this exploration of all four speeches, the four speeches showed al-Baghdadi's ability to exploit the conditions that the group has passed to mobilize support and stir division through intimidation and incitement. The speeches also revealed al-Baghdadi's determination to retain his extremist religious ideology even as he lost all the territory under the group's control. Despite losses, he continued calls for retaliation against the countries participating in the coalition. The first speech was quite different

from others because he declared a caliphate state and established the new state as the head of the religious state without commenting on the international circumstances surrounding it. The other three speeches were different from the first because these contained common factors, such as the call for jihad, fighting, non-surrender, steadfastness, and crusades. In these last three speeches, al-Baghdadi exploited emotions of anger, pride, and fear to recruit fighters who would not surrender easily. The call for fighters motivated in this way prolonged the battles and maximized civilian casualties. In all speeches, Al-Baghdadi was keen to show himself as a military leader who could rally enthusiasm among the fighters. Despite the suffering of al-Baghdadi and the losses of the organization, he continued to be seen in public, regularly give enthusiastic speeches so that it was clear that he was still alive.

In his first speech, Al-Baghdadi appeared publicly for the first time in Friday sermon, announcing a religious caliphate. Al-Baghdadi seemed confident about the success of his country, and his speech was balanced. The second and third speeches were lengthy audio recordings, and in the fourth speech, he used video showing himself sitting with a group of masked men. All al-Baghdadi's speeches appeared during Muslim religious seasons such as Friday prayers, Ramadan, and holidays to influence and evoke the cause such that he could mobilize recruits.

Research question summary.

RQ1: What are the persuasive elements and arguments on which al-Baghdadi's rhetoric was based?

As a cleric, Al-Baghdadi incorporated into his speeches the emotional calls and slogans that mimic the religious appeals and invitations as used in the Qur'an. These calls

and slogans were intended to give more power and influence to his rhetoric. This intention was evident in all his speeches; for example, he used phrases such as "O Muslims worshipers of God, the youth of Islam, brothers of Islam, the mujahideen, and you who believe." He used plural forms in his speeches, often used in rhetorical practice by extremist Muslims such as Osama bin Laden. Clear speech, and speaking in the plural form of Islamic discourses is a classic approach that has been imitated in all religious discourses up to the current day. For example, in the first speech, Al-Baghdadi stated,

> All praise is due to Allah. We thank him and seek His assistance and His forgiveness. O Allah, defend us from the evil of ourselves and the evils of our actions. Whoever is guided by Allah will never be misguided, and whoever is made lost by Allah will never be guided (Al Baghdadi, 2014).

Al-Baghdadi's essential focus was on building credibility as a cleric, preacher, and expert in complex Islamic teachings. He emphasized virtuous morals by invoking verses and hadiths that encourage virtues, such as fasting, jihad, charity, as well as raising slogans in defense of weaker Muslims, reviving the Islamic caliphate, and restoring the dignity of Muslims. From the Arab and Islamic world's social perspectives, presenting the impression of religiosity and honesty is crucial to creating legitimacy for the speaker, thus facilitating the persuasion process. In some situations, Al-Baghdadi directly appealed to the people regarding the necessity of establishing an Islamic state and Islamic law as the framework for this state. Al-Baghdadi used these types of slogans since the establishment of his jihad movement. For example, in the first speech, he proclaimed,

> O people, the religion of Allah, blessed be He, is not established and this goal for which Allah created us is not achieved but by empowering the Shariah of Allah

and being judged by it and establishing the restrictions, and this is only done with

power and authority." This is the establishment of the religion: A Book that

guides and a sword that supports. (Al Baghdadi, 2014)

Al-Baghdadi also used Islamic cultural symbols, such as the sword, which is a symbol of

strength and a reminder of the past glories of Muslims during the era of the Islamic

empire. These are compelling messages for Muslims that are not easy to ignore.

In the first speech, Al-Baghdadi focused on building a credible personality among

Muslims. He portrayed himself as a cleric who did not want the presidency and described

the country he founded as different from the Arab regimes. Al-Baghdadi stressed that he

was chosen for the role by ordinary Muslims and not as a self-imposed leader. Al-

Baghdadi considered leading the state to be a difficult task that must be accomplished for

Muslims' sake.

Al-Baghdadi was also keen to raise the slogans of social justice and anti-

corruption by reminding all that he was an average man chosen by others to rule, fight

corruption, achieve social justice, and a fair distribution of wealth. His calls were linked

to Islamic law, specifically to the return to the old Islamic system from the days of the

Prophet Muhammad. The promises and appeals were effective because he linked them to

the Qur'an. The usefulness of the appeals was especially apparent after chaos struck the

Middle East, and the Arab system failed. Through slogans, virtuous expressions, and

displays of Islamic morals, Al-Baghdadi presented an alternative for creating a successful

Islamic empire that could last for centuries.

In the remaining three speeches dominated by the conflict between the

international coalition forces and the Isis organization, Al-Baghdadi focused on slogans

of revenge, patience, and jihad. He stressed the goal of building a comprehensive Islamic regime. However, at the time of the last three speeches, the political and social atmospheres were dominated by the conflict between the international coalition forces and the Isis organization. Al-Baghdadi shifted focused to slogans of revenge, patience, and jihad, and stressed forming a fulsome Islamic regime. However, the enemies came and destroyed the project. Consequently, Al-Baghdadi's focus was on retaliation and implementing retaliatory terrorist acts in the coalition countries. Al-Baghdadi raised slogans related to the struggle between truth and falsehood and between Islam and infidelity. These slogans, in particular, provoke anger among Muslims.

Notably, Al-Baghdadi relied on integrating the slogans of religious and emotional calls, promises of reform, and fighting corruption and injustice. He used these in the second, third, and fourth speeches as significant elements of persuasion. In general, the religious appeals adopted by Al-Baghdadi may be decisive in persuading, given that the Arab and Islamic societies are conservative, and many hardliners and moderates believed that the Islamic state is the solution to their problems. Al-Baghdadi relied on these elements frequently in his speeches.

RQ2: How did al-Baghdadi exploit the interpretations of the Qur'anic text to support his arguments?

The appeals that Al-Baghdadi relied on were linked to verses of the Qur'an and hadiths of the Prophet. These phrases were aimed to take advantage of young Muslims' ignorance of interpretations of the Qur'an and exploit the many variations of these interpretations. For example, he used verses calling for jihad and defending Islam linked to stories during the reign of the Prophet Muhammad 1,400 years ago. Al-Baghdadi

relied on intensifying the use of Qur'an verses to strengthen his arguments and convince more young Muslims to join him. The goal of the persuasion was to give legitimacy to a nascent Islamic state. The Qur'an contains 6,348 verses, all of which have multiple interpretations; however, Al-Baghdadi focused on the verses that call for jihad, fighting, and sacrifice for Islam, as these existed 1,400 years ago.

In the Islamic literature and the Arab and Muslim social perspectives, whoever kills while struggling for God's sake will enter Heaven, and they remain alive with God. This is not an analysis but a fact found in the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. The words are "who was killed while striving for the sake of God is not dead. Rather, he is alive with God and has paradise."

There is a verse in the Qur'an that urges fighting the polytheists. This verse has been used by extremists to justify their motives. Al-Baghdadi used the idea in most of his speeches, such as "fight all the polytheists as they all fight you, and know that God is with the righteous." Similarly, he used, "Go forth light and heavy, and strive with your money and yourselves for the sake of God." Furthermore, he included, "God has given the Mujahideen a great reward over the rest."

Moreover, there are many hadiths about the Prophet Muhammad discussing the merits of jihad, and it is the best of deeds; for example, "He said: I said: O Messenger of God, which work is better?" Prophet Muhammad said, "Faith in God, and jihad for His cause." All these verses in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad are related to events of 1400 years ago and have little to do with today. Nevertheless, extremists such as Al-Baghdadi continue to use these verses to recruit Muslims into the organization's ranks. He emphasizes and repeats these verses to frame the recruits as

jihadists in the cause of God and portray that they will enter eternal paradise if they are killed. These details illustrate why there is no surprise when Muslim youths blow themselves up for the sake of eternal life in the eternal paradise.

In general, the verses of the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet were crucial in recruiting and persuading Muslim youth around the world. Al-Baghdadi linked these verses with the pretext of creating a pure Islamic state, but the enemies came and destroyed the Muslim project. Therefore, for these extremists, the destruction is evidence of the legitimacy of the fight because opposition attacked and occupied Muslim lands.

RQ3: How al-Baghdadi does exploit the concept of identity to persuade thousands of young Muslims?

Al-Baghdadi took advantage of the concept of Islamic identity, a useful element in influencing the targeted youth, by declaring in his first sermon that his country would champion vulnerable Muslims and restore the dignity of the Islamic nation. He did not recognize the existing Arab nations and regimes and described them as agents. Using the model of the Prophet Muhammad and his successful Islamic State of 1400 years ago, Al-Baghdadi painted in the minds of young people an Islamic State like that of the Prophet Muhammad as a solution for Muslims' problems.

In his speeches, Al-Baghdadi placed Muslims in one category and non-Muslims in another, exaggerating the division between these two groups and strengthening the similarity and sympathy within the Muslim group. He declared that one of the pillars of his movement is restoring Muslims' dignity, defending vulnerable Muslims, and the withdrawing Muslims from the enemy Western countries. Strengthening Islamic identity was not an invention of Al-Baghdadi; the notion is abundantly present in Islamic

literature. The verses of the Qur'an are addressed to Muslims as a community because the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad view Muslims as a nation. There is no difference between their rich and poor, and there are no differences in color. All are equal; the only difference is the degree of godliness. For example, the Prophet Muhammad said, "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever." Also, the Prophet Muhammad said, "The relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other." He illustrated this by interlacing the fingers of both his hands.

Al-Baghdadi knows that there is confusion in understanding the Islamic identity within the Islamic and Arab world, as many Muslims believe that states' borders are temporary and that affiliation must be based on the Islamic religion and not on a homeland. Extremist organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood, do not believe in borders. They believe in a cross-border identity. In his first speech, Al-Baghdadi used the famous cultural Islamic symbols, which is the month of Ramadan, in which all Muslims fast in worship to God and abide by many common religious customs. Moreover, in Islamic literature, Ramadan is considered a symbol of goodness and unity and a reminder of the Prophet Muhammad and others' Islamic victories. Al-Baghdadi succeeded in creating a common unity with Muslims by revering the cultural symbols in Islam. In his third and fourth speeches, Al-Baghdadi appealed to Muslims and militant groups to unite under the organization's banner because division means the enemies' control over the capabilities of Muslims. Jihad is one of the most important cultural symbols in the Islamic identity that Al-Baghdadi uses in his speeches. Historically, Muslims proudly

view the Islamic empire that their forefathers established through jihad and Islam's spread.

Al-Baghdadi took advantage of the youth's thirst for a comprehensive Islamic project that eliminated borders, restored the Islamic empire and the caliphate, and presented an Islamic project's nucleus under Islamic law. The state should have a socialist character and provide free education, healthcare, and fight corruption. It aimed to attract militants and convince the hesitant who seek a comprehensive Islamic state that includes all under one Islamic entity.

Al-Baghdadi believed that the caliphate project was the duty of every Muslim to participate in it. Al-Baghdadi clarified that this duty had been lost for centuries, and Muslims must now be swift and participate in this movement. "This duty is upon Muslims – it is a duty lost for centuries, and absent from the world's reality, and many Muslims were ignorant of it. The Muslims sin by losing their duty, and they must seek to establish it, and they have done so, and all praise is due to Allah (Al Baghdadi, 2014). Generally, Muslims believe that the Islamic nation is the best in principles, values, and beliefs, and therefore, there are questions about why there is a lack of a comprehensive Islamic state such as that which Al-Baghdadi created. Therefore, he expounded that the project must be supported according to his perspective. The coalition's attack against Al-Baghdadi's state was an attack on the significant Islamic project, and therefore, deserved to be answered and retaliated. These were the calls made by Al-Baghdadi in his more recent speeches.

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The dissertation explored the rhetorical and persuasive methods used by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in his speeches, which targeted the Islamic nations. Central to the purpose was to examine Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's success in persuading thousands of young people around the world to join his extremist Islamic state. He also cited the Qur'an in the face of controversy surrounding interpretations of the verses and the lack of a unified interpretation. Furthermore, Al-Baghdadi used verses of the Qur'an to support his rhetorical argument. The use of these verses is important for completing the persuasion process as part of al-Baghdadi's use of social media to reach wider audiences, such as any protest or extremist movements. Using Aristotle's rhetorical methodology, the discursive concept of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the theory of social identity, and Burke's concept of identification, the analysis focused on four speeches of this leader of ISIS. In this process, the key appeals of al-Baghdadi were described, and the ways he used them were highlighted. Al-Baghdadi took advantage of the tragic situation in Arab countries after the wave of revolutions during the Arab Spring, which revealed the despair of the youth, the state of poverty, and the infighting in Syria and Iraq. Al-Baghdadi presented a vision for an Islamic state based on social justice and the distribution of wealth among the youth, with free education and healthcare. Al-Baghdadi promised a state free from corruption, favoritism, and taxes. Al-Baghdadi addressed unifying Muslim sentiments by reviving the Islamic Caliphate, restoring the dignity of the Islamic nation, and defending vulnerable Muslims worldwide. He wagered on the success of his project using the fundamentalist Islamic religion. He called for non-reliance on Western countries and boycotting them and outright fighting them at certain times. The arguments revealed how

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al-Baghdadi transformed from a state leader to a "gangster," as he tried to create division between Muslims and others--particularly between non-Muslims and those enemies who committed genocide against Muslims.

Forms of Islamic Rhetoric

Rhetoric in the Arab world revolved around spinning, love, mourning, pride in lineage, and praise; the spin was successful. However, after the emergence of Islam, the revelation of the Qur'an, and the establishment of a comprehensive Islamic system, Arabic rhetoric was affected by the many calls of the Qur'an, the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, and new Islamic slogans. The Qur'an and the Prophet's hadiths fostered an unprecedented intellectual and social revolution. The rhetorical style of the Qur'an was powerful as it contained stories, warnings, appeals, consequences, invitations, and other aspects of rhetoric. Therefore, it was logical that the Arabic language was affected by this intellectual revolution. Islamic discourse flourished in an unheralded way; the discourse was moderate, and poems of praise, satire, and spinning flourished. Weekly Friday sermons were an intellectual, political, and religious platform where the Prophet was diligent in establishing Islam based on social justice and paying zakat. The zakat represents symbolic sums withdrawn from the rich and distributed to the poor every year its one Pillars of Islam. The fasting and Hajj, which are cultural symbols that came with Islam, were significantly affected by the Islamic discourse. The tribes eventually attacked the Prophet Muhammad; thus, he had no choice but to defend his project by calling for jihad among his enthusiastic companions and tribes, and they supported the Islamic project by participating with him.

Consequently, Arabic rhetoric was affected by these historical and significant events. However, recently, radical movements have appeared and have used classical Islamic discourses to revive the old Islamic empire and Islamic identity through jihad. They favor abolishing the existing Arab and Islamic regimes and fighting the infidels. Moreover, these extremist organizations are trying to influence the Islamic discursive scene by mentioning the old jihadist stories and creating enthusiastic chants similar to singing but without music. These chants threaten the opponents of their project, fuel feelings, and link the project to the era of the Prophet Muhammad 1400 years ago. In contrast, moderate Islamic discourse is unique and comprehensive. The moderate discourse takes place weekly, on holidays, and during the Hajj season to follow the Islamic system, correct mistakes, and develop Islamic ideas for the modern era.

Extremist rhetoric in Islam. Jihad and its urging are considered one of the most crucial extremist discourses in the literature. Using this content, extremists support a Western conspiracy that seeks to divide Muslims, tamper with their capabilities, and provoke division. Similar to Al-Baghdadi, the followers of jihadist discourse believe in an Islamic nation. They consider the Arab and Islamic countries and the borders to be Western "plans." According to their discourse, these countries and borders have contributed to divisions within the Islamic nation. If the Islamic nation was unified, it becomes a real threat to the West. Therefore, their most important goal is attaining the caliphate; however, not everyone who adopts the goal of establishing one Islamic nation or the caliphate's restoration is extremist. There are hadiths about the Prophet Muhammad that state that the Islamic Caliphate will return at the end of time.

Consequently, those upholding the discourse of one Islamic state believe that the time has come to revive the caliphate and fulfill the promise of the Prophet Muhammad. This discourse exploits the enthusiastic youth who are revolting against Arab regimes, corruption, and unemployment. The discourse presents an inclusive, alternative, and successful Islamic goal, as during the Prophet Muhammad's era. The Arabic language was influenced by Islamic rhetoric and Aristotle's rhetorical approach. Merging of culture and other traditions with a quasi-socialist vision for the administration of a system based on Islamic identity is, of course, an influential and unprecedented methodology. In my opinion, it is a methodology closer to an ideological approach.

Extremist rhetoric and the Qu'ran. Al-Baghdadi rarely deviated from the classic Islamic rhetoric employed by al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. Social media, which was not available during the time of Osama bin Laden, was used to spread al-Baghdadi's speeches and principles. Al-Baghdadi used verses of the Quran extensively to support arguments in these speeches. Al-Baghdadi's speeches carried the same ideas that bin Laden and the Prophet Muhammad did, such as uniting the Islamic nation, helping Muslims, restoring lost dignity, and creating a system of free social services for people. The dream of the Islamic Empire was the motive for establishing the state of al-Baghdadi and Al-Qaeda.

Al-Baghdadi and extremist heritage. Al-Baghdadi viewed the ancient heritage as an uncomfortable element, and he believed it to represent a non-Islamic cultural symbolism. Thus, he established an Islamic state that contradicted the older heritage and cultural symbols such as statues. His state was based on some hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad that prohibited the possession of such statues. In general, Al-Baghdadi

wanted to create a new Islamic culture and establish this country's heritage. The ancient heritage was seen as a symbol of non-Muslims, and thus, he demolished all the statues and sold many of them. Consistently, all extremist Islamic movements have viewed the old heritage as a form of suspicion and threat, and it is impermissible to preserve it.

Al-Baghdadi designed objectives in these speeches to focus on the declaration of the Islamic Caliphate State. Therefore, he swayed the audience using Islamic identity as a weapon of persuasion. The intent was to gain audience loyalty to the concept of a powerful state by describing it as having many resources and ways to achieve its goals. A second appeal was to convince the young Muslims of the necessity of jihad and call upon them to join and support this new state by supporting it financially and promoting its ideas and principles.

Social media and extreme persuasion. Al-Baghdadi realized that his extremist religious ideology is not welcome on traditional media, and to confront this problem, he relied heavily on publishing his activities on social media, and he succeeded in reaching a wider audience by translating his religious ideas and speeches into several languages around the world. Incredibly, no speech was given on television or radio channels; instead, al-Baghdadi relied on social media, and in an unparalleled way, he spread the speeches and ideas around the world. In the process, the group established a news agency and a magazine interested in spreading Baghdadi's ideas. Al-Baghdadi succeeded in recruiting thousands of young people worldwide, and his messages reached 110 countries, as cited by the U.S. counterterrorism envoy. As the following grew, ISIS stepped up its propaganda campaign in an unprecedented way. Publicity campaigns varied using video and audio recordings and quick messages. ISIS's propaganda

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campaigns included mass executions, suicide bombings, and sniper operations for ISIS enemies. However, Isis was keen to highlight its soft image by publishing promotional videos that included celebrations with children on holidays, distributing financial and cash subsidies to low-income families, treating patients, and opening new schools. All these campaigns included images of the leader of Isis and audio excerpts from his famous sermon. They also established government headquarters under old Islamic names (Revkin, 2016). Social media has therefore been a crucial element in spreading the extremist al-Baghdadi movement, which is still active today despite his death in 2019.

The first video produced in high quality was entitled "Islamic State News." The report was a message to strengthen ISIS's position on social media; the report was translated into English to target non-Arabic-speaking Muslims (Berger, 2015). Members of the ISIS of different nationalities began publishing tweets promoting ISIS's image on the social networking site, Twitter, under the title "Mujahid Diary." The Russian, German, and French languages were also frequently used on the accounts of ISIS members, which meant expanding the publicity process and using sophisticated techniques to recruit more fighters (Nico, 2014). Religious ideology was not the only motivating factor in the speeches. Al-Baghdadi has also promised a stable and robust country by fighting corruption, giving free health care, free education, and other benefits that attracted thousands of young people worldwide.

Many Western countries, including the United States, have acknowledged the failure of their efforts to counter the Isis campaign on social networking sites. Because of ISIS' expansion of social networking sites such as Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram,

Western and Arab governments have struggled but failed to repel these campaigns (Berger & Morgan, 2015).

Twitter monitored more than 90 thousand accounts sympathetic to the ISIS organization. According to the website, 120,000 accounts were suspended on their website sympathizing with ISIS. One of the reasons for the failure of the counter-campaign is that Isis used several languages to spread his professional propaganda (Berger & Morgan, 2016).

ISIS's propaganda targets a dedicated group of young people both in the Arab regions and in western countries. ISIS's organization in its rhetoric focuses on young people in general, but it targets the rebellious young man who is angry about Society, who has lost his identity and feels isolated.

Identification and social identity in al-Baghdadi's rhetoric. Regarding identity, I find that most Arabs and Muslims are experiencing an identity crisis, especially in Arab culture. Furthermore, there is a malingering conflict between the advocates of Arab nationalism, as adopted and promoted by Gamal Abdel Nasser Nasser against those who are engaged in a significant project to reach out to the advocates of Islamic identity. There are the majority who consider religious identity and beliefs as an ideal framework for the Arab and Islamic world. This approach advocated by those such as Nassar refers to the Qur'an and the hadiths as primary to Islamic unity. The moral underpinnings include beliefs such as there is no difference between the rich and the poor, and those with different skin colors or ethnic heritage–all are equal with God. The advocates of Arab nationalism say the Arabic language is the language of the Qur'an, and the Prophet Muhammad is the Arab Prophet; therefore, Arab nationalism existed before the

emergence of the Islamic call and the Prophet Muhammad. Nationalists believe that Arab

nationalism must be separate from the Islamic identity in its entirety and its geographical

extension. They hold that Arab identity and national allegiance do not necessarily clash

with an Islamic identity.

However, conflicts lie mostly with Muslim intellectuals who consider the Arab

identity racist because it appears founded on ethnic or racial bloodlines; Islam forbids

such thinking. Ethnic minorities in Arab and Muslim countries, such as Yazidis,

Christians, and Kurds, suffer from the problem of confusion about identity. Al-Baghdadi

claimed to create an Islamic framework that embraced all identities and focused on the

reverence of cultural and Islamic symbols such as Ramadan and Islamic unity. Crucially,

he concentrated on the idea of creating one Islamic nation as a fundamentalist Islamic

system similar to that adopted by Muslims during the era of the Prophet Muhammad. The

advocates of Islamic identity believe that the Ottoman Empire is the best evidence

showing the success of endeavors explicitly aimed for Muslims.

On the theoretical side, researchers who study rhetoric have asserted that

rhetorical criticism should not "serve" scientific theory because rhetoric and its

understanding is an art in itself. Nevertheless, I found that 'Burke's concept is consistent

with Al-Baghdadi's rhetorical practice of persuasion, and Burke Suggestion my

understanding. For example, Al-Baghdadi's focus on creating common ground with the

public by revering the Islamic symbols and presenting as a virtuous fundamentalist cleric

is consistent with tenets of Burke's rhetoric analysis. Al-Baghdadi stands in contrast to

the corrupt and indolent leaders of Arab regimes. For instance, Al-Baghdadi realized that

wearing a turban and appearing similar to the Prophet Muhammad, significantly impacted

the masses. He used the turban symbolically to connect the masses to the era of the

Prophet Muhammad and the Islamic Caliphate. Al-Baghdadi succeeded in broadening the

divide between Muslims and non-Muslims. Again, this strategy was endorsed by Burke,

who the approach as an influence on the masses. By nature, people are thirsty to compete

in their surroundings in their culture and with other cultures and groups. As stipulated by

Burke concepts, competition creates divisions among people. As attempted by Al-

Baghdadi in the third and fourth speeches, the unifying of groups was promoted by

calling on armed groups to unite to defeat the coalition. He reminded the masses of the

Qur'an in which it is said, "Do not provoke strife because it leads to failure." Al-

Baghdadi warned of the danger of internal conflicts within armed groups because they

gift their enemies.

Social identity theory was also a part of the rhetoric; the theory states that people

usually exaggerate the similarities within groups while exaggerating the differences

between groups. People sympathize with the groups to which they belong. Al-Baghdadi

succeeded in using these concepts by categorizing Muslims in a group distinct from non-

Muslims. He exaggerated the similarities within the Islamic community using verses

from the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. Moreover, Al-Baghdadi built

a framework on the divisions between Muslims and others and called on Muslims to

leave Arab lands and join his Islamic movement. He promised to restore the dignity, the

honor of an Islamic nation, and the defense of weak Muslims worldwide. These

theoretical concepts provide a logical explanation for Al-Baghdadi's rhetoric, although

rhetorical criticism is not usually associated with scientific theories. Aristotle's

methodology, Jamal Abdel Nasser's rhetorical concept, the concept of identity, and the theory of social identity succeeded in deconstructing al-Baghdadi's rhetoric.

Theoretical implications of extremist rhetoric. The conclusions of the study emphasize that Al-Baghdadi exploited the misery of the youth, their thirst for a new social order, and the desire to build an economically and militarily strong Islamic empire. In his speeches, al-Baghdadi blended emotional and religious appeals and verses of the Qur'an, conferring religious legitimacy on his state. These appeals mainly motivated religious youth in Islamic countries. Religious and extremist groups focus on persuading youths regarding factors common within their groups, thus, stimulating social identity by emphasizing the divide between us and them. More precisely, social identities can play a decisive role in wars, conflicts, and spark protest movements, as we see today, such as the Black Lives Matter movement that focuses on the injustice toward the Black race. The ISIS organization succeeded in operating schools and hospitals, restoring electricity and services in the areas it controls, thus, creating a free and straightforward social system for people, unlike other systems. Extremist Islamic movements are no longer against societies, but can administer the sites they control and provide free services to the communities. Social media contributed to sparking protest movements around the world. Al-Baghdadi's movement relied on social media to communicate his ideas to a wide range of Muslims—and even non-Muslims--worldwide.

Identity and resisting extremism. To develop a policy to combat extremism, the starting point should be identity issues; if identity is foremost, then leaders can use it as a positive force to open further possibilities of recruitment (Isiah, 2016). Overall, al-Baghdadi focused on the cross-border identity of the Islamic Ummah, abolishing all

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cultural identities and religious pluralism in the Middle East and making the Islamic identity critical. To combat this extremist discourse, researchers should find other ways to enact or define identity and promote an alternative means for cross-border identity; however, it may mean confining Arab nationalism to the borders of a state. Arab governments must meet the aspirations of young people, create jobs for them, work to fight corruption, and fight unemployment to eliminate extremism. In addition, Muslim scholars must find a unified and clear interpretation of the Qur'an that is taught in schools in all Muslim countries to prevent tampering with interpretations of the Qur'an. It is also important to find a strategy that prevents terrorist and extremist organizations from accessing social media and using them to spread their malicious ideas. The Security Council must find a just solution to the five-decade-old Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the Sunni and Shiite extremist organizations use the Palestinian cause as a symbol of injustice to remind Muslims of the failure of political solutions and the lack of seriousness of the West in resolving Muslim issues. Teachers in the Muslim world should develop educational curricula that include lessons of tolerance and emphasize eradicating books that include isolation and hatred. There is a need to find a moderate and counter persuasive discourse that addresses the identity issues raised by extremist rhetoric. To create a moderate discourse, tradition dictates that clerics become involved. This tradition derives from an ancient Islamic legacy that supports a need for an intellectual review to understand others as human beings and not as competitors. Islamic clerics should remind people that Muslims are not better than others and that non-Muslims share in humanity. It is also a problem to continue dividing people into Muslims and non-Muslims. Pushing people to embrace multiple identities is the best solution to prevent isolationism and

fanaticism against each other (Sen, 2006). Because of Muslim's faith in the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad, it is possible to rely on some verses of the Qur'an that call for tolerance as a rationale for creating moderate speech.

In sum, moderate rhetoric could use identification in non-extremist ways to encourage an audience to identify with their homeland and within the borders of one state, and identify with prosocial aspects of Islam or other social movements across nation-states. The use of this rhetoric would also promote individuals' identities and strengthen the coexistence of diverse cultures in the Islamic world. An outstanding feature of the Islamic world is that there are dozens of cultures, races, and sects. Communities of Muslims should encourage cultural pluralism and tolerance among Muslim identities rather than promoting the dominance of an extreme Islamic identity over others.

APPENDIX A - Al-Baghdadi's Speech

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Appears in Video, Delivers Sermon in Mosul

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi
July 05, 2014

[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, appeared for the first time in a video, delivering a sermon at the Great Mosque in the city of Mosul in Iraq's Ninawa province.

The 21-minute video was produced by the group's al-Furqan Media Foundation, and was posted on the Twitter account of another Islamic State media unit, al-I'tisaam, on July 5, 2014. The Islamic State, which had recently declared itself a Caliphate, appointed Abu Bakr as the new Caliph and identified him as Caliph Ibrahim. The video shows Abu Bakr delivering his speech before the congregation and then leading them in prayer.

In the sermon, Abu Bakr spoke on blessings for Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan and incited for participation in jihad, telling listeners, "if you knew about the reward and dignity in this world and the hereafter through jihad, then none of you would delay in doing it". He also discussed his role as "Caliph," portraying himself as a reluctant leader and describing the responsibility of his position as a "plague". He added: "I was placed as your caretaker, and I am not better than you. So if you found me to be right then help me, and if you found me to be wrong then advise me and make me right and obey me in what I obey Allah through you. If I disobey Him then there is no obedience to me from you. I do not promise you, as the kings and rulers promise their followers and congregation, of luxury, security, and relaxation; instead, I promise you what Allah promised His faithful worshipers…"

The video is available here:

http://sitemultimedia.org/video/SITE_IS_Baghdadi_Sermon_Mosul.mp4

Following is a translation of the video:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Al-Furqan Foundation

Special Coverage of the Sermon and Friday Prayer in the Great Mosque in the City of Mosul

6 Ramadan 1435AH

Caliph Ibrahim

Emir of the Believers in the Islamic State, May Allah Preserve Him

All praise is due to Allah. We thank him and seek His assistance and His forgiveness. O Allah, defend us from the evil of our selves and the evils of our actions. Whoever is guided by Allah will never be misguided, and whoever is made lost by Allah will never be guided. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone without a partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His worshiper and Messenger, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, and upon his family and his Companions.

{Qur'anic Verse}

The most honest of talk is the talk of Allah, and the best guidance is that of Muhammad, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, and the most evil of matters are those which are newly invented, and every novelty is an innovation, and every innovation is loss, and every loss is in the hellfire.
{Qur'anic Verse}.

O Muslims, reaching Ramadan is a great blessing and great grace from Allah. The beginning of the month is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is protection from the fire. Whoever fasts in it with faith and consideration will have his sins forgiven, and whoever arises in it with faith and consideration will have his sins forgiven. {Hadith}. It is a month during which the gates of heaven are opened and the gates of hell are closed. It is a month during which one night is worth a thousand, and if one is barred from it then he has been barred from all goodness. {Qur'anic Verse}.

It is a month in which for Allah we are protected from hell, and this is every night – nights during which the marketplace of jihad is opened. The Messenger, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, would hold in it the brigades and arm the armies to fight the enemies of Allah to do jihad against the polytheists. So take advantage of this good month in obeying Allah, for in it the rewards are multiplied, and let the competitors compete.

O Muslims, Allah, blessed be He, created us to believe in Him alone and worship him and establish His religion. {Qur'anic Verse}. And he ordered us to fight His enemies and do jihad in His cause to achieve this and establish the religion. {Qur'anic Verse}.

O people, the religion of Allah, blessed be He, is not established and this goal for which Allah created us is not achieved but by empowering the Shariah of Allah and being judged by it and establishing the restrictions, and this is only done with power and authority. Allah said: {Qur'anic Verse}. This is the establishment of the religion: a Book that guides and a sword that supports. As for your mujahideen brothers, Allah has bestowed upon them the grace of victory and conquest, and enabled them, after many years of jihad, patience, and fighting the enemies of Allah, and granted them success and empowered them to achieve their goal. Therefore, they hastened to declare the Caliphate and place an imam, and this is a duty upon the Muslims - a duty that has been lost for centuries and absent from the reality of the world and so many Muslims were ignorant of it. The Muslims sin by losing it, and they must always seek to establish it, and they have done so, and all praise is due to Allah.

I have been plagued with this great matter, plagued with this responsibility, and it is a heavy responsibility. I was placed as your caretaker, and I am not better than you. So if you found me to be right then help me, and if you found me to be wrong then advise me and make me right and obey me in what I obey Allah through you. If I disobey Him then there is no obedience to me from you. I do not promise you, as the kings and rulers promise their followers and congregation, of luxury, security, and relaxation; instead, I promise you what Allah promised His faithful worshipers.{Qur'anic Verses}.

This is the promise of Allah. So if you want to the promise of Allah to be fulfilled, then fear Allah and obey Him. Obey Allah in every matter and every situation, and stick to righteousness and adhere to it in what you love and what you hate. And you want the promise of Allah to be fulfilled, then do jihad in the cause of Allah, incite the believers, and be patient in the face of this hardship. If you knew about the reward and dignity in this world and the hereafter through jihad, then none of you would delay in doing it, for it is the business that Allah indicated and used to save [people] from shame, and followed it with dignity in both houses. {Qur'anic Verse}.

I say these words and I seek forgiveness for and from you from Allah, so pray to Allah while you are certain of the answer.

Praise be to Allah alone. Peace and blessings be upon he who there is no prophet after him, and upon his family, his Companions, his party, and his soldiers and those who followed them with benevolence until the Day of Judgment. There is no god but Allah alone without a partner. He was honest with His promise, supported His soldiers, and defeated the Parties alone. There is no god but Allah alone without a partner, and loyalty is to Him with the religion even if the disbelievers hate it.

O worshipers of Allah, establish your religion and fear Allah, so that He may dignify you in this world and the hereafter. If you want security, fear Allah. If you want a living, fear Allah. If you want a good life, fear Allah and do jihad in the cause of Allah. We ask Allah, the Lord of the Great Throne, to unify your word and to reform between you, and to guide you to what He loves and approves of.

O Allah, dignify Islam and the Muslims and humiliate polytheism and the polytheists, and dignify your mujahideen all over the world. Make their foothold firm and bind their hearts and be a supporter and assistant for them. Make their aim true and their opinion true. Prepare for them good guidance and make Your good assistance to them reinforcement.

O Allah, O overturner of hearts, make our hearts steadfast on Your religion and Your obedience, purify our hearts of hypocrisy, our actions of competition, our mouths of lies, and our eyes of betrayal. We ask from You honest faith and accepted work... We ask from you health and to make our gathering here a merciful one and our scattering a protected one...

Our last supplication is that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad.

Courtesy of the INSITE Blog on Terrorism and Extremism/

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