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Māris Kūlis

PROPAGANDA OF *ISLAMIC STATE* IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Introduction

Since the beginning of 20th century the so-called political Islam has acquired diverse and at the same time enigmatic shapes. This could have various causes like being an underground movement or cultural policies of the Western countries. However, it is quite clear that, in contrast to some expectations,[1] since the beginning of 21st century and especially since the rise of terroristic organization *Islamic state* in the Middle East, military jihad movement of political Islam has gained profound attention.

Almost countless atrocities performed by *Islamic state* and the excessive brutality of it has diverged focus from the ideological and religious foundations of the group.[2] The slip of focus has created impression that violence is purely senseless and just a means without any end. Such viewpoint lacks justification, even though it is easily understandable as the victims can hardly distance themselves just to spot any ideas. However, it is clear that focusing on violence and *modus operandi* of it can significantly distort the understanding of *Islamic state*'s structure and aims. Violence,

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[1] "War on Terror" by George W. Bush was intended to eradicate Islamic terrorism once and for all.

[2] For more on diversity of the message of *Islamic state* see the research paper "The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy" by Charlie Winter (Quilliam, 2015).

indeed, is a significant element of the brand of *Islamic state*; however, it is just a part of more complex scene. As violence is mostly directed towards external actors, i.e. showcased for aliens, meanwhile ideologues and proselytizers of the *Islamic state* diligently work with internal affairs. It could be certainly stated that propaganda is one of the most important element of *Islamic state*.

Not in all cases attention is gained by those who deserve it. However, the case of *Islamic state* shows tendency that is substantial not only in the context of particular age or space but expresses trends of a much wider scale. Military and ultra-aggressive jihad, performed by *Islamic state*, in an unseen fineness, creates quasi-syncretic union of religious bigotry and the use of contemporary information technologies (both potentialities and consequences). The thesis is that *Islamic state* has successfully united two well-known subjects. One is information and communication technologies as well as social networks; another is military jihad.

The union employed by *Islamic state* challenges the false and rigid belief that jihadists and terrorists are some somewhat technologically backward radicals. Even more – revaluation of the tight relationship among religion, propaganda, and modern society, becomes philosophically relevant subject.

The use of contemporary digital technologies (including internet, computers, and online social networks) has become global phenomenon and the impact on the lifestyle of majority of users seems to be undoubted.[3] The well-known subject of *the digitalization of life* encompass issues from the impact of technologies on the everyday life to the finesses of communication, though rarely *average opinion* has included idea that digitalization could be in any sense related to jihad and terrorism.

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[3] The invasion of contemporary technologies in everyday life, especially addiction to smartphones, has become a topic of various researches. For example, see: Sherry Turkle. *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*; Sherry Turkle. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*; Joseph M. Reagle Jr. *Reading the Comments: Likers, Haters, and Manipulators at the Bottom of the Web*; Nir Eyal, Ryan Hoover. *Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products*.

The development and expansion of computer technologies goes on for several decades. It has created situation where especially youth has technological competency or *know-how*. Right now, in the year 2016, the median age of the population of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is reported to be 25 years.[4] These young dissatisfied people have both *know-how* and gadgets and they are both the main target audience of jihadi ideologues and potential members of jihadi groups. One can only agree to the statement in the *MIT Technology Review* that *Islamic state* "emerged after important technological shifts"[5]. Such online services as *YouTube*, *Twitter*, *Facebook* etc. have gained notable popularity in the last five years, namely, long time after the 9/11 terror act. Leading French jihadi and political Islam researcher Gilles Kepel states that after decline of second-generation "top-down" television-driven jihadi organizations, like al-Qaeda, the bottom-top organized *3G* or *Third-Generation Jihad* has born alongside *YouTube* and *Twitter*.[6]

Another element of quasi-syncretic union is extreme, fundamental, military or lower jihad of religious Islam with such examples as almost classical *al-Qaeda* as well as *Boko Haram*, *Jabhat al-Nusra*, *Islamic state* etc. Islamism, the violence of Islam, jihadism – all of these subjects have been extensively researched and have provoked a lot of discussions particularly after the boom of political Islam in the seventies of the 20th century. Jihad is not anything new or surprising. The very opposite, jihad has attracted

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[4] See: Roudi, Farzaneh. *Youth Population And Employment In The Middle East And North Africa: Opportunity Or Challenge?* Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat. New York : United Nations Secretariat, 2011. In comparison, European Union – 42.2 years (*Eurostat*, 2014); USA – 37.8 years (*CIA World Factbook*, 2015).

[5] Talbot, David. Fighting ISIS Online. *MIT Technology Review.* [Online] September 30, 2015. [Cited: April 11, 2016.] https://www.technologyreview.com/s/541801/fighting-isis-online/.

[6] The emergence of *Third-Generation Jihad* is a phenomenon examined in the book "Terreur dans l'Hexagone. Genèse du djihad français" by Gilles Kepel (Gallimard, 2015). First generation stretches from 1979 to 1997 and corresponds to the Soviet-Afghan war and consequences of it; second – from 1997 to 2005 and can be associated with Osama bin Laden.

enormous amount of both true and false statements on it. A common prejudice is that violent jihad groups are technologically backward. The roots of such opinion could be found in their anti-western rhetoric and *salafi* ideology. However, the rejection of Western and Christian values does not necessary mean rejection of Western technological advancements. Consequently the reality of the 21ˢᵗ century jihad is that it uses technologies, besides does it skilfully and a great deal.

Islamic extremism side by side with technological competence creates a new kind of warfare. It could be described as something close to the concept of hybrid war often attributed to Russia.[7] Even though *hybrid-anything* should still be examined, here arises temptation to see *Islamic state* as an expert of the non-conventional warfare with undervalued capability to perform proselytization.

Founding Basis of the Propaganda of the Third-Generation Jihad

In the understanding of the specifics of the propaganda carried out by *Islamic state* stands out ideas of two individuals. One is military strategist Abu Musab al-Suri and another is imam Anwar al-Awlaki.

Organization vs. System

Abu Musab al-Suri (born Mustafa Setmariam Nasar) was born in Aleppo, Syria in October of 1958.[8] Although he studied engineering in the University of Aleppo for four years, he abandoned studies in 1980 in order to join *The Combatant Vanguard Organization* of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. At the end of the year the group was almost in

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[7] The understanding of this concept still has a lot of blank spaces. See: "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Other Dark Arts" by Michael Kofman in http://warontherocks.com. Nevertheless exactly this obscurity of the concept is what makes attribution of it possible in the case of *Islamic state*.

[8] For more on the life and works of al-Suri see: Lia, Brynjar. *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al-Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri*. London: Hurst Publishers, 2007.

ruins and he was advised to leave Syria for Jordan. Later he immigrated to France and then to Spain, where he married Spanish woman and so became Spanish citizen. Nonetheless, he kept close ties to Islamic radicalism and often travelled to Afghanistan where in year 1987 he met one of the most important jihadi ideologues and the founding father of *al-Qaeda* – Abdallah Azzam, and become deeply impressed by him. Acquaintance with Azzam and regular stay in Afghanistan allowed him to build up close ties with Osama bin Laden too. All of that leads to consider that he was one of the founding members of *al-Qaeda*, and, during this period, he gained both experience and expertise.

The year 2005, with publication of Abu Musab al-Suri's 1600-page long *magnum opus* "The Call to Global Islamic Resistance", as noted by Gilles Kepel, marked the birth of the *3G* or *Third-Generation Jihad* in the same year as online video service *YouTube* was registered in California. "The Military Theory of the Global Islamic Resistance Call", section four of chapter eight, writes al-Suri, "is the heart of this two-volume book"[9]. Although military theory of al-Suri in a direct way does not concern religion and propaganda, his suggestion for a new way of organizing global jihadism is almost perfectly reflected in the propaganda machinery of *Islamic state*. In short, one of his main thesis, expressed in chapter eight, is distinction between two governance forms – *organization* and *system* (*nizam la tanzim*). Al-Suri writes that in the post 9/11 world the previous form of governance, "the school of dynamic organizations" or simply *organization*, is no longer suitable. The main characteristics of *organizations* are that they are regional, secret, and hierarchical[10], namely, they are made as pyramids. However, because of "the changes of time", such form of governance is too dangerous. He

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[9] Quoted from online document at http://ge.tt/1I9jhQs1; p. 7. However, it seems to be slightly modified Brynjar Lia's translation of some excerpts published in his book "Architect of Global Jihad" (pp. 347–484).

[10] al-Suri, Abu Musab. *The Call for a Global Islamic Resistance (Key excerpts)*. 2005, pp. 9–13.

compares it with a bag of water – it does not matter where you poke the bag, water will pour out. [11]

Al-Suri offers an alternative. He presents *system* as a better form of governance. In essence, it means that there are no single united chain of leadership. Instead al-Suri offers to use template of action and ideology, which can be used by small autonomous groups. He develops guidelines just like in a case of franchise licensing; he gives ready-made plan, ideology, guidance, strategy etc. Brynjar Lia writes: "Hence, the practice of "individual terrorism" is a core theme in [The Call to Global Islamic Resistance]. In other words, there should be "an operative system" or template available anywhere for anybody wishing to participate in the global jihad either on one's own or with a small group of trusted associates."[12] Al-Suri points out that the central bonds of the "Global Islamic Resistance Brigades" would be just three: (1) the common name and the personal oath to Allah; (2) the politico-judicial programme (*shar'iyy manhaj*) and a common doctrine (*'aqeedah*); (3) the common goal to resist the invaders, and then to work on establishing Islamic sharia.[13]

The military strategies of al-Suri does not have great significance from the perspective of religion. His importance lies nearby, as precisely commented by Brynjar Lia: "The danger of al-Suri's training doctrine lies in its very realistic assumptions about the jihadis' military weakness. His doctrine seems to be cleanly and pragmatically tailored to the security situation in the Western world of the post-9/11 era."[14] One could add that with little modifications al-Suri's ideas provide dangerous prospects for contemporary and future jihadi propaganda activists. The significance of al-Suri's ideas can be revealed in the context of propaganda campaign

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[11] Video lecture of al-Suri: https://archive.org/details/TNMJPARTONE

[12] *Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihadi Training – Part 1*. Lia, Brynjar. 1, s.l.: The Jamestown Foundation, February 21, 2007, Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 5.

[13] al-Suri, Abu Musab. *The Call for a Global Islamic Resistance (Key excerpts)*. 2005. Most probably translation by Brynjar Lia, p. 45.

[14] *Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihadi Training – Part 2*. Lia, Brynjar. 2, s.l.: The Jamestown Foundation, February 21, 2007, Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 5.

performed by *Islamic state*. The transition from hierarchical *organization* to self-dependant *system* directly corresponds with distinction, by French philosopher Jacques Ellul, between *vertical* and *horizontal* propaganda. This distinction will be essential latter in the following text.

State-of-the-Art Jihad

The life story of Anwar al-Awlaki and al-Suri to some extent are alike. Both of them could not complain about poverty or unfavourable conditions, both were educated and both got involved in jihadi movements. Al-Awlaki was born in 1971 in New Mexico, USA. His parents were quite well situated immigrants from Yemen with good education. His father Nasser al-Awlaki was Fulbright Scholar and received a doctorate at the University of Nebraska. His family returned to Yemen where his father held high ranking position in government. Higher education was obtained also by Anwar al-Awlaki. Following his stay in Yemen he returned to USA in 1991 where he earned a BSc in civil engineering from Colorado State University and latter in 2000 he enrolled in George Washington University for doctoral studies. At the same time he undertook the position of imam at mosque first in California (1996) and latter in Virginia (2001). While fulfilling his clerical duties he discovered in himself not only great talent for such job but also developed his devotion to religion. Complications in Anwar al-Awlaki's life started after the 9/11 attacks (he publicly condemned it) when he attracted the eyes of security institutions of USA. Troubled by problems in personal and public life, he left USA for Yemen. Turning point in his life could be 2007 when, after serving 18 months in prison in Yemen and sensing too much attention from local security establishment, he contacted local *al-Qaeda* branch AQAP[15] and joined the jihadi club.[16]

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[15] Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

[16] For more on the life of Anwar al-Awlaki see: Shane, Scott. *Objective Troy: A Terrorist, a President, and the Rise of the Drone.* s.l. : Tim Duggan Books, 2015; Scott Shane. *The Anwar al-Awlaki File. From American Citizen to Imam to Terrorist to Drone Killing* (http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB529-Anwar-al-Awlaki-File/)

In the context of quasi-syncretic union between propaganda practiced by *Islamic state* and contemporary technologies, one particular dimension of al-Awlaki's actions is of special importance. Namely, he proposed, supported and implemented idea that jihadi organizations should act in concordance with reality of modern world and consequently should spread the message of true believers by utilizing up-to-date technologies. Moreover, he proposed to do it with care so that result would not be just ideologically right and bright but equally good-looking, attractive, interesting etc. In the year 2009 he published online document called "44 Ways to Support Jihad", where No. 29 is "WWW Jihad"; al-Awlaki writes: "The internet has become a great medium for spreading the call of Jihad and following the news of the mujahideen."[17] Researcher of terroristic jihadi movements Abdel Bari Atwan writes: "Anwar al-Awlaki, a US-born, youthful cleric… was the first to suggest exploiting social networking platforms to spread jihadist material more widely and reach new recruitment pools. The so-called bin Laden of the Internet created his own blog, Facebook page, and YouTube channel, and used them to distribute the online magazine *Inspire*, which included recipes for bomb-making and increasingly sophisticated films."[18]

One of the most well-known results of this approach was English language magazine *Inspire*. Al-Awlaki's new-born magazine attracted mass attention partly because of sensation-seeking journalism, and perhaps partly because of al-Awlaki's close ties to the USA. Even though it is rightly pointed out by Western jihadi analysts that emergence of new journal was nothing impressive[19] or extra-ordinary[20], it still is emblematic representation of certain ideological and technological trend. Eventually

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[17] al-Awlaki, Anwar. *44 Ways to Support Jihad.* 18 January 2009.

[18] Atwan, Abdel Bari. *Islamic State. The Digital Caliphate.* London : Saqi Books, 2015, p. 11.

[19] Hegghammer, Thomas. Un-Inspired. *Jihadica.* [Online] July 6, 2010. [Cited: April 14, 2016.] http://www.jihadica.com/un-inspired/.

[20] Berger, J. M. AQAP Inspire Magazine Is Nothing New. *Intelwire.* [Online] July 5, 2010. [Cited: April 14, 2016.] http://news.intelwire.com/2010/07/aqap-inspire-magazine-is-nothing-new.html.

this particular magazine is not of particular concern. Instead, the thing one should keep in mind is that it attests the rise of worldview – both from the perspective of the Western world and jihadi networks – that includes presence of particular *modus operandi*, namely, very aggressive and resistant propaganda mechanism.

The first issue of *Inspire* saw digital light in the June 2010 but al-Awlaki's influence reaches far beyond this one event. He can be credited as pioneer of use of social networks for promotion of jihadi materials. Al-Awlaki was excellent preacher, but part of his success, as noted by Scott Shane, was "the shifting communication technology between 2001 and 2008, moving from audio cassette, to CD, to Paltalk, to his own interactive website and blog, and finally to Facebook and YouTube."[21]

Of course, on the one side, to some ultra-orthodox salafi jihadists the use of World Wide Web could seem to be vicious. However, on the other side, everyone had to acknowledge that it is step forward to reach society drowned in computer screens. If al-Awlaki's approach could provide new recruits then it was good for jihadi matter. Right now at the beginning of year 2016 (especially after *Islamic state*'s unrelenting activity during Syrian Civil War and re-emergence among turbulent conditions in Iraq) it appears to be productive.[22]

Unconditional propaganda

Two elements described above can be considered as the basis for emergence of mass propaganda in internet. System approach by al-Suri jointly with the use of social networks (and other tools provided by inter-

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[21] Shane, Scott. *Objective Troy: A Terrorist, a President, and the Rise of the Drone.* s.l. : Tim Duggan Books, 2015.

[22] Theological wisdom or religious expertise of the recruits of *Islamic state* can be rightly doubted. However, the appeal of religious ideas actively distributed by *Islamic state* seems to be self-evident. In year 2015 among *Islamic state* fighters are estimated to be approximately 20 to 30 thousand foreign fighters. The estimate total strength in various sources varies between 20 and 300 thousand fighters.

net) by al-Awlaki created fertile ground for occurrence of propaganda of *Islamic state*. Though here one thing is even more important – it is mark of the age. Contemporary situation opens new ground for uncontrolled and unconditional propaganda. French philosopher Jacques Ellul writes: "The aim of modern propaganda is no longer to modify ideas, but to provoke action. It is no longer to change adherence to a doctrine, but to make the individual cling irrationally to a process of action. It is no longer to transform an opinion but to arouse an active and mythical belief."[23] The weapon of *Islamic state's* propaganda is social networks. Thereby it sounds well-founded, as said by managing director of think-tank *Quilliam* Haras Rafiq, that "jihadism is digitalised and brought firmly into the 21st century."[24]

In the research paper "The Weaponization of Social Media", published by Royal Danish Defence College, Thomas Elkjer Nissen states, that "we can see the contours of a very calculated and professional social media information campaign which resembles modern cross-media marketing or political PR campaigns."[25]

With reference to Rose Powell, he distinguishes four levels of online activities:

1. Leading propagandists of *Islamic state*. Usually main source of official news.
2. Regional or provincial accounts that disseminate news about local events.
3. "Individual fighters that post updates about their experiences on what is meant to appear as personal accounts. These are more personal, emotional and therefore appealing to, e.g., young potential recruits."

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[23] Ellul, Jacques. *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.* [trans.] Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner. New York : Vintage Books, 1973, p. 25.

[24] Rafiq, Haras. Foreword. [book auth.] Charlie Winter. *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy.* s.l.: Quilliam, 2015, p. 4.

[25] Nissen, Thomas Elkjer. *The Weaponization of Social Media.* Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015, pp. 49–50.

4. Fourth and last level is most innovative and dangerous. It is in a kind do-it-yourself approach without control from the centre. It mostly consists of sympathisers and supporters outside the war zone.

With problem of uncontrolled propaganda in mind, most interesting are the members of the last or lowest level, namely, the disseminators. Nissen recognizes that "all four levels use the centralised strategic narrative as the framework or as direction and guidance for their use of images and messages in the different social media platforms supporting their propaganda activities", but he also emphasises that while the content is initially coordinated, as it follows the way of dissemination, it "changes result in some loss of control of the message, and hence the narrative."[26]

Even if al-Suri was mostly thinking about armed struggle, his ideas clearly can be utilized in the dissemination of propaganda. The case of *Islamic state* seems to be clear evidence of that. In the massive use of unattached disseminators, *Islamic state* stands out on the background of more conservative jihadi groups. It departs from the archaic understanding of jihadi terrorism for more modern approach, namely, if one cannot fight in the battlefield on the land, then one could do it in the internet! It gives options to all those who are disgusted with gory jobs.

For all of that still the most impressive aspect of *Islamic state's* propaganda is that it levels differences between the creators and the disseminators of the content. For example, in the case of television distinction is very clear. However, social networks of internet radically changes situation. If television is not accessible to everyone, then blogs, *YouTube* channels, *Twitter* accounts can be created by anyone, besides youth of the MENA countries (as youth everywhere else) has explicit knowledge of *how-to* to do so. That is particularly advantageous for *Islamic state* because helps to outsource part of the duties and greatly enhances safety of central leader-

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[26] Nissen, Thomas Elkjer. *The Weaponization of Social Media.* Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015, p. 52.

ship. The outsourcing of agitation is a way to balance previously mentioned two kinds of propaganda outlined by Jacques Ellul, namely, *vertical* and *horizontal* propaganda.[27]

The main difference, described in Ellul's book "Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes", between both types of propaganda is the amount of dependence to some central management. Vertical propaganda functions as hierarchical transfer from top to bottom. Horizontal propaganda, just like al-Suri's military strategy, is made as bottom-top method or, if more precisely, anti-method. Horizontal propaganda as a way of spreading certain stance (in this case narrow interpretation of religious cause) lets participators to choose the most appropriate technique in each case or to simply stay in safe distance from clearly evident guilt of illegal agitation. Thus the propaganda of *Islamic state* simultaneously both is and is not chaotic, to wit, it is self-organizing constellation. The lack of centre seriously limits options to quickly and effectively counter the propaganda of *Islamic state*; however, even more dangerous and worrying is the whole system as an example of success. The contemporary world, whether just now or also in past, with its vices, social injustices, discrimination, conflicts etc. is fertile ground for emergence of various forms of activisms. Ellul writes: "The individual who burns with desire for action but does not know what to do is a common type in our society. He wants to act for the sake of justice, peace, progress, but does not know how. If propaganda can show him this 'how' then it has won the game; action will surely follow."[28] Recent terroristic acts in Belgium and France[29] clearly show such actions. Therefore, contemporary jihad cannot be seen as a limited phenomenon. It has become mark of an age, namely, it is an expression

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[27] Distinction described by Jacques Ellul first in "*Propagandes*" (1962). See: Ellul, J. *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.* New York : Vintage Books, 1973, pp. 79–84.

[28] Ellul, Jacques. *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.* [trans.] Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner. New York : Vintage Books, 1973, p. 209.

[29] Not to name almost endless killings in Middle East, the bombing of Russian aircraft and so on.

or a manifestation of the wide arrangement of elements deeply rooted in the processes of present life-world. The understanding and derogation of *Islamic state's* propaganda is equally important as the armed struggle in the ongoing war.

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Māris Kūlis

Islāma valsts propaganda informācijas laikmetā

Kopsavilkums

Politiskā islāma militārā jeb mazā džihāda kustība un organizācija *Islāma valsts* (*Daesh*, ISIS, ISIL, IS) ir "izkarojusi sev" pastiprinātu uzmanību ne tikai ar vardarbību vien, bet arī ar līdz šim neredzētu propagandas kampaņu, kuras panākumus apliecina diezgan liels ārvalstu kaujinieku pieplūdums organizācijas armijas rindās. Šī situācija izgaismo filosofiski satraucošu mūsdienu sabiedrības situāciju, kurā *Islāma valsts* ir sekmīgi apvienojusi divus jau labi zināmus, taču nošķirtus tematus, proti, (1) informācijas un komunikācijas tehnoloģijas, tostarp sociālos tīklus, ar (2) militāro vai karojošo džihādisma kustību. *Islāma valsts* īstenotais militārais un ārkārtīgi agresīvais džihāds ar vēl nepieredzētām sekmēm ir izveidojis sinkrētisku reliģiskās degsmes un mūsdienu tehnoloģiju lietojuma kombināciju.

Neskaitāmo *Islāma valsts* īstenoto vardarbības aktu brutalitāte ir novērsusi uzmanību no tās ideoloģiskajiem un reliģiskajiem pamatiem. Lai gan vardarbība nudien ir viens no *Islāma valsts* "zīmola" būtiskiem elementiem, tā ir tikai daļa no daudz plašākas kopainas, kurā propagandas darbs *Islāma valsts* gadījumā ir izšķirīgi svarīgs.

Islāma valsts īstenotās propagandas metodes teorētiskos pamatus var saistīt ar divām personālijām – militārā džihāda stratēģi Abu Musabu al-Suri (*Abu Musab al Suri*; īstajā vārdā *Mustafa Setmariam Nasar*) un imamu, tīmekļa aktīvistu Anvaru al-Avlaki (*Anwar al-Awlaki*).

Sīrijā dzimušais Spānijas pilsonis Abu Musabs al-Suri 2005. gada jan-
vārī tīmeklī laida klajā savu sacerējumu "Aicinājums uz vispasaules islāma
pretošanos" (*The Call to Global Islamic Resistance*). Šajā darbā centrālā vieta
veltīta teroristisko grupējumu pārvaldes formu izvērtējumam. Al-Suri uz-
sver nošķīrumu starp "organizāciju" un "sistēmu" (*nizam la tanzim*). Viņš
raksta, ka ilgstoši izmantotā džihādistu grupējumu pārvaldes forma – or-
ganizācija – ir bīstama un nepiemērota. Tā vietā viņš ierosina izmantot
franšīzes principu, proti, izveidot "sistēmu", kuras potenciālie darboņi va-
rētu pārņemt sagatavi – plānu, vadlīnijas, ideoloģiju, uzskatu sistēmu u.tml.
Tādā veidā tiktu veicināta mazu un autonomu grupiņu izveide, kuras savā
starpā saistītu vien trīs nosacījumi: kopīgs nosaukums un mērķis, kopīga
politiskā un juridiskā programma un doktrīna, kā arī kopīga cīņa pret
ienaidniekiem, lai izveidotu islāmisku valsti.

Savukārt Anvara al-Avlaki (*Anwar al-Awlaki*) nopelns propagandas
izplatīšanas kontekstā ir viņa ierosinājums pievērst arvien lielāku uzma-
nību mūsdienu tehnoloģijām un sociālajiem tīkliem. Viņš ierosināja, vei-
cināja un īstenoja ideju, ka džihādistu organizācijām vajadzētu sekot laika
garam un savu ticības vēsti izplatīt ar jaunāko datortehnoloģiju starpnie-
cību. Turklāt viņš ierosināja to darīt nevis vienkārši un pavirši, bet gan vel-
tīt tam pūliņus tā, lai rezultāts būtu ne tikai ideoloģiski pareizs, bet arī glīti
un patīkami "iesaiņots". Viņš darbojās laikā, kad pasaulē arvien populārāki
kļuva tādi tiešsaistes pakalpojumi kā *YouTube*, *Facebook*, emuāri.

Al-Suri ieteiktais džihādistu organizāciju hierarhiskās pārvaldes for-
mas noraidījums un autonomo šūniņu izveide kopsolī ar al-Avlaki iero-
sināto uzsvaru uz mūsdienu interneta tehnoloģiju (piemēram, tiešsaistes
sociālo tīklu) izmantošanu, ir sagatavojusi auglīgu augsni t.s. *trešās pa-
audzes džihāda* (*third-generation jihad*) tapšanai un *Islāma valsts* propa-
gandas īstenošanai. Aizgājušo laiku otrās paaudzes džihāda komunikācijas
formu – televīziju – nomaina tiešsaistes pakalpojumu izvirzīšanās teju ik-
katras saskarsmes priekšplānā. Militārā džihāda un mūsdienu tehnoloģiju
(gan sniegto iespēju, gan izraisīto seku) izmantošanas savienība tieši sabal-
sojas ar franču filosofa Žaka Elula *vertikālās* un *horizontālās* propagandas
nošķīrumu. Vertikālā propaganda funkcionē kā hierarhiska kārtība, kurā

vēsti nodod no augšas uz leju. Savukārt horizontālā propaganda, gluži kā al-Suri militārā stratēģija, tiek īstenota no apakšas uz augšu.

Prasmīgi veidotas un apjomīgi izvērstas ideoloģiskās ietekmēšanas kampaņas, proti, propagandas izplatīšanas kontekstā īpašu ievērību izpelnās *vertikālās* propagandas zemākais līmenis jeb t. s. vēsts izplatītāji. Masveidā izmantojot šo slāni, *Islāma valsts* izceļas uz citu – "konservatīvāku" – teroristisko organizāciju fona. Proti, tiem, kas nespēj karot kaujaslaukā, ļauj pašiem uzņemties iniciatīvu internetā! Tas ir vairojis *Daesh* atbalstītāju skaitu, jo darbs atrodas arī tiem, kam klaja vardarbība derdzas.

Propagandas īstenotājiem tiek dota autonomija pašiem izvērtēt situāciju un atbilstoši rīkoties, kā arī palikt drošībā. Tādējādi *Islāma valsts* propaganda, kas visdrīzāk izmanto šādu metodi, vienlaikus gan ir, gan nav haotiska. Proti, tā ir kontrolēta jucekļa pašpārvalde. Kāda noteikta vadības centra neesamība būtiski apgrūtina propagandas apkarošanu. Tomēr vēl būtiskāks un bīstamāks ir paraugs, ko rada un parāda *Islāma valsts* panākumi.

Mūsdienu džihāda spējas pārkāpt fiziskās robežas un piemēroties modernajai pasaulei mudina domāt, ka *Islāma valsts* propagandas satura un uzbūves izpratne ir tikpat svarīgs uzdevums kā bruņota cīņa. Kareivīgā džihāda un mūsdienu tehnoloģiju savienība ir kļuvusi par laikmeta zīmi, proti, tā ir teorētisko ideju un pastāvošās kultūras situācijas manifestācija.