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A Theoretical Analysis of ISIS Indoctrination and Recruitment Tactics

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Table of Contents

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to use various theories in the social sciences as a tool to understand the mechanisms employed in ISIS indoctrination and recruitment tactics. There is a discussion of theories that have been developed in the field of influence psychology, rationalizing the context of indoctrination within this area of study. There is a discussion of proposedly relevant materials in philosophy, specifically simulacrum and linguistic deconstruction. These components are extrapolated to interpret a first person account of ISIS indoctrination, the first-ever ISIS recruitment film, and a Radical-Islamist periodical *Inspire Magazine.* Using a form of propaganda film analysis, and a comparative analysis, this research found that ISIS recruitment tactics rely on a scheme that is similar to cult indoctrination: deconstructing a target's social reality, reconstructing their social reality, and preventing outsider influence once their reality has been reconstructed.

Introduction

This research seeks to elucidate a narrative that appears to exist in the growing body of work in the social sciences, in connection to a relevant global phenomena; the development of radical terrorism.

This narrative has been summarized before in various terms; *suggestibility* (Bernheim 1889), *deindividuation* (Zimbardo, 1970), *conformity* (Luchins & Luchins, 1967; Zimbardo, 1970)-- or wholly as the study of *attitude change* or *influence psychology.* In short, the past 100 years have shown us the overwhelming power of social pressure, and it's ability to distort behavior and perception. While there are various applications for *influence psychology,* here, I am looking for specific components of personal and social experience that can be altered or influenced in ways that lower obstacles toward questionable decisions. Herein; leaving your country of origin to join the militant Islamist group, Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIS).

Here, I am looking to make an assertion that is, perhaps, theoretically analogous to Zeno's Paradoxes. I am looking to suggest an answer to a pervasive question of human behavior that is axiomatically communicated through the exemplary case of ISIS defection. Though it seems absurd, ISIS is successfully recruiting demographics that are specifically oppressed by them (Bergen & Gross 2016). Here, I will try to understand why this recruitment is successful.

I assert that this defection *is* absurd, but of what value is this conclusion? To claim that something is absurd is a resignation. It certifies that, because it cannot be understood by existing cryptography, then it cannot possibly be cipher, and thus cannot be interpreted. Instead, here, the question 'why' will not remain unanswered-- it will seek to cryptographically understand this cipher by rejecting the notion of absurdity as a conclusion. Instead, the attitude here is that it makes sense because it occurs.

This idea applies to a wide variety of topics. Why do massive congregations of people take their own lives simultaneously? Why do we allow genocide to happen? Why are household incendiary

devices necessary at a marathon? To ascribe these acts to an abstraction, "evil," isn't merely ignorant, it isn't merely lazy; it is a willful aversion to a truth that refuses to go unheard, and it allows these atrocities to continue occurring.

And so, I must begin by re-conceptualizing the understanding of these foundational ideas; absurdity, evil, and even our social contract which binds us to reality. Concurrent with *Parmenides,* a suggestion of *plurality* allows the absurd to become lucid-- I suggest that objective reality does not change, that moral reality does not change-- but that change is an illusion (Plato, 1991). The illusion is created, whereby reality is constructed through temporal context (Pratkanis, 1991). In application, I suggest that the potential to reconstruct reality justifies a rationale for behavior previously considered absurd. This justification, then, is dependent upon a deconstruction of identity, as well as social, moral, and objective reality.

If it is possible to disengage individuals from their personal constructions of morality through simple appeals to authority (Milgram, 1963), and to distort objective reality in social settings (Asch 1955); how fluid is our construction of "truth" in a material or ideal sense of the word? If our initial construction of this "truth" is constructed by a catalog of experiences (Markus 1977), and our experiences are becoming increasingly less "real" (Baudrillard 1981); then how do we determine this "truth" to be rooted in any sound correlation to an objective reality, or *aufhebung* (Derrida 1967/1997)?

I am suggesting, through the inter-connectivity of research with dissimilar intentions, that reality is inter-subjective. That it becomes circumstantially fragile, and allows for the altering of the ideas --reality, truth, morality-- that we so desperately seek consistency and objectivity from.

The proceeding literature looks to elucidate the precedent for this suggestion-- reconstructed and simplified here under the theoretical framework and methodology sections. With an emphasis placed upon the inter-connectivity of the historical narrative of influence and social pressure, concurrent works from philosophy are used to augment Anthony Pratkanis' (1991) paradigm for

indoctrination.

This reconstruction is used in an effort to help us understand this defection, 'how does reconstruction occur' becomes this more specific question: How does ISIS propaganda effectively recruit satellite operatives and defectors?

Theoretical Framework

The crux of our research question lies within the concept of *influence*. The exploration of the functional term is multidisciplinary, and perhaps even inexact; various theoretical lenses and fields have asked questions concerning the impact of influence, pertaining to various context and degrees. Here, influence is considered as a derivative of research in *compliance*-- a force exerted upon one party from another, transactional, and incremental when compared to *persuasion* (Cialdini, 2006; Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991; Zimbardo, 2008). Our theoretical design, and concurrent review of literature, seek to understand the narrative Influence Psychology has offered us thus far.

Influence Psychology

Research in Influence Psychology begins with an assessment of conformity conducted in 1950. The initial research that demonstrates the ability of a group to homogenize incorrect opinions in the face of objective truth (Asch, 1951) led to research in the effects of authority in the face of moral truth (Milgram, 1963). Both of these studies demonstrate external forces effect in the face of observable and recognized "wrong," that the participants could be easily influenced to either (1) knowingly answer a question incorrectly, or (2) perform an act the participant acknowledges as morally objectionable.

These studies, however, do not address the specific form of influence I am herein seeking to understand. Though they each address participants that were influenced to do something they know is measurably "wrong," they both rely on *deindividuation* as a means for application (Zimbardo, 1970). Additionally, these are clinical trials that seek generalizable data. However, according to primary sources, it appears that the effects of ISIS indoctrination are targeted to specific populations (Bergen, 2016; Gross & Bergen, 2016).

Cult Indoctrination

To address the deficiencies in the available models of *influence*, this research will use Pratkanis (1991) as a theoretical precedent for collecting data from organizations known for their effective use of

indoctrination practices in susceptible populations. The publication seeks to elucidate the tenets of

influence that have been popularized under the terminology *brainwashing*; demystifying the very real

effects of persuasion that exist outside of popular culture and television.

The collection of tenets describe conditions necessary for creating and maintaining a cult. The

analysis relies upon; the People's Temple, the Unification Church, Children of God, the Church of

Armageddon, the Divine Light Mission, and the Followers of Swami Rajneesh for data. As suggested

by Pratkanis and Aronson (1991), aggressive techniques for influence find a rough inception point in

POW camps during the Korean War. The techniques were based upon then-recent findings in

Behavioral Psychology of *operant conditioning*; behavior is met with reinforcement stimulus or

punishment stimulus depending upon desired behavior or thought process (Skinner, 1938). This belays

the precedent for the central role of information regulation or manipulation in Pratkanis and Aronson

(1991), ultimately leading to the first tenet, the *Construction of Social Reality*. The suggestion is that

information that flows to indoctrinated participants must be limited or manipulated to be concurrent

with the views of the cult. The tenets that follow can be considered contingent upon this idea;

Construction of Granfalloon, Dissonance Reduction, Construction of Leader Credibility, Distraction

from 'Undesirable' Thoughts, Construction of Phantom Goal. The central idea is to remove the

population from the scrutiny of the uninitiated, and offer limited figureheads, goals, and identities to

limit dissonance and undesirable thoughts, and focus the group upon simple central themes (Pratkanis,

1991).

Soviet Montage Theory

Inline with the assumption that al-Hayat Media's strategies are classically informed (Quilliam

Foundation, 2014); a classical theory of propaganda production will be used to analyze the research

material.

The Soviet Montage Theory (SMT) for film production and analysis is antiquated. It was used

to produce fewer than 30 films around the early 20th century. It's relevance is perhaps rather nuanced. In the very early 20th century, there were two important revolutions in Russia that took place in quick succession. *The February Revolution* was the first of these. The result of this revolution was a change in government structure-- from an objective stand-point. The more contextually-relevant result was the second revolution, which ousted the Tsar and created the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, led by Vladimir Lenin.

Among a long list of actions that overshadow the unit of interest here, Lenin would establish Narkompros, a university section concerning the visual arts. Comprised of two cooperative actors, the Deliberative actor, and the Executive actor, the college's stated objective was the exploration of the visual arts and the effect on the community. The stated motive was to develop the world's most important art, cinema. The, perhaps more honest goal, of the Narkompros section was the development and distribution of highly effective propaganda pieces.

SMT will be used specifically due to it's antiquity, and it's prevalence in propaganda film. More accurately, SMT may have created propaganda film technique. By using this paradigm to analyze propaganda film, it may be possible to reveal structural components and strategy concurrent to a particular school of thought.

Methodology

In response to the specific aspects of phenomena I am seeking to address, this research collected qualitative data for interpretation within an etic structure. This etic structure is based upon Potter's description of the *Researcher Construction.* As described, a *Researcher Construction* places interpretation within the realm of the research, and not the environment of the phenomena, to determine the value of the units (Potter 1996). In praxis, this means that our theoretical framework and concurrent extrapolated paradigms are used to organize the qualitative data points, this organization creates a meaning that exists specifically in the research (Harris 1976:334; Pike 1967:575).

Execution of Cult Indoctrination Paradigm

This research reviewed and coded ISIS recruitment resources within the structure of Pratkanis' 7-point paradigm of cult indoctrination. However, because Pratkanis' paradigm pertains to conditional and environmental factors in addition to communicative measures, some paradigm features are excluded from the analysis.

Within the 7 step description of the paradigm, Pratkanis describes the conditions necessary for recruiting and maintaining cult members as; (1) self-construction of social reality, (2) dyadic construction of possible behaviors, (3) construction of escalating commitment, (4) establish and reinforce leader's credibility, (5) recruitment strategy that constructs self-persuasive messages in current members, (6) construct a thought-depriving environment, (7) construct a prophetic phantom-goal to the faithful (Pratkanis, 1991). Measures (3) and (5) require primary source data that is unavailable due to the structure of this research, however, measures 1 through 7 are cataloged.

Execution of Soviet Montage Theory Paradigm

The thesis of SMT suggests the prevailing importance of editing. Asserting a predominance over the content of the individual shots, SMT suggests that aspects and opportunities that exist in the meter, tonal, and effectual aspects of clip-cutting are essential to creating a nuanced and powerful

message (Trischak, 1998). Described as the "nerve of film," the suggestion surrounds the idea that structural components of the edit contribute to a *Dialectic.* With comparative points and clips inter-dispersed, an argument is created, which creates tension, and is resolved in the conclusion. This dialectic is identical to the Social History Theory of the Dialectic, comprised of *Thesis, Antithesis,* and *Synthesis,* with the corresponding definitions intact.

Underneath the grander structure of the dialectic, SMT uses a formal element to create tonal qualifiers in strategic components of the film. More concisely, *stimulants* refer to audio and visuals cues to create *Dominant* and *Subordinate/Secondary* dimensions of the piece. *Dominant Stimulants* are used to highlight the most important pieces or messages of the film, whereas *Subordinate Stimulants* round out the films audio/visual spectrum. The Subordinate or Secondary pieces may also contain themes, but they are not as important as the pieces that the Dominant aspects of lighting/sound/timing/allusion, highlight (Trischak, 1998).

The dialectic elements are coded for, and then quantified according to duration and presence. The tonal elements are coded separately from the Pratkanis paradigm according to specific tonality, and concurrently with the Pratkanis paradigm as tonal qualities pertain to (1) *Construction of Social Reality* (Pratkanis, 1991).

Use of Analysis Technology

Nvivo, as a qualitative data coding and organization software, is used to organize these 5 measures according to their placement in the propaganda films. The coding function of this software is used to; determine the quantifiable relevance of the paradigm, and to elucidate indoctrination patterns across the various vehicles for recruitment. A transcript of this process is included in the appendix of this research document.

Literature Review

The Production of Reality

> *It is not consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their*
>
> *social being that determines their consciousness.*

-Karl Marx, 1857, page 13

Objective reality

In the mid-20th century, influenced extensively by cultural and academic context, Solomon Asch sought to understand the effect of "social forces." The cultural and academic precedent was the increase in communication technology's proficiency, and hypnotism's effects on the healthy persons' psychological state. Hypnotism, which is now considered somewhat of a children's party gag, was the springboard for discoveries in social psychology pertaining to influence. This is because hypnotism was seen as an extension of a normal psychological state, however exaggerated. The state was termed "suggestibility," and encouraged research pertaining to an apparent change in behavior when humans are observed as a group (Bernheim, 1889). This idea of changed behavior, as demonstrated between observed individual and observed group, is the foundation of Social Psychology.

Early experiments in Social Psychology observed stated opinions noted in individual settings, and would compare them to the stated opinions noted in social settings; either with colleagues, individuals in positions of authority, etc. It is this precedent that underpins the importance of Solomon Asch's *Opinions and Social Pressure* to the research design I am discussing.

Asch followed the tradition of comparing individual statements to social statements in his experiment. In a group of 8 total, comprised of 7 confederates and 1 measured participant, a question would be posed with the participant answering last each time. The 7 confederates were told to answer a specific way, in agreement, with the intention of creating dissent in the 1 measured participant. This would be nearly identical to other trials conducted at the time, if it weren't for the topic posed to the

group-- it wasn't a matter of opinion, it was a matter of describing objective reality.

The group was shown a card with one line, and a second card with three lines of different lengths. The group was asked to match the line on the first card, to the line on the second card whose length was correspondent. This was done 9 times with the same group, 3 initial trials acting as control, and to gain the trust of the participant, and 6 subsequent critical trials. In the critical trials, where the confederates created a dissenting opinion in the participant, social pressure was 36.8 percent effective in creating an incorrect response.

Asch's intentions or ideation surrounding the implication of his findings may have pertained to academic pursuits and an interest in a new component in Psychology. It may have even been influenced by the superfluous anti-communist sentiment that sought to detail the weakness in collectivism and the value of independence and individuality. Regardless of his idea surrounding the implication, these findings suggested that, even in the face of observable and even measurable reality, an individual is at the mercy of the majority.

Moral reality

For the purposes of brevity, I will begin this section with the suggestion that we operate under the assumption that it is considered morally wrong to cause undue harm to others. With this assumption, I consider Stanley Milgram's *Behavioral Study of Obedience.* Milgram contextualized the intentions of his experiment in terms of the chronologically relevant Jewish Holocaust. Milgram suggested that, though the Jewish Holocaust was the idea of one man, it was carried out with incredible efficiency due to the obedience of thousands.

And so Milgram sought to explore this idea: the destructive power of obedience. His experimental design involved 3 individuals; observer, accomplice, and observed participant. Milgram used a pretext, suggesting the experiment sought to understand the effect of a punishment's magnitude on an individual's learning. It was explained to the observed participant that an individual in the

neighboring room was being examined for their ability to complete a memory game. That individual was hooked up to an electronic shocking mechanism, which the observed participant was asked to operate. When the individual in the neighboring room made a mistake, the observed participant was asked to shock the individual, and increase the voltage for the next shock. The individual being shocked was an accomplice in the experiment design, and wasn't truly being shocked, but would react violently to each increasing shock. The experiment design measures how many volts the observed participant would be willing to administer, for no other reason than being told to.

The results were fairly decisive, suggesting that a majority of observed participants were willing to administer a deadly amount of voltage to the individual in the neighboring room. Of 40 participants, 26 were willing to administer a level of "450 volts" labeled on the control panel under a designation "XXX" beyond "Danger: Severe Shock."

Milgram does not offer too much speculation in the Discussion section of his experiment. He comments on the physical suffering experienced by the observed participant, which he asserts is a demonstration of perceived authority's influence over our actions. It should be noted that, much like Asch's experiment, the observed participant does not defer to their ideas of right and wrong, but instead to the social pressures of the situation. The implication, here, is that individual ideas are subject to be overpowered by the context in which they attempt to exist.

Reality of the self

As mentioned earlier, Psychology seeks to understand the mechanisms of an individual being, whereas Social Psychology seeks to understand the mechanisms of a group as a being. Perhaps inter-correlated for these topics is a certain approach to understanding the concept of the self, sometimes described as Schema, or Self-Schema. The theory pertains to a schematic interpretation of identity, and self-identification.

Markus (1977) set out to understand conceptions of the self as a topic inherent to self-care and

emotional well being. Based in a Cognitive approach to psychology, the epistemology of the concept is indicative of a paradigm that looks to understand the way the mind processes information to affect behavior. As such, the Schema Model of Self-Concept appears analogous to computing software. Markus explains that all stimuli are recorded and stored within knowledge structures that summarize information for accessibility and interpretation purposes. These interpretations pertain to contextual assumptions of the self (Markus 1977). Markus uses the proliferation of thinness as attractiveness in society. This correlation is stored, and then compared to the self when data pertaining to the self's appearance next becomes available; when the individual steps on a scale to measure their weight, when a comment is made about their appearance, or when they look in a mirror and make a visual comparison to idealized forms.

It is important to note that, once again, this concept suggests that identity relies upon contextual understanding, and perception. That these perceptions are pertinent only when incoming information is available in relation to a topic of interest. Or, more simply, Markus' idea of Self-Schema is concerned with mental and emotional health, because healthy women are being affected negatively by cultural messages telling them they are not socially valuable unless they are thin. Markus' work can be used in this context, however the point of interest used herein is the establishment of these knowledge structures, and the fact that they rely on incoming information. This creates a suggestion of identity and self-concept heavily grounded in social interaction and available information.

Moral reality in context

Influence Psychology and studies concerning conformity and social environments began with simple experiments that sought to understand mechanisms and conditions of influence (Asch 1951), experiments seeking to understand the effects of influence on learned behaviors (Bandura 1977), and experiments seeking to understand influence toward acts of violence (Milgram 1963). Within this context of understanding bizarre acts of violence in social situations, Zimbardo's work looked initially

at prison environments. Though his most famous work is still his Stanford Prison Experiment, it is where this work lead his research that is of particular note.

Zimbardo's initial prison experiment noted a compelling nature in what he calls *deindividuation.* More simply, uniforms and the removal of identity seem to disassociate their actions from their individualized identity. This concept may sound familiar to anyone that has read *Lord of the Flies,* where our group of protagonists enable themselves to hunt and kill a wild boar, but only after applying war paint to their faces (Golding 1954). Zimbardo noted the incredible and drastic change in behavior that was affected by minute factors of deindividuation. He sought then to extrapolate this idea to a similar incident that had occurred on a larger scale at a military prison. Considering the participants in the study had been accepted with no issues in mental health, nor sadistic tenancies, Zimbardo now sought to understand how situations might negatively impact the behaviors of otherwise mentally stable individuals. The assessment suggested that human beings are not either good or evil, that these qualities are products of context. This is especially true in clinical trials where participants are immersed in what Zimbardo describes as *total situations;* which are averse or consistently different to the conditions that contributed to an individual's previously established personality.

Zimbardo's work suggests then, that in addition to the literary precedent which suggests identity is socially constructed (Markus 1977), and in addition to the social construction of behaviors (Bandura 1977), our identity and our behavior can be temporally altered by social and situational pressures.

Objective reality in context

Culture can be summarized in the idealist tradition as the common stories we tell ourselves, or the similar ideas we hold-- creating a cultural narrative that theoretically binds people together (Arnold 1869). This cultural narrative, based upon the stories we tell ourselves, is largely based on information in one form or another. Objects, occurrences, and other instances are encountered and digested by a community to create an accepted understanding that is useful either practically or spiritually (Strauss

1960). This concept derives from Structuralist Anthropology, which is rooted in Gestalt Psychology.

Both of these suggest that there are patterns inherent to human understanding, with Structuralist

Anthropology seeking to understand these patterns by examining myths. There are many relevant

issues that pushed this approach from prevailing epistemology and paradigm, however, herein the

relevant issue is access to information.

Information in the modern age has become abundant; objects, occurrences, ideas, and stories are

published, posted, recorded, and easily accessible. This means that our finding traces of water on Mars

was known almost immediately, and globally. The minute details of celebrity Kim Kardashian's

wedding found similar reception. This is the issue addressed by Jean Baudrillard's concept of

Simulation and Simulcra-- inundation with information of varying values. That is not nearly the crux of

Baudrillard's concern, however. Instead, the issue is that the inundation of information is taking place

in the form of symbols, or representative stand-ins for real objects; which Baudrillard calls *simulcra.*

These simulacrum are then digested, in a process that is similar to the one described earlier in reference

to structuralism; they are understood in a way that is useful either practically or spiritually. And so

these simulacrum, based upon a reality with no true allegiance to it, are woven in to a cultural narrative.

And so it is suggested that, as these simulacrum who-- representing a non-truth-- are accepted into

large populations, we experience a creation of multiple realities. He calls this product of the *procession*

of simulcra the *simulation.*

The importance of this idea, despite it's similarity to a possibly antiquated paradigm in

Anthropological history, is this theme of socially-affected reality. Baudrillard (1981) is suggesting that,

with the predominance of print, television, internet, radio, and other expansive platforms for mass

communication, information can no longer be communicated wholly. This system of mass

communication contributes small pieces of whole ideas to parts of the population, creating a specific

reality, or simulation of reality, based on these pieces. This destroys any possible dyadic explanation of

social reality. As attributed to Ecclesiastes, "the simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth-- it is the truth which conceals that there is none" (*in* Baudrillard 1981:1).

As context becomes reality

As Baudrillard contemplated the objectivity of reality, Derrida contemplates the validity of our ability to comprehend an objective reality. As are many linguistic analyses, Derrida's work is loquacious, and contains neologisms that translate poorly into English. The most important of these is this idea of *aufhebung*. The suggestion within the idea of *aufhebung* is that the *signifier* relates to *truth* by context that is constructed within the *encoder* and the *decoder* (Derrida 1967/1997).

This suggestion is not as linguistically motivated as it is philosophically. Though this rejection of Saussure's (1916) assertion, that writing exists as a function of speech, was the most poignant contribution to the field-- here I seek to extrapolate this idea of *aufhebung*.

Derrida tells us that the conception of written language no longer derives from a classical logos. Instead, Derrida suggests that the logos derives from an intractable connection to the *phoné*. As explained, Aristotle's conjecture that "spoken words are the are the symbol of mental experience," it is due to proximity of mind and voice, wherein they are connected in their understanding of the context they communicate within. The philosophical suggestion here, is that this proximity between mind and voice is what allows linguistic reality to exist temporally. This proximity, and similarly it's reality, is altered when the medium changes to written language. The written language is capable of producing it's own intractable *phoné*. This becomes *The Written Being/The Being Written,* wherein understanding of communicative reality hinges upon this idea of proximity in a social context. In short-- understanding depends upon a fatallistic heterogeneity, without it, this communicative reality is fragile and is easily broken.

The Production of Reason

> *But to be hanged—is that not unendurable? Even so, when a man feels that it is*
>
> *reasonable, he goes off and hangs himself.*

-Epictetus, 1904:6

Reason is not objective

Pratkanis, operating in circles familiar with Cialdini, Zimbardo, and other influential figures in the psychology of attitude change, presents a paradigm for understanding persuasion enacted by cult leaders. Using the infamous cult leader Jim Jones as an exemplary model, Pratkanis explains the conditions necessary to construct a proper causal-indoctrination program.

The crux of inspiration for this literature review comes from the first condition presented in Pratkanis' paradigm; (1) create your own social reality (Pratkanis, 1991). What Pratkanis explains here, is that isolation is key to the environment of any causal-indoctrination program. This isolation serves as a filter for information from the outside world. This allows our cult leader to construct a sort of "alternate reality" deriving only from the information they provide.

The steps that follow describe; the construction of a deindividualized identity to create a macrocosmic dyad between the cult and the outside world, subtly increasing a demand for commitment, establish and glorify the leader, cement the "we vs. them" dichotomy by sending members out to convert new members, distracting members from their own thoughts by depriving them of cognitive clarity through deprivation or practices, and finally creating a phantom goal that "must be achieved," but possibly cannot be.

Pratkanis' paradigm is developed from his expertise in propaganda and influence psychology, however, his work leaves room for research in understanding how this transition occurs between the recruit's established reality, and his constructed "alternate" reality.

Evil is not objective

Conceptualizing evil is the first step towards understanding the factors that allow it's existence. The idea of evil as banal finds itself at the forefront of this thematic element, as it's re-conception of evil is inherently important to a modern social heterogeneity. This conception derives from an interesting intersection of analysis.

Through a clear influence of Heidegger, and his rejection of abstract contemplation and dissociation from observed reality, Arendt's analysis of political life is conceptualized as a distinctive mode of existence (Arendt 1963). Then, this mode of existence is designed with specific dimensions and rules; that pervert an organic human nature, so that it conforms to the goals of a political system. It is perhaps from this perspective that we find *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* an analysis of presupposed "evil" in the political actions of Adolf Eichmann, specifically his facilitation of the Jewish Holocaust. From this the question arises, "how could this happen?"

Traditional conceptions of evil fail to engage with this question properly. Consider the flaws of Augustine's philosophy, which permeate the arts and sciences alike; "[f]or good to be diminished is evil[...]" (Augustine & Paolucci 1961). This is reflected in our tropes, and even in laws of physical sciences; "matter cannot be created or destroyed" (Gaskell 2003). These ideas create an idealistic dyad between being and not being, whereas matter's existence is used to suggest that a structure is inherent, and this structure is thereby inherent to existence.

This dyad is perhaps reflected in Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Bare Reason* (2013), where *das radikal Bosé,* or, *"radical evil,"* suggests that evil exists as an antagonist to good. Specifically, Kant creates this idea by suggesting that evil occurs when moral law is subverted in favor of our own self-interests (Kant 2013). The supposition is extended from the idea of God and his word, wherein good arises directly herein. Conceptions of evil that derive from this idea, seem to take the form of exercising the limits of perversion; how far away from this "good" can we possibly stray?

Therein we find monstrosity; Dracula, Boogeymen, and figures that seek to cartoonishly contrast our ideas of "good."

However, Augustine and Kant's conceptions, respectively, don't quite account for Eichmann's courtroom behavior, which becomes incredibly clear through Eichmann's own courtroom citation of Kant's *Categorical Imperative.* Perhaps the inception of Arendt's philosophy outlined therein, Eichmann's claim, that he lived his life in accordance to Kant's Categorical Imperative, appears absurd. It became more outrageous, however, when Eichmann outlined a *correct* definition for the idea; "I meant by my remark about Kant that the principal of my will must always be such that it can become the principal of general laws[...]" (Arendt 1963:66).

The dyadic explanation was unparallel to the narrative unfolding; that Eichmann was "terrifyingly normal" (Arendt 1963:273). It is possible to consider Eichmann just by his understanding of traditional evil. He was not the far-reaching monstrosity that consumes blood to stay alive, or that stalks live human prey for the thrill of murder, or even the inexplicable arch-nemesis-- who "just wants to watch the world burn" (Nolan, "The Dark Knight"). And yet, his acts were measurably evil.

Eichmann is not considered very bright by most accounts-- the suggestion for this analysis is not placed within this idea that he might hold a wisdom whose relevance could have prevented the action. It was instead the supposition that, had he contextualized any of the decisions he was making, perhaps he would have reconsidered; as Arendt suggests, "[he] never realized what he was doing" (Arendt 1963:16). Instead his context was limited to self-advancement-- in fact to a degree which is nearly unbelievable. As Arendt describes;

> It was precisely this lack of imagination that enabled him to sit [and face] a German Jew […] pouring his heart out to the man and explaining, again and again, how it was that he reached only the rank of lieutenant colonel in the S.S., and that it had not been his fault that he was not promoted. (Arendt 1963:287)

Arendt restates that Eichmann's actions could be interpreted as stupidity. However, by Arendt's analysis, this would be a gross misstatement. Eichmann's intellectual short-coming's may have resulted in many of his actions-- in his inability to graduate high school, his short-lived career selling vacuum cleaners-- but it was thoughtlessness that allowed him to disassociate his actions from reality.

As reason becomes evil

This reconstruction of traditional evil is important in it's potential applications. It's merit's are perhaps reaffirmed by their unintentional presence in Zimbardo's work, wherein the formulation of his conclusion pertains directly to an idea of disassociation.

Deindividuation occurs, in Zimbardo's work, when the personal identity is subverted in favor of action that does not align with the self-concept (Zimbardo 1970). This subversion can be assisted through multiple means, however it's constance is determined by *outward association.* This is what inspired Zimbardo's analysis of the Abu Ghraib Torture incident of 2003. Within the analysis, and explicitly stated in the conclusion of the work, is the suggestion that systems diminish moral responsibility, or adherence to personal beliefs of "right" and "wrong," creating an environment where it is perhaps reasonable to commit acts that would otherwise be considered "evil."

This could be described as "blind allegiance," similar to Eichmann's interpretation of Kant, where he describes that he is "just doing his job." An appeal to authority places the decision and the identifying components of that decision within the concept of the authority as an idea, and not within the self-concept. This is echoed in Milgram's experiment, wherein participants were asked to shock confederates as a test of obedience-- they did not take responsibility for their actions, because their actions did not belong to them; they belonged to the authority figure (Milgram 1961).

In Arendt, in Zimbardo, and in Milgram, the subject decidedly removes their own agency as a coping mechanism. Is it possible that these subversions describe a situation where human action does not conform to morality, objectivity, or even an affixed point of truth. Instead, these subjects removed a

fixed measure of righteousness, and instead affixed the judgment within the imminence of their actions, in a way that they might feel vindicated even after committing their atrocities. In short, when reality did not allow for their vindication, they deconstructed reality, and allowed their acts of evil to become reasonable.

Findings

Introduction to Resources

In an effort to understand the components that altered the lives of ISIS indoctrination targets, I have analyzed the following resources; (1) a Jordanian woman's ISIS defection, (2) an example of an ISIS recruitment film, (3) the most recent edition of the ISIS periodical *Inspire,* and (4) *Fundamental Concepts in al-Jihad,* the manifesto used by ISIS and affiliated groups. The following section interprets the message of these resources to understand their intended effect as components contributing to indoctrination and recruitment.

I. ISIS: Production of Reality

Objective reality

It is of no surprise that the conditions of defection appear to exist in an environment that is not ideal for individual successes. This idea is explored in further detail by Peter Bergen (2016; Bergen & Gross 2016), however, there are foundational factors in these environments that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of ISIS indoctrination.

Each of the resources that were analyzed contained themes of an audience burdened by transgressions against them. It is unsurprising that their audience (as observed in these resources) appears to exist in areas of dire economic conditions, unstable social conditions, or unstable mental conditions (Bergen 2016).

The economic impact can be seen as a driving factor that exists in the context of the ISIS social media strategy, which directly and individually addresses potential targets (Bergen 2016; Bergen & Gross 2016; Laub & Al-Soud 2015). Considering the Jordanian woman, we can evaluate the accuracy of Bergen's interpretation of targeting components; economic environment, employment status, social environment, familial status (Bergen 2016).

Specifically in Jordan, youth unemployment peaked between the years of 2006 and 2010 at

33%, and remains high at 28%. Specific issues in youth unemployment pertain very specifically to the

education the youth are seeking, and the disconnection to the jobs available.

The Jordanian woman had graduated from university with a Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology,

and remained painfully unemployed. Although she had graduated, her degree did not correspond to the

job-market needs.

The government program, which provides aid to women seeking college education, considered

this tactic to be foundational in rebuilding their economy. However, simultaneously, the Jordanian

government had recently passed legislature that would attempt to reconstruct the economy by

reinvesting in infrastructure (World Bank, 2016). The woman's circumstance can be understood in a

cobweb model of a shifting economy:
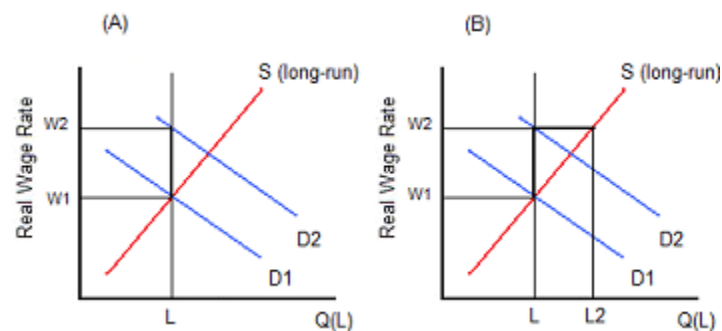
Fig. 1 Cobweb Model of Shifting Economy

In this model, consider the government's conception of the woman as existing at the intersection of L1

and W1, representing existing labor and their current wages. The economic stimulus created by the

Jordanian government intended to increase *labor mobility* by increasing the size of a more valuable

labor pool, the *college educated* (Radcliffe 2014).

This phenomena could be effecting numerous ISIS targets. As of 2015, over 3,000 Jordanians

have joined ISIS. Between 400 and 450 of those recruited have died in ISIS operations (Laub & Al-

Soud 2015).

Moral Reality

As ISIS seeks to recruit new members, it operates between three arms, using social media for distribution (@CENTCOM, 2009; Heavy.com: Taiwan, 2015; Zelin, 2010). These arms; Al-Hayat Media Center, Inspire Magazine, and it's assorted Centralized Command Centers use short propaganda films, PDF magazines, and tweets from twitter's social media platform, respectively.

These platforms each contribute to describing the moral dynamics of their movement, which exist in the context of their fight to "[...] repel the disbelievers" (Abd al-Aziz 2004:27). Accordingly, the moral dynamics are largely based in this idea of retribution, largely divine, that seeks to overthrow the corrupt powers that are uniformly affecting the disenfranchised of the world (Zelin, 2010).

The ISIS recruitment film, *No Respite,* was found to contain a re-conceptualized moral reality that it constructs through dyadic representation-- revealed by the SMT analysis. The analysis was completed in two components initially; dimension and content. Dimension, herein meaning audio and visual queues, and content herein meaning ideas expressed explicitly and verbally.

Dimension notations were taken to describe (1) tonality, (2) audio and visual emphasis effects, (3) coinciding symbols, (4) forced visual perspective. *Content notations* were taken as they pertained to a transcription of plot elements. This structure was then used to describe thematic timing. Dimension notations were coded according to the *Stimulants* and *Subordinates* theory. Meaning, once the components of tonality, effects, symbolism, and perspective were taken, they were coded according to their conceptual or thematic presence in the film.

Melodic audio was ambient and heavily subdued under high decibel effects that emphasized a destruction/construction dichotomy. For this reason, the simplistic melody of chanting male voices that loop throughout the film (with two noteworthy exceptions), were coded as subordinate to the stimulant movement effects. Once the concurrent pieces were coded according to their auditory-spectrum dominance, it revealed two key pieces of the Theme, which specifically emphasized two moments in

the film, expressing; equality in godliness, and the importance of the Qu'ran.

These notations were used specifically to uncover the *Thesis, Antithesis,* and *Synthesis* equation of the film. The plot was notated using key words from the topics discussed, which were then coded into "we" "them" sequences. Once the plot was recorded and coded, the content was measured in seconds by discussion of "we" versus "them." These time measurements were used to seek the prolific tension-building jump-cut of SMT, meaning a shrinking time-span between the competing ideas of "we" and "them." As measured, duration of competing topic "we" and "them" shrank from 15+ seconds to a period of 2 second intervals in the late-center of the film, resolving in a 26 second *Synthesis*.

According to Trischak (1998), this "we" versus "them" dichotomy implicates the underlying message of the film, and allows for a reinterpretation of the films purpose. While externally it can be interpreted as seeking recruits, it's underlying purpose is much more precise. *No Respite* looks to find recruits by asserting that morality is firmly on their side.

Moral reality in context

As recruitment videos are produced and circulate, *Inspire* is responsible for framing the moral argument in the context of current events. *Inspire #14* opens with an Official Statement, "Vengence for the Prophet." The topic surrounds the cover story, and the looming issue in the community at the time of publishing, the attack on the French satire publication, Charlie Hebdo. As contextualized in the letter from the editor, the message follows this omni-present narrative, wherein there is a war against Islam, whose truth was only exposed when the 9/11 terror attacks occurred. The suggestion is that the 9/11 terror attacks raised awareness to an issue that had been known by few, and was now unifying the Muslim community as awareness spread.

This awareness is expressed in terms such as; the plundering of Muslim wealth, the imprisonment of Muslim men and women, and the killing of Muslim scholars. Linguistically, these

statements suggest an internal reference to ideas covered later, or to be known through deictic

repetition. This diectic repetition can be observed in *Vengeance for the Prophet,* one of *Inspire #14'*s

main pieces.

While citing sections of the Qu'ran, the phrasing detracts from the intended purpose of the

excerpt. For example, "Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah"

is followed by a parenthetical rationalization, which suggests that the referenced "covenant" that a

believer has been true to, is the act of jihad. Following this quotation, is a declarative in appreciation

for those that attacked the Hebdo building. The passages create a narrative, whereby the Hebdo authors

created a sort of cosmic unrest that was resolved through the attack, which is interpreted as divine.

However, this isn't explicitly stated, it enacts a form of diexis, whereby our questions created by the

Qu'ran citation are answered by the attack on the hebdo building, which structures the argument.

Surat luq'man, the chapter which precedes the above quotation in the Qu'ran, suggests that the

covenant is not a dedication to conversion nor vengeance. Instead, it is the adherence to belief in the

face of disbelief. So this constructed dichotomy exists outside of any of the 7 morphologies of the

passage, while claiming to be a direct prophecy. In this context, morality has been decidedly re-

structured.

It is this newly constructed morality that becomes the narrative of the remainder of the

introduction. It suggests that those who do not follow the prescriptions of the [altered] Qu'ran are

actively insulting the Prophet, and they are finally being held against due justice. The words "glory" are

repeated throughout the sections pertaining to self-sacrifice, and the word "consequences" is repeated

throughout sections pertaining to attacks in New York, Paris, and Spain. The theme of this introduction

is *tawfeeq,* or, reconciliation.

Objective reality in context

Inspire describes Lone Jihad, a key principal of the modern terrorist movement that emerged

from *Fundamental Concepts in Jihad,* where Abdul Aziz describes what he calls "Open Source Jihad" (Aziz 2013). It's very likely that this manefesto is what sparked Khan's idea for *Inspire,* which appears as an attempt to facilitate Aziz's ideas. Open Source Jihad is this idea that Mujahidin should de-centralize. This is accomplished by deconstructing a Mujahidin training program in a way that can be expressed through a medium capable of spreading at an increased rate, and communicating goals that can be accomplished by un-trained civilians. It is, in effect, modernized guerrilla warfare.

The recommendation of these techniques is presented in context of American military rationale. The author refers to the invasion of Iraq, Yemen, and Syria as criminal acts that are legitimized through a false sense of duty described in the western world as "humanitarian causes." The suggestion inherent here, is that Americans enable themselves to commit atrocities world-wide while ridding themselves of the guilt through a commonality with disbelievers. This commonality is a flagrant opposition to the teachings of Khan's Islam, and is thus an insult to Allah which the community must unite to punish.

Sections that appear to be advertisements are litered throughout this article, and address obstacles in this route to punishment-- namely the subversion of the physical self to create tawfeeq. More specifically-- suicide bombing. One of the advertisements describe a "mountain" which one must overcome-- reaching it's summit provides the perspective one would need to understand the importance of such a trying ascent. More specifically, this mountain is the fear of death, and the summit is supposed to be the act of suicide, wherein it's necessity becomes clear. Another advertisement is simple, it suggests that one be merciful, and thus Allah will be merciful to them. More clearly-- if you live a proper life, death won't be so bad.

Among these advertisements is an infographic that simplifies the Mujahidin "equation." America's defeat, concurrent with *Da'awah* [invitation of non-Muslims] and Defense beget an established *Khilafa* [Caliphate]. The equation details each idea. America must be defeated because it uses perverse consumerism to fuel a war against Islam and Allah. Destroying the American economy

will deteriorate their military strength. Da'awah, or the inviting of non-Muslims to Islam creates a

power in numbers. Defense prevents any sort of renaissance in the enemy, America. This combination

is suggested to result in the predominance of Islam throughout the world-- the establishment of the

Caliphate.

   As context becomes reality

   Inspire is hauntingly familiar in it's dichotomy construction. It is, at it's heart, created from

perceptions of threat, based in perceptions of conspiracy. Conspiracy, in it's many iterations, exist at

incredibly diverse intersections of western culture. Additionally, a conspiracy is an idea that cannot be

extinguished because conclusive information simply isn't available. The conspiracy constructed by

Inspire creates a narrative of a world against what is right and righteous, and that this righteousness

must be adhered to in the face of the disbelievers, and necessitates self-sacrifice. The operative

language, that appears to communicate to Americans, is that their government isn't telling them

everything. That the American government is seeking to commit atrocities under one veil or another.

   It should be noted that the Mike Brown and Freddy Gray incidents were both included in

Inspire #14. The article did not create any correlation to Islamic terrorism until the conclusion of the

piece. Initially, the piece compares perfectly to any piece found on a subsidiary of Gawker Media LLC.

They introduce the issue as a marking of systemic racism, which is suggestibly known through deictic

repetition. The article then discusses a history of racism, followed by the suggestion that these things

will continue to happen unless the provoked unite in protest. The *Inspire* article does not go beyond the

Gawker Media article in it's prescription, avoiding the suggestion of violence or even tawfeeq.

II. ISIS: Production of Reason

      Reasoning of al-Jihad

al-Sharif, or *Abd Al-Qader Bin Abd Al-Aziz* as he is credited in *al-'Umda fi I'dad al-'Udda,* or *Fundamental Concepts in Jihad* (2004)*,* is considered a key figure in the modern Jihadist movement. While in exile from Egypt for his association with the assassination of Anwar Sadat, al-Sharif spent his time creating a manifesto of sorts; a guide to a decentralized Jihadi movement.

This decentralized Jihadi movement is expressed over the course of 20 sections. The sections build from an inception of describing the Muslim obligation to serve Allah as universal, towards the impetus of war, with *The Purpose of the Creation* (Abd Al-Aziz, 2004.: 13), and *And Allah, Majestic Is His Stature, Commands the Believers, To Repel the Disbelievers* (Abd Al-Aziz, 2004:35), respectively.

The author selects pieces of the Qu'ran and Hadith as references for holy commandments that pertain to the presented narrative.

As described within the manifesto, Allah commands allegiance from all via holy message. The suggestion is that, when Allah's words were brought to the people by Mohammed the prophet, a composite of good news and warning were broadcast throughout the world. Those who chose not to believe would be held before court to repent, and upon refusal, should be executed (Abd Al-Aziz, 2004:15).

It is then suggested that the will of Allah was to bring together all communities into a composite, ruled by peace. However, due to a division between Believers and Disbelievers, this would not be possible. That, additionally, Allah could not smite those who disbelieve as it would not communicate the holy word, due to the disbelievers inherent ignorance (Abd Al-Aziz, 2004:18). Instead, it is suggested that, once the disbelievers assert their disbelieve, that they shall be executed unless their God might protect them (Abd Al-Aziz, 2004:27).

The crux of al-Sharif's argument is rooted in the Sunni interpretation of the Qu'ran. A section

known as *Surah At-Tawba,* or *the Nature of Repentance*, reads "O' you who believe! Fight those of the

disbelievers who are close to you..." (Qu'ran 9:123). The suggestion is that the most dangerous

disbeliever is the one who is closest to you. If this is to be done, the world could be relieved of it's

disbelievers, and peace would settle in over an established Sunni Caliphate.

The words, cited verses, and most importantly the principles asserted in *Fundamental Concepts*

in Jihad are echoed through publications like Samir Khan's *Inspire Magazine*, Anwar al-Awlaki's *al-*

Hayat Media Productions, and social media posts (@CENTCOM, 2009; Heavy.com: Taiwan, 2015;

Zelin, 2010). This suggests that, despite differences, this manifesto transcends specific extremist

affiliations, and echoes through the modern terrorist movement.

Analysis

Infrastructural Weakness in Social, Moral, or Objective Reality

An *infrastructural weakness in social, moral or objective reality* is a conept that picks up from the momentum of insecurities. There is are a significant amount of ideas in the social sciences that suggest an individual is eager to differ to the opinion of a group for a number of reasons. Among these reasons are the value of consensus, the value of authority, and the value of established ideas-- they are seen as reliable measures for correctness, and under pressure, an individual will defer to them (Asch 1955; Cialdini 2006; Hassan 1990; Luchins & Luchins 1967; Milgram 1963; Pratkanis & Aronson 1991; Pratkanis & Shadel 2005; Zimbardo 1970; Zimbardo & Leippe 1991). This came from an understanding of an individual's suggestibility, or our ability affect an individual's interpretation, reaction, or perception of a discrete event after interacting with the individual in an altered state of consciousness (Berheim 1889).

The *infrastructural weakness* here, is a way of representing a new interpretation of the altered state as explored by Bernheim, and instead suggests a more comprehensive list of platforms for suggestibility. The classic works of suggestibility, like Bernheim's (1889) work, reveal that the mechanics of *suggestibility* are surprisingly simple; it relies simply on the exertion of "...an idea which has been suggested to, and received by the mind" (Bernheim 1889:125). However, in the discussion of methods, it becomes clear that *suggestibility* requires that the idea is eased into the mind of the subject, with 'ease' being attributed to multiple dimensions.

I want to suggest that, based upon the dynamics discussed in *No Respite* with our SMT analysis, we reveal a type of this easing. Instead of insisting the subject fall in to a sort of sleep, SMT lures the subject in to a sort of acedia where they can be Socratically guided through a reconstruction of a similar reality. In fact, it almost seems as if SMT were constructed upon this idea, however it is not explicitly stated in any of the literature. However, Narkompros was likely capable of accessing the material based

upon the date of it's formation and it's predominance (Trischak 1998).

As such, the *infrastructural weakness* is a dimension that relies on a subtle sort of relaxation that is not physical, but is instead potentially psycho-somatic, and indulgent. The *infrastructural weakness* is a weakness of connection-- low inter-community value, low inter-social value, negative macrocosmic value, or negative macrocosmic or microcosmic identities. Each of these ideas describe obstacles to establishing connections to one's own community, and thus correlate to obstacles in stabilizing one's own identity.

This weakness asks us to heed our concerns, our unfounded convictions in civilized society's metaphysics and mechanics-- and indulge in the idea that the reality we are privy to is inherently flawed. As either a quantum physician might explain, this is both true, and not true, at the same time. Inter-subjectively, the mechanics of the civilized society the subject finds themselves within is inherently true, however, the design of civilized society is inherently arbitrary, and is thus flawed.

It should come as no great surprise that the structure of society is flawed, however in this context, it is posited as a *truth*-- a grand conspiracy that the unlearned are not privy to, or are consciously averse to.

Deconstruction of Social, Moral, and Objective Reality

Following the established *infrastructural weakness,* the conceptualized otherness combines with a desire for righteousness in the face of a new dyad. This dyad presents the lurid themes of the currently presented reality, and suggests that it's offensive and confounding features call for it's own deconstructing. In short, we are witnessing a unification that occurs when a group of people are outcast, yet assert within themselves a feeling of deserved vindication.

A significant amount of research that explores *Influence* discusses the ideas as they pertain to humans as social beings, which prizes interaction and the velocity of interactivity that is conducive to value in networking (Cialdini 2006). This network of value creates this idea that cooperation is desirous

in given social interactions, and creates familiar components like *foot-in-the-door,* and *reciprocity,* both creating a value from interactivity and transaction (Pratkanis & Shadel 2005).

A similar concept creates a bond, where interactivity and transaction create magnetism, and forge a group identity-- we might call this a *tribe* (Adams & Smith 2008). However, unlike some of the definitions of tribalism, which suggest that members may find each other due to geo-spatial reasons (Dodge & Kitchin 2001), *Inspire Magazine* can be seen creating an identity for readers to associate with, by amalgamating principles, and vectoring those principles against an abstract morality.

The *deconstruction of social reality* makes the *infrastructurally weak* target operable. It creates value in the cooperation of the outcast, and gives an identity to those who are potentially enlightened by it's destruction. As it was mentioned in the section regarding *Inspire Magazine's* topicality, it sought to communicate the ideas of ISIS or radical Islam in the context of events it generally disagreed with, yet capture the spirit of an incredibly vague dyadic where anyone who isn't a great, faceless, and ambiguous evil political powerhouse must then consider the present reality absurd, and favor it's subversion. It draws extremes between the reader and the subject content, suggesting that there is a unilateral idealism that unites it's allegedly enormous readership. It suggests that their vindication is imminent, and with divine power on their side, beckons the deconstruction of the current world order.

Reconstruction of Social, Moral, and Objective Reality

From the deconstruction of existing reality, begs it's reconstruction. In this analysis, the reconstruction begins from a point that is so foundational in the middle east, that it defines the inception of their calendar-- the coming of Mohammed, and the writing of the Qu'ran. The *reconstruction of social, moral, and objective reality* begins with a Holy reinterpretation performed by Abd al-Aziz.

In each and every piece of ISIS propaganda, the center of ISIS's philosophical foundation is Fundamental Concepts in al-Jihad (n.d.). The 242 page manifesto socratically explains the chain of

events that has led to modernity, wherein peace is threatened by the non-believers. The dyad expressed

here, is that peace cannot exist in the face of the non-believer, and as Allah empowers each the believer

and the non-believer for discrete purposes, the tension exists simply as an obstacle for the believers to

overcome-- to demonstrate that there is no diety higher than Allah (Abd Al-Aziz 2004:11).

It is unsurprising that the wording of nearly every functional line of propaganda is fatalistic--

"though the disbelievers dislike it," is a prime example. The entirety of the work seeks to create these

statements, or at very least this modality of thought. This can be seen in the escalating Socratic

narrative of the work, using the larger ideas to draw conclusions about the work's directionality.

However, it is more concise in some of the rarer portions of the book where the author seemingly

stumbles with his own concepts, and retraces his steps to rectify his own narrative:

And this is the condition of those who believe in some of the Book while disbelieving in some;

those who used as evidence, one of the evidences in the matter, while leaving the remaining

evidences, as I mentioned in the fourth principle from "The Principles of Holding Steadfast to

the Book and the *Sunnah."* (Abd al-Aziz, 2004:50)

The author continues from there to suggest that the point of discussion which prompted confusion in

the author, also prompted confusion in Allah, because it's meant to be confusing, and if the reader is not

confused, then they are not of Allah. Decidedly, that's a pretty convoluted method for making

everything seem simple.

However, it's not really about reading the book. In fact, based upon some of the information

gathered from our ex-patriated Jordanian woman, it's likely that they're hoping you *didn't* read the

book-- as it seems some of the ISIS principles diverge from their own teachings when it comes to a few

things. In the case of our Jordanian woman, being allowed outside of the house without male

supervision.

The *reconstruction of reality* relies on each of the previous two components, but builds upon

them with prescribed actions. The *infrastructural weakness* opens the world up to reinterpretation,

suggesting that those who are not valued by society exist within a flawed society. The *deconstruction*

of reality becomes imminent when we consider the amoral construction of the existing reality, and the

perceivable unilateral idealism that is described by *Inspire, No Respite,* and *Fundamental Concepts in*

al-Jihad. Because reality is currently flawed, and exists outside this unilateral idealism that

undoubtedly makes sense to the indoctrination target, reality must be *reconstructed* for vindication.

Once an outsider, with few stable connections to reality, the target is lured in with vague truths

and appeals to reciprocity. The combination of these factors strengthen their involvement, and continue

to escalate until de-escalation becomes noticeably difficult, whether it's the increased alienation they

feel if they begin sharing unpopular beliefs during the initial stages of indoctrination, or it's the physical

border they've crossed from Turkey in to Northern Syria. However, as it occurred in *Inspire Magazine*

creator, former Queens resident Samir Khan, as it occurred in al-Hayat Media Center, New Mexico

native Anwar al-Awlaki, and as it occurred with our Jordanian woman, it appears the process is highly

effective (Chayes 2011; Laub & Al-Soud 2015; Raghavan 2009).

Conclusion

Until now, the understanding of ISIS recruitment regards the chaos of the Middle East as fundamental in radicalization, and the channeling of these radicalized individuals via social media as the final step (Bergen 2016; Bergen & Gross 2016; Lister & Rashid 2015). This relegates the discussion of a complex phenomena to "Radicalize and Recruit." While this describes the phenomena, this research was an attempt to understand it.

Privileged by existing research conducted by historians and political analysts, combined with the tools of existing tools of theoretical analysis, I believe this research has illuminated a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms that perpetuate ISIS indoctrination and recruitment tactics.

I have looked for theoretical precedent conducive to understanding indoctrination and influence in the social sciences, examined their capabilities, and assumed a vector for understanding the menagerie of contributing factors. I have used this vector to compare findings from a qualitative analysis of ISIS propaganda pieces, and a former recruitment target. I believe the results of this analysis contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of ISIS, however I believe the most impactful contribution of this analysis is the observed fracturing of identity, from beginning to end.

Numerous sources have argued that there is no consistent profile that describes the average ISIS recruit (Bergen 2016; Bergen & Gross 2016; Lister & Rashid 2015; Speckhard & Yayla 2016; Speckhard 2015). After conducting this analysis, I would like to reject this notion.

Peter Bergen (2016) would suggest, through his analysis of cases pertaining to *homegrown terror,* that disenfranchisement connects the story of each defector he's covered. Charles Lister would disagree, stating specifically:

I have seen people being recruited from impoverished, uneducated, lost-- disenfranchised backgrounds, but I've also seen multi-millionaires going to join; who had master's degrees,

Ph.D's-- they ran their own businesses […] the idea that ISIS recruits just impoverished,

disenfranchised groups is a myth. (Lister [Middle East Institute] 2016: 16:15)

Both, however, are correct in their polar assertions. I don't believe one would find demographic

similarities between recruits that would illuminate the function of ISIS indoctrination.

In collecting these pieces of information, and seeing the narratives that exist in our exploration

of these topics, I believe that expatriation and motivation towards extremist actions is presupposed by

our relationship with objective reality; and that objective reality does not exist. I believe that the

malignance that exists in a vast intersection of ideas, owes it's livelihood to a human inability to ground

our actions in a universality. I believe that every component that seems almost unrelated, constructing

the chaos of everyday behaviors, can be traced to our inability to comprehend our own existence-- to

understand a non-diegetic logic for our actions, and to rationalize with impunity the value of our

behaviors

As discussed in this analysis, it is the process, beginning with an *infrastructural weakness in*

social, moral, or objective reality, met with a targeted *deconstruction of that social, moral, or objective*

reality, which is then *reconstructed* according to the goals and intentions of the ISIS caliphate,

according to a new *social, moral, and objective reality.*

That this process is possible presents vast implications for further research, and potentially

extends itself for many of the confounding questions of identity and motive we are presented with

today; ranging from school shootings and lone-wolf terrorism, to the deteriorating lines of bi-

partisanship currently plaguing American democracy and the world abroad.

The potential of this research should be considered from it's philosophical-theoretical basis.

That ideas considered moral, objective, and true, can become evil, or subjective, or false does not seek

to create a feeling of nihilism, of pessimism, or of futility. Instead, from the philosophical-theoretical

basis, it means that reality and our social environment are influenced by the way we choose to live our

lives, and by the things we consider important. In short, reality is broken, and is only resolved through

inter-subjectivity. Perhaps we may only find objectivity, morality, and truth, in agreement and

cooperation.

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Appendices

Appendix i

"No Respite" Observation Notes

["*no rest from the difficult task at hand*"]

[possibly a dichotomy construction: semiotically relies on false information demonstration via comparison. Argumentative.]

[soviet montage theory(SMT)://dialectic]

    [Thesis://Force for (good)[righteousness]]

    [Antithesis://liars, *sodomites*]

    [Synthesis://"*Truth will be revealed*"]

        [Truth://The true underdog is the one who is weak of faith]

[SMT://musical composition theory(MCT)/stimulants determine dominant themes]

        [stimulant://audio/decibels]

        [stimulant://visual/light]

        [subordinate://tonalities/simplicity]

        [subordinate://tonalities/consistency]

    [Dominance://unity is righteousness]

[SMT://Methods/]

    [Methods://Attractions]

|:|Dimensions

Audio:

Continuous melody   [SMT://subordinate]

chanting

male voices

[[sounds "dutiful"]

Sound effects

movement effects   [SMT://stimulant]

waiving banner noises   [SMT://subordinate]

Bass emphasis for IS flag entrances   [SMT://stimulant]

Bass emphasis for IS soldier entrances/appearances [SMT://stimulant]

Voice over

Artificially lowered   [SMT://stimulant]

[[Pronunciation is excellent]

American English

[[Qatar is pronounced as cutar]

Emphasis through silence   [SMT://Dominance]

Once for black/white equality

Once for recital of "Surah Yunus 71"

Imagery:

Custom-animated still images

Sepia-lens flares   [SMT://Dominance]

[sun/light dichotomy]

Size comparisons   [SMT://attractions]

Clouds

blue for IS

Black/purple for the US

Soldiers: IS

Feet atop obstacles   [SMT://attractions]

upward perspective for individual soldiers

straight shots for group images

one "unity shot"

Soldiers: US

[[Truth/truth dichotomy?]

[[T:suggests American propaganda is about idealizing the american army as the greatest

[on earth/t: suggests the full truth is]

Numbers are true

soldiers are weak

dead

suicidal

They fear us   [SMT://attractions]

attack from the air spending millions

[[cheap IS arms work because the soldiers are better, and are allied with Allah?]

|:|Content

Plot   We/You dichotomy in seconds

History and context :12   -12

this is Khilafah

established in 1400's

it's huge   [SMT://attractions]

follows Quran

not like other "*non secular*" governments :39   27

[[non-secular?]

We will perform Jihad :56   17

We bow to Allah 1:03

Call to **Toheen** 1:07

\[Unlike] 1:11   15

Jahiene politics 1:13

demolished 1:19   8

paulmira and **minowa**

Sykes-Picot border 1:25

Shirk & Nationalism 1:28   9

\[Unlike] 1:30   -2 [MARG/ERR: +2]

no difference between an Arab and a non-Arab 1:35

Black man and White man 1:37

[[clue that this is specifically targeted towards the US?]

Shar'iah law 1:44   14

prepare the youth 1:49

\[Unlike] 1:54   10 [MARG/ERR: 26]

greatest army ever known 2:00

weak soldiers 2:01

dead 2:08

suicidal 2:09

lie about military victories 2:17

18 suicides each day 2:25

no advancement 2:31

6 trillion dollar war 2:35

crippled

"against the muslims"

[[ISIS is not the "*muslims"?*]

$250k missiles 2:45

\[We]   60

50 cent bullets 2:50

\[You]   18 - 8 [10]

Turkey, Iran, Russia oppose the truth 3:08

[[we are allies with Russia?]

It has been foretold that the opposition would mount 3:15 [7]

but we will win on the hill of Dabiq 3:20   [5]

Surah Yunus 71   3:47

So resolve upon your plan and call upon your associates. Then let not your plan

be obscure to you. Then carry it out upon me and do not give me respite.

[26]

/[Who is us?]

Appendix ii

    CITI Program Completion

The image part with relationship ID rId6 was not found in the file.