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Capturing the Islamic State's Words

Manichaeism, Ideology, Propaganda

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- February 2015: in the aftermath of the *Charlie Hebdo* attack in Paris, publication of an essay in the seventh issue of *Dabiq*, entitled “The Extinction of the Grayzone”.
- Slow death of the space of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims, said to have started with the “blessed operations” of September 11, 2001.
- Two antithetical and irreconcilable camps: the camp of Islam, endowed with a new “caliphate”, and the camp of disbelief, namely the Western and allied military coalition.



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- No intermediate zone, no third way. Muslims would face a choice: apostasy – the abandonment of Islam – or joining the Islamic State.
- “Grayzone”: space of compromise, ill-defined contours. It separates and connects both camps of masters and slaves (Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 1986).
- For the Islamic State, this blurred area corresponds to our plural and multicultural societies.



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- Manichean logic that echoes the *war on terror*: “You are either with us or against us”.
- The identity constituted by the Islamic State's members or sympathizers is therefore experienced as ‘solid’, powerful and superior: total intolerance and insensitivity towards the alleged “enemies of Allah”.
- To remove the gray zone is a fundamental element of the jihadist narrative, of its radical and revolutionary utopia.



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- Profusion of commentaries, analyses and studies but few academic works have addressed the issue of the discourse elaborated and projected by the Islamic State.
- Yet, it is through this specific discourse that the terrorist group has marked the hearts and minds, and recruited among a wide audience.
- The jihadist rhetoric emits more than a representation of the world: it transforms it by inspiring and guiding action.



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- Extreme dualism, anchored in the gray zone haunting the jihadist group: a binary thought characteristic of hyper-modernity.
- Alongside 'liquid', globalised worlds of meaning, confusion can push individuals to seek certainty in meta-narratives.
- The caricatural categories used by the jihadists have made their way among their declared enemies as well.



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- Essentially digital, the Islamic State propaganda has been abundant and sophisticated. Through a variety of media outlets, the group has spread its ideology massively.
- The jihadists expose their goals and wish to strengthen a sense of collective identity. They inscribe their intentions in a series of facts and events (internal dimension).
- This is also about guaranteeing resources, symbolic and financial, and recruits, to lead action (external dimension).



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- West *versus* East, civilisation *versus* barbarism, Islam *versus* disbelief, jihad *versus* crusades, colonial *versus* decolonial, unity *versus* division, caliphate *versus* democracy, ummah *versus* nation, tyranny *versus* liberation, corruption *versus* justice, humiliation *versus* revenge, greatness *versus* decay etc.
- Here are the binaries that fundamentally structure all the jihadist discourse, which allow its ideologues to sensitise, persuade and incite violence.



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« Strangeness is a condition that the Muslim living in the West cannot escape as long as he remains amongst the crusaders (...) I immediately felt different amongst the people of Sham. I no longer felt a stranger for merely adhering to some of the manifest rites of Islam that would create shockwaves in the West. » (Dabiq 12 : 29-30)

- History of encounters and exchanges between West and East: tradition of mutual representations, often negative and difficult to correct in the postcolonial era.
- Such process of othering, according to which the East is a 'we' and the West a 'them', is an old construction.



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- **Binary representation**
- **Constructing the enemy**
- **‘Self-orientalisation’?**



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HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE WEST

"The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify – by Allah's permission – until it burns the crusader armies in Dabiq"

- Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi





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RUMIYAH EN

Dhul-Hijjah 1437

ISSUE **1**

O muwahhidin, rejoice, for by Allah, we will not rest from our jihad except beneath the olive trees of Rumiya (Rome). – Abu Hamzah al-Muhajir

■ Foreword

Stand and Die upon That for Which Your Brothers Died

P-2

■ Articles

The Religion of Islam and the Jama'ah of the Muslims

P-4

Interview with the Amir of the Central Office for Investigating Grievances

P-10





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صور من أرض الخلافة





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WILL RISE VERY SOON**

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@shaheed442

TWEETS 388 FOLLOWING 229 FOLLOWERS 72 LIKES 2 [Follow](#)

Jerusalem next stop
@shaheed442 [Follow](#)

France, you reap what you sow.
9:28 PM · 13 Nov 2015

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RETWEETS 7 LIKES 7



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« If a mujahid kills a single man with a knife, it is the barbaric killing of the “innocent.” However, if Americans kill thousands of Muslim families all over the world by pressing missile fire buttons, it is merely “collateral damage”... » (Dabiq 3 : 3)

- The Islamic State extends the duality established between East and West by opposing civilisation and barbarism.
- Claude Levi-Strauss had perfectly explained how the distinction drawn between the civilised and the barbarian was at the origin of a multitude of fictitious categories.



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(Dabiq 3 : 3)*

- **Managing savagery**
- **Civilising mission**
- **Fictitious categories**



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« The old colonialism was but a front for the Crusaders, just as it is today a front for the Jews and Christians. Indeed, the “Caesar of Rome” Bush has declared multiple times that, “It is a Crusade!” So why do people lie and deny this? » (Rumiyah 2 : 13)

- In the post-9/11 context, George W. Bush launched the ‘war on terror’, likened to a crusade. Three years earlier, Osama Bin Laden had called for jihad against crusaders.
- The Islamic State constantly evokes a ‘crusade’ against Islam. For the group, jihad and crusades symbolise the clash between the East (Orient) and West (Occident).



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- **Mujahidin and crusaders**
- **Modernist approaches**
- **Neo-medievalism**



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DABIQ

1435
DHUL-HIJJAH

4
ISSUE

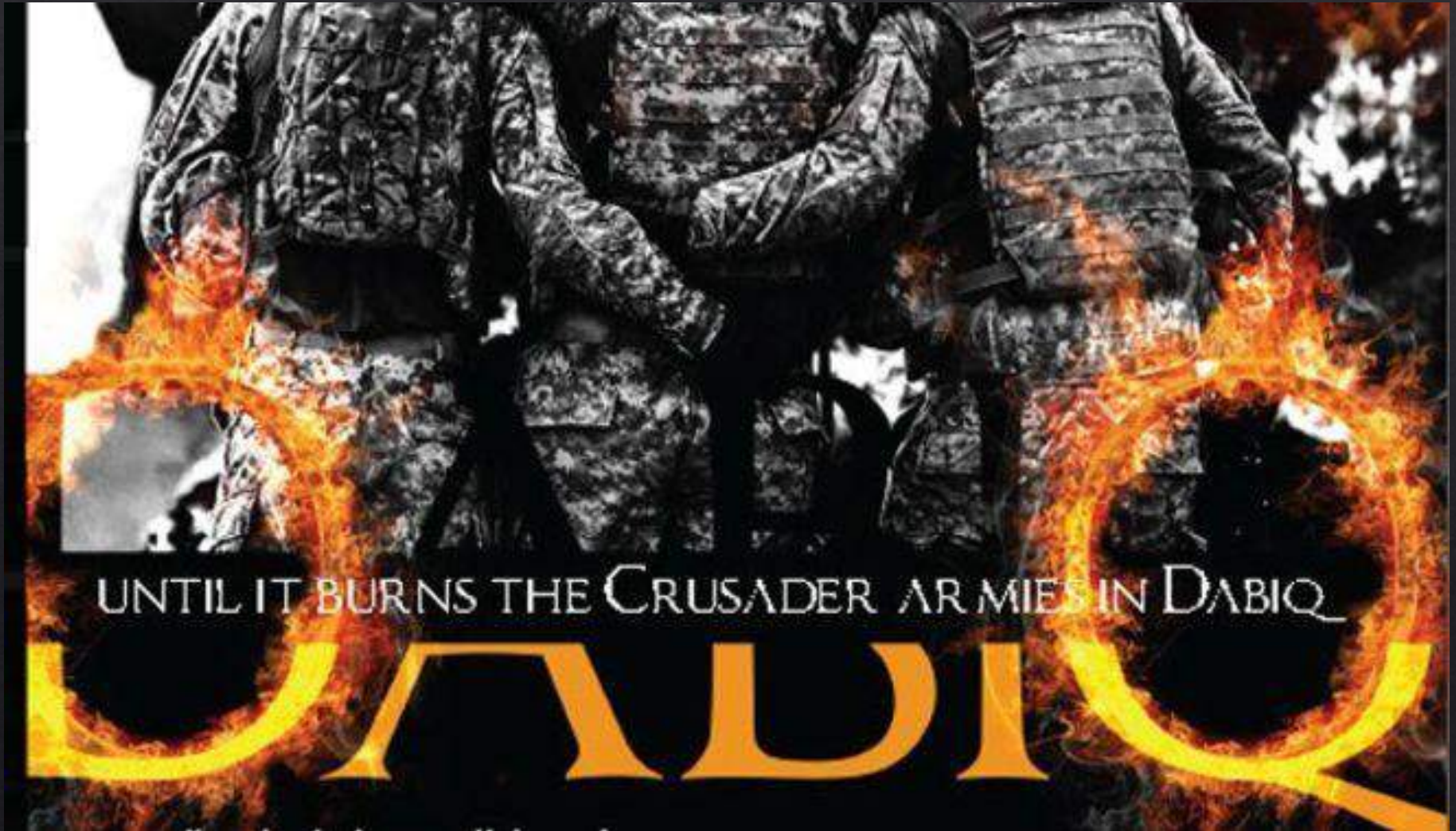


THE FAILED CRUSADE



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Thanks for your attention.

