TITLE PAGE

The Final Crusade: A Study of the Crusades in ISIS Propaganda

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Introduction

"*Deus vult, Deus vult, Deus vult!*" the voices of the faithful carry out across the fields in an exhortation that will continue to ring out for centuries. The year is 1095 and as the Council of Clermont draws to a close with the grave preaching of Pope Urban II, the men of Latin Christendom prepare for war. It will be another four years, fraught with hellish sieges, starvation and disease, horror and valor, until these men of the cross finally reach Jerusalem, their vows fulfilled. Their journey through the Near East will not be forgotten to the pages of history.

Almost a thousand years later, a man wrote his own sermon somewhere deep in the hills of Afghanistan. "This is a recurring war," Osama bin Laden claimed, his words read by thousands on the eve of the American invasion of Afghanistan, "the original crusade brought Richard from Britain, Louis from France, and Barbarossa from Germany. Today the crusading countries rushed as soon as Bush raised the cross."[1] Over a decade later, an offshoot of al-Qaeda overran and butchered its way to control much of Syria and Iraq in 2014. These fanatics claimed not only jihad but a war against the "Final Crusade," declaring with pointed purpose that "history repeats itself by Allah's divine decree." This organization came to be known by many names, chiefly as "the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria," or ISIS. The now deceased ISIS spokesman Al Adnani delivered a speech to both his fellow jihadists and the world, proclaiming:

> We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted… So mobilize your forces, O crusaders. Mobilize your forces, roar with thunder, threaten whom you want, plot, arm your troops, prepare yourselves, strike, kill, and destroy us. This will not avail you… And so we promise you [O crusaders] by Allah's permission that this campaign will be your final campaign.[2]

[1] Tayseer Alouni, Interview with Osama Bin Laden, *Al Jazeera*, Undisclosed, 2001.
[2] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq,* September, 2014.

The words of bin Laden and al-Adnani illustrate a trend which began in the twilight of the Ottoman Empire, grew through a period of intense anti-Western sentiment, and emerged as central to the propaganda of jihadist groups in the 21st century. Many modern jihadist organizations classify the forces of the West, particularly America and its European allies, with a very specific name: Crusader. ISIS works occupy the foreground of this movement, with integral aspects of its propaganda reliant upon the idea of an all-encompassing and ever-present boogeyman, embodied by the Crusader label. I argue that ISIS uses a romanticized history of the Crusades to claim a historical validity for their own war and ideology. ISIS and its al-Qaeda predecessor use a historical parallelism of the Crusades inherited from Europe and 20th century Arab nationalist and Islamist thinkers to depict their jihad as an epic struggle to defend their homeland and their religion from Western invaders and their indigenous allies, legitimizing their conquests and bolstering recruitment and morale.

The year 1099 marks the beginning of the Crusader era in the Levant, ending nearly two hundred years later with the fall of Acre in 1291 at the hands of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars. Eight crusades would be launched after Clermont, most ending in failure with a few notable exceptions. The time of the Crusades stand out as some of the most romanticized years in human history. The Crusades claiming the crown of most influential and storied are the First and Third Crusades. These Crusades claim both fantastical, near miraculous feats and characters as well as blood chilling acts of carnage and death on both sides. The romantics had no shortage of material to write about. The great and terrible sieges upon the fabled cities of antiquity, the suicidal exploits of pious warrior monks in desert kingdoms, and perhaps one of the greatest cast of characters that history ever saw, complete with a warrior king and a mujahid (one who wages holy war, or jihad) sultan, were received as legends for centuries and are still awed at today. The bloodshed and violence of

the Crusades also became a characteristic source of ignominy, with events like the sack of Jerusalem still remembered for their utter barbarism. These types of events, along with the general nature of the Crusades as an invasion, enrapture the imaginations and passions of ISIS jihadists today. It is of vital importance to understand these events and their minutia in order to fully appreciate their invocation, even if so many who use their memory do not. A large section of this thesis is thus devoted to a brief history of the First Crusade and the career of Saladin, the Muslim hero of the Third Crusade, for this very reason. The shouts of "Crusader!" will carry a great deal more gravity if one knows who those men actually were, what they did and why they did it.

The two centuries of holy war captured the imaginations of Europe for nearly a millennium, in either pride or shame at various times. Chief among these times of pride was the age of European imperialism. The French, even after their incredibly antitheist revolution, held the Crusades in the view of French exceptionalism and as an historical treasure of the French people. This is indicative of a powerful force that is of prime importance to this thesis and the current situation of the Middle East in regards to terrorism and modern jihad. 19th century European romanticism brought back an idealized and, as the name implies, romantic understanding of the Crusades just in time for new waves of European expansion and foreign involvement. It was this romantic view of the Crusades that the Europeans held when they conquered the Ottoman Empire, when they aided nationalist uprisings in former Ottoman territory, and when they broke the last vestiges of Muslim international power. These overtones were not lost on those they conquered, and soon an easily made historical parallel took root.

While the West took the Crusades as an influential part of their history, in the East these conflicts, or the "Wars of the Cross" as they became known, faded into obscurity until the end of the 19th century. In Eastern remembrance the Crusades were roundly defeated by the forces of

Islam, a blip on the historical radar amounting to nothing more than a failed invasion by the West. Even the classic Muslim hero Saladin turns out to be not quite so classic as his fame was also lost to the passage of the centuries. In reality the works and appreciation that kept Saladin's memory alive came from Western voices. It was European figures who brought Saladin back into popular memory, such as Sir Walter Scott with his romantic portrayal of Saladin in his book *The Talisman*, and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany who made a rather pompous visit to Saladin's tomb shortly before WWI in 1898, placing a wreath upon it and paying handsomely for its renovation. The arrival of the 20th century marks the reentry of the Crusades into the imagination of the Middle East, mainly for nationalist and political reasons. The Crusades would be seen as times of great victory and defiance against the West because, after all, if anyone could romanticize the Crusades it would be the descendants of those who won them.

When recognizing the popularization of the Crusades shortly before and after WWI, it is important to appreciate both the context and the rationale for their reintroduction into Middle Eastern thought. The Ottoman Empire, long the bastion of Muslim supremacy over the West and unchallenged in its dominance of the lands resting on the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Seas, now stood in near ruins as the "sick man of Europe." In the age of imperialism, the partitioning of this dying empire was a very real concern and its ultimate fate after WWI. The European philosophy of imperialism maintained the inherent supremacy of the West and even used the Crusades as a glorified example of European intervention in Muslim lands. A telling example comes to mind of the French negotiations over their Syrian mandate after WWI with Faisal al-Hashemi, the one-time king of Syria and the eventual King Faisal I of Iraq, instrumental in the famed "Arab revolt" fomented by the British and the Hashemi family against the Ottomans in WWI. According to T.E Lawrence (the famous Lawrence of Arabia), when discussing their role in Syria the French Stéphen

Pichon actually claimed a French historic interest in the lands of Syria based on French involvement in the Crusades 700 years ago.[3] Faisal responded by saying "But, pardon me, which of us won the Crusades?"[4] This remark, and the context it was made in, exemplify how the Crusades would soon be seen and used throughout the next century and beyond. Did the forces of Islam and the East not defeat the Crusades? Did they not fight and win this same war before? Was it not Muslims who conquered the Franks of the Levant, only to see those same Franks return and subject the peoples of the Muslim empire?

Sultan Abdulhamid II, considered the last real Ottoman Sultan with a reign beginning in 1876 and ending in 1908, attempted unsuccessfully to counter European imperialism in his lands by nurturing Pan-Islamism. Pan-Islamism sought to unite the Muslims of the world politically by reinstating the religious political role of the Ottoman caliph in the Muslim world. Ultimately this effort was more feared by the European powers, who had many Muslims living in their colonial possessions and fighting in their armies during WWI, than it was actually effective in the Muslim world. One tool of this last Sultan in his efforts to polarize Islam against the West was the classification of Western encroachment as a new political crusade. This much is agreed with in the first modern history of the Crusades written in Arabic, *Splendid Accounts of the Crusading Wars*, penned by Sayyid 'Ali al-Hariri in 1899.[5] One of the men that Abdulhamid II chose to focus on in his quest to restore the Crusades to popularity was Saladin.

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[3] Paul F. Crawford*, "*Four Myths about the Crusades," *Intercollegiate Review* 406 (2001).
[4] T. E. Lawrence, "Letter from T.E. Lawrence to Robert Graves, 28 June 1927," in *T. E. Lawrence to His Biographers,* ed. Robert Graves and B. H. Liddell-Hart (New York: Doubleday, 1938), 52, note.
[5] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 674; John Riley-Smith, "Jihad Crusader," *National Review*, January 5, 2004.

The career of Saladin provided many tantalizing parallels to what Abdulhamid, and later Arab nationalists, sought to accomplish. Saladin entered history with his capture of Shi'ite Egypt, after which he founded his own kingdom stretching across what would be termed the "Arab lands," captured Jerusalem and most importantly fought to a draw the forces of the Third Crusade. Sultan Abdulhamid II was keen on creating a national hero that could epitomize the defeat of a Western invasion and serve as a source of historical unity for his empire in the face of growing nationalist tensions and Western influence. Likewise, men like Gamal Abdel Nasser sought to portray himself as the Saladin of a new period of Arab unity and resurgence against the West. The revival of Saladin's heroic stature and the parallels his career had with the 20th century Middle East are especially important as they coincided with the serious onset of Arab nationalism. Saladin found places in the heritage and burgeoning national identities of states throughout the Middle East, as varied as Iraq under Saddam Hussein to the Kurds he was trying to subjugate and butcher.

The memory of the Crusades remained, however, even after the movement that saw its popular revival crumbled away. With the end of Arab Nationalism, a new movement, Islamism and eventually Islamic extremism, rushed in to fill the ideological vacuum. The Crusader ideology continued on its way with the work of Sayyid Qutb, an Islamist thinker executed by the Egyptian government in 1966. Qutb coined the term "Crusaderism" as it applies to the West in the modern context. Qutb, whose work went on to influence the founders of al-Qaeda, such as Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden, wrote extensively on Western involvement in the Middle East and on how this "Crusaderism" permeates European actions and culture. In his book *Social Justice in Islam*, Qutb wrote about this "Crusader spirit"[6] of the Europeans and remarked in an interview that

[6] Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam,* trans. John B. Hardie (Oneonta: Islamic Publications International, 2000), 274.

"Western blood carries the spirit of the Crusades within itself. It fills the subconscious of the West."[7]

The Crusades refuse to be confined to the pages of history, and in the modern day the Crusades are as real to some as they were to the defenders of Antioch 900 years ago. Although the treatment of the Crusades, and their actual remembrance, changed and evolved over the centuries, we live in a time where their importance cannot be ignored. The al-Qaeda attacks on the world trade center brought over a decade of conflict, trillions of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of men and women to the Middle East in a war that is still ongoing. The wars in the Middle East saw and continue to see the creation of violent and ideologically extreme organizations committed to various things, from the overthrow of a particular government to total apocalypse. From the outset of the 9/11 attacks major organizations, as illustrated by Osama bin Laden in the quote printed above, use the Crusade narrative to bolster their own cause. The most vociferous and genuine adherent of the Crusader narrative came to be realized as ISIS. Their role in the refining and evolution of the idea of a new crusade into a more expansive family of beliefs, what I call the Crusader mythos, is irrefutable. In general, the Crusades are used as a tool for ISIS to increase recruitment and shore up the morale and conviction of their own forces, galvanizing their soldiers and subjects to greater feats of mobilization and tenacity. Their favored tactics revolve around the use of the term Crusader as a name calling label, the Crusader label, in order to create a boogeyman responsible for all their ills and guilty of a litany of atrocities. Any who side against ISIS are in league with the Crusader foe, marking them in their eyes as politically and religiously legitimated targets.

[7] Sylvia Haim, "Sayyid Qutb," *Asian and African Studies* (1982): 154.

Comparing their own wars to those of Saladin and Baybars does more than liken themselves to victorious Muslim rulers. A romanticized vision of the Crusades grants a larger than life aspect to the present, reaching to the past for a historical legitimacy in battling a familiar foe. It connects them to the epic struggle of their ancestors and builds an illusion of a continual and unending war of theology and politics, fought on the same soil by the same peoples over centuries. The memory of the Crusades and the Muslims who fought them evokes a memory of jihad against a Western foe on the cusp of conquering the entire Middle East, who if not defeated will bring destruction, humiliation, and even eradication to Islam and its holy places. It paints the world in black and white terms, of just Muslims against bloodthirsty and irreverent Western Crusaders. More specifically for ISIS, it brings a historical need for jihad, unification, and leadership under one Islamic banner against the Christian enemy. Pronouncements, edicts, and even administrative directives all contain examples of the propaganda use of the Crusader mythos, as ISIS tries attaching the weight of Armageddon to its will.

For some groups the use of the Crusader label appears to be a merely cosmetic addition to an otherwise homogenous propaganda effort. To others, such as ISIS, the struggle against the Crusader enemy is central to their identity and goals. ISIS is the most prominent and visually impressive terror group when it comes to using the Crusades in both propaganda and ideology. The easiest way to see this is to look at their propaganda itself, especially its English publication *Dabiq* and the statements issued in it. This publication is dedicated to supporting the Crusader narrative, with the average issue mentioning "crusader" in a significant way over forty-five times. Each issue of *Dabiq* is emblazoned with a quote from their founder, ex al-Qaeda affiliate al-Zarqawi: "The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify – by Allah's permission – until it

burns the crusader armies in *Dabiq*." This quote is inspired by the Hadith 6924, reported by Muhammad's companion Abu Hurayrah, which states "The Last Hour would not come until the Romans (Christians) land at al-A'maq or in *Dabiq*. An army consisting of the best (soldiers) of the people of the earth at that time will come from Medina (to counteract them)."[8] *Dabiq* is itself a small and rather strategically insignificant city in North Western Syria, and yet the reaction from ISIS after its capture was nothing short of ecstatic.

Given their meteoric rise to fame and influence with a blitzkrieg of both men and media, taking over large swathes of Iraqi and Syrian territory and the limelight of jihadist online mass media (the cyber caliphate as they call it), ISIS now holds a considerable amount of influence on other jihadist groups. This ranges from official bayat (oath of allegiance) and formal affiliation to copying their trends and social media campaigns. Central to ISIS' media campaign is the Crusader narrative, with their most famous videos (tragically, all gruesome executions) all revolving around it. In an important video from ISIS affiliates in Libya, over twenty Coptic Christians were slaughtered on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. In the beginning of the video the head executioner proclaims "And today, we are on the south of Rome, in the land of Islam, Libya, sending another message. Oh Crusaders, safety for you will be only wishes." After the beheadings the lead executioner points his knife across the waves, saying "We will conquer Rome, by Allah's permission."[9] This video is important for many reasons, two of which are the threats to Crusader Rome and the fact that the video was shot in Libya. As ISIS and their rhetoric gains in popularity so too has the prevalence of the Crusader narrative in jihadist propaganda, as organizations pledge allegiance or

[8] Sahih Muslim, compiler, "Hadith Number 6924," in *Book 041: The Book Pertaining to the Turmoil and Portents of the Last Hour*.
[9] ISIS, *A Message Signed With Blood to the Nations of the Cross*, (2014: Al-Hayat Media), Video.

latch on to a preexisting trend with renewed vigor. Although ISIS did not create nor exclusively pioneer the use of the Crusader label, they did spark the newest evolution of term, as well as create a unique Crusader mythos that is apocalyptic in scope and truly originating with ISIS.

History is a malleable field, being used in the context of the times for various political or even religious ends. The Crusades are no different, or rather are an example of how history can be used for violence and engendering support for the worst types of movements and people. History is a powerful force and those claiming a special link, a successorship to it, can tap into a powerful source of legitimacy for themselves. This newfound legitimacy usually rests, as in the case of the Crusades, upon a romanticized memory of times long past and nearly forgotten and is used to motivate and captivate. The Crusades harken back to a time in Islam where defeat loomed and invasion threatened, when heroes and villains stormed the field in what is truly an epic of history. Now new men find themselves in a similar position, threatened by invasion and in their view a real chance of extinction, a position that allows them to uniquely capitalize on the crusading past of the Levant. These men stoke the fires of jihad in the hearts of their followers and the tinder they often reach for is a thousand years old. With this thesis, I will analyze the construction, employment, and goals of ISIS propaganda centered around this historical epoch of the Crusades.

Part 1

1.0 Chapter 1- Marshalling the Mind

A Literature Review on Propaganda

Propaganda; today the word generally elicits a negative response. The word conjures up thoughts and images of grandiose recruitment posters, of demagogues pounding podiums, and cunning puppet masters using double speak and half-truths to control a population. There is, however, propaganda aimed at encouraging positive traits, societal cohesion or simply to get someone to buy a new car seat for their child. Regardless of its use, the study of propaganda is split between two major views, that of the universally and contextually based. On the universal side, the philosophy of the short lived but influential Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) and its founder Clyde R. Miller, there is the belief that propaganda is a more or less universal tool. Propaganda is not just a message but something that always comes out of the same semantic toolbox, an amalgamation of verbal trickery and misrepresentation of the truth used to dominate a population. On the other hand, men like William Garber, an early proponent of a contextual approach to propaganda, deny the veracity of propaganda as psychological and grammatical tricks. Propaganda is before all else something that preys on "the total societal context,"[10] human situations, viewpoints, and desires. Propaganda is carefully constructed and tailored to a unique population. Jacques Ellul, and influential 20th century French author and philosopher, agrees with Garber, writing that "A

[10] William Garber, "Propaganda Analysis- To What Ends?" *American Journal of Sociology* 48 (1942): 244.

Communist or a Christian with strong beliefs is very little, if at all, shaken by adverse propaganda."[11] Whatever the belief or construction, propaganda exists as a tool to influence and persuade, to strike fear or inspire hope.

That does not necessarily mean to change a person's belief, however. Ellul believes that the main preoccupation of propaganda is "to intensify existing trends… and, above all, to lead men to action."[12] In his view the propagandist must "know as precisely as possible the terrain on which he is operating… the sentiments and opinions, the current tendencies and the stereotypes among the public he is trying to reach."[13] In psychological warfare the goal is to crush the enemy's will to fight but also to shore up the morale of the propagandist's own forces and home front. Often times this can be done with the same piece of propaganda, especially with the presentation of news that claims a one sided, unstoppable victory. There are also objective techniques that are used by propagandists to achieve a desired effect regardless of whether or not it is viewed as linguistically or contextually based. In its rather short lifespan, founded in 1937 and dissolved in 1942, the IPA managed to publish a list of seven widely accepted propaganda techniques that continue to influence the observation and analysis of propaganda today.

The history of propaganda is nearly as old as the history of war itself. Propaganda was and is used in Roman, Crusader, and especially modern times to vilify the enemy and rouse the passions and support of allies. Propaganda, along with war itself, became industrialized with the World Wars and after both of them (but importantly not during) the objective study of propaganda

[11] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973), 33.
[12] *Ibid,* vi
[13] *Ibid,* 33-34

blossomed. Immediately after the World Wars, propaganda became approached with intense loathing and anything resembling traditional propaganda was met with new suspicion. The study of propaganda led to "an extremely high, even menacing, degree of cynicism"[14] and many academics in the US attempting to create a "propaganda resistance" in their pupils, according to Bruce Smith, a US Department of Justice analyst concerned with anti-propaganda measures. The painful memory of the millions who died, many of whom were egged on by blind nationalism or forceful demagogues, helped to inject a skepticism of government, official rationale, and even news into the study of propaganda and its general reception. The integration of new technology into society and the media brought with it an increased dosage of propaganda into the daily lives of developed populations. The means with which propaganda can be broadcast, and hidden, such as print, radio, television, and now the internet permeates most societies and with it so too does attempts to influence people. Propaganda of Integration, first written about by Ellul, is used "to promote acceptance and support among its citizens for that system."[15] Propaganda can seek the cohesiveness and health of the state and community and is not necessarily a bad thing. The realization that propaganda can be used for beneficial as well as nefarious ends brings up an important dilemma in the study of propaganda. In an age where we are all subject to propaganda and bring with us some level of ideology and bias from our respective communities, how can we objectively decide what is good and what is bad propaganda? Brett Silverstein remarks in his article "Toward a Science of Propaganda," that "the effect of ideology on propaganda analysis may lead some scholars to question the possibility of the field ever becoming scientific."[16]

[14] Clyde R. Miller, "Some Comments on Propaganda Analysis and the Science of Democracy," in *Public Opinion Quarterly* Winter (1941), 657.
[15] Brett Silverstein, "Toward a Science of Propaganda," *Political Psychology* 8 (1987): 49-59.
[16] *Ibid,* 58

Despite doubts of its objectivity, the academic field to which it belongs, and even what it actually is at its core, the study of propaganda is fruitful and full of literature that I will analyze in this chapter, offering my own observations and conclusions along the way. Influential figures and organizations such as the IPA, Miller, Ellul, Lasswell, Garber, and others will be examined. I divide the theories of propaganda into two main schools: that of semantics and social context. The semantic approach becomes valuable in its treatment of propaganda techniques while the school of social context treats the underlying reasons for why propaganda is believed. Within these there are further divisions, theories, and practices. The main theories that will be discussed are the seven propaganda devices, propaganda based on the truth, propaganda of agitation, propaganda of integration, psychological warfare, and invincibility and atrocity propaganda. What is important to take away from this literature review is that despite the differences in opinion and practice, propaganda is recognized as a tool common to anyone who seeks to rally a people to their goal, utilizing themes that are common throughout history and its peoples. Its treatment here is to gain a deeper understanding of the varied practices and apparent goals of propagandists in relation to their enemies and their own population. As will be shown in the second part of this thesis, ISIS makes abundant use of these techniques and practices. With this in mind, it is especially important to understand the name calling device, propaganda of agitation, and invincibility and atrocity propaganda, as these constitute the primary occurrences of the Crusader label and mythos in ISIS propaganda.

1.1 The Institute for Propaganda Analysis, the Seven Devices and Semantic Universality

"But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought."

-George Orwell

The allure of treating propaganda as semantic sorcery comes from the semantic theory's emphasis on universality. Under the semantic approach a piece of propaganda is powerful for the tools it employs and the way it obscures a person's thought, regardless of the time or place. It offers the possibility of a formula that once discovered can lead to the enslavement of a population. On the other hand, if the formula can be widely disseminated people can be immunized against the advances of propaganda upon a free society. Aldous Huxley, the author of "Brave New World", reiterated this view in an article published in 1958, stating: "the effects of false and pernicious propaganda cannot be neutralized except by a thorough training in the art of analyzing its techniques and seeing through its sophistries."[17] The term "doublespeak," the two faced propaganda that obscures rational thought and distorts history found in George Orwell's popular dystopian novel, also became a popular term for semantically based propaganda.[18] The organization consistently associated with the propagation and formalization of this theory is the IPA.

The IPA was founded in 1937 by Clyde R. Miller to provide "an objective, scientific approach to controversial issues [the study of propaganda] and, as an integral part of that approach,

[17] Aldous Huxley, "Brave New World Revisited," in *North American Newspaper Alliance Syndicate*, November 5, 1958.
[18] Brett Silverstein, "Toward a Science of Propaganda," *Political Psychology* 8 (1987): 57.

has been trying to build… a vigorous faith in the values and ultimate triumph of democratic practice."[19] It was a non-profit institution influential in the first anti-propaganda period following WWI, aimed at educating the American populace on propaganda in order to defend democracy.[20] It defined propaganda as "the expression of opinion or action by individuals or groups deliberately designed to influence opinions or actions of other individuals or groups with reference to predetermined ends."[21] The IPA focused on the semantic analysis of propaganda, using it to, in the words of Brett Silverstein, "study the misuse of language that occurs in much propaganda (e.g., Herman and Broadhead, 1984) which has come to be called 'doublespeak.'"[22] The IPA's most influential product was the seven propaganda devices. IPA board member Edgar Dale later mentioned "the quick popularity of the anti-propaganda movement was caused by the fact that there were seven neat, easily understood principles set up."[23] Published in 1937 in the article "How to Detect Propaganda," these detection aides became an instant hit. The article opens up with what would be the thesis of the IPA's efforts: "We are fooled by propaganda chiefly because we don't recognize it when we see it."[24] This belief that propaganda could be countered if it was recognized and dissected on a semantic level went on to be challenged by several prominent authors such as Ellul and Garber. The seven devices are as follows, the quotes taken directly from the IPAs original publication:

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[19] Clyde R. Miller, "Some Comments on Propaganda Analysis and the Science of Democracy," in *Public Opinion Quarterly* Winter (1941): 657.
[20] J. Michael Sproule, "Authorship and Origins of the Seven Propaganda Devices: A Research Note," in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4 (2001): 136.
[21] William Garber, "Propaganda Analysis- To What Ends?" *American Journal of Sociology* 48 (1942): 240.
[22] Brett Silverstein, "Toward a Science of Propaganda," *Political Psychology* 8 (1987): 57.
[23] J. Michael Sproule, "Authorship and Origins of the Seven Propaganda Devices: A Research Note," in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4 (2001): 137.
[24] Institute for Propaganda Analysis, "How to Detect Propaganda," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 24 (1938): 49-55.

1. Name calling- Preying on hate and fear, the propagandist attaches negative names and their associated stereotype "to those individuals, groups, nations, races, policies, practices, beliefs, and ideals which he would have us condemn and reject." One of the most common forms of propaganda, "name Calling is a device to make us form a judgment to reject and condemn, without examining the evidence." Examples of this are labeling opponents communists, terrorists, or in the case of ISIS, Crusaders.
2. Glittering generalities- The opposite of name calling, "the propagandist identifies his program with virtue by use of "virtue words." Here he appeals to our emotions of love, generosity, and brother- hood… All persons of good will believe in these ideals." This technique attaches a "shining ideal" to the goals of an organization in order "to make us accept and approve without examining the evidence." Examples of this are claiming to fight for truth, progress, the American way, or the will of God, while avoiding a satisfactory explanation of what those actually are.

The article says about these first two devices:

> The propagandist is most effective in use of these devices when his words make us create devils to fight or gods to adore. By his use of the 'bad words,' we personify as a 'devil' some nation, race, group, individual, policy, practice, or ideal; we are made fighting mad to destroy it. By use of 'good words,' we personify as a god-like idol some nation, race, group, etc. Words which are 'bad' to some are 'good' to others, or may be made so. Thus, to some the New Deal is 'a prophecy of social salvation' while to others it is 'an omen of social disaster.'[25]

In terms of ISIS's use of the Crusader label, the IPA's description of name calling fits quite nicely as a verbatim description of ISIS's technique. The "devil" is meant to be the Crusader in ISIS's propaganda publications, understood only by a stereotype created by ISIS's Crusader mythos.

[25] *Ibid,* 52

What name calling and glittering generalities have in common is that their goal is to stymy the thought process of an individual. These devices are focused on getting the individual to accept a blanket generality, good or bad, without delving any deeper into the reality of the situation. Blind patriotism used during WWI is a powerful historical example of this.

3. Transfer- "A device by which the propagandist carries over the authority, sanction, and prestige of something we respect and revere to something he would have us accept." Transfer is an appeal to authority wherein the support of an organization, such as a church or government, is used to bolster the credibility and appeal of something that would normally be rejected. Government sanctioned persecution of a is an example of this.
4. Testimonial- Similar to transfer, testimonial is a way for a propagandist to get a supposed third party's support for their goals by quoting people relevant to the propagandist's audience. People or groups are quoted as supporting or opposing something, for example interviews with people who used a product or claim a political group victimized them.
5. Plain folk- This is the approach wherein the propagandist claims they're just like you, a normal person doing what a normal person would do. With this technique the propagandist tries to appear as a member of their audience, claiming a sort of familial credibility. Politicians use this all the time when in campaigns they try to appear as down to earth and "normal" as possible. It would not be erroneous to view this device as the propagandist trying to come across as a neighborhood friend, with the same wants, desires, and grievances as their audience.

6. Card stacking- "[The propagandist] stacks the cards against the truth. He uses under-emphasis and over-emphasis to dodge issues and evade facts. He resorts to lies, censorship, and distortion. He omits facts. He offers false testimony." Card stacking is essentially the propagandist lying and distorting the truth in order to completely change what their goal appears to be and who is opponents really are. This is manipulation using half-truths or by simply making up a story or fact to support their objective.
7. Band wagon- This "is a device to make us follow the crowd, to accept the propagandist's program en masse. Here his theme is: 'Everybody's doing it.'"[26] If your friends jumped off a cliff, would you jump too? If the propagandist is using band wagon propaganda then yes, they hope you would jump.

These devices did end up receiving a fair share of criticism. The major charges were that they fostered an unhealthy skepticism of everything and made no distinction between socially beneficial and malicious propaganda. These two facts were part of the reason for the IPA's dissolution. The emphasis, intentional or not, on detecting propaganda regardless of its intent was decried as being caustic to the American war effort as the US began its fight against Nazis Germany, a regime accused of employing propaganda to diabolical ends. As the devices and other intellectual products of the IPA did not distinguish between good and bad, allied or axis propaganda, the IPA and many of its contemporaries felt that the universal skepticism it was fostering would be harmful to American and British attempts at sustaining a cohesive war effort. "When applied to the war of words between Britain and Nazi Germany, the IPAs goal to uncover the full spectrum of propaganda found the organization pointing to self-serving language and strategy of the democracies as well

[26] *Ibid,* 50-55

as the totalitarians."[27] The devices were also simplistic, lacking a quantitative methodology, a part of their initial charm that ended up lowering their prestige in the academic community.[28] The seven devices only decided whether a piece of media or information was propaganda, stopping short of any further analysis. This, coupled with the accusations that it was hampering the war effort by fostering a universal distrust of propaganda, led many academics to depart from the model.

Nevertheless, the seven propaganda devices experienced a resurgent popularity in the post-Vietnam era and they continue to serve as an academically sound methodology for labelling propaganda.[29] It is interesting to note that the devices decreased in popularity when there was a worry of oversensitivity to propaganda and increased in popularity when there was a fear of under sensitivity to propaganda and the government. The seven devices, hampered as they are with their simplicity, should not and cannot be used on their own to analyze propaganda. They are useful in the way that they were originally intended: identifying propaganda based on rhetorical devices and opening the door for further research into the context and originators of the propaganda in question.

[27] J. Michael Sproule, "Authorship and Origins of the Seven Propaganda Devices: A Research Note," in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4 (2001): 139
[28] *Ibid,* 139-140
[29] *Ibid,* 141

1.2 Garber and Societal Context

"One who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived."

-Niccolo Machiavelli

William Garber believes that propaganda is not merely a way to spin words and syntax. It requires knowing and taking advantage of the reasons an audience would want to believe the propagandist. A propagandist needs to intimately understand the total societal context of their audience in order to be truly effective. What message do people want to here, what promises do they want to be made, who do they want to follow or destroy? Hold out the correct hand and it will be grasped.

The IPA focused almost solely on semantics in the universal use of propaganda. In this view propaganda can be viewed solely through the lens of devices and rules, something that could be replicated regardless of context to similar effect. Garber is particularly against this train of thought, believing "the Institute seemed convinced that propaganda is founded mainly on the use of certain verbal tricks, such as distortion, suppression of relevant facts, and the use of ad hominem arguments."[30] Garber goes further, describing the IPA as "representative of the still current tendency [current being the 40's] to follow the assumption that a propaganda statement (or any statement, for that matter) is best dealt with in terms of its individual components considered as units."[31] What Garber means by this is that when taking a statement, for example the WWI recruitment poster seen in Figure 1, the semantic approach is to break apart each section of each sentence. This approach, Garber argues, fails to take the whole societal picture into consideration, focusing to a

[30] William Garber, "Propaganda Analysis- To What Ends?" *American Journal of Sociology* 48 (1942): 243.
[31] *Ibid,* 243

fallacious extent on the verbiage of the message. Take for example the whole quote, "You're proud of your pals in the Army of course! But what will your pals think of YOU? THINK IT OVER!"[32]



Figure 1, British WWI Recruitment Poster

A semantic analysis could be as follows: "You're proud of your pals in the Army of course" creates an assumption in the reader utilizing both the transfer and glittering generalities devices that not only are the people he positively associates with joining the organization, but that the reader is meant to feel inherently proud of it. "But what will your pals think of YOU?" is a use of the bandwagon appeal, making the reader feel ashamed that he is not joining along with all of his friends. The tools of the propaganda now exposed, the poster has been thusly declawed and rendered moot because the propaganda is understood. Garber would argue that this ignores the societal implications, that joining with one's friends was a popular practice in Britain at the time, along with the pervasive sense of nationalism that dominated British society's feelings of duty to the British Empire during the war.

Illuminating the devices that make up a statement does not inherently lead to understanding. To illustrate this point Garber contrasts Hitler's speeches and Roosevelt's fireside chats, stat-

[32] Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, *Think it Over!* 1915.

ing: “the difference between Roosevelt speaking and Hitler speaking is not basically one of propaganda techniques, but rather of different views of life, of differing approaches to mankind, to human dignity.”[33] Focusing on the semantics can be, well, just semantics. The semantic model of propaganda evaluation carries with it an inherent risk of suffering tunnel vision, ignoring the actual message and intent of a piece in favor of its classification “under ‘Psychological Device No. 5xy,’”[34] as Garber derides it. The Garber’s main theory is that it is not the devices of propaganda that make a piece powerful or important (although they do exist and constitute its construction) it is the state of society that makes it possible, the feelings, beliefs, and history of a nation that drives it into the arms of certain rhetoric. In the conclusion of “Propaganda Analysis, to What Ends?” Garber writes that “the answer to a propaganda of fear must lie in the removal of the causes of fear. Propaganda appealing to the despairing can find no roots in the hopeful.”

[33] William Garber, “Propaganda Analysis- To What Ends?” *American Journal of Sociology* 48 (1942): 244.
[34] *Ibid,* 243

1.3 Misrepresentation of the Truth

"There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics."

-Benjamin Disraeli

The work of Jacques Ellul, especially that of propaganda of agitation, integration, and the mass media aspect of modern propaganda, is insightful into the workings of extremist propaganda. The type of movements that focus on violence to achieve their goals especially focus on the use of propaganda of agitation and modern extremist groups also make extensive use of a new mode of mass media. ISIS falls squarely into this category, making a barbaric habit of attaching ultra-violent conduct such as public executions to its propaganda to reinforce both their message and adherence to it. It is beneficial to the reader to pay careful attention to the descriptions of propaganda in this section.

An important implication of the "societal context" model not explicitly stated by Garber is that the truth can be used as propaganda, or that even understanding that something is propaganda will not necessarily dull its effects. Ellul expounds upon this in *Propaganda, the Formation of Men's Attitudes*, where he writes that propaganda evolved since the beginning of the 20th century to actually focus on the truth, abandoning outright lies.[35] This evolution poses a special danger to those targeted by propaganda. After WWII and the Nazis party, it became widely accepted that propaganda was based solely off of lies and clear distortions when in fact good propaganda actually uses accurate facts and statistics. This itself is an irony, as Joseph Goebbels, the head of propaganda for the Nazis regime, insisted throughout his career that communiques and information to

[35] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973), v.

be broadcasted were as accurate as possible.[36] According to Ellul, the belief that propaganda is based on lies rather than truth is dangerous because it fosters two things. The first is that people believe they know the difference between truth and falsehood, and are therefore able to determine what is and is not propaganda. This thinking actually makes the more educated vulnerable to propaganda because of the confidence in understanding facts that education brings. If the status of propaganda rests solely on whether it is true or false, then if someone is able to deduce that the facts and figures are correct they will believe it is not propaganda. The second is that the enemy only speaks in lies. This is dangerous because, much like the previous statement, if the opposing side can show what they say to be true, people who believed the enemy only spoke in lies will be inclined to believe the enemy now tells the truth. In both cases where people believe propaganda to be based on lies, if the propagandist actually uses true facts and figures, regardless of how they are presented, they are in a good position to persuade those people.

The falsity in modern propaganda comes from the misrepresentation of true facts, selective censorship, and most importantly on interpretations that cannot be proven true or false. Unlike hard numbers and historically verifiable events, interpretation, feelings, and speculations about said numbers and events cannot readily be proven false in a quantifiable way. As Ellul says, "propaganda by its very nature is an enterprise for perverting the significance of events and of insinuating false intentions."[37] The use of half-truths, full truths, and selective silence can take many forms. One is basing an argument on something being false or true that is intentionally difficult to prove either way. A second is presenting facts, figures, statistics etc. when they have no actual meaning, as "most of the time the fact is presented in such a fashion that the listener or reader cannot really

[36] *Ibid,* v-vi
[37] *Ibid,* 58

understand it or draw any conclusions from it."[38] Giving a percentage increase with no base number, claiming a yearly change without showing the previous year, or using statistics without showing how they were calculated are all examples of this. A third way is essentially the use of the Socratic method to force an audience to arrive at a conclusion based on accurate facts presented in a misleading way. An obvious fact is presented in such a way that the majority of people would arrive at the same conclusion when they read it. Ellul calls this "innuendo."[39] A fourth method is simple silence. If there are facts and mathematical figures that harm a propagandist's message, the prevailing tactic is to simply not mention it. Ellul cites the example of Goebbels, remarking that "about one fifth of all press directives given by Goebbels between 1939 and 1944 were orders to keep silent on one subject or another."[40] The one thing that cannot come out, however, are the true motives of the propagandist. In many cases propagandists accuse their opponent of the very thing they are trying to accomplish themselves. This is prescient when someone or a group tries to instigate a war by declaring themselves for peace. Hitler, in his many invasions and subversions of the nations' surrounding Germany, spent much of his time giving speeches about his desires for peace and the protection of ethnic Germans.

As stated above, Ellul views propaganda as a way not to change people's minds, but to convince them to act or remain passive. Regarding this, Ellul breaks down propaganda into two categories: Propaganda of agitation and propaganda of integration.

[38] *Ibid,* 55
[39] *Ibid,* 56-57
[40] *Ibid,* 56

1.4 Propaganda of Agitation

Propaganda of agitation is propaganda that seeks to incite action in its audience, "to stretch energies to the utmost, obtain substantial sacrifices, and induce the individual to bear heavy ordeals."[41] Revolutionaries, warring groups, and even economic leaders all use propaganda of agitation. Propaganda of agitation is the most common form of propaganda and focuses on opposition to something, generally an enemy "other," in order to stir up passions and a will to sacrifice for the cause in its audience. That enemy, however, does not need to be external. It can be a weakness in the audience, their culture, or their politics. The enemy can be human laziness, tolerance for other cultures, or the presence of an ethnic or potentially subversive minority in the community. In line with his belief that propaganda works with the material found inside every person and society, Ellul claims that propaganda of agitation "addresses itself, then, to internal elements in each of us, but it is always translated into reality by physical involvement in a tense and overexcited activity."[42]

With participation in these events of hysteria and intense ideological messaging, "the propagandist releases the internal breaks, the psychological barriers of habit, belief, and judgment."[43] In these unbound episodes of primal violence and agitation, participating audiences loose themselves in the furor and suffer a loss of their traditional morality, which is replaced by the new ideology. Propaganda of agitation also needs a more or less targeted framework, something that will resonate in their target audience. This can be nationalism, economic prosperity in times of famine, or even perverting the call of faith and religion. This last theme is clearly visible in the

[41] *Ibid,* 72
[42] *Ibid,* 72
[43] *Ibid,* 72

varied organizations of Islamic extremism that dot the globe today, many of which are also paired with a latent nationalist tendency, such as the Taliban or ISIS with the attempted creation of their own states.

Propaganda of agitation aims in the extreme to create a zealotry, a fanaticism for the cause throughout its audience. This can be seen with the actions of the Nazis regime and ISIS. The Nazis book burnings and Kristallnacht are examples of these furious bouts of unbridled activity steeped in propaganda and directives conveyed by the state. The widespread atrocities committed, glorified, and highly publicized by ISIS also serve to accompany their propaganda with a terrible orgy of violence in the lives of their soldiers and subjects. Revenge executions, which will be covered later in the thesis during the chapter on ISIS videography, are a prevalent use of ISIS propaganda of agitation. Onlookers are read the prisoners "crimes," listen to a quick grandstanding by the executioner, and are then made to witness an intentionally brutal execution, usually followed by music or the hoots and hollers of ISIS supporters. Audiences can vicariously experience the fervor of propaganda of agitation by watching and internalizing such a scene on video.

In these examples many may wonder why, especially in more modern times, these scenes of barbarity are publicized with such zeal. Propaganda of agitation is designed to be eye catching, to grab attention and focus on the most base of human emotions. Violence, intolerance, and hatred are its most plentiful resources. Hatred of an enemy, historic or invented, is one of the easiest ways to mobilize a populace for war and is one of the most ever present themes of wartime propaganda. It allows the personification of all the malice, violence, and "just" causes of a conflict into a one dimensional and easily employed caricature. This can even be seen in American propaganda dur-

ing WWII. Figure 2 is an American WWII propaganda poster showing an extremely racist caricature of a Japanese man, complete with fangs, pointed ears and a bloody dagger.[44] Its purpose was to get Americans to stop wasting scrap metal and other aircraft material useful in the war effort. The poster was commissioned in order to support the idea that being careless with scrap material would help an evil, backstabbing and universally hated enemy. Similar types of posters can be found in the campaign to save food in the first World War as the nations of Europe found themselves increasingly low on supplies.



Figure 2, WWII Anti-Japanese Poster

Propaganda of agitation operates in leaps and bounds. Its promises much and by its nature must ride the wave of momentum. If progress stalls and the effort stagnates people begin to tire and lose the enthusiasm so vital to propaganda of agitation. In order to counter this, the propagandist must base their planning on stages, breaking up the overall goal into much smaller, more easily achievable aims. This can be anywhere from meeting a certain production marker for a year to capturing a certain city before fixating on the next one. After each stage is met the population is allowed a small respite to recharge and reorient themselves to the next piecemeal goal.

[44] WWII American Anti-Japanese Poster "Tokio Kid Say-," 1940's.

Groups that utilize violence as their primary resource to achieve a strategic political or social aim are in an incredible debt to propaganda of agitation. The hatred and ecstatic violence perpetuated serves to capture their recruits into a cycle of violence and stiffening ideologies that many do not escape from. They often play upon the existing tensions underpinning their society, whether it be political, cultural, or ethnic, in order to drum up support and drive men and women to unspeakable acts. When dealing with these groups and the propaganda they utilize it is an ever present necessity to analyze the context in which they are occurring and the types of violence that the group chooses to specialize in and glorify. This leads to a better understanding of not only the group's motivations, but also their tactics and the total social context in which they see themselves operating.

1.5 Propaganda of Integration

Propaganda of integration is at the same time quite different from and the natural evolution of propaganda of agitation. Propaganda of integration seeks to integrate a member into the propagandist's society, to mold the individual into the ideal citizen or member supporting and believing in the group to which they belong. Ellul describes propaganda of integration as "a propaganda of conformity."[45] It does not and cannot be based on quick spurts of passion or on seemingly close aims. The goals of integration propaganda and the techniques it employs are more long term in scope and practice. Education, of children and adults, is an example of this. It is insufficient for propaganda of integration to rely on slogans or cheap buzzwords. It must rely on an ideology that an individual can accept, latch on to, and even expound upon.

It can, however, be fueled by a passion to build the ideal community in opposition to an enemy, and in this way shares a fundamental tool with propaganda of agitation. Propaganda of integration can still be aimed at quelling internal and domestic issues, such as schism within a political society or potential rebellious elements that threaten the existing regime. Propaganda of integration can be used to squash dissidents by focusing on the image of a supremely unified group or the need to unify in the face of an enemy. "Communism must reign supreme to defeat the forces of capitalist greed," or conversely "Capitalism must reign supreme to defeat the forces of communist oppression" are example slogans.

Propaganda of integration can also be called propaganda of participation, as it "aims at making the individual participate in his society in every way."[46] It seeks to shape not one powerful

[45] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973), 74.
[46] *Ibid,* 75

burst of activity but rather the day to day life of the individual. Integration means believing what the community believes, acting socially as the community acts, and fighting for what the community deems worth fighting for. The main goal of this propaganda is complete acceptance of the values of the propagandist, seeing the individual not as an individual but a smaller piece of a larger society. An example of this is "political education," education that seeks to indoctrinate as much as possible an individual into the beliefs and values of the government in an effort to force total conformation to the state. Mao Zedong, the founder of Communist China and the creator of the term, described it as "putting into the mold,"[47] meaning the ability to take a person and completely reshape them into what the state wishes them to be. This type of propaganda of integration was used to great effect in maintaining the cohesiveness of the communist armies of Mao Ze Dong throughout the formation of Communist China and also of the Viet Cong during the Vietnam war.[48] Looking at the military as a microcosm of the state, adherence to the party line was crucial to maintaining morale and more importantly discipline in the two revolutionary armies. James Whittaker, an early scholar of psychological warfare in Vietnam, remarks that "in short, there appeared to be a correlation between the extent of indoctrination in the VC and the tendency to defect. Where great effort had been extended to ensure comprehension of and dedication to the political goals of the struggle, few defected."[49] In this way a powerful military group created by propaganda of agitation was given direction, stability, and long term viability by propaganda of integration.

As propaganda of integration is based on creating stability, it is the desired propaganda of any group trying to forge a long term body or state. Not only is it "the propaganda of developed

[47] *Ibid,* 79
[48] James O. Whittaker, "Psychological Warfare in Vietnam," *Political Psychology* 18 (1997): 172.
[49] *Ibid,* 176-177

nations (in reference to a modern technological state) and characteristic of our civilization," it "aims at stabilizing the social body, at unifying and reinforcing it… thus the preferred instrument of government".[50] Once a state is created out of activity garnered from propaganda of agitation, the propagandist will turn to propaganda of integration to defend their achievements. Propaganda of agitation, like fire, is powerful, destructive, and even creative. But like fire, if not controlled it will burn down everything it touches before fizzling out. Once passions have been excited and impressive promises made, those passions and expectations must be reined in if the group is to survive. Ideology must be reinforced by academics and study instead of raw emotion and slogans. The shining allure of promises must be dampened by the reality of the present situation. A movement must switch from spirited vigor to a way of life. If not, and the propagandist loses control over their own agitation, the movement will consume itself and any vestige of central authority will eventually be lost as the movement fractures and eventually disintegrates. "The greatest difficulty is that agitation propaganda produces very rapid and spectacular effects, whereas integration propaganda acts slowly, gradually, and imperceptibly."[51]

The need for a group or movement based on propaganda of agitation to switch to propaganda of integration is evidenced by their emphasis on creating the next generation. The goal for the group's survival is to ensure that the next generation is completely steeped in the groups ideology, that the average citizen of an entire generation becomes a supporter that knows nothing else but the propagandist's views. That is why you see groups like ISIS and the Taliban putting so much effort into educating children, spending resources and manpower that could otherwise be sent to the extremely pressing war effort. In the wake of their military defeats throughout Iraq and

[50] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973), 74-75.
[51] *Ibid,* 77

Syria in 2016, ISIS spokesmen gloated that they would never leave because they succeeded in creating an entire generation that their opponents would need to eradicate. Hitler's programs of child indoctrination, such as the Hitler youth, is another example. By creating a new generation out of a group's ideology they ensure that for at least some time they will have a viable pool of recruits for their military and government positions and even a steady supply of average supporters that have a personal stake in the stability of the new regime. Propaganda of integration is vital to the success of the new regime because in essence it creates the long term base of support for the new regime. Without genuine and non-violent buy in from the society any movement will be doomed to eventual failure. Even ISIS accepts this, implementing educational programs and

That being said, propaganda of integration is not inherently malicious or devious. According to Ellul, it is the most widespread propaganda today and is inseparable from a modern technologically advanced state. We are saturated every day by propaganda of integration through our schools, televisions, and computers. Propaganda of integration can be a good for a community in that it can create stability and a homogeneity that lends itself well to a prosperous society. Propaganda of integration can be used to change a society's view on pollution and ecological preservation, to turn a society away from racism and sexism, for example.

1.6 The Role of Media Technology in Propaganda

Propaganda only becomes more pervasive as our world continues to integrate and depend upon modern technology. The modern forms of media, from mass print, radio, television, and now the internet become spouts for propaganda that modernized societies can never really turn off. In what Ellul terms the "technological society," controlled media is necessary for the propagation of modern propaganda.[52] The forces behind media must be unified and powerful, according to Ellul. Ellul focuses mainly on a centrally controlled media because at the time he was writing, the 1960s, such was the only way to really exert a notable influence over a large population, by having command and control over expensive and complicated methods of media distribution. Individual access to information dissemination infrastructure was a daunting task and this access to media distribution networks was more controlled by the state or a handful of organizations.

Today, however, it only takes a computer with a connection to reach literally every single person with access to the internet. Video is no longer strapped down to cables and expensive broadcast studios but viewable to anyone with a smartphone. Articles no longer have to be printed but can be disseminated and downloaded en masse with extreme ease. It no longer takes a room of dedicated professionals but a small group or even an individual with rudimentary equipment to publish an infinite amount of copies of whatever they wish. Taking Ellul's view of physical media infrastructure as integral to the propaganda of the 1960s, the internet is integral to the propaganda of the 21st century. It is how non-state actors reach their audiences from across the ocean, how the youth that are so often targeted receive the latest "reports" and "debates" from their predators. In the case of ISIS, the internet is by far their most valuable resource when it comes to distributing

[52] Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1964).

propaganda. ISIS videos, newsletters, chatrooms, reports, and more are all one click away and readily accessible for any willing to listen.

With the internet there is no need for a centralized control of media to have an influence on a society. I say this in part because, with the exception of a few countries and areas, there is no way to have total centralized control over the modern media, as various independent groups routinely inject their beliefs into the world stage. One connection is a doorway to whatever the world can offer. Many heavy handed and even democratic modern regimes continue to be vexed by the fact that censoring the internet is becoming more difficult by the second. Stopping the flow of ISIS propaganda is a stirring example of this. In one week alone in 2015, Twitter shut down over 2,000 ISIS related accounts, thirteen of which were official outlets for the group.[53] This may sound like a smashing success, but it represents a drop in a bucket astonishingly full of holes. A Brookings Institution report found there to be a minimum of 46,000 pro-ISIS twitter accounts operating in 2015.[54]

Despite the gap in time and technology between Ellul's works and ourselves, a practical parallel can be made to his treatment of print news, such as newspapers and magazines. People can and by necessity make themselves open to the advances of propaganda in their consumption of print (or online print), partly because they want to read what they agree with and more importantly buy the papers that they like. If a paper offered for sale that reinforces and takes further an individual's opinions, that individual is more likely to buy and be influenced by that publication. The same can be said of subscribing to or following outlets or individuals on social media or on

[53] Polly Mosendz, "Twitter Shuts Down 2,000 ISIS-Linked Accounts," *NewsWeek,* March 3, 2015.
[54] Rick Gladstone and Vindu Goel, "ISIS is adept on Twitter, Study Finds," *New York Times,* March 5, 2015.

the internet in general. People in general do not look to broaden their opinions and challenge their views on the internet, but instead tend to gravitate towards what they already agree with.

I make special note of Ellul's theory that all branches of the media need to be controlled. As stated above, the media of today operates differently than the 1960's. Now it is possible to get varied mediums of media, such as movies, radio (podcasts), news, and even "scholarly" papers and debates from one group in many places. ISIS, for example, uploads film, reports their own version of news, broadcasts announcements and speeches, and even publishes "scholarly" articles from their own media groups or individuals all on the internet. An individual, supportive or just curious about their group, can easily fall into a false sense of media diversity. Reading an article can be a gateway to self-isolation. People looking for a cause or seeking opinions and information on their life's struggles can find themselves trapped in the illusion that they are reading multiple sources and the feeling that they are receiving information from a wide variety of mediums. They can turn in any direction and find something that reinforces or exasperates a belief. In this way, an organization does not need to control all media or all forms of it, they only need to offer the illusion that they influence a wide spectrum of media.

1.7 Psychological Warfare

"The art of war is of vital importance to the State… All warfare is based on deception."

- Sun Tzu

On the battlefield, more whizzes through the air than bullets and shells. Deceiving the enemy is a technique as old as warfare itself, with techniques for the use of propaganda, assassination and spies, and domination of emotion found in ancient texts the world over. Colonel Linebarger, one of the first psychological warfare specialists in the US who helped organize the Army's flagship psychological warfare section,[55] writes that "psychological warfare and propaganda are each as old as mankind."[56] Linebarger makes his point by writing about "the use of unfamiliar instruments to excite panic" in reference to the Jewish leader Gideon's inspired defeat of the Midianites, chronicled in the Old Testament.[57]Techniques such as deception, brutality, rumors and myth, relying on various and sometimes ingenious methods of mass communication, have been and continue to be used to devastating effect when wielded by a skilled psychological warrior. Sun Tzu spoke of deceiving the enemy with flags, drums, and darkness and the importance of controlling the flow of information to both enemy and allied forces.[58] The ancient Indian book of statecraft, the Arthashastra, speaks vividly about the use of spies to circulate rumors in the enemy camp about impending defeat. The ancient text offers advice as true today as it was when the Arthashastra was originally written, suggesting "astrologers and other followers of the king should infuse spirit into his army by pointing out the impregnable nature of the array of his army, his power to associate

[55] John J. Pierce, "The Instrumentality Series," in *The Great Science Fiction Series*, ed. Frederik Pohl, Martin Harry Greenberg and Joseph Olander (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 420.
[56] Paul M. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), 2.
[57] *Ibid*, 5
[58] Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, trans. Lionel Giles, (London: Luzac and co., 1910), 15.

with gods, and his omniscience; and they should at the same time frighten the enemy."[59] During the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II's fiery and impassioned speech to the knights of Christendom was brimming with tales of Turkish and Muslim atrocity, of torturous murder, destruction of churches,[60] and the sprinkling of Christian blood onto holy sites and alters.[61] In short, the creation of a veneer of invincibility in oneself and demonization in the enemy are historical hallmarks of wartime propaganda.

Propaganda by its nature is goal oriented. It always involves influencing an audience in order to achieve a specific end state, such as the success of a military campaign or the pacification of a population. In times of war propaganda holds a keener edge, focused on bleeding the enemy's will to fight or shoring up the morale of one's own forces, both civilian and military. Harold Lasswell, another early pioneer in the study of psychological warfare, writes that psychological warfare seeks "to widen the gap between the physical destruction of capabilities on both sides and the magnitude of the impact upon the enemy's intention to resist."[62] In other words, Lasswell believes the goal of psychological warfare is to support traditional forces in that propaganda enhances the effects of military defeat and victory, lowering the amount of hardship an enemy will endure before surrender and raising the amount for an ally. In order to do this, "means of mass communication [are used] in order to destroy the enemy's will to fight."[63]

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[59] Kautilya, *Arthashastra*, trans. R. Shamasastry (1915).
[60] Fulcher of Chartres, "Gesta Dei per Francos," trans. Oliver J. Thatcher, Edgar Holmes and McNeal, *A Source Book for Medieval History* (New York: Scribners, 1905), 513-17.
[61] Robert the Monk, "Urban and the Crusaders," trans. Dana C. Munro, in *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History,* Vol 1, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1895), 5-8.
[62] Harold Lasswell, "Political and Psychological Warfare," in *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, ed. William E. Daugherty (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1958), 22.
[63] *Ibid,* 22

Propaganda and its dissemination become weapons in and of themselves, capable of degrading enemy military capacity without firing a single shot. However, some of the most poignant and powerful forms of psychological warfare, in the case of publicized assassination or execution, require only a few shots. Mass communication is not limited to loudspeakers or pamphlet drops, "it uses other media also, such as physical acts and material devices."[64] These physical acts include assassination, executions, large scale or graphically singular, or the destruction of culturally or otherwise important buildings and sites. Lasswell cites the term "propaganda of the deed", an idea stemming from social revolutionaries that placed a premium on symbolic actions such as the capture of "emotionally significant cities" and the assassination of prominent figures.[65] The goal is to send a message, something that dovetails well into the goals of terrorism. There are many high profile ISIS executions that seek to not only function as propaganda of agitation but also to disturb and demoralize their opponents in order to encourage surrender and assimilation. When considering the use of propaganda in warfare one must necessarily be aware of these types of action and the dissemination of their occurrences through traditional news or video.

Shoring up allied morale and crushing the opponent's will to fight often takes the form of invincibility and atrocity propaganda respectively. Invincibility propaganda serves two purposes with one emphasis. It perpetuates the idea that the propagandist's forces are nigh invincible, that their victory is assured despite any setback because of the inherent strength and power of the group. Shading a propagandist's forces with invincibility attempts to present an insurmountable obstacle to victory for the enemy while simultaneously providing a deep well of hope for their own forces.

[64] *Ibid,* 22
[65] *Ibid,* 23

Atrocity propaganda demonizes the foe, focusing on actual or imagined atrocities and characteristics of the enemy in order to paint them as the devil that must be defeated at all costs. Atrocity propaganda dances to a cautious tune because if it swings too far one way the enemy will garner their own air of invincibility but if it strays too far to the other it will not be effective in its goals.

1.8 Invincibility Propaganda

An important part of psychological warfare is trying to control how one's forces are seen by both the enemy and themselves. A common goal is for the psychological warrior to make his military seem invincible, that their inevitable victory is just around the corner. This hits two birds with one stone as it not only raises the morale of the propagandist's military but degrades the will of the enemy to fight against at least seemingly insurmountable odds. Groups ranging from the pagan forces of ancient Rome and India to ISIS extremists all have utilized this. As quoted above, the Arthashastra speaks of the importance of spreading rumors of impending defeat in the enemy camp through the use of spies. It also goes into more detail about using basically every figure possible that could vouch for the strength and victory of one's forces.

In order to bolster the effectiveness of his armies, Genghis Khan placed a premium on propaganda, "deliberately [using] rumor and other means to exaggerate accounts of their own huge numbers, stupidity, and ferocity… Europeans described light, hard-hitting numerically inferior cavalry as a 'numberless horde' because Mongol agents whispered such a story in the streets."[66] In this way an atmosphere of fear cultivated by the image of a vast, numberless, inexorable horde made up for the lack of an actual horde. Emperor Augustus of Rome (the successor to Caesar) built upon the Roman tradition of obsessing over military victory. Augustus developed a cultural system that perpetuated the idea of Roman invincibility in both his own legions and in the minds of his opponents. He took advantage of military victories and used propaganda to maximize their momentum. "The success of Roman military power was in itself excellent propaganda. It was used to frighten potential opponents, such as when imperial legations visited 'barbarian' courts with news

[66] Paul M. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), 15.

or reminders of recent triumphs, and was perpetuated in a cult of invincibility as reflected in art, ceremony and games, coins (carrying the words 'Victory of …' or 'Eternal Victory'), and even in the battle cries of the Roman troops."[67]

Invincibility propaganda is a specialty of groups that find their ideology rooted in or influenced by religious motivation. ISIS, for example, constantly references in its many propaganda pieces a divine will backing up their victories or military actions. In *Flames of War*[68], for example, several quotations from the Quran are used to justify their attempted conquests and even military losses in Iraq and Syria. These quotations are in reference to the soldiers who fought alongside Muhammad in the 7th century, and with that in mind the terrorist group tries to also draw a historical continuity between themselves and the original wave of Muslim expansion. Other groups such as the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and Boko Haram all make extensive use of the idea of a divinely ordained victory in their propaganda in an effort to motivate their own men and demoralize the regime forces that they constantly face.

Invincibility propaganda is not the sole domain of religiously motivated groups, although they do tend to specialize in it. Secular conflicts also exhibit the use of invincibility propaganda on all sides. In Vietnam, the psychological warfare operations of the US made extensive use of painting the conflict as inevitably futile for the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong). Figure 3 is a US leaflet dropped over North Vietnam, showing a VC unit suffering greater casualties in each panel. It reads "Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow." The back of the leaflet says ominously: "where are

[67] Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 44.
[68] ISIS, *Flames of War,* (2015: Al-Hayat Media), Video.

your comrades who started out with you?" This leaflet utilizes invincibility propaganda by implying the lethality of the American and South Vietnamese forces and their inevitable victory. It gains its power as a piece of psychological warfare by trying to convince the enemy that victory cannot be achieved and the only question that remains is how many of their own men need to die before they realize that fact. VC propaganda likewise made similar appeals, with the limited amount of leaflets distributed by the VC focusing heavily on the cost of the Vietnam war, the unrest and unpopularity it was inciting at home, and the prospect of high casualties for an unpopular war.[69]

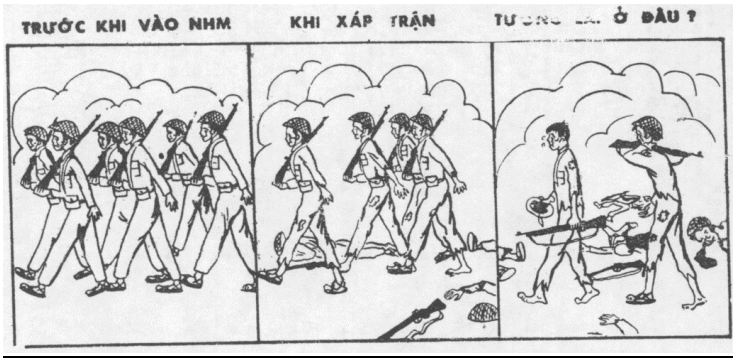


Figure 3, "Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow?" [70]

[69] *Ibid*, 171
[70] James O. Whittaker, "Psychological Warfare in Vietnam," *Political Psychology* 18 (1997): 174.

1.9 Atrocity Propaganda

Atrocity propaganda is an ancient propaganda, one that is used in nearly every conflict. It is easier to shoot the devil than a man who would drink a beer with you under different circumstances. Atrocity propaganda has several goals, all of which revolve around depicting the enemy as evil and by contrast the propagandist's forces as just and righteous. Atrocity propaganda drums up support for the conflict on both the international and home fronts by portraying the war as one against an evil opponent who slaughters/maims/pillages/rapes etc. In this way atrocity propaganda supplements all other propaganda because it makes defining the enemy as a one dimensional caricature extremely easy. Atrocity propaganda also tries to marshal support from citizens or even other countries neutral in the conflict by persuading them of the evil they face. ISIS's favorite source of atrocity propaganda are the coalition bombings that ravage ISIS controlled areas. ISIS devotes hours upon hours of screen time to the aftermath of these attacks, even if the results are from ISIS's use of human shields.

Atrocity propaganda blossomed on the modern stage in World War I. In the first instance of industrialized and globalized propaganda, atrocity propaganda was used to mobilize the home front and encourage other nations to enter the conflict. British propagandists during the war used the conquest of neutral Belgium as fodder for what would become one of the most intense atrocity propaganda campaigns in history. Stories of rape, mindless destruction and pillaging, and infamously stories of German soldiers bayonetting babies were circulated like wildfire throughout the British empire. The British government even set up legal bodies and official "investigations" for the sole purpose of validating erroneous and grossly exaggerated accounts of German actions in the war. The Bryce Report, from the specially created Committee on Alleged German Outrages, is the best and most impressive example of this. It used the authority of the British government to

at once lay out various accused atrocities, bringing them to the public's attention, while simultaneously "verifying" them.[71] The Austro-Hungarian occupation of Serbia likewise was widely chronicled to be full of the most brutal and inhumane atrocities including rape, stonings, mutilations and indiscriminate killings. A Russian propaganda poster provides one of the most direct examples of atrocity propaganda in the war, even if it does not mention a particular atrocity but rather depicts the war itself as an atrocity. The poster in figure 4 shows Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany as the literal devil, with the piece entitled "Vrag roda chelovecheskogo (The Enemy of Humankind)."[72] American propaganda focusing on the Germans as atrocious murderers of the innocent was also prolific. Figure 5 shows the iconic American WWI poster entitled "Halt the Hun!" which depicts the Germans as brutish thugs attacking the defenseless innocent.[73] Figure 6 shows a cartoon depicting a buffoonish German soldier with a string of children skewered on his bayonet.[74] The use of caricatures is a common theme of American propaganda during the world wars and the depiction of the Germans as the invading Huns stuck for decades.



Figure 4, "The Enemy of Humankind"

[71] Trevor Wilson, "Lord Bryce's Investigation into Alleged German Atrocities in Belgium, 1914-15," *Journal of Contemporary History* 14, no. 3 (1979): 369-83.
[72] WWI Russia, *The Enemy of Humankind*, 1914-1916.
[73] Henry Raleigh, *Halt the Hun!* 1918.
[74] MB Walker, *German Bayonetting Children*, 1915.



Figure 5, "Halt the Hun!"



Figure 6, German Bayonetting Children

What all of these forms of atrocity propaganda have in common is the desire to dehumanize the enemy by demonizing them. The enemy was not merely the German empire, it was the scourge of humanity, the invading Hun, the enemy of humankind. The characterization of the Germans as such lent itself well to convincing the populations of the Allied countries of the need to fight what most of the world would in hindsight characterize as the most terrible and pointless war in human history. Even with extremely concentrated and centralized efforts to motivate workers and soldiers, the belligerent powers struggled to stay in fighting shape. Without such wide ranging and evocative attempts at atrocity propaganda, one wonders whether or not the allied nations would have been able to continue to rationalize the conflict and motivate their people to go towards what many returning soldiers described as hell on earth.

Atrocity propaganda can, however, be used by a propagandist to depict their own forces. As stated above, the ability of executions to have a psychological effect on the enemy has been used throughout history to instill fear in the enemy by showcasing an army's ruthless nature or abilities. This is a favorite of ISIS, who throughout its history has seemingly made sport of brutal, and insidiously inventive, executions. A Jordanian pilot, Muadh al Kasasbeh, captured by ISIS militants was burned alive in a cage before being buried in rubble. His gruesome execution, brimming with warnings against Jordan's cooperation with the Crusaders, was broadcast in an incredibly high production value video.[75] In another video entitled *What You Promised We Return*, ISIS performed three rounds of executions with a horrific showmanship. ISIS militants execute the first group of prisoners by first locking them in a car and then destroying it with anti-tank weapons, taking great pains in the video to magnify and clarify the sounds of their screams. The second group is locked in a cage which is lifted by a crane and dunked slowly into a pool. Several waterproof cameras are attached to capture the expressions on the victims faces as they drown, again recording their muffled screams. The final group is killed when an extremist wrapped a single length of explosive detonation cord around their necks. When triggered, the line of prisoners was decapitated simultaneously.[76]

There are also two historically infamous examples of atrocity propaganda to intimidate an opponent from the Crusades, one involving the town of Baalbek in the First and the other Acre and Richard the Lionheart in the Third. During the First Crusade the town of Baalbek was captured by a group of Crusaders precariously low on supplies. Some men, after months of nightmarish conditions and fighting, resorted to eating the corpses piling up from starvation, disease, and war.

[75] Christopher Dickey and Shane Harris, *Barbarians Burn Pilot Alive: ISIS Will Never Release a Living Prisoner*, The Daily Beast, February 3, 2015.
[76] ISIS, *What You Promised, We Returned*, (2015: Al-Hayat Media), Video.

Word of this desperate act got out and, in a mostly accidental way, became a story of Crusader barbarity that actually augmented the feeling of Crusader invincibility in their Muslim foes.[77] During the Third Crusade the town of Acre was captured after an intense siege along with most of its Muslim garrison. Richard the Lionheart, in negotiations with Saladin, used the prisoners as a bargaining chip in part for the return of the True Cross, a holy relic of immeasurable value to the Crusade. Saladin stalled on his promise to return the relic, and after several weeks of waiting Richard brought out the prisoners to a field just in sight of the Muslim camp. The prisoners were then massacred to a man in full sight of Saladin and his army. The message was clear, and negotiations were ended as the Crusaders continued their march to Jerusalem.[78]

In conclusion, propaganda theories take many forms. They range from the almost mathematically semantic to the wider scope of total social context. Propaganda can be approached linguistically, psychologically, and historically. Whatever theory it springs from, however, propaganda is designed to sway and persuade, to bring men to action or convince them to stay at home, to destroy his will or prop it up ad absurdum. Propaganda is one of the most omnipresent facets of war and history, and controlling opinions has always been a key supportive task of warfare. Historical appropriation, as we will see, is the topic of choice for ISIS and it is by better understanding propaganda techniques, functions and theories that we may better analyze the uses of history in propaganda and ideology.

[77] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 90.
[78] *Ibid*, 452

2.0 Chapter 2- The Stuff of Legend: The First Crusade

From 1095 to 1291, a history spanning East and West was born, one that would come to electrify the imaginations and ignite the passions of generations nearly a thousand years into the future. From the preaching of Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont to the conquest of Acre at the hands of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars, the Crusades and the Crusader Kingdoms gave birth to a time of legend unparalleled in human history. The Crusading era is replete with such fascinations as monastic orders of warrior monks imbued with suicidal courage, hopeless sieges and momentous battles concluded with individual daring and reports of miracles, iconic heroes and villains (depending on the audience) and a realpolitik that would make Machiavelli take the cross. The chief events of these two centuries are the First and Third Crusades, encompassing the creation of the Crusader Kingdoms and the clash between Richard the Lionheart and Sultan Saladin respectively, both surrounded by their own legends and fantastical histories of bravado, cruelty, and piety.

Like most movements in retrospect, the Crusades were not monolithically united entities. It was not a black and white war between the Christian Franks and the Muslim Saracens (as they were contemporarily named). As we will see, the motivations behind the men that took the cross (as joining a crusade was commonly known) were just as varied as they were united. The Popes that called them seemed to have their own tiered reasons, some aimed at Europe and others centered on the East. It is important to view this history as a multifaceted period, as complicated and layered as it is fascinating. Historians and laymen alike have fallen into the traps of stereotyping the Crusades and the men who fought them, stripping away their human reality and replacing it with a storybook heroism or villainy. The stereotype is one of the most poignant weapons of a

propagandist, and in order to ensure that arrow is never fletched it is vital that one approaches the Crusades with an open mind and an appreciation of the human nature of both the Crusaders and their Muslim opponents.

The sieges of the First Crusade, and indeed all subsequent crusades, deserve a special consideration for their role in shaping its history. These sieges are home to the most dramatic events of the First Crusade. A Byzantine fleet was transported overland from the Mediterranean Sea to Lake Ascanius in order to prosecute the siege of Nicaea by both land and water. A last ditch sortie was launched by the beleaguered conquerors of Antioch to break a Muslim counter siege, accompanied by the discovery of an alleged holy relic and claims that the Saints themselves fought alongside the Crusaders as they defeated a vastly overwhelming force with minimal casualties. The siege of Jerusalem nearly met with unquenchable thirst and complete failure. Teetering upon the cusp of defeat, after days of penitent mass and a barefoot procession of the Crusading host around the Holy City a Genoese fleet landed, bringing with it relief and the material needed to construct mammoth siege towers.

Warfare in the 11th century was dominated by the control of castles and fortified cities, as these strongpoints granted the occupiers control of the surrounding countryside and served as bases of power and wealth in their own right. As romantic as the idea of pitched battles fought between dazzling armies in an open plain might be, such large and decisive battles were rare. They were rare because, as will become apparent, they were extremely risky and fraught with uncertainty. Sieges can be characterized as wars of attrition peppered with skirmishes and psychological warfare, aimed at breaking the enemy's ability, or will, to either resist the attackers or continue the siege. The actual fighting during these skirmishes, or attempts by the defenders to sally forth or the attackers to storm the city, took the form of brutal hand to hand combat. Soldiers used swords

and axes designed to hack and slash, or spears used to thrust and skewer, battering and stabbing each other shoulder to shoulder. Archers were particularly deadly, even more so if armed with the increasingly popular crossbow. In the aftermath of many battles, captured archers and crossbowmen often received little quarter in comparison to their melee brethren, so hated were they by their enemies. Successful sieges required not only strong military leadership and organizational skills (as the siege camps were essentially makeshift towns supporting rings of counter fortifications that sought to encircle their target) but technical skills as well. Massive machines of war, such as the ever popular siege towers, armored penthouses, and catapults and mangonels (projectile launchers based off of counter weights) were the chief weapons used to overcome fortifications. Their construction, and efforts to destroy them, figure prominently into Crusader era sieges.[1]

A gnawing specter that haunted nearly all of the major sieges of the First Crusade was starvation, owing to the poor logistical networks that came with fighting in deserts and mountains so far from home, and perhaps a lack of appreciation for the realities of warfare in the Near East. The sheer size of the Crusader armies also meant that when proper supply chains were established, they were often hard pressed to fulfill the armies' needs. Disease and death also ran rampant throughout many of the Crusader siege camps, as will be seen in the accounts of prominent First Crusade chroniclers. Conditions deteriorated to such abysmal levels that oftentimes the besiegers found themselves worse off than the besieged. The aftermath of these hells on earth spilt over into the cities once the walls were overcome. Brutal retaliation was the fate of many Muslims and Christians living behind the ancient gates, most notoriously at the conclusions of the sieges that captured Antioch and Jerusalem. Squabbling over the new territorial possessions, expansive and

[1] John France, *Victory in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 26-27, 48, 50. For a detailed account of the military action of these sieges, see John France's work cited here.

impressive in their wealth and prestige, threatened to disintegrate the Princes' Crusade more than once. Some of the Crusade's leaders never even fought at Jerusalem, instead staying behind to found their new statelets while the rest of the host moved on.

When you read of the sieges, the battles, and the diplomacy that raged throughout the two centuries of the Crusading period, try to put yourself into the shoes of these men. When reading a history, it is all too easy to overlook or downplay what a sentence represents, especially if it appears as minute or mundane as "the Princes moved what remained of their armies to Jerusalem." For those who have never experienced it, an accurate picture of war is incredibly difficult to grasp even before one accounts for the gap of over 800 years of history. In the 11th-13th centuries any successful military endeavor took an incredible amount of organization, logistical preparation, and sheer amounts of human hardship. You will soon read about the catastrophe that visited the campaigns that failed in these areas. When you read "the Princes moved what remained of their armies to Jerusalem," picture yourself marching in a sweltering heat, ensconced in thick wool and metal, if you were lucky, surrounded by a sea of dour and gaunt faces. Your feet blister and bleed, the meat pressed against your lips the flesh of the horse that carried you through the lances of Antioch, so many miles away. The dust chokes you and invades every crevice of your property, filling the empty bags that once held bolts of purple and the wealth of your fief. Your brother falls from exhaustion behind you, and as you stop in self-pity, clutching at the reopening gash in your side, you stare at the unforgiving sky that watches your progress with disinterest. One thought drives you on, as you drag your brother to his feet and empty your water skin onto his cracked and bleeding lips. The Sepulcher is barred, held by a hostile people. The walls of the Holy City are manned by heathens, and they must fall by the decree of God for the good of all His people. You gird

yourself and continue your journey, surrounded by a sea of misery lead by a flame of hope. Jerusalem must be liberated, and by God you will do it or you will embrace your martyrdom. Feel their ecstasy, fear their fear, imagine their thirst and their hunger for food and water, power and humility.

2.1 The Birth of an Era, The Call of the Pilgrim

Deus Vult. God wills it. These words became the slogan of the Crusades at the Council of Clermont in 1095 after a near apocalyptic exhortation from Pope Urban II. Emperor Alexius had sent word from Constantinople, warning of a Muslim threat against the Byzantine Empire. Born in a tumultuous time under complex circumstances, the First Crusade drew poor and royalty, warriors and noncombatants alike from throughout Europe for an overland journey covering Eastern Europe, Anatolia and the Levant, culminating in the sack of Jerusalem.

The success of the First Crusade is responsible for not only the survival of Crusading as an ideology but also for the zeal that would support such endeavors for nearly two centuries. The list of victories, and importantly the cast of characters and their methods, of the First Crusade is nothing short of astonishing. City after city fell to what became an unlikelier and unlikelier force after every engagement. The amount of political accommodation and cold ambition in some of these men was balanced only by an equally forceful piety in others, sometimes coexisting in both. The men who lead the First Crusade, the namesakes for what is otherwise known as the Princes' Crusade, exemplify the complexity of the maelstrom of motivations that came to characterize the Crusades and the Crusading Kingdoms. The First Crusade was only the beginning of their careers, as some would go on to return to Europe as heroes, others become kings of the Levant and one even try to usurp the Byzantine Emperor after leaving Antioch with everything that wasn't nailed down. At its conclusion, the First Crusade saw a Near East transformed, seeding new centers of power and duty that would bloom into their own epochs and exploits.

There are several competing theories for why the First Crusade was called by Pope Urban II nearly a thousand years ago upon the grassy fields of Clermont. Was the Crusade (crusade being

an anachronistic term in relation to the First, as the French *croisade* wasn't applied until around the 12th century)[2] called to halt the tide of Islam sweeping across the ancestral lands of Christianity, coming to the defense of Catholicism's brothers in the East? Were the Pope's actions a delayed response to the Islamic conquests of the 7th century, a just invasion that was only delayed by the squabbling and greed of the warlords of Christendom? Or was the Crusade called because of the kingly quarrels, an attempt to give Europe some semblance of unity under Papal authority? Some claim a darker theory that the Crusade was an opportunistic ploy to gain wealth, land, and prestige at the hands of innocent Muslims who had called the Holy Land their home for over three centuries. The truth is most likely a mix of these.

It was once popular, and in some circles still is, to paint the Crusaders as nothing more than the land hungry outcasts of Europe, the second sons that held nothing back in Europe and pursued a world of plunder awaiting in the East. In this theory the First Crusade was a proto-imperialist expedition for the nearly wealthy and powerful to make names for themselves. Modern research shows, however, that the majority of knights and figures of note in the First Crusade were wealthy landowners, placing their hope in the Catholic Church's promise to protect their families and property in their absence.[3] They risked not only their lives but also expended a significant portion or even all of their wealth funding their incredibly arduous and uncertain expedition. It cannot be stated that these men were motivated solely by wealth. As touched upon above, it is near impossible for the majority of modern society to comprehend what war was or even is like today. It is all

[2] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 40.
[3] "The once fashionable myth that crusaders were self-serving, disinherited, land-hungry younger sons must be discarded. Crusading was instead an activity that could bring spiritual and material rewards, but was in the first instance both an intimidating and extremely costly activity." *Ibid*, 47; Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades*, 11.

too easy to fall into the trap that warfare for any cause was an easy task, a simple matter of picking up and heading to a fight. It was, and still is, full of horror and immense cost and uncertainty. Fighting on crusade would most likely end in death or bankruptcy, a realization not lost on the Crusaders who funded their way to the Holy Land at great personal cost. The historical record supports a genuine piety as the chief motivator. The actions of some of these men once in the Holy Land, such as Bohemond of Taranto, does paint some of the Crusaders as less than pious in their motivations.[4] Matters both spiritual and temporal guided the creation of the First Crusade. This holy war can be divorced from neither true piety nor ambition.

Concerning the historical context of the late 11th century, the West was not under an immediate existential threat that would be solved with the capture of Jerusalem. The Muslims that threatened the Byzantine Empire were the Seljuk Turks, whose successors would not enter Constantinople for centuries. Although it is true that these successors, the Ottoman Empire, would eventually prove to be one of the few existential threats Europe ever faced, this would not occur for many, many years. To say that the Pope recognized the relatively local conflict between the Byzantine Empire and the Seljuk Sultanate as the ancestor of the Ottoman invasions of Austria is a stretch to say the least. When Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus sent for aid to Pope Urban II at an ecclesiastical council in Piacenza in 1095, he only requested a detachment of Latin soldiers. Possibly a request for mercenaries, these soldiers were likely expected to help repulse repeated Seljuk incursions and retake historically Byzantine lands.[5] It is true, however, that Islam had been expanding at the expense of Christianity since its inception in the early 7th century. The cities of

[4] "Bohemond lacked wealth, having been disinherited by his acquisitive half-brother in 1085. Driven by rapacious ambition, he thus took the cross in the summer of 1096 with at least one eye upon personal advancement, nursing dreams of a new Levantine lordship to call his own." Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 45.
[5] *Ibid*, 34

Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, three of the original five seats of Christian theological authority (the Pentarchy),[6] were now under Muslim rule. It was not unreasonable to view the success of Islam as the weakening of Christianity, especially in its traditional heartland. Beginning in the mid11th century there was a movement, championed by the Papacy and specifically by Popes Gregory VII and his successor Urban II, to "rejuvenate Western Christendom… the so-called 'Reform Movement'".[7] This movement entertained a vision of renewed Papal authority and Church prestige to lead Europe out of its murderous state into a brighter and more peaceful future. For Pope Urban II, the answer to both of these challenges lay in the reclamation of the Holy Land. It was a target capable of channeling Europe's rage, made possible by the request for military assistance from Emperor Alexius.[8]

Europe, and the relationships that constituted it, were bloody and fratricidal in the time building up to the First Crusade. According to historian Thomas Asbridge, "eleventh-century Europe was not in a state of fully fledged anarchy, but the ravening violence of feud and vendetta was commonplace, and lawlessness epidemic."[9] It got so bad that in the early 11th century the idea of the omnipresent strife heralding the end times gained significant popularity. Out of this realm of war naturally came a class of professional warriors and warlords: knights, or the French *chevalier*. This relatively new stratum of leadership in Western Europe was extremely fragmented, with the kingdoms of the age being held together by loose bonds of loyalty and economic and military obligation. Central authority was a misnomer. This time of incessant war and destruction did not

[6] Paul McPartlan, "The First Millennium and the Future," in *A Service of Love*, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 53-84.
[7] *Ibid*, 63
[8] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 7-8.
[9] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 7.

coincide with a weakening of religious belief, however, and actually saw it increase. A major tenant of Christian thought is to love one's neighbor and abstain from harming or killing him. Unfortunately for the burgeoning class of medieval warrior lords, harming and killing your neighbor became an established political practice that many built their livelihoods and power upon. Worries about eternal damnation increased alongside the killing, and many of these strongmen often took to pilgrimages and other acts of devotion to beg their Lord for forgiveness.[10]

The Papacy of Pope Gregory VII was one concerned chiefly with reform. For decades the Church had been trying to stymy the violence in Europe with various initiatives such as the Peace of God, prohibiting the slaughter of noncombatants, and the Truce of God, proclaiming Sundays and certain holy days as periods of temporary truce throughout Europe.[11] But these and most other Church efforts to reign in the chaos of medieval Europe were stunted by the lack of temporal Church authority. As remarked by Asbridge, for Pope Gregory:

> Any failings within the Church were just symptoms of a deeper malaise: the corrupting influence of the secular world, long enshrined by the links between clergymen and lay rulers. And the only way to break the stranglehold enjoyed by emperors and kings over the Church was for the Pope finally to realize his God-given right to supreme authority.[12]

Specifically, the priests and bishops of Europe were under the sway of their earthly lieges more so than their spiritual superiors, and the Pope found himself inferior to the power of kings. Pope Gregory saw the way forward for both Europe and the Church was to establish the Pope seated in Rome as the spiritual head of all Christianity, above bishops and especially above kings. The Pope,

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[10] *Ibid*, 4-5
[11] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 6.
[12] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 10.

officially the Vicar of Rome, was not always the undisputed head of the Catholic Church as he is today. Originally there were five patriarchs of Christianity, or the Pentarchy, as mentioned above. By the 11th century, four of these seats lay outside Western Christianity, with Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem under Muslim ownership and Constantinople freshly split from the Western Church. This left Rome as the more or less de facto center of Western spirituality, but not its vicar as the uncontested head of the religion. The eventual profession of the See of Rome as the leadership of Christianity also strained the Church's relationship with what is now the Greek Orthodox Church, who rejected universal Papal authority.

In pursuit of his reformist agenda, Pope Gregory VII came into serious conflict with some of the earthly powers of Europe, most notably the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. After a series of arguments, squabbles, excommunications, and minor invasions, the Catholic Church and its reforms were on its heels. It took Pope Urban II, elected to the Papacy in 1088, years to reverse the Church's fortunes.[13] Pope Urban succeeded in returning the Papacy to its path of reform to such an extent that perhaps the most ambitious plan of Pope Gregory became feasible. One of the most impressive sources of kingly authority was the ability to raise and (hopefully) control an army. Pope Gregory envisioned a campaign fought by an army led and raised by the Pope, an episode that would surely showcase to the world the influence of the Roman Papacy. The plight of the Byzantine Empire proved to be an insufficient reason for Pope Gregory to rally his proposed army until the fresh plea for aid from Emperor Alexius and the conquest of Jerusalem by the Seljuk

[13] *Ibid,* 34

Turks in 1077. These events, along with a bolstering of Papal influence under Pope Urban, specifically in Italy and in his homeland of France, allowed for the declaration of a war to reconquer not only parts of Anatolia but the Holy Land itself.[14]

In order to add an appeal of urgency to his request to the knightly class of Europe, Pope Urban focused the most grandiose parts of his sermon at Clermont on alleged atrocities committed by the Turks against Christians and pilgrims. Although exaggerated, the sentiment behind these claims had some merit. Extremely controversial, these allegations were most likely based on an incredibly hyperbolized truth. Pope Urban depicted the plight of Christians living in the Holy Land under Muslim rule as a special kind of hell, as they were killed and ripped apart with their entrails wound around spears, while the ancient churches were destroyed and defiled with Christian blood flung into the baptismal fonts as only a few examples.[15] Although these claims are likely imbued with some dramatic effect, there is enough evidence to claim Christian pilgrims were harassed, extorted, and even killed en route to Jerusalem. Looking at the conduct of many local Levantine Christians regarding the Crusaders, more support for harsh treatment at the hands of Muslim rulers can be ascertained. Throughout the endeavor of the First Crusade, the Crusaders were supported by local Christians in the form of intelligence and logistical support, sometimes even fighting as auxiliaries.[16] In response to the charge that these Christians were trying to get ahead by supporting

[14] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 8.
[15] Fulcher of Chartres, "Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont, November 27, 1095," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 25-46.
[16] In one notable event, a local Christian provided an incredibly valuable piece of information during the siege of Jerusalem. The Egyptian defenders made excellent use of Greek fire, a substance that when lit could not be doused with water, used successfully to destroy Crusader siege engines. At a critical juncture, this Christian disclosed the secret of defeating such a terrifying weapon: vinegar. Asbridge, *The Crusades,* 99-100.

the inexorable conquerors, I point out that the Crusade repeatedly looked to be a doomed affair, and many local Christians found less risky favor with their Muslim lieges by spying in the Crusader camp.[17]

The theological importance of pilgrimage and holy sites in 11th century Catholicism meant that as far as the audience at Clermont was concerned, the Muslims oppressing the pilgrims were literally barring their way to salvation.[18] The Crusade was billed to be a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, at any cost. This inherently meant clearing the Holy City of its Muslim masters, entailing a military campaign that would both give and receive support from Byzantium along the way. Pope Urban's sermon, and the subsequent preaching campaigns, were so successful at igniting the passions and zeal of Europe that not only did experienced and well-funded knights join, but noncombatants, such as women, children, elderly, and woefully unprepared and undisciplined civilian men took the cross. This would have profound and appalling consequences later, especially for the remembrance of the Crusaders, as what were essentially mobbish elements of the Crusade ran rampant wherever they went.

Regardless of the motivations for the Crusade, approximately 150,000 people took the cross.[19] The actual fighting force that would reach Jerusalem and found the Crusader Kingdoms was not the first to leave, the first to set off being the ill-fated People's Crusade. The actual first Crusade, the Princes' Crusade, was led by a coalition of European lords: Count Raymond of Toulouse, the most powerful lord of Southern France and the first to take the cross; Bohemond of

[17] At the siege of Antioch, many Christians served the Muslim ruler Yaghi Siyan by infiltrating and spying on the Crusader camp. Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum,* 29.
[18] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 11-12.
[19] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 11.

Taranto, a disinherited and ambitious military leader par excellence; his capable nephew Tancred of Hauteville; Godfrey of Bouillon, the first (if only briefly) king of Jerusalem; his brother Baldwin of Boulogne, founder of the county of Edessa and second king of Jerusalem; as well as Duke Robert of Normandy, his son-in-law Count Stephen of Blois, and his cousin Count Robert II of Flanders. [20] To say these prominent men of Europe, who brought with them professional armies and subjects with their own wealth and titles, would go on to live storied lives is an understatement.

[20] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 43-46.

2.2 Siege by the Lakeside: The Battle for Nicaea

The People's Crusade, led by the unsanctioned popular preacher Peter the Hermit, was a logistical and military disaster, an embarrassing and horrific start to what was supposed to be a dignified venture. Hunger turned to looting and a criminal lack of discipline manifested itself in raids against Christian soft targets. The fissures of ethnicity became all too apparent as the main force shattered into competing crusades as it reached the shores of Anatolia, having run a destructive course throughout the Byzantine realm and beyond. According to the Gesta Francorum, perhaps the most famous contemporary history of the First Crusade:

> Those Christians behaved abominably, sacking and burning the palaces of the city, and stealing the lead from the roofs of the churches… after they had crossed [the Hellespont] they did not cease their misdeeds, and they burned and laid waste both houses and churches.[21]

The ineptitude of these groups became even more apparent when they sought to pillage Nicaea. At first the French Crusaders launched a surprise attack, returning with an impressive amount of booty. Not to be outdone, the German Crusaders tried their own assault, but were quickly rounded up and slaughtered by the now alert Turkish garrison. Believing a forged letter sent by the Turks claiming a successful German capture of the city, the remaining French Crusaders hurried to Nicaea, where they promptly suffered the same fate of their likewise overzealous and incompetent comrades. Contemporary chronicler Fulcher of Chartres recounts:

[21] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 3.

> Oh, how many severed heads and bones of the dead we then found beyond Nicomedia, lying upon the plains near the sea! These people [of the People's Crusade], inexperienced in the use of the arrow, the Turks had annihilated.[22]

Peter the Hermit narrowly avoided the disaster, as he had departed earlier for a meeting with the Byzantine Emperor. Peter was "virtually the only survivor."[23] He could do nothing but sit on his hands and wait for the professionals to arrive.

The Seljuk Sultan of Nicaea, Kilij Arslan, felt his capital of Nicaea secure. Yes, it was a tempting target for Emperor Alexius, but if the rabble Arslan had just faced were the best the Emperor could muster than what real threat was there? Surely the banners cresting the horizon belonged to a similar stock, defeating them would be an easy task for the garrison. Feeling vindicated by victory, the Sultan decided that a dispute over the minor strategic town of Melitene in the far Eastern reaches of his lands was a more pressing concern.[24] But unfortunately for the Sultan, those banners did not belong to a mob. Two years after the sermon at Clermont, the Princes' Crusade, eventually numbering around 75,000 with nearly 7,500 fully armed knights, had at last arrived in Anatolia.[25] While passing through Constantinople nearly every Crusader Prince, with the exception of Raymond of Toulouse, formally allied themselves to the Byzantine Emperor, promising "'whatever cities, countries or forts he might in future subdue, which had in the first place belonged to the Roman Empire, he would hand over to the officer appointed by the emperor'" in

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[22] Fulcher of Chartres, "A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 105.
[23] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 18.
[24] John France, *Victory in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 160.
[25] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 52.

return for "imperial aid and counsel." [26] This alliance gave Emperor Alexius, at least at first, a modicum of control over the Crusading army. With his guidance and aid, the Crusaders set off to prosecute a siege against the city of Nicaea on May 6, 1097.

The siege of Nicaea bears special consideration as the first siege of the Crusades, serving as an example of the ingenuity, savagery, and psychological warfare that came to define them. As described above, siege craft was responsible for most of the influential clashes of the Crusading era, often creating the conditions for brutal retaliation from both sides. According to Asbridge, "barbarous psychological warfare was common in medieval sieges and certainly not the preserve of Christians."[27] Nicaea was a formidable fortress city, enclosed by 4,970 meters of ten meter high walls dotted by 114 towers, which rose to as high as seventeen meters. These impressive fortifications were surrounded by a formidable double moat, which although simple proved to be one of the most troublesome defenses for the Crusader's siege machinery to overcome.[28] What made besieging the city truly difficult, however, was the Askanian Lake which met the Western edge of the city. Facing this large body of water, the Crusaders could not completely envelop the town, allowing the Turkish defenders to both resupply and focus on defending approximately half of the city's walls. This left the Crusaders with a dilemma: assault the city or find a way to seal off the lake. With the aid of the Emperor, they eventually settled on both.

Assaulting the city was not an easy task, even with overwhelming numbers. The formidable defenses resisted the projectile throwing war machines that tried in vain to batter down the walls, forcing the Crusaders to attempt scaling the battlements or sapping their foundations. Both tactics

[26] *Ibid,* 50-52
[27] *Ibid,* 53
[28] John France, *Victory in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 143.

required braving showers of arrows and other larger projectiles until a Crusader reached the walls, resulting in heavy casualties. According to Raymond of Aguilers, the chaplain and companion of Raymond of Toulouse, "if anyone wants to approach nearer [to Nicaea], he is easily overwhelmed from the top of the towers without being able to retaliate" (overwhelmed most likely being a euphemism for dying horribly from arrow wounds or being crushed by rocks).[29] If trying to undermine the walls, the attackers would need to maintain a robust excavating operation directly in the defenders' field of fire, staying hours or even days perpetually exposed or under the cover of only rudimentary defenses. Often the Crusaders attempted to create penthouses, "a wooden structure with an armoured sloping roof within which attackers could undermine the wall in relative safety."[30] Relative is the key word here, as these mobile shields were obvious targets for the defenders, which made manning them a great risk. One such penthouse, called "the Fox," collapsed after reaching the walls, killing all 20 knights within.[31] Even when a portion of the wall collapsed from sapping, the defenders could still fill in the gap if the attackers failed to aggressively pursue their advantage, as happened in Nicaea. A contingent of French Crusaders managed to collapse a section of wall, but as the night stalled the Crusader advance, the Turkish garrison was able to plug the breach under the cover of darkness and completely nullify the Crusaders' efforts.[32] Sieges often dragged on for months, even years. Raymond writes about the siege of Nicaea, remarking that

[29] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 103.
[30] John France, *Victory in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 163.
[31] *Ibid*, 163
[32] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 104.

"machines were constructed and the wall attacked in vain, for it was very firm against us and was valiantly defended by arrows and machines. So we fought five weeks with no result."[33]

Psychological warfare played heavily into the stratagem of a siege, and Nicaea offers some telling and gruesome examples. In the face of the Crusader assaults on his capital, Kilij Arslan finally returned to launch a two pronged counter attack from the hills on the Crusader camp. In a major setback for the Sultan, the Crusaders were able to intercept his southern maneuver and defeat the entire Seljuk relief force. With this victory the Crusaders gained a fresh resource in their investment of Nicaea- fear. Building upon the damage Arslan's defeat inflicted upon the garrison's morale, the Crusaders decapitated hundreds of Turkish dead and "bearing many heads fixed upon spikes and spears, offered a spectacle," parading their trophies around the city.[34] The Crusaders did, however, make sure to reunite the defenders with their deceased comrades. The Gesta Francorum recounts how in the course of the attack:

> As many as came down [from the mountain] had their heads cut off by our men, who threw the heads of the slain into the city by means of a sling, in order to cause more terror among the Turkish garrison.[35]

In their own attempt to demoralize the Crusaders, the Nicaean defenders responded by decorating their walls with the rotting naked corpses of their Crusader opponents. Fulcher of Chartres recounts the horror, writing:

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[33] *Ibid,* 104
[34] Anselm of Ribemont, "Letter to Manasses II, Archbishop of Rheims," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 132.
[35] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 15.

> For when they slew one of our [the Crusaders] men before the wall in any way, they let down iron hooks by means of rope and took the body up… After stripping the corpse, they threw the body outside [onto the wall].[36]

Despite all of the assaults, both physical and psychological, the defenders continued to have a tenacious, if precarious, hold on Nicaea. The lake was providing a crucial lifeline of communication and resupply to the outside world, and if this line could not be cut the chances of the siege succeeding slimmed by the day. Emperor Alexius was well aware of the threat the lake posed as he watched the siege grind into stalemate from miles away. Up to this point the Emperor contented himself with sending small detachments of soldiers and military advisors, chief among them a memorable man named Tacitus, a devoutly loyal servant of the emperor, eunuch, and tactician said to have worn a gold nose to replace the one cut off in the course of a busy military life.[37] Around a month into the siege, Emperor Alexius decided to portage a small flotilla of Greek ships across twenty miles of the Anatolian mainland, overcoming mountains and forests, into the lake. On June 18, 1097, this fleet, fully stocked with pristinely armored Byzantine troops, appeared without warning and attacked Nicaea, blaring trumpets, unfurling vibrant flags, and beating drums as it descended upon the unprepared defenders. The shock of a seaborne fleet seemingly appearing overnight with a frightening amount of imperial fanfare, in a lake twenty miles from the sea, was probably as valuable as a psychological attack as it was a military encirclement. The Turkish garrison, upon seeing the imperial fleet materialize on their lake, "were afraid almost to death, and began to wail and lament, while the Franks rejoiced and gave glory to God."[38] At the same time

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[36] Fulcher of Chartres, "A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 106.
[37] *Ibid*, 54
[38] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 16.

the Crusaders launched their own land based assault, fully encircling the city. The will of the Turkish garrison was broken and they sued for peace.

This honeymoon phase of the Crusader-Byzantine alliance would soon wane after Nicaea as the Crusaders marched out of the Emperor's sphere of influence and into the territory of modern day Syria. The further away the Crusaders traveled from Constantinople, the further away they became from the Emperor's military intelligence, advice, and control. As the First Crusade wound its way through Asia Minor and into Syria proper, the Seljuk Turks continued to prove themselves dangerous foes. After the Crusader Princes decided to temporarily split their forces into two groups, Kilij Arslan, determined to ruin the Crusaders who made a fool of him and conquered his capital, launched an attack on the Crusader vanguard in what would be known as the Battle of Dorylaeum.[39] Dorylaeum is significant because it offers an invaluable insight into what motivated the Crusaders in life or death situations.

The Battle of Dorylaeum began as the Sultan's force of traditional Turkish cavalry, armed with powerful bows and deadly expertise, engaged the first group of Crusaders under Bohemond of Taranto and Robert of Normandy. The Turkish war tactics, relying on their maneuverability and superior ranged firepower to pin down and eliminate their slower adversaries with a metal rain of arrows, horrified the Crusaders. Fulcher of Chartres, present in the vanguard, recounts how:

> The Turks crept up, howling loudly and shooting a shower of arrows. Stunned, and almost dead, and with many wounded, we immediately fled.… We were all huddled together, indeed, like sheep shut in a pen.[40]

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[39] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 57.
[40] Fulcher of Chartres, "A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 117.

Many fled, and those that didn't were confronted with a sobering tactical reality- form a dismounted battle line and rely on superior numbers and armor, weathering both the sun and Turkish arrows in the hopes of survival. The battle line was made possible by the efforts of Bohemond and Robert as they rallied their men by force of impressive personal leadership. During the course of the battle, the many priests that were present with the Crusaders began chanting and singing hymns praising God and beseeching His mercy, while "many… ran to the priests and confessed their sins to them."[41] A motto, possibly started by Bohemond of Taranto, passed along the sheildwall to instill morale into the Crusaders is a powerful insight into the realities of the men who fought the Crusade, and a rather straightforward reason for the controversy surrounding the Crusaders' motivations. Pressed together for nearly a full day,

> [The Crusaders] passed a secret message along our line, praising God and saying, 'Stand fast all together, trusting in Christ and in the victory of the Holy Cross. Today, please God, you will all gain much booty.'[42]

Genuine piety was bolstered by the human desire for short term gain, because who would not be motivated by victory and plunder? With the arrival of the main body of Crusaders, the Seljuks of Anatolia were finally scattered, never returning to harass the First Crusade. This early victory for the Crusaders showed that these men, facing an uncertain and deadly pitched battle (the Crusaders lost around 4,000 men to the Turks 3,000),[43] were motivated by strong leaders, religious evocations, some material gain, and perhaps most importantly, survival in a land far from home.

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[41] *Ibid*, 118
[42] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 19-21.
[43] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 59.

Although after Dorylaeum Kilij Arslan never again engaged the Crusaders in battle, he was far from finished with them. The Sultan ordered a scorched earth retreat through the Anatolian desert. Recorded in the Gesta Francorum:

> [The Seljuks] burned or destroyed everything that might be helpful or useful to us… We therefore pursued them through a land which was deserted, waterless, and uninhabitable… we barely emerged or escaped alive.[44]

Hundreds if not thousands died on the rode out of Asia Minor during one of the more peaceful legs of the journey, in terms of military conflict.[45] Horses, one of the most valuable commodities and weapons of war for the Crusader knights, died in droves. Pack animals, so vital to the logistical duties of carrying equipment and men, shared a similar fate. Fulcher of Chartres dourly reported that:

> Truly, either you would laugh or perhaps shed tears of compassion, when many of our people lacking beasts of burden, because many had died, loaded wethers, she-goats, sows, or dogs with their possessions… armed knights even used oxen as mounts.[46]

Eventually finding relief at the city of Iconium and reaching lands belonging to friendly Armenian Christians, the Crusaders were able to forge alliances that allowed them to resupply and secure the vital logistical centers that would support them for the rest of their campaign. Baldwin of Boulogne, however, went much further than establishing an alliance with the local Armenians.

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[44] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 23.
[45] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 24.
[46] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 68. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt3fhh0t.7.

Taking a small force of knights, Baldwin portrayed himself as the liberator of the Armenian Christians under Seljuk rule, carving out a relatively large area of influence for himself and attracting the attention of the Armenian noble Thoros, king of Edessa. Baldwin, in exchange for bolstering the defense of Edessa against Seljuk raiders, was adopted by Thoros in a traditional adoption ceremony (that involved both men wearing the same tight fitting shirt simultaneously) and declared his heir. Unfortunately for the lord of Edessa, he and his wife were subsequently murdered several days after the traditional adoption ceremony, with Baldwin turning a blind eye to the assassination. In some accounts Baldwin actually urged on the crowd that lynched the aging king and queen.[47] Baldwin acted swiftly to claim Edessa for his own and founded the first Crusader Kingdom, the County of Edessa in 1097.[48]

Passing successfully through the lands of Anatolia, braving strange and fearsome Seljuk attacks, surviving starvation and thirst, and even dubiously founding a minor kingdom along the way, the Crusaders were now able to continue on to their next goal and what would soon become the center of a new Crusader state: Antioch.

[47] Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Shocken Books, 1984), 30.
[48] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 61.

2.3 Miracles and Men: The Siege of Antioch

In a letter Fulcher of Chartres catalogues as "The Letter of the Princes Addressed to the Roman Pontiff," dated August 1, 1098, Bohemond of Taranto describes the siege of Antioch:

> We endured many evils in the siege. Because of the battles with the neighboring Turks and heathens rushing in on us so frequently in great numbers, we were more truly said to be besieged by those whom we had besieged in Antioch.[49]

The siege of Antioch, lasting from October 20, 1097 to June 3, 1098, and the subsequent counter siege rank as the most intense clashes of the First Crusade, overshadowed in importance only by the capture of Jerusalem. Antioch stood as a target of immense significance for the First Crusade. Not only was it the goal of the Byzantine-Crusader alliance, it guarded the most direct route to Jerusalem, held religious significance as a seat of the Pentarchy and home to many important churches (including the Antiochene Basilica of St Peter), and was in and of itself a valuable prize for any conqueror. The wealth and power of Antioch would mesmerize some of the Crusade's leaders, especially Bohemond of Taranto and Raymond of Toulouse, and their emerging rivalry would play a decisive role in the coming siege and its aftermath.[50]

The months of the siege were fraught with starvation, disease, and the constant threat of counterattack. Camped around the city, the Crusaders found themselves unable to fully encircle Antioch because of the unique terrain, which saw several gates nestled high in the Staurin and Silpius mountains or along the river Orontes. The fortifications were some of the most immense

[49] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 81-82.
[50] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 67.

in the world, with ancient walls nearly sixty feet high dotted with around sixty towers, not to mention the mighty citadel perched upon the peak of Mount Silpius.[51] Fulcher of Chartres remarked that:

> [Antioch] is an extensive city, has a strong wall, and is well situated for defense. It could never be captured by outside enemies if the inhabitants, supplied with bread, wished to defend it long enough.[52]

Unable to completely encircle the city, the siege of Antioch, much like Nicaea, devolved into a nightmarish stalemate.

Morale and psychological warfare played a large part in the siege and, again much like Nicaea, the decapitation of prisoners and enemy dead became a favored tactic. The airspace around Antioch experienced a heavy traffic of flying heads, flung with alarming frequency into the opposing camps. After one skirmish the Turkish defenders managed to bury their dead in secret, only to have the Crusaders loot the graves, decapitate the bodies, throw the corpses into a very large and very visible pit, and then proudly finish the construction of a new castle using the stones from the Turkish graves.[53] At one point the Turks captured a standard of the Virgin Mary and proudly displayed it upside down in the mud to taunt the Crusaders, which deeply distressed them. This practice reportedly halted after the severed heads of an attempted Turkish relief force were arrayed on stakes in view of the defenders.[54] On the part of the garrison, the Turkish ruler of Antioch,

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[51] *Ibid*, 64-65
[52] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 71.
[53] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 42.
[54] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 142.

Yaghi Siyan, publicly tortured and killed many of the city's Christians and various Crusader prisoners that he managed to obtain. The Greek Patriarch of Antioch was dangled by his feet off Antioch's high walls and beaten with metal rods.[55] Yaghi Siyan directed these tactics not only towards the Crusaders but also to those closer to home, as he had more to worry about than besiegers. According to 12th and 13th century Muslim chronicler Ibn al-Athir, Yaghi Siyan "feared the Christians in the city" and expelled the Christian men, tricking them by digging a moat around Antioch and then refusing to let them back into the city.[56] Betrayal would come, but not from the Christians.

During a particularly harsh winter, the Crusader supply stores reached critical levels, and many hundreds perished from starvation. Fulcher of Chartres described the trying times in his chronicle:

> When the Franks had besieged the city for some time, and had pillaged the surrounding region for food necessary for themselves and had devastated it on all sides, bread could be bought nowhere, and they endured excessive hunger. As a result, everybody was especially desolate and many secretly considered withdrawal from the siege in flight, either by land or by sea. They had no supplies on which they could live. It was with great fear that they sought food far away, in going distances of forty or fifty miles from the siege, that is, in the mountains, where they were often killed by the Turks lying in ambush… At that time, the famished ate the shoots of beanseeds growing in the fields and many kinds of herbs unseasoned with salt; also thistles, which, being not well cooked because of the deficiency of firewood, pricked the tongues of those eating them; also horses, asses, and camels, and dogs and rats. The poorer ones ate even the skins of the beasts and seeds of grain found in manure.[57]

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[55] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 67-68.
[56] Ibn al-Athir, *The Crusading period from al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh, Part 1*, trans. D.S. Richards (Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 14.
[57] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 72-73.

The Crusader camps also suffered torrential winter rains, and the Crusaders bestowed Antioch with the nickname "the pissoir."[58] Even Count Stephen of Blois abandoned the siege while Peter the Hermit and another Crusader notable, William of Melun, attempted to flee, only to be unceremoniously dragged back by Bohemond in a stinging blow to Crusader morale.[59]

Throughout the siege, earthquakes rumbled and caused the ground to shake, something that the Antiochene garrison was accustomed to as the area was no stranger to such tremors. The Crusaders were terrified, however, and took it upon themselves to undertake myriad penitent exercises, such as expelling all prostitutes from the camp and shutting down its gambling dens. Fulcher of Chartres reported:

> We saw an astonishing glow in the sky, and, in addition, we felt a great movement of the earth, which made us all quake. Many at that time also saw a certain sign in the shape of a cross, whitish in color, advancing toward the East in a straight path.[60]

In the end, Bohemond of Taranto managed to secure Antioch's capture by bribing an Antiochene armorer. This armorer commanded a section of the Antiochene wall and would be able to let Bohemond and a handful of his men into the city. Bohemond waited, however, to execute his plan until after the Crusader Princes agreed to grant the city to whoever could end the siege.[61] The guard commander, who according to Fulcher of Chartres was commanded by Christ to deliver the city to the Christians, who according to Ibn al-Athir was commanded by a desire of revenge

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[58] Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Shocken Books, 1984), 24.
[59] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 33.
[60] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 73.
[61] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 45.

against Yaghi Siyan, and who according to the Gesta Francorum was commanded by a friendship with Bohemond and his gold, let twenty men over the walls by rope ladder. These men promptly went to open the nearest gate, and with the signal cry of "Deus vult! Deus vult!" the Crusaders swarmed in and proceeded in a frenzied sack of the city.[62] It is important to note the starvation and depravities that the Crusaders experienced throughout the siege, incensing their hatred of the enemy and instilling a dark rage against the city that made them suffer so much torment for so long. The poor in the Crusader siege camp especially existed in a precarious state of existence, flirting with death for the better part of a year, and they let loose with wild abandon once the city was taken. This is not to excuse them by any means, as the Crusaders went on to massacre a large portion of the population, many of them Christians. Fulcher of Chartres even recounts:

> The Franks [were] running far and wide through the streets with their naked swords and wildly killing people… our rabble wildly seized everything that they found in the streets and houses. But the proved soldiers kept to warfare, in following and killing the Turks.[63]

Yaghi Siyan himself fled the city, collapsing in grief only to be found and beheaded by a local Armenian, his head delivered to the Crusaders for a monetary reward.

The citadel remained in the hands of Yaghi Siyan's son, however, and while the Crusaders were busy prosecuting their siege an army sallied forth from Mosul to relieve the garrison. This massive army proved to be an even larger disappointment, as it was soon revealed to be as fractured and mutinous as the current Muslim political situation. In previous months the Crusaders faced other relief forces led by two feuding brothers. One force was led by the ruler of Damascus, Duqaq,

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[62] *Ibid*, 44; Fulcher of Chartres, *The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres*, 75; Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 72-73; Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 30.
[63] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 75-76.

and turned around after suffering losses from an encounter with a Crusader foraging party. The other would be relief force was led by the ruler of Aleppo, his brother Ridwan, who only agreed to help Yaghi Siyan after another Crusader foraging party ransacked his lands. Ridwan's numerically superior force was utterly routed by a Crusader attack spearheaded by Bohemond of Taranto, forecasting heavy showers of severed heads onto the Antiochene garrison. The only recourse left to Yaghi Siyan, and eventually the only hope of his besieged son, was the atabeg of Mosul, Karbugha. The terrifying army of Karbugha was in reality a coalition force consisting of several Muslim emirs and Duqaq's reconstituted forces, marching under the lightest pretense of loyalty. Karbugha had his rapacious ambitions set on expanding his influence throughout Syria and dominating the local Muslim emirs, not something that those emirs thought highly of as they traveled as part of Karbugha's army. Furthermore, these Muslim emirs were under the impression that the siege was merely the Byzantines trying to retake their city, which was only lost around a decade ago. The thought of an expansive and incredibly meddlesome Latin kingdom springing up after the fall of Antioch never crossed their minds. According to Ibn al-Athir, "the atabeg so annoyed the Muslims with his pretensions that they decided to betray him at the battle's decisive moment."[64]

The Crusaders were now between a rock and a hard place, finding themselves besieged between the army of the atabeg and the citadel of Antioch, all inside a city that saw its food stores devoured during the siege. The situation was worse than ever and truly desperate. Some men even resorted to lowering themselves from the walls with ropes to escape the city and abandon their comrades. It seemed only a miracle could save the recently conquered Antioch. Luckily for the Crusaders, miracles are just what they seemed to receive. In the days leading up to the fateful Crusader counterattack, reports of miracles, visitations of Christ, and exhortations from dead

[64] Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 23-34; John France, *Victory in the East*, 197-203.

brothers in arms to keep fighting in the cause of the Crusade abounded.[65] These miraculous events were crowned by an electrifying discovery. A priest named Peter Bartholomew, acting under the guidance of a supposed vision of St. Andrew, directed a small group of Crusaders to dig under the basilica of St. Peter. The men found, as foretold by Bartholomew, what the priest claimed to be the relic of the holy lance, the spear that pierced the side of Christ. This relic, the authenticity of which was doubted immediately by the Papal legate Adhemar de Le Puy, was nonetheless held in great esteem by Raymond of Toulouse and subsequently the majority of the Crusade, lifting spirits by what many believed to be a sign of God's renewed support. Raymond of Aguilers, part of the party searching for the relic, when writing of the ecstasy that swept through Antioch exclaimed "what great joy and exultation then filled the city I cannot describe."[66] Bolstered by such miracles, cornered by their enemies, and forced by hunger and circumstance, the Crusaders delivered an ultimatum to the army of Karbugha: Leave, or prepare for battle.

With penitent sacraments and accompanied by ranks of priests singing devotionals and praying for the blessings of the Almighty, the Crusaders marched, in a battle line modified by Bohemond of Taranto to account for the loss of Crusader cavalry, against the Muslim army. They fought with fanatical resolve, secure in the knowledge that they would die for the Cross or gain an impossible victory. Unable to shatter the supposedly defeated and bedraggled Crusaders, the first lines of Karbugha's army routed, fleeing directly into the path of the reinforcements. The stunned atabeg ordered a disheveled and chaotic advance, and the already fractured army broke against the

[65] Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)," in *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials*, ed. Peters Edward (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 77-78.
[66] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 181.

Crusader line, abandoning Karbugha at the critical moment despite relatively light casualties.[67] According to Ibn al-Athir, "the Franks… drew up a great battle line. At that, the Muslims turned their backs in flight, firstly because of the contempt and the scorn with which Karbugha had treated them."[68]

In the course of the battle, many Crusaders reported an army of saints, resplendent and invincible in holy regalia bearing pure white standards and led by Saints George, Mercurius, and Demetrius, descended from the hills to aid the Crusaders, delivering it a great victory.[69] Antioch was secured under the dominion of Bohemond of Taranto, who would take his conquest and found the Principality of Antioch. The road to Jerusalem now lay open. Only the Holy City remained.

[67] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 77-82.
[68] Ibn al-Athir, *The Crusading period from al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh, Part 1*, trans. D.S. Richards (Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 17.
[69] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 69.

2.4 Deus Vult: The Conquest of Jerusalem

After Antioch, the Crusade's momentum began to flounder, its leaders squabbling over their recent conquests. Count Raymond of Toulouse, fearing the growing influence of Bohemond of Taranto, decided to make a slight detour into the Summaq plateau region, conquering the city of Ma'arra. [70] Ma'arra became one of the worst cases of starvation in the First Crusade, as after the Crusaders stormed the city in a hard fought siege, supplies dwindled past critical levels. Armed men, faces gaunt and stomachs full only of pain, soon wandered through the streets searching for anything to ease their hunger. Eventually, however, the looks of suffering etched in some of the men's faces were replaced with an indifferent, strange calm. Some of the poorer Crusaders turned to cannibalism, nibbling away at the corpses lining the streets in a gruesome display of desperation. News of this traveled quickly throughout the Levant. These new tales of horror were combined with the track record of impossible Crusader victories to create a sense of Crusader invincibility and brutality that began plaguing the Muslim garrisons, spreading terror throughout their ranks at the prospect of facing these warriors from the West. Raymond of Aguilers recounts a despairing cry from the Turks and other Muslims:

> And who can resist these people [the Crusaders], who are so obstinate and cruel that for a whole year they could not be turned from the siege of Antioch by famine, sword, or any other dangers, and who now live on human flesh?[71]

[70] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 84-85.
[71] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 214.

First they achieved seemingly impossible victories, crushing impenetrable defenses and overcoming armies many times their size, and now they literally eat people. The fate of Ma'arra inadvertently became a potent psychological weapon, a Crusader era example of atrocity and invincibility propaganda. This sense of invincibility and fear surrounding the Crusaders prompted cities like Tyre, Acre, and Caesara to offer truces as the First Crusade marched down the Palestinian coast.[72]

As the Crusader Princes continued to forestall the attack on Jerusalem with their bickering over non-Jerusalem conquests, specifically Raymond of Toulouse, who with the holy lance was fast becoming the leader of the Crusade, over the fate of Antioch and Ma'arra, their armies grew restless. At Ma'arra a group of poor crusaders, fed up with Raymond of Toulouse's obstinacy, began demolishing the walls of Ma'arra, exclaiming "surely there will be no further argument about this city!"[73] Raymond of Toulouse finally confronted reality and left Ma'arra in a barefoot procession, ostensibly towards Jerusalem. In reality Raymond steered the Crusade to the coast and besieged Arqa, in lieu of Jerusalem, for two months. The siege was a blistering failure, and many of the Crusaders saw "this siege which we had set chiefly for other causes contrary to justice than for God, God was unwilling to promote, but there did everything against us."[74] The failure of the siege was accompanied by the disintegrating failure of the cult of the holy lance. To prove the challenged authenticity of the relic, Peter Bartholomew offered to walk through a raging fire and emerge unharmed, thus proving his truthfulness. Bartholomew walked through the flames, was horribly and mortally burnt, and died of his injuries within days. Count Raymond's authority was

[72] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 90.
[73] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 213.
[74] *Ibid,* 221

intertwined with that of the holy lance, which the count had supported more than any other Crusader Prince. Raymond of Toulouse's authority was irrevocably shattered, and with that the First Crusade began its final march on Jerusalem.[75]

The Fatimid Egyptians reached the Holy City first, however, wresting it from the Turks in August of 1098. The Crusaders were now faced with a deadly time constraint: take Jerusalem before the Egyptians, led by the Vizier al-Afdal, could bring the full force of Fatimid might against the Crusade. As the Crusaders hurried their way to Jerusalem they found themselves once again in dire straits. The surrounding area was pilfered by the Fatimid governor of anything that could be of use to the Crusaders, which included poisoning wells and felling forests. The Crusaders at this point were nearly spent. They had nearly no potable water, one of the only sources being the spring called the Pool of Siloam at the foot of Mount Zion. Raymond of Aguilers recounts a pitiful scene regarding this oasis:

> And so, when the pool was filled with the crowd and with the bodies of dead animals, the stronger, even at the price of death, forced their way to the very opening… which the water flowed, while the weak got only the water that had already been contaminated.[76]

The Crusaders had practically no siege equipment, with only about one proper siege ladder to scale the walls. Help arrived at the eleventh hour, however, in the form of a small Genoese fleet come to join the Crusade. These ships carried supplies and all the tools of war needed to construct the mighty engines the siege required. With newly discovered sources of timber, two formidable

[75] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 86-88.
[76] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 252.

siege towers along with a number of catapults and mangonels were constructed, allowing the Crusaders the one chance they would have to storm the city before Fatimid reinforcements arrived.[77]

The siege itself and the preceding days were a worthy climax for the First Crusade, recounted in some detail by Raymond of Aguilers. The days before the final assaults found themselves filled with elaborate religious observances, prophesies, and some antagonizing displays of sacrilege and execution. At the onset of the siege, before the arrival of the Genoese, several of the Crusade's leaders encountered a hermit wandering on the Mount of Olives. This mysterious recluse proclaimed if they attacked at once the city would be delivered into their hands. The Crusaders then attacked, with their one siege ladder and some other unnamed and hastily assembled machines, and actually overcame the outer wall of the city before being pushed back. As the extreme thirst and creeping hunger continued to afflict the camp, "the whole army scattered throughout the surrounding country to collect provisions, and nothing was even said of the necessity of preparing the machines… to capture the city."[78] In the midst of this stalling siege, the deceased (having died shortly after the capture of Antioch) Bishop Adhemar of Puy was reported to appear to a priest named Peter Desiderius, who then conveyed the Bishop's prophecy to the Crusader Princes. If the First Crusade would fast and march around Jerusalem in a barefoot procession, in full regalia with trumpets and standards led by priests bearing crosses and relics of the saints, culminating in a mass reconciliation at the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem would fall on the ninth day. While this was going on, the Egyptian defenders matched the procession's progress along the walls, jeering and dese-

[77] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 89-95.
[78] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 251.

crating crosses "with blows and insulting deeds" (such as urination) which infuriated the Crusaders.[79] The Crusaders again made it policy to execute their prisoners in full view of the garrison, the by now standard method being decapitation. The Crusaders did, however, go to great lengths to release a captured Muslim spy. Unfortunately for the spy, they released him from a catapult. He was flung onto the rocks just outside the city and died instantly and viscerally.[80]

Split between Raymond of Toulouse in the south and the rest of the Crusaders, now led by Godfrey of Bouillon, in the North and Northwest, the final assaults came in the form of a two pronged attack. While the Crusaders busied themselves with constructing their siege machinery, Jerusalem's garrison spent their time hurriedly fortifying the sections of wall most likely to be attacked. In the course of a single night, however, the Crusaders under Godfrey managed to disassemble and move the entirety of the siege apparatus a mile away to an undefended section of walls, to the great astonishment of the defenders and the Crusaders themselves.[81] The attack proceeded, and first Godfrey's northern contingent and then Raymond's southern forces broke into Jerusalem.

The sack of the Holy City was truly nightmarish, an orgy of violence and blood. The chroniclers present did not shy away from the barbarity in their accounts, the Gesta Francorum recording "our men followed [Godfrey and his brother], killing and slaying even to the Temple of Solomon, where the slaughter was so great that our men waded in blood up to the ankles."[82] Raymond of Aguilers describes the gruesome scene in infamous detail:

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[79] *Ibid*, 256
[80] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 96.
[81] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 258.
[82] Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, trans. Rosalind Hill (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1962), 91.

> Some of our men (and this was more merciful) cut off the heads of their enemies; others shot them with arrows, so that they fell from the towers; other tortured them longer by casting them into the flames. Piles of heads, hands, and feet were to be seen in the streets of the city. It was necessary to pick one's way over the bodies of men and horses… in the Temple and porch of Solomon, men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins.[83]

Ibn al-Athir concurs, writing "the inhabitants became prey for the sword. For a week the Franks continued to slaughter the Muslims."[84] Three years of campaigning in a foreign land, suffering repeated starvation, thirst, the ravages of nature and their enemies, and the innumerable deaths of friends and countrymen came to a head in the sack of Jerusalem.

In the end, the Fatimid relief army was defeated and the city of Jerusalem fell under the control of Godfrey of Bouillon, the first Latin King of Jerusalem. With that, the bloody and eventful episode of the First Crusade drew to a close, laying the groundwork of history that would be remembered, warped, used and abused for centuries to come. The Holy City would remain in Crusader hands for nearly a hundred years, forming the epicenter of the Crusader kingdoms. In 1197, however, Jerusalem would once again be conquered, this time by a Muslim. The loss of Jerusalem would herald a storied military endeavor of immense proportion and the creation of a new legend: The Third Crusade and Sultan Saladin, mujahid king of the Ayyubid empire.

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[83] Raymond of Aguilers, "Chronicle of Raymond of Aguilers," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 261.

[84] Ibn al-Athir, *The Crusading period from al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh, Part 1*, trans. D.S. Richards (Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 21.

3.0 Chapter 3- Saladin: Hero of Islam and Champion of Arab Nationalism

With the conflict that drew such Western figures as Richard the Lionheart and the Templar Order into the fray, heroes of the East also arose. Saladin, defender of Islam, liberator of Jerusalem, and the nemesis of the Crusader fulfills the role of Muslim hero during the Crusading era. His ghost conquered the modern popular remembrance of the Crusades, dominating the role as Muslim protagonist of the Third Crusade. It was the jihad of Saladin against the Crusader states that brought them to near ruin and inflicted their most severe losses. His forces and his struggle permanently changed the power makeup of the lands touched by the Crusades and marked the downfall of the Crusader states from regional powers to arguably rump states clinging to the Mediterranean coastline. This pushing of Western dominance back into the sea became a popular notion for many Muslim rulers during the past century. The romanticized memory of Saladin, popularized at the close of the 19th century in the Muslim world, painted a picture that many Arabist and extremist leaders desired for themselves. From the decline of the Ottoman Empire to the rise of the Ba'ath party, Saladin offered a national hero that represented the defeat of the West, the conquest of Jerusalem, and the unification of the "Arab lands" into one nation. The revival of his story was emblematic of a larger trend, in which the Crusades first began to be appropriated into a political context to oppose the West. Statesmen such as Sultan Abdulhamid II, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Saddam Hussein, and Hafez al-Assad all appropriated the memory of Saladin in order to draw a sense of legitimacy, strength, and hope of victory from the past to soothe a convoluted and tempestuous present.

For all Saladin's merits he faded into general obscurity in the lands he once ruled around a century after his death (1193 AD), with men such as Sultan Baybars and Nur al-Din claiming the limelight of history. The return of Saladin to the popular memory of the Middle East can be traced throughout the years as a feature in the growth of Arab nationalism and, more importantly for the subject of this work, the emerging importance of the Crusades to anti-Western thought as new states and nationalities emerged from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. First used in an attempt to fend off imperialist encroachment of Europe, the resurrected image of Saladin came to thrive as Arab nationalism rose from the ashes of an empire in a volatile and quickly changing environment. This trend is what eventually conveyed the Crusades to the 21st century, allowing ISIS to use and twist their memory as they do today. An appreciation of the Crusades' resurgence and its surrounding context, motives, and historical applications is a necessary framework for understanding ISIS' Crusader mythos and its relation to state building.

The Crusades are one of the most romanticized periods of human history. Waves of European knights ensconced in metal armor and zeal crashed upon the holy land, resulting in the creation of kingdoms, controversial and brutal wars, and legends. The Crusades, however, were largely forgotten or downplayed by the Muslim world. Muslim chroniclers rarely referenced them and they viewed them largely as a failed invasion, a nuisance of lesser nations imposed upon the Levant. The first Arabic history of the Crusades was only published in 1899, 800 years after the First Crusade captured Jerusalem.[1] It was Christendom that kept the stories and tales of the Crusades and the men that fought them alive throughout the centuries, at times in adulation and at others in disgust. Saladin in particular held the fascination of Europe for centuries. The chivalrous hero of

[1] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land*, (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2010), 674.

Islam was famed for his military ability, charisma, and generosity. Saladin was seen and romanticized as the epitome of a chivalric European monarch, the only type of person capable of defeating Richard the Lionheart, the great warrior king of Europe. This was an important step in the creation of his modern character, one that will be made abundantly clear with the example of Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany's public adulation of the man. Through the allure of this hero Saladin and his solidification in popular history, one can trace the rise of the Crusades to the prominence it enjoys today in modern thought. Saladin's legend, and the ways in which it was used in Arab statecraft, offers a concrete way to trace the beginnings of the anti-Crusader fervor and ideology that would grow over the course of a hundred years to influence the minds of ISIS propagandists in the 21st century.

3.1 Saladin, Vizier of Egypt, Mujahid Par Excellence

Saladin began his career in relative obscurity as a lieutenant under the command of his uncle, Asad al-Din Shirkuh, who in turn served under Nur al-Din Zangi, another paragon of jihad during the Crusades often cited as the spiritual predecessor of Saladin.[2] In the course of his long career, Nur al-Din united large swathes of the Levant and pioneered what would be the signature anti-Crusader propaganda campaigns of Saladin. Nur al-Din was portrayed as a saint king (or simply wanted himself viewed for his genuine piety), one uniting the Levant and beyond in a jihad to retake the Holy Land and Jerusalem from the Crusader foe. He even had a special prayer podium, a minbar, made in 1168 inscribed with a prayer beseeching God to grant Nur al-Din the conquest of Jerusalem. Made to grace the al-Aqsa mosque of Jerusalem after its conquest, this minbar served as a symbol of hope for the city's return to Muslim hands. [3] The honor of placing that podium in the al-Aqsa mosque, however, would go to Saladin.

After seizing control of the Fatimid Caliphate of Egypt under orders from Nur al-Din, Shirkuh died, leaving a vacancy at the top of a newly formed Egyptian hierarchy. At the age of thirty-one, Saladin succeeded his uncle and was appointed Vizier of the Caliphate, abolishing it and assuming full control over Egypt several years later and officially restoring it to Sunni orthodoxy. From this base of power, Saladin went on to conquer the wider region through religious posturing, power politics, military campaigning, and a concerted campaign of religious and political propaganda. His Ayyubid kingdom, as it would come to be called, extended to the southern reaches of modern day Turkey in the north, Yemen in the south and Egypt in the West. Much of his justification for conquering and annexing his Muslim neighbors came from his self-portrayal

[2] Paul E. Walker, *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, "Saladin," 2016.
[3] Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades- Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 152.

as a selfless mujahid waging a long overdue jihad against the interloping Crusader powers. Unity was required to defeat the Crusaders, and unity would come at a price for Saladin's rivals.

An important facilitator of Saladin's conquest was the way he presented both himself and his Muslim rivals. Saladin and his ambition lived alongside the Crusader Kingdoms, chief among them the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Since the Kingdom's creation at the bloody conclusion of the First Crusade, calls to expel these Franks rang out from all corners of the Muslim Near East. Saladin, building upon the precedent of Nur al-Din, painted himself as the epitome of a selfless mujahid king, bent on expelling the Crusaders from Jerusalem at all cost. This cost, importantly, included the invasion and assimilation of his neighboring Muslim strongmen. If they were not with Saladin, they were with the Crusaders, and their kingdoms therefore needed to be conscripted by force into the war effort. Saladin spent the majority of his time and effort expanding his empire into Muslim lands, only waging a few serious campaigns against the Kingdom of Jerusalem, none resulting in the debilitating victories he promised. Warfare is always a risky proposition, especially so in the Crusading era. Take for example Saladin's defeat at Montgisard in 1177. Although he vastly outnumbered his foe, the Sultan was badly defeated by the Leper King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem who, despite his crippling leprosy, managed to be personally involved in the fighting. As the Sultan's army disintegrated before his eyes, he was reportedly forced to flee on a commandeered camel into the mountains, narrowly avoiding capture.[4] Whether these forays into Crusader territory simply failed or because the assaults were merely tokens to back up his rhetoric and secure Jerusalemite land and wealth cannot be determined by anyone but Saladin. Saladin did, however, have a brush with death near the height of his power, falling seriously ill for several months in the

[4] Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010).

late 1180s. Whether this episode awoke a genuine piety within him or reminded him that his time was slowly running out, Saladin set out on a serious campaign to conquer the Kingdom of Jerusalem, finally fulfilling the promises made to his people and his God.

3.2 1187, Year of Slaughter and Mercy

1187 is the seminal year in the creation of Saladin's eventual fame. His rapid and successive total victories at Hattin and Jerusalem secured his legacy as the man to break Crusader power in the Holy Land. Marshaling the strength of his freshly unified kingdom, Saladin raised an impressive army and marched on the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In response to this challenge, King Guy of Lusignan, the embattled king of Jerusalem, assembled his own forces by levying virtually every fighting man in his kingdom. This force rivaled the strength of the massive Crusader host that repulsed Saladin in 1183, and in order to muster such numbers of fighting men King Guy pulled soldiers from vital garrisons, including the city of Jerusalem. King Guy, although technically making what was far likelier to be the right choice of not pursuing the retreating Saladin across the Jordan river in 1183, was lambasted mercilessly by his rivals. The king's opponents took the opportunity to decry their liege as ineffectual and indifferent to the chivalric ideals, calling for his removal from power. King Guy was determined not to make that "mistake" again, and rushed headlong into a direct confrontation with Saladin. Suffering a fatal lack of fresh water, the army of King Guy was outmaneuvered and forced to camp on a hill called the Horns of Hattin. Dying of thirst, Saladin's camp had trapped the Crusaders so completely that according to an anonymous continuation of the history of William of Tyre, the Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles:

> They camped around the Christian host so close that they could talk to one another, and if a cat had fled from the Christian host it could not have escaped without the Saracens taking it.[5]

[5] Anonymous, *The Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles*, trans. Peter W. Edbury, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing LTD, 1996), 159.

With this battle the fate of Jerusalem was sealed, opening the city to Saladin's conquest and providing a rallying cry that once again ignited the passion of crusade in the hearts of Europe.

The Battle of Hattin was objectively one of the most lopsided victories of the 12th century. The Christian casualties and prisoners taken were so devastatingly numerous that the strength of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was permanently gutted. In this battle some knights from the Templar and Hospitaller Military Orders were captured, with the majority of those knights present killed in battle. These monastic orders, founded after the capture of Jerusalem in the First Crusade, came to be powerful military organizations active in the Kingdom of Jerusalem and beyond. In a unique blend of military prowess and pious devotion not seen since, these men were ordained monks dedicated to the protection of Christian pilgrims and the Christian Holy Land. The Templars took their name from the Temple of Solomon, where their headquarters was established, and the Hospitallers from their famous hospital of St. John founded and staffed by the Order in Jerusalem to treat poor pilgrims. Instead of offering the knights captured in the Battle of Hattin for ransom or even enslaving them as was custom, the monks were unanimously singled out and executed by Saladin's command. Contemporary Muslim chronicler Ibn al-Athir records that "It was [Saladin's] custom to execute the Templars and Hospitallers because of their fierce enmity towards the Muslims and their courage."[6] The knights of the Hospitallers and Templars were more than steadfast in their duty and faith, not fearing and many even seeking a martyr's death in what they, and the rest of Christendom (evidenced by the incredibly large amounts of charitable donations these orders received from Europe), saw as the defense of God and his pilgrims seeking repentance and forgiveness. The Military Orders were even unbowed by the dreaded Assassins, the reclusive order

[6] William J. Hamblin, *Muslim Perspectives on the Military Orders during the Crusades*, Brigham Young University Studies, Vol. 40, No. 4, A Special Issue on Islam (2001): 103.

of a radical and divergent Shi'ite sect that resorted to ancient terrorism in the form of assassination to exert influence. Instead of receiving tribute from the Military Orders, as they did with most other powers in the region, the Assassins actually sent a yearly tribute to the Military Orders.[7] Off the battlefield, however, there is evidence of a peaceful and even respectful coexistence between these men of the cloth and the Muslims they came into contact with daily, for example respecting and even defending their right to Muslim prayer directed towards Mecca.[8]

These monks were unrelenting in combat, with stories abounding of these warrior monks routinely fighting to the last man whenever they were rarely defeated, either in last stands or suicidal charges. Sometimes this zeal manifested as overconfidence and proved ill advised, leading to exhausting losses of knights in battle. In the days before the Battle of Hattin, the Master of the Templars led a charge of all the Order knights in the army of King Guy to confront a force led by Saladin's son as it forayed into Crusader territory. The Old French Continuation of the History of William of Tyre, the authoritative contemporary history of the 1180s-90s, describes the attack:

> Then the Master of the Temple and the knights who were with him together with the Master of the Hospital charged at the Saracens… There were at least 7,000 armed Saracen knights, and the Christians only had 140. There the Master of the Hospital had his head cut off, and so did all the knights of the Temple. Only the Master of the Temple together with just three knights escaped.[9]

Virtually all of the Templars and Hospitallers that set out with King Guy would be killed in the fighting or defiantly executed (with the exception of the Master of the Templars, who was held for ransom).

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[7] *Ibid*, 104
[8] *Ibid*, 101
[9] Anonymous, *The Old French Continuation of the History of William of Tyre*, trans. Peter W. Edbury, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing LTD, 1996), 32.

Reynald de Chatillon was a notable figure in the time preceding the Third Crusade, seen in many Muslim chronicles and histories to be the first major villain of the period. He also met his end personally at the hand of his longtime nemesis, Saladin, guardian of the Two Cities. Reynald made a name for himself as an aggressive and successful Crusader lord during his tenure in the late twelfth century, filling the pages of his history with brutalism, charisma, and polarizing action. He also managed to impress his regent, becoming a companion of the King of Jerusalem. After an interesting career in high lordship and prison, the firebrand embarked on an ill-fated, moderately successful, and fateful raiding expedition on the Red Sea.[10] This minor campaign aroused more than just the ire of Saladin. Reynald was raiding lands unnervingly close to Mecca and Medina, the two holiest cities in Islam. In addition to this, Reynald raided an Egyptian caravan during a period of truce between Saladin and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, giving legal precedent for Saladin's invasion of the Kingdom. William's Continuation writes that:

> It [the foray of Saladin's son] had come about because of the caravan that Prince Reynald had taken in the land of Kerak, and it was the beginning of the loss of the kingdom [of Jerusalem].[11]

For these crimes, Saladin vowed to personally deliver retribution upon Reynald de Chatillon. Saladin came through on that promise in the aftermath of his one sided victory at Hattin. William's continuation describes the interaction between King Guy, Saladin, and Reynald after the battle:

> Saladin had left the field rejoicing at his great victory and was in his camp. There he ordered all the Christian prisoners who had been taken that day to be brought before him… Then he ordered syrup diluted with water be brought in a gold cup. He tasted it and gave it to the king to drink and said, 'Drink deeply.' The king, who was extremely thirsty, drank and handed the cup to Prince Reynald. Prince Reynald would not drink. When Saladin saw

[10] Alex Mallet, *A Trip down the Red Sea with Reynald of Chatillon*, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Third Series, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Apr., 2008), 141-153.
[11] Anonymous, *The Old French Continuation of the History of William of Tyre*, trans. Peter W. Edbury, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing LTD, 1996), 33.

> that he had handed the cup to Prince Reynald he was angered and said to him, 'Drink, for you will never drink again.' The prince answered that if it pleased God he would never drink or eat anything of his. Saladin asked, 'Prince Reynald, by your law, if you held me in your prison as I now hold you in mine, what would you do to me?' He replied, 'So help me God, I would cut off your head.' Saladin was greatly enraged at this most insolent reply and said, 'Pig, you are my prisoner and yet you answer me so arrogantly.' He took a sword in his hand and thrust it right through his body. The mamluks who were standing nearby rushed at him and cut off his head. Saladin took some of his blood and sprinkled it on his own head as recognition that he had taken vengeance. Then he ordered Reynald's head be brought to Damascus, and there it was dragged along the ground to show the Saracens whom the prince had wronged that vengeance had been exacted.[12]

With this, Saladin ended the man's career as most hated Crusader in the Levant. Reynald de Chatillon's infamy would carry itself as a facet of Saladin's own legend. Reynald would be used in many instances as a storybook villain defeated by Saladin, seen in many different forms of media including a famous statue of Saladin in Syria (this statue will be covered later in the chapter).

After Hattin, the garrisons of the Crusader state were dangerously depleted and unable to offer any meaningful resistance. Saladin was subsequently and nearly effortlessly able to conquer large swathes of the Kingdom, including its capital of Jerusalem. This conquest of Jerusalem, its legend enhanced by Saladin's gregarious post victory conduct when accepting the surrender of the city's defender Balian of Ibelin and a hastily improvised levy of newly appointed knights, proved to be a cornerstone for his legend in the Middle East beginning nearly 700 years later. Instead of massacring the city as was its fate a hundred years ago (which was actually Saladin's initial course of action before Balian essentially held the city's holy sites hostage in tense negotiations) Saladin allowed anyone in the city to ransom themselves and depart with any possessions that they could carry with them to Tyre.[13] Even if Saladin only spared the city because of the machinations of

[12] *Ibid*, 47-48
[13] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 77

Balian, the fact that Saladin followed through on his objectively lenient terms speaks about the man's character. In another note on Jerusalem's conquest, the boundaries of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and modern day Israel are incredibly similar, and Saladin's capture of the Holy City would come to play a pivotal role in the Arab states evocation of Saladin in the 20th century.

3.3 The Lionheart

The fall of Jerusalem provoked the Third Crusade, one of the more existentially threatening episodes of Saladin's story. The Third Crusade is overshadowed in influence only by the monumental successes of the First Crusade and was funded and organized by the most powerful sovereigns of Europe, including Frederick Barbarossa (who drowned on his way to the Crusade, succeeded in the war by his son, the Duke of Swabia),[14] Phillip II, and Richard the Lionheart. These kingly patrons of Crusade gave the Third Crusade its moniker, the Kings' Crusade. Richard the Lionheart earned his nickname from a constant and insatiable courage in battle, riding to the front lines to personally engage the enemy with a mighty battle axe or crossbow on many occasions. The last to arrive at the siege of Acre, the Lionheart was made busy and waylaid by a voyage to the Levant that is a story in its own right. Richard's fleet was late to pick up their king and his army, who had traveled over land, because the fleet had stopped by Portugal to aid a minor crusade against the Moors. After rendezvousing with his fleet, King Richard encountered another roadblock as he was forced to pacify the entire island of Sicily after an inhospitable reception of his men. This was made all the more awkward and difficult because Phillip II was actively supporting the Sicilians in order to slight Richard. After making peace with Phillip and building an expensive and formidable fortress he called griffon killer (griffon being a derogatory term for Sicilians), Richard's fleet was scattered by a storm. The ship carrying his wife to be and mother ended up stranded and alone just off the coast of the island of Cyprus, where they would soon be contacted by an unsavory character.

[14] Anonymous, *The Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, trans. Helen J. Nicholson, (NY: Routledge, 2016), 100.

Anchoring off the Cyrene coastline, the two royal women found themselves petitioned by the rebellious self-declared Byzantine "emperor" of Cyprus (whose rule was somewhat defined as unrestrained piracy of the surrounding region), Isaac Comnenus, to come ashore and enter into his hospitality. The women recognized the trap, seeing through the pirate king's honeyed words that sought to lure the two and imprison them as hostages to sell back to Richard. Comnenus' plan turned out to be ill advised, as after Richard arrived with his fleet at Cyprus and found the dearest women of his life, they told him all about their prospective host's overtures. Comnenus surrendered after a brief but violent campaign that saw the island completely given over to King Richard, on condition that Comnenus be reunited with his captive daughter and not put in irons. The Lionheart obliged, and there was a happy reunion before Richard's men bore Comnenus away in shackles made of silver. After the conquest of two island nations, the Lionheart finally arrived at Acre to lead the final pushes to capture the city. By the conclusion of the siege of Acre, the first and most important conflict of the Kings' Crusade proper, Richard the Lionheart alone remained in the Holy Land as the Crusade's de facto leader.[15] King Philip left for France after the city was taken and the Holy Roman Emperor had drowned on his overland journey to the Holy Land. This accounts for the Third Crusade's popular remembrance as a mythical contest of will and martial and diplomatic skill between the mujahid Sultan and the crusading Lionheart. The siege of Acre, lasting over a year, had all the characteristics of a traditional Crusader siege. Prolonged starvation and desperation, assaults and counter assaults, and an intense amount of personal daring from both sides became commonplace.

As the fight for Acre slogged onwards, large trenches were dug by the Crusaders to both encircle Acre and protect the siege camp. Many skirmishes were fought in defending these lines

[15] *Ibid*, 83-84

from either the garrison sallying forth or Saladin's relief forces trying to break through to the city. The Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi, the official contemporary history of King Richard's Crusading journey, recounts a number of claimed miracles during the siege. It claims a man struck by a massive stone from a mangonel emerged unhurt and unmoved, while another was saved by a piece of cloth with God's name written on it after a crossbow bolt had pierced his armor. It also recounts a story of a knight who, having gone outside the trench line "answering a call of nature," was beset by a fully armored Turkish knight in full gallop. Dodging the first charge, the unarmed, unarmored, and startled knight picked up a stone and hurled it at the small area of the Turk's head unprotected by his helmet. The rock struck the Turk, a la David and Goliath, knocking him of his horse and causing him to break his neck.[16] The siege of Acre was also host to a relatively unique naval campaign, one that saw such amazing things as massive siege towers built onto Crusader ships flinging massive anchors on the top of the Tower of Flies, so named because of the flies that the pagan sacrifices of old would attract to the small island it was constructed on, only to be burnt to cinders by the Greek fire flung from the tenacious defenders.[17]

Starvation plagued both sides, surviving only by an uncertain cycle of periodic relief from supply ships, either Egyptian or European. On more than one occasion the city of Acre threatened to buckle under the stresses of war, the townspeople debating whether or not to end their torment and surrender to the Crusaders. Every time but the last, however, Saladin's forces managed to save the city at the eleventh hour by sneaking or forcing through barges full of supply. In a scene that hints eerily at a situation similar to that at Ma'arra, the author(s) of the Itinerarium Peregrinorum laments the state of the Crusader camp:

[16] *Ibid*, 81, 89, 103-105
[17] *Ibid*, 113

> But who can write or describe such great misery, such great common suffering? Some were driven mad by starvation and seen rushing around like rabid dogs and seizing on bones found by chance, which had been thrown to the dogs and gnawed for three days. Although there was nothing left to gnaw they nibbled, sucked and licked them, not doing themselves any good but having some sort of pleasure as if they were nibbling the memory of where meat had once been. What should we add to this? The enemy harassed them with constant attacks from both sides. But when they killed them in sudden attacks they were reckoned to be gentler than the terrible famine, because their swords brought an instant end to life and misery, whereas starvation killed slowly, with long torture. Indeed, often those who had lost their sense of shame through hunger, for sorrow! fed in sight of everyone on abominable food which they happened to find, no matter how filthy, things which should not be spoken of. Their dire mouths devoured what humans are not permitted to eat as if it were delicious.[18]

With this passage I must reiterate the need to be conscious of the literally unbearable strife much of these men went through, on both sides. Atrocity seldom happens in a void, and it is important to understand the context of such horrible deeds, whether it be desperation, rage, or indoctrination. Even after these times of torment, however, there was still a flicker of respect for the opponent even though they were of different faith, a brief flame of humanity in the dark nights of the war:

> What should be said about that unbelieving people who guarded the city? They certainly ought to be admired for their valour in war and their integrity. If only they had held the right faith, there would be none better.[19]

Eventually the city fell, and as the Lionheart entered the city he captured what was left of the Muslim garrison. Seeking to use these new prisoners as a bargaining chip for the return of the True Cross, which was lost at the Battle of Hattin, Richard was met with stalling and empty promises from Saladin as he tried to gain the upper hand and renegotiate Acre's surrender. In response, Richard carried out what would come to be the most infamous act of the Third Crusade. On the morning of August 20, 1191, a short time after Saladin's last batch of uncertain promises, the

[18] *Ibid*, 130-131
[19] *Ibid*, 216

prisoners were paraded outside the city walls by a large group of Crusaders and made to kneel just in sight of Saladin's camp. As Saladin and his men gathered on the edge of their camp to puzzle out what the Crusaders were doing, a shout went up as the Muslims gazed on in horror at the scene unfolding before their eyes. As Crusaders struck down with their weapons, each of the nearly 3,000 prisoners were executed on orders of King Richard, decapitated to a man. Saladin responded by immediately executing his own prisoners. The Itinerarium Peregrinorum describes the event:

> As the time limit [established in negotiations] had expired long before, King Richard was certain that Saladin had hardened his heart and had no concern about ransoming the hostages… On the Friday immediately after the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary he ordered 2700 Turkish hostages to be led bound out of the city to be beheaded. Men-at-arms leapt forward readily and fulfilled his orders without delay. They did this with glad mind and with the assent of divine grace, to take revenge for the deaths of the Christians whom the Turks had killed with shots from their bows and crossbows. [20]

Two days later, Richard's army departed from Acre and the tone was set for future negotiations.

Marching down the coast, Richard and Saladin skirmished repeatedly, never fully committing to a decisive clash until the Battle of Arsuf. Meeting at the forests of Arsuf on his way to Jaffa, the Crusaders managed to eke out a significant victory in what was a fairly even and risky open battle. Throughout the incredibly tense fight, the Crusade was held together until the final charge with strict unit cohesion as Saladin committed his forces to battle in the groves surrounding Arsuf. As the massive Crusader column tried to move in the disciplined ranks that had seen them to victory so many times before, Saladin's attacks began eroding that discipline and cracks in the line began to appear as Crusaders repulsed the numerous Muslim assaults. The Crusader army was able to retain its discipline just barely, remaining in formation while suffering repeated charges and a constant barrage of projectiles while the Crusader crossbowmen traded fire with a deadly effect.

[20] *Ibid*, 231

If order held, the Crusaders would likely score a major victory. A different Order, however, would end up responsible for victory.

At the climax of the battle, the Master of the Hospitallers approached King Richard requesting to lead a counter attack. The King denied the request, soundly reasoning that the Crusade's knightly charge needed to be saved for when Saladin's entire host had been committed to the battle. In order for this to happen, the Hospitallers needed to retain their position as the rearguard, prompting Richard to say "Good Master, you must sustain their attack; no one can be everywhere."[21] A short time after Richard sent the knight away, a lonely and resounding cry of "St. George!" pierced the din of battle. The Master of the Order broke ranks and literally charged the entire Saracen line with only one other knight, Baldwin de Carron of the King's own retinue, in tow. Seeing their leader's suicidal courage, the Hospitaller knights galloped after their Master, the rest of the Crusade's knights soon close behind as they rallied to the cry of the monk. Realizing that with this development it was now or never, Richard sounded the counter attack and committed the entire Crusade into the battle, personally "hurling himself swift as a thunderbolt from the right flank into the daunting crowd of Turkish infantry."[22] The initiative of the Hospitallers paid off in the end, and Saladin was routed from the field. After this victory, Saladin would never again challenge the Crusade in open battle. [23] The Lionheart seemed tantalizingly close to achieving his goal.

Although the Third Crusade reclaimed Acre and much of the territory lost to Saladin, along with never technically suffering a significant defeat, it nevertheless was unable to capture Jerusalem. Much of the Third Crusade's successes were due in part to the naval supremacy enjoyed by

[21] *Ibid*, 251-252
[22] *Ibid*, 253
[23] Richard the Lionheart, *Richard's letter to the Abbot of Clairvaux, October 1, 1191*, trans. Peter W. Edbury, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing LTD, 1996), 180.

the Crusaders, allowing for adequate, if spotty, resupply along the coast. Moving inland presented a new logistical problem and after breakdowns in leadership and doubts of whether or not the Crusaders would be able to take the city in a prolonged siege or even hold it if captured, the Crusaders were forced to the negotiating table. Forced to accept guarantees for pilgrim's rights and other concessions for the Kingdom of Jerusalem, Richard the Lionheart and the Third Crusade left the Holy Land, much accomplished but with the gates of Jerusalem still in Saladin's control.[24] Saladin's ability to withstand and protect his most important holding from a Western invasion would be used by proponents of Arab nationalism, and eventually Islamic extremism, throughout the Middle East as they sought to repulse their own Western incursions, perceived or otherwise.

[24] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 90.

3.4 The Eagle of Arab Nationalism and the Death of the Ottomans

The Arab nationalism that emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries under the ideological parentage of Sati al-Husri came to be the guiding force of the Middle East following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, until the retreat of Arab forces in the Six Day War of 1967.[25] Politicized in the 1920s, a revival of the Arabic mother tongue of FusHa (or modern standard Arabic, MSA) was mixed with European, specifically German, conceptions of nationalism. It is important to make the distinction between the state, as a political and geographical body, and the nation, a group that is bound together by a common language, history, and culture. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the nations of Europe divvied up the Middle East into new political bodies, the modern states of the Middle East whose borders would become the source of bitter and violent contention. These same borders were later torn down and demolished, rhetorically and symbolically, by ISIS under the auspices of reversing 20th century Crusader meddling. In the new post-World War I climate of drastic change and social upheaval, Arab nationalism edged its way into ideological supremacy as the nations of the Middle East agitated for their own states and political unions, succeeding through various political and military means. After the world waged war against itself for a second time, Arab nationalism entered into a new chapter, experiencing the peak of its potency both real and imagined. The champion of post-World War II Arab nationalism was Gamal Abdal Nasser of Egypt, whose charisma led the Arab nations until the late 1960's. Although the vision of Arab nationalism seeking to unite the Arab peoples into one mega state faded as a movement, an Arab nationalism targeted at the state, *Wataniyya Arabiyya* (Arab Patriotism) remained.

[25] Adid Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 282.

This was especially true with the Baathist regimes of Syria and Iraq, under Hafez al-Assad and Saddam Hussein, respectively.

Husri began his work on Arab nationalism in the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire and emphasized both language (MSA) and a shared history as the bedrocks of Arab identity. ISIS, in the course of creating their own propaganda for the purposes of nation building, holds these in high esteem as well. Although ISIS and Arab nationalism obviously have many differences and are indeed polar opposites in many regards (ISIS even penned a lengthy article about the evils of Arab nationalism, which will be covered in another chapter), the idea of the Crusades as a source of shared history, and thus of legitimacy, contains several inherent lures to ideologues and propagandists from the Middle East, regardless of background. Claiming ownership of proper Arabic is also a trend seized upon by ISIS, as the group is exceedingly strict about its use of MSA and the very vocabulary that's its members and subjects are allowed to use. Husri was deeply influenced by German Romantic Nationalism, the kind espoused by 18th century German thinkers such as Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Ernest Moritz Arendt.[26] This form of rigid nationalism held that membership in a nation was not a matter of choice, but something intrinsic to each member due to history and language, an inseparable part of their identity. In the words of Husri:

> Every Arabic speaking people is an Arab people…. He is an Arab regardless of his own wishes. Whether ignorant, indifferent, undutiful, or disloyal, he is an Arab, but an Arab without consciousness or feeling, and perhaps even without conscience.[27]

[26] *Ibid,* 64
[27] *Ibid,* 72

This ideology went further than stating an Arab is an Arab whether they wanted to be or not. Individual freedom was subjected to the will and liberty of the state against foreign intervention. Husri declared that "the system to which we should direct our hopes and aspirations is a Fascist system."[28] Michel Aflaq, the founder of the Ba'ath party and a major proponent of Arab nationalism, advocated for violent repression of non-Arab sentiment, stating coldly "when we [Arabs] are cruel to them, we know that our cruelty is in order to bring them back to [Arabness], to their true selves of which they are ignorant."[29] For this Arabness, history was extremely crucial. According to Husri:

> Nationalist feeling depends on historical memories more than anything else…. The longing for power and glory begins with a lament for the lost power and diminished glory; faith in the future of the nation derives its strength from a belief in the brilliance of the past…[30]

In the post-Ottoman and post-WWII period of uncertainty drunk with potential, the charismatic Nasser firmly lead the Arab world into the future by virtue of the past. Nasser "would vilify the West as the uncommonly perfidious 'other,'… In fiery speeches, Nasser would remind Arabs continuously of their glorious history and of their military and intellectual superiority over the West."[31] The Crusades, and Saladin especially, served as a powerful reminder and symbol of that glorious past, used as propaganda in the effort to create a unified Arab state. But decades before Nasser would get his chance at the podium, the embattled Sultan of the dying Ottoman empire

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[28] William L Cleveland, *The Making of an Arab Nationalist; Ottomanism and Arabism in the Life and Thought of SatiÊ» Al-Husri*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 127.
[29] Franck Salameh, *Language, Memory, and Identity in the Middle East: The Case for Lebanon*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), 11.
[30] Adid Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 67.
[31] *Ibid*, 301

would first tie past to future and use Saladin as a prominent tool in his effort to rebuild the Ottoman nation.

This primacy of history in the course of nationalism was not difficult to grasp for the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II, who celebrated and compared himself to Saladin in order to cultivate a proto-nationalist Islamic pride in his Ottoman subjects. To begin this undertaking, Abdulhamid II latched onto Saladin's tomb as a symbol of national pride. Indeed, Saladin's first major impact after the Crusades centered around the use of his tomb as a historical monument for the Ottoman Empire. This newfound importance for Saladin initially took the form of renovations and excavations of the man's tomb. At the beginning of his reign, Sultan Abdulhamid II commissioned an elegant cenotaph in the Ottoman baroque style to adorn Saladin's tomb,[32] the same year that the Ottomans lost the Russo-Ottoman war of 1878.[33] This can be seen as Abdulhamid's first attempt at using a romantic history to distract his people from a less than glorious present. The visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany to the Ottoman Empire, filled with dramatic and over the top Crusader overtones, completed the reinvigoration of Saladin's memory, although in an ironic and embarrassing way for the Ottomans.

In 1898, Kaiser Wilhelm II journeyed throughout the Ottoman Empire with an immense amount of fanfare from both the Kaiser himself and the Sultan. The Sultan was so committed to making the Kaiser's visit all it could be that he actually ordered a new gate constructed in the walls of Jerusalem, so that when the Kaiser visited he would have an unobstructed path to the religious

[32] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 61.
[33] *Ibid*, 61

centers of the city.[34] The Kaiser did so, with him and his entire entourage masquerading as 13th century Germanic Crusaders through the streets of Jerusalem, complete with historically accurate full length costumes. During his visit, Wilhelm paid for a handsome restoration of Saladin's mausoleum and gave a eulogy for the Sultan, then dead for over 600 years. The Kaiser also laid on the tomb a bronze wreath bearing the inscription "from one great emperor to another."[35] This high profile visit and adulation from the Western monarch brought Saladin to the fore of Ottoman consciousness, if for no other reason than out of a sense of shame and embarrassment. Would it be this adventure seeking European, parading around in a costume of Saladin's historic enemy, who would fantasize about and remind the world of a Muslim hero? Shortly after the visit, contemporary Egyptian poet Ahmad Shaqwi (1868-1932) wrote an ode to Saladin, lamenting that it took the visit of a European monarch to resurrect the glorious memory of a Muslim hero.[36]

Another visit by a European statesman to the tomb entrenched this feeling, this time with a touch more animosity and rumor. After the defeat and disintegration of the Ottoman state in the aftermath of the first World War, the French High Commissioner Henri Gouraud came to Damascus to govern the French mandate of "Grand Liban, Etat de Damas, Etat d'Alep, Djebel Druses, Djebel Ansariyyé, Cilicie," (Greater Lebanon, State of Damascus, State of Aleppo, Druze Mountain, Ansariyeh Mountain, and Cilicia), in 1920. This was renamed the "Mandat Syrie-Liban," the Mandate of Syria-Lebanon, in 1936. The original naming of the French Mandate signaled the French understanding of the multiplicity of nations within their newly acquired former Ottoman

[34] Johnathan Riley-Smith, "Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination, 8 November 1898-11 September 2001," *Crusades, Vol. 2.* (Hampshire: Ashgate for the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the LatinEast, 2003), 151-52.
[35] Thomas Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 202.
[36] Werner Ende, *Wer Ist Ein Glaubenheld, Wer Ist Ein Ketzer?, The World of Islam* (1984): 84.

domain. Once there, Gouraud is rumored to have kicked the tomb while muttering "Saladin, nous voilà"[37] (Saladin, here we are) or the more poignant "Nous Revenons, Saladin!" (We return, Saladin!) in reference to the Frankish Crusaders, who made up the bulk of the first and most subsequent Crusades.[38] This in itself is a good representation of the romanticism through which Europe viewed the Crusades, and more specifically France's self-appointed historical mission as the "Elder Daughter of the Church" and the guardian of Middle Eastern Christians. France had an intense attachment to the Maronite community of present day Lebanon (the Maronite Patriarch Hoyek specifically lobbied for Gourand to become High Commissioner for his impeccable French Catholic credentials), a close relationship which continues in the present.[39] Another example of France's romantic attachment to the Levant is the attempt by the French government to actually purchase the property of Krak de Chevaliers from the local Alawite government in the 1920's. The French reasoning was that the impressive Crusader fortress, which adorns Syrian money today, was a part of France's national heritage.[40]

3.5 Nasser and Saladin

With the end of the British and French mandate system Arab nationalism rushed to fill the void, becoming the dominant philosophical power in the Middle East. This manifested in various

[37] Franck, Salameh. "Language, Memory and Identity in the Middle East." Lecture, Boston College, MA, September 27, 2016.
[38] Frederick Quinn, "'Nous Revenons, Saladin!'" *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 126.
[39] Franck Salameh, *Language, Memory, and Identity in the Middle East: The Case for Lebanon*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), 92, 93, 99.; Franck, Salameh. "Language, Memory and Identity in the Middle East." Lecture, Boston College, MA, September 6, 2016.
[40] Franck Salameh, correspondence with author, December 1, 2016.

independence movements and coups against holdover regimes from the period of European domination. One such coup took place in 1952, with the overthrow of the Egyptian King Farouk by the Free Officer's Movement, led by one Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser. With his revolutionary victory, Nasser subsequently became the leader of Egypt and Arab nationalism during the 1950s and 60s. As the paragon of the movement during its most vocal period, Nasser's attitude towards the Crusades and Saladin bears special consideration. Saladin offered a near perfect historical parallel for the goals of Pan-Arab nationalism and Nasser's aspirations, and Saladin's career was appropriated as a romanticized history of unification and triumph over the West and Israel. Propaganda in all forms of media was produced in order to concoct a historically justified pan-Arab state, with Nasser at its head. Contemporary writer J.S.F. Parker, writing in *International Affairs*, remarked that "this encouraging medieval parallel is one of Nasser's favorite themes, to which he is always referring in his speeches."[41] It was so apparent that a New York Times article written around the time Nasser first assumed power remarked at how Nasser "fancies himself a modern Saladin."[42]

Nasser's portrayal of his modern ideology made an appearance on the Egyptian big screen as well. In a famous Egyptian film, "Saladin the Victorious" (in Arabic the title is "al Nasser Saladin", drawing an intentional correlation to Gamal Abdel Nasser), the words and goals of Saladin in the script copy those of Nasser. In one scene the character of Saladin literally spells out Arab nationalism with the line: "My dream is to see an Arab nation united under one flag."[43] Saladin's legacy was also officially adopted by the new government. Egypt was among the first of what

[41] J.S.F. Parker, "The United Arab Republic," *International Affairs*, 1st ed. Vol. 38., (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1962), 18.
[42] Osgood Caruthers, "Nasser's Star Rising in All Arab States: His Appeals to Nationalism Have Won Support Against Enemies," *New York Times*, March 30 1958.
[43] Mazhar, Ahmed. *Saladin the Victorious*. Directed by Youssef Chahine. Assia, 1963.

would become many Arab states (such as Ba'athist Iraq and Syria) to use the Eagle of Saladin, or the Arab Eagle (pictured below), in its heraldry.[44]



Figure 7A, 7B, and 7C, The Egyptian, Iraqi, and Revolutionary Egyptian Coats of Arms, respectively

Evidence that Saladin actually used this device is sparse, and the many variations of the Eagle are credited as a creation of Arab nationalism's appropriation of Saladin.[45] Revolutionary Egypt is also one of the first countries to make overt references to the Crusades in its founding ideological documents. Nasser devotes several pages of his revolutionary manifesto, *Philosophy of the Revolution*, to the analysis of the Crusades and their impact on Egypt, past and present.[46]

The empire that Saladin created in the 12th century, loosely uniting the lands that Nasser sought to join, served as an example and rationale for what Arab nationalism sought to accomplish. Saladin's empire was used as a historical precedent for the United Arab Republic (UAR), a short lived political union between Egypt and Syria.[47] During Nasser's first visit to Damascus in 1958 for the inauguration of the UAR, the leader of Arab nationalism made a high profile and symbolic

[44] Figure 7A. *Egyptian Coat of Arms*, Modern. Figure 7B. *Iraqi Coat of Arms*, Modern. Figure 7C. *Flag of Revolutionary Egypt*, 1952.
[45] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 65.; Gazette, Pall Mall. "Fleur-de-Lis and Double-Headed Eagle." *The Collector and Art Critic* 1.2 (1899): 31.
[46] Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Philosophy of the Revolution*, (President Gamal Abel Nasser), 65, 81-84.
[47] J.S.F. Parker, "The United Arab Republic," *International Affairs*, 1st ed. Vol. 38., (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1962), 18.

visit to the tomb of Saladin, where he addressed throngs of supporters paying him allegiance.[48] An excerpt from the book *Legends of the Middle Ages: The Life and Legacy of Saladin*, sums up the event well:

> [This] was a symbolic visit for the pan-Arab leader, who sought to unite the Arab world and restore it to its past glory. For nationalists like Nasser and devout Muslims across the Middle East, Saladin's life and reign represent the pinnacle of that glory, more than eight centuries after his death.[49]

Much like Abdulhamid II, Nasser sought to ingrain Saladin as a national hero of the state by positioning Saladin's tomb as an important national historic site.

Nasser's revolution was based in large part on resistance to Western involvement in Egypt and the Middle East, notably from Britain, France, and Israel. This stance led Nasser into conflict with these countries, and throughout the crises he often turned to Saladin for inspiration. The success of Nasser against Western powers in the 1956 Suez Canal crisis was conflated with Saladin's expulsion of the Crusaders through a united Middle East. As author of *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, Eric Cline, puts it, "the Arabs perceived the Suez expedition of 1956 as a Crusade by the French and the English."[50] In expressing his anti-Western sentiment, Nasser wrote in his *Philosophy of the Revolution*:

> If the wars of the cross (Crusades) were the dawning of the renaissance in Europe, then [the Crusades] were the beginning of an era of darkness for our nation. Our people carried

[48] Charles River Editors, *Legends of the Middle Ages: The Life and Legacy of Saladin*, (Charles River Editors, September 8, 2012), Description, Kindle Edition.; Gamal Abdel Nasser, "The Address by President Gamal Abdel Nasser at the Tomb of Saladin in Response to the Crowds Coming to Pay Him Allegiance" (speech, Damascus, Syria, 1958), President Gamal Abdel Nasser.
[49] Charles River Editors, *Legends of the Middle Ages: The Life and Legacy of Saladin*, (Charles River Editors, September 8, 2012), Description, Kindle Edition.
[50] Eric H. Cline, "For God, Gold and Glory," in *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 197.; Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, (New York: Schocken, 1984), 265.

> most of the burdens of the Crusades alone. They emerged afterwards poor, destitute, wearied.[51]

As mentioned earlier, Saladin's successful capture of Jerusalem and the near annihilation of its kingdom was referenced repeatedly in Nasser's war with Israel in 1967. For Nasser and many Arab nationalists, Israel represented an imperialistic incision into the world of the Middle East, in much the same way that they saw the Crusades as a projection of European power into Arab lands. Nasser described Israel in no uncertain terms, saying "[Western] imperialism signed a pact with Zionism and the result was the Balfour Declaration… and the deathblow to our Nationalism, this time under a new name, a substitute for 'the Crusades,'… the mandate."[52] Saladin's capture of Jerusalem served as the focal point of successful resistance against Israel and Western intrusion. In 1967, Nasser delivered a speech to the Arab Trade Union, remarking:

> During the Crusaders' occupation, the Arabs waited seventy years before a suitable opportunity arose and they drove away the Crusaders (Saladin's conquest in 1187) … I say that as a people with an ancient civilization, as an Arab people, we are determined that the Palestine question will not be liquidated or forgotten.[53]

Twenty years later, the spirit behind this remark was given new voice by Palestinians. A popular chant of the first intifada, a violent popular uprising in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, was "tell Shamir, tell Rabin; we are the sons of Saladin!"[54]

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[51] Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Philosophy of the Revolution* (President Gamal Abel Nasser).
[52] Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History*, (Great Britain: Yale University Press, 2013).
[53] Gamal Abdel Nasser, "Statement by President Nasser to Arab Trade Unionists" (speech, 26 May 1967), Jewish Virtual Library.
[54] Eric Black, "An Oath and a Chant," *Parallel Realities: A Jewish/Arab History of Israel/Palestine*, (Minneapolis, MN: Paradigm, 1992).

3.6 Ba'athism and the Crusades

After Nasser, Saladin next became an important character to the Ba'ath parties of Iraq and Syria in the late 1960s. Iraq was created by British mandate after the first World War, and as such the region had no real sense of historical nationhood. In fact, it had the exact opposite, as three diverse regions, or vilayets (essentially administrative states/provinces within the Ottoman Empire), were merged together under the British Iraqi mandate of 1920. These were the provinces of Mosul to the North, with a heavy Kurdish, Turkmen, and Assyrian Sunni population, the province of Baghdad, home to Persians, Arabs, and until the creation of Israel in the mid-20th century a major Jewish population, and the heavily Shi'ite southern province of Basra.[55] The Ba'athist movement under Saddam Hussein aimed to tie Iraq's cultural mosaic into its current statehood, uniting its people by appropriating regional historical events, places, and rulers into a new nationalistic

[55] "In fact, what became the Kingdom of Iraq under British Mandate in 1920, had previously constituted three distinct Ottoman administrative units—that is to say three *Vilayets*, or states in today's parlance, each as discrete and divergent from the other as, say, a Prague, a Vienna, or a Budapest would have been disparate in an Austro-Hungarian Empire. To wit, the Ottoman Vilayet of Mosul in the north, today the capital of Iraq's Nineveh Governorate, which was declared the seat of a new 'Caliphate' by a nascent Islamic State during the summer of 2014, had, historically speaking, consisted of a majority mix population of Kurds, Turkmens, Assyrians, Armenians, and others, often with more kinships—as well as historical, cultural, and geographic ties—to Aleppans in present-day Syria, and even Anatolian Turks and Iranians in the north, than to populations further south in what became Iraq proper. Likewise, the Vilayet of Baghdad, with even the etymology of its name recalling Persian rather than Arab origins, shares equally in the heritage of ancient Akkadians, Babylonians as well as Persians and Arabs, and until the middle of the twentieth century still boasted a majority Jewish population, remnant of the sixth-century BC Babylonian Exile. The same hybridity and multiplicity of identities and cultural accretions apply to the southern Iraqi province of Basra; another district with a storied past, corralling Sumerians and Elamites in ancient times, Aramaeans, Arabs, and Persian in more recent history. Today, with its majority Shi'ite population, the province of Basra is deemed—perhaps inaccurately, but not unfairly or without reason—to be more Persian than it may be Arab."- Franck Salameh, *Charles Corm: An Intellectual Biography of a Twentieth-Century Lebanese "Young Phoenician,"* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 31.

history and culture.[56] Saddam Hussein's role in this cannot be understated, as his fixation on claiming successorship of every great ruler in the region's history dating back as far as Nebuchadnezzar greatly influenced the artistic and ideological landscape of Ba'athist Iraq. Saddam placed a premium on an artistic representation of his fanciful ties to the past to "mak[e] his image 'visible, solid, and overpowering.'"[57] Saladin eventually emerged as the greatest target of this obsession, becoming the historical avatar of Saddam's dreams and ego, represented throughout Iraq in various works of art.

Saladin and Saddam Hussein shared a number of things, not least of which being the apparent goal of uniting the Middle East in opposition to Western powers in Jerusalem. Both men were born in Tikrit, with Saddam Hussein born almost exactly 800 years after Saladin, facts that were heavily emphasized in propaganda. Saddam remarked shortly after entering power that

> Saladin [was]…of the same caliber, but with the spirit of Islam in him. He was a Muslim Iraqi… He was able to make use of the nation's spirit; he breathed life into it, united it, and gave it one aim and purpose, and thus won a brilliant victory over the Crusaders.[58]

In the late 1980s the efforts at appropriating Saladin increased at the expense of other "Iraqi" leaders, such as Nebuchadnezzar and Hammurabi. With the 800 year anniversary of Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem in 1987, Saddam Hussein began to transfix his efforts on portraying himself as Saladin come again.[59] Four years later, this historical appropriation was nailed down into Sad-

[56] Michael Seymour, "Ancient Mesopotamia and Modern Iraq in the British Press, 1980–2003," *Current Anthropology*. 3rd ed. Vol. 45. (University of Chicago, 2004): 355.
[57] Jerry M. Long, *Saddam's War of Words: Politics, Religion, and the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait*, (Austin: University of Texas, 2004), 79.
[58] *Ibid*, 76
[59] Eric H. Cline, "For God, Gold and Glory," in *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 198-199.

dam's psyche as a coalition of mostly American troops quickly ousted Saddam's forces from Kuwait in the First Gulf War. The propaganda value of Saladin's wars against the Crusaders was immense for the Hussein regime. With Iraq's defeat, efforts to link the two men, and their conflicts, took on a renewed vigor. An Iraqi newspaper caught up in this fervor even wrote "we smell the smell of Hattin and of the battle for the innermost sanctum."[60] Stefan Heidmann, author of *Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq*, notes that Saddam framed the Gulf War as both "part of the greater Arab struggle of liberation from the Christian 'Crusaders'"[61] and, interestingly, a victory.

Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem was a prominent fixture in Saddam's Saladin narrative, as Saddam positioned himself as diametrically opposed to Israel. In an attempt to claim leadership of the Arabist movement, Saddam supported the Palestinians against Israel. Evoking Saladin's Battle of Hattin, the dictator fired scud missiles at Israel in 1991, "establish[ing] his bona fides as Saladin redux."[62] Saddam's portrayal as the return of Saladin by Palestinians in the 1990s shows how Saddam's attempts were meeting with some international success. Fouad Ajami wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that "in the West Bank and Gaza, they had been waiting for an Arab cavalry, and Saddam was the 'Knight of Arabism' riding to their rescue. He was the 'Second Saladin'…"[63]

[60] Ofra Bengio, *Saddam's Word: Political Discourse in Iraq*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 83.
[61] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image,* ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 65.
[62] *Ibid,* 65; Jerry M. Long, *Saddam's War of Words: Politics, Religion, and the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait,* (Austin: University of Texas, 2004), 30.
[63] Fouad Ajami, "The Summer of Arab Discontent," *Foreign Affairs* 69.5 (1990): 1-20.

Art, and more specifically monuments, were a favored weapon of visual legitimization for Saddam's regime, as massive statues loaded with symbolism dotted the Iraqi landscape. According to Kanan Makiya, author of *The Monument: Art, Vulgarity, and Responsibility in Iraq*:

> The role of a successful monument in such a city (Baghdad) is to transfix the fantasy into the service of some new need… their principal function is to forge this new collective identity supposedly handed down by history, but in fact motivated by a Ba'thi led modernization…[64]

The extreme emphasis on various romanticized histories in art was an attempt to create one Ba'athist Iraqi history, one that exemplified an Arab nationalism under Saddam Hussein. This feature of Ba'athist rule merged with the appropriation of Saladin as murals, statues, and even children's books were commissioned, depicting Saddam alongside or literally as Saladin conquering again the lands of the Levant and Iraq.[65] A striking visual example linking Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem to Saddam is the four gigantic busts the Iraqi dictator commissioned of himself, all of which have the dictator wearing the dome of the rock as a Saladin era helmet.[66]



Figure 8, Billboard depicting Saddam Hussein, Saladin, and Nebuchadnezzar

[64] Kanan Makiya, *The Monument: Art, Vulgarity, and Responsibility in Iraq,* (Berkeley: University of California, 1991), 72.
[65] "The Crusades and Crusade Memory," Dartmouth University, accessed on October 19, 2016.**;** Ofra Bengio, *Saddam's Word: Political Discourse in Iraq*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 82.; Figure 8. Anonymous, *Billboard near the ruins of Nineveh depicting Hussein, Saladin and Nebuchadnezzar celebrating the fall of Jerusalem*, 1990.
[66] Figure 9. Jim Gordon, *Bronze Busts of Saddam Hussein with Dome of Rock helmet*, 2005.



Figure 9, Saddam Hussein Dome Of the Rock Helmet Busts

In Ba'athist Syria, Saladin was recruited to be the historical hero of the entire country, legitimating the Arabist state more so than to prop up a personality cult, as was the case with Saddam Hussein. ISIS followed this technique as well, eschewing direct links to personalities in favor of tying their entire "state" to the defeat of the Crusaders. Syria's first Ba'athist President Hafez al-Assad remarked in an interview that the Battle of Hattin, a large mural of which hung in his office, was not where the Muslims defeated the Christians, but rather "where the Arabs defeated the West."[67] Saladin appears on money, claiming the glories of the past for the state, his famous statue guards the entrance to his now Syrian citadel, and Syrian academics establish the pedigree of Syria as Saladin's true successor through papers and symposiums. The power of Saladin's memory, and the crux of his usage, comes from the fact that some of the most notable historic sites linked to Saladin reside in Syria and are claimed as landmarks by the Syrian government or as a part of world heritage. Damascus is particularly important because Saladin's tomb, such a prominent symbol in his historical appropriation, and the imposing citadel that served as his residence and seat of Levantine power are both located there.

[67] Kenneth W. Stein, "Western Intrusion Collides with Tradition in the Middle East," *Harvard International Review* 13.2 (1990/91): 8.

Artistic rendering of Saladin on monetary notes was one of the first and most prominent examples of Saladin as part of Syrian national identity. The twenty five pound Syrian bank note originally printed in 1977 (shown in figure 10A) used the image of Saladin hung during the restoration of his tomb in Damascus alongside Krak des Chevaliers, the famously impregnable Hospitaller turned Muslim fortress that is today an important Syrian historical site.[68] The monument of Saladin commissioned for the restoration and conversion of the citadel of Damascus (shown in figure 11) into a historical site in the late 1980s is perhaps the most well-known monument in Syria, and of Saladin in general.[69] This monument is important for its depiction of Saladin, victorious after the Battle of Hattin with King Guy and Reynald de Chatillon in tow, precisely because it is a historical site. This statue portrays Saladin as a Syrian national hero defeating the Crusaders, further cementing him as a cultural possession of the Syrian people. An image of this statue also graces the 200 pound Syrian bank note (shown in figure 11) alongside the Syrian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, connecting modern and historical military exploits and sacrifice.[70]



Figure 10, Syrian Twenty Five Pound Note

[68] Figure 10. Audrius Tomonis and Banknotes.com, *25 Pound Syrian Banknote*, 1977.
[69] Figure 12. Graham van der Wielen, *Statue of Saladin Outside Damascus Gate*, 2008.
[70] Figure 11. Audrius Tomonis and Banknotes.com, *200 Pound Syrian Banknote*, 1997.



Figure 11, Syrian 200 Pound Note



Figure 12, Statue of Saladin Outside the Citadel of Damascus

In the 21st century, Saladin also played a growing role in Syrian media. Saladin was portrayed in television series and even Western movies, such as Ridley Scott's "Kingdom of Heaven," which met a very warm reception in Syria and starred Syrian actor Ghassan Massoud.[71] In an interview with Rhonda Roumani, Massoud remarked that

> Everything in Saladin's own life is also my philosophy. My culture is that of Saladin. He has been a role model for us since our youth. Saladin was an example of the Muslim hero

[71] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 72-73.

> who returned to Arabs and Muslims their pride and their dignity. He is an example for our people, our leaders, our society.[72]

Although the association of Saladin to Assad is not as direct as it was with Saddam and Nasser, there was still an effort to construct a sort of succession from Saladin to Assad. The personality cult of Assad differs strikingly from that of Saddam Hussein, in that Assad "remained always himself and so is never dressed as a historical hero…In contrast to the Iraqi personality cult, moreover, al-Asad abstained from monumentality."[73] That being said, Assad still claimed himself a "descendant of Saladin," and efforts were made to link the two men.[74] Like with Iraq, the 800 year anniversary of Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem was a high profile event for the Ba'athist regimes, and in Syria a series of academic lectures were staged with the intent to "legitimize the regime by constructing a historical line between Saladin, Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, and Hafiz al-Asad."[75] This was similar to an academic symposium in Iraq constructing a link between Saladin and Saddam in a formal setting.

In Assad's war with Israel, Saladin also played an important role, serving as a rhetorical element throughout Assad's speeches. Journalist Amy Dockser Marcus reported that "in his

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[72] Rhonda Roumani. Interview with Ghassan Massoud. "A Modern Saladin Speaks His Mind." *Beliefnet*. n.d.
[73] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 68.
[74] Eric H. Cline, "For God, Gold and Glory," in *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 198.
[75] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 69.

speeches, Mr. Assad frequently cites the example of Salah al Din as support for the hard-line approach he has taken in his dealings with the Israelis, who he views as latter-day Crusaders."[76] A slogan used during the 1991 referendum of Assad's presidency, "from Hattin to Tishrin," linked the Battle of Hattin with the 1973 October War against Israel and was used throughout the 1990s.[77] That being said, Assad differs once again in his appropriation from Saddam in the realm of art. Where Saddam was extremely overt in his support of the Palestinian cause artistically through various Dome of the Rock motifs, Assad was noticeably much more silent, abstaining from symbolism directly related to the city of Jerusalem.[78] Hafiz's successor Bashar al-Assad used Saladin in a slightly more Islamic context, as well as in relation to Jerusalem. Conflict with Israel remained a fundamental claim of Bashar's legitimacy, and so the parallels with Saladin and the modern state of Israel, so widely used by Arab nationalists, became much more applicable.[79]

Saladin offers a romantic historical vision of what Arabists hoped to accomplish. Regardless of who the man actually was, his image in popular culture today is of a just, pious, and powerful ruler who united much of the Arab world in an alliance that would fend off one of the most powerful Western military expeditions in history. His story from over 800 years ago wove the dreams of Middle Eastern leaders such as Nasser, Hussein, and al-Assad into an ideological tapestry that captivated the popular culture of the Middle Eastern world. Saladin is not just an oft used national hero, he is the historical symbol of an ideology, the historical fulfillment and progenitor

[76] Eric H. Cline, "For God, Gold and Glory," in *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 198.
[77] Stefan Heidmann, "Memory and Ideology; Images of Saladin in Syria and in Iraq," in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), 69.
[78] *Ibid*, 68 Heidmann contends that this was because of the presence of Palestinian refugee camps and military elements within his country. Assad did not want to show any overt support for the Palestinian cause and create unrest in his country while making it a larger target for Israel.
[79] *Ibid*, 72

of all that it hoped to accomplish. The revival and idolization of his memory was not a convenient accident. The leaders of the post Ottoman period flocked to Saladin because by associating themselves with this champion of the past, they sought to claim for themselves a wellspring of historical legitimacy. ISIS, in our modern day, desires the same things as those men, and so creates its own version of Crusader propaganda in order to fashion its own territories into a cohesive politic. The history of Saladin and his impact transcends that of the man, for his appropriation as a hero of Arab nationalism became a message of victory intertwined with complex cultural and political realities and desires. His memory symbolizes the greater envisioning of the Crusades as a triumphant saga of Muslim resistance against the West, which prospered throughout the 20th century to influence the ideology of a new and disturbing movement.

With this powerful history of remembrance and appropriation, the tides of politics and strife carried the Crusades into our modern era. Soon after the failure of Pan-Arabism and Ba'athism, the Islamic extremism of Osama bin Laden and his acolytes entered center stage. The growth of the global jihad movement was accompanied by a renewed surge in appearances of the Crusader label, the device growing in popularity for many of the same reasons it did for the Arabists of the 20th century. In order to understand this usage, it is vital that the previous chapter be understood, as it illustrates the powerful hold the Crusades have had on movements in the Middle East and the vigor with which the Crusades were brought into the modern Middle East. The defeat of the Crusades represents for much of the Middle East a recovery of Muslim pride and power, a valiant victory in the face of difficulty and uncertainty. The Crusades, regardless of audience, ideologue, or state that a leader yearns to see made real, are a dry kindling for the fire of propaganda. The powerful epoch of the Crusades represents a mystical history, one so far removed from the modern day to be a fable ready to be transformed into national myth. Anyone vaguely related to

the history of the Crusading era, regardless of context or vision, can use the Crusades as the basis for a powerful stream of propaganda aimed at creating a national identity. Now, the banner of the anti-crusade is taken up most violently and vociferously by ISIS, as they turn a new page in the once again bloody Crusader narrative.

Part 2

Introduction

The Crusader Label in Jihadist Propaganda: Usage and Tools

In war, the conceptualization of the enemy is paramount, and therefore for propaganda, the chief source of material is the enemy. Nothing is more pressing than a deadly reality and nothing more concerning and angering than a rival that shares lifetimes of enmity. For ISIS, the Crusades offer the historical battlefield they yearn for and the verbal resource their propagandists harvest in speeches, images, and the ideology itself. The term Crusader is used as an encompassing term, bundling together into one vague definition of the enemy an alleged historical animosity, a deadly romanticism of war and sacrifice, and a real life slate of modern opponents. This collection of beliefs, historical reality, and conjured nightmares that give the Crusader label its power is what I call the Crusader mythos. Throughout history, fighting the enemy was and still is used as a justification for a wide variety of official decrees and actions, in addition to sowing seeds of discontent or renewing support. As shown in previous chapters, this was true in the Crusader period and still is today, with similar tactics of name calling and atrocity propaganda used to encourage the demonization and alienation of the opposing forces. Turning the enemy into a vague symbol importantly allows for vague and wide ranging justifications, as a lack of real clarity allows the symbol to be applied to nearly any situation. Oftentimes these situations are violent, but sometimes more mundane. As we will see, a full spectrum of actions ranging from mass executions to memorandums on the use of apple products all fall under the greater fight against the Crusader foe.

ISIS propagandists generally aim to depict themselves and their struggle as a war that transcends the importance of the modern battlefield, extending to the spheres of civilization and history. The world has been split for nearly a millennium, according to the propaganda of jihad, and as ISIS would have it "you are either with us or with the Crusaders." You either support ISIS unequivocally, or you are the enemy, unequivocally. In his speech announcing the formation of the "caliphate," Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS, declares the continuation of this division and announced:

> The world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the Jews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr…[1]

Unbinding the present conflict from its temporal and physical boundaries assigns it the merits and sacrifices of a thousand years ago, giving it a sense of timelessness and objective importance. The main vehicle of this propaganda is historical appropriation, the reason why Crusader is such an effective and sought-after label. ISIS propaganda makes particular use of the label with both glittering generalities and name calling. Glittering generalities come from their comparison of themselves to the men who only a few centuries after Muhammad defeated the Crusaders, serving the dual purpose of assigning ISIS's actions historical precedent and a virtuous cause, of recreating a glorious victory for Islam. More important to the ISIS narrative, and thus their propaganda, is the stereotyping of their enemies using name calling and bolstering this with atrocity propaganda. The simple act of using the Crusaders, or the Crusader alliance as many non-Western forces are referred to, as a boogeyman is used and further constructed in topics ranging from economic to military.

[1] Christopher Dickey, "Pope Francis, ISIS, and the Last Crusade," *The Daily Beast*, August 18, 2014.

An intimidating enemy, made even worse by atrocity propaganda, is quite the motivator when it comes to unification, recruitment and discipline, or morale.

As the previous chapters show, there is much to draw from when creating propaganda centering around the Crusades, notably the massacres and near constant cyclical conflict that eventually ended in the destruction of the Crusader States. Although in most cases these specific events are not mentioned by name (as the primary usage of Crusader propaganda is as a catchall name-calling label, which is designed to be used in most cases as a quick descriptor), evoking the memory of the Crusades conjures thoughts of invasion and occupation, resistance and victory, and a fundamental dichotomy between invaders and defenders. In the following excerpt from an Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) statement expressing solidarity (not to be confused for an oath of allegiance) with ISIS, AQAP claims Crusader forces seek the destruction of Islam and the subjugation of all Muslims, even while AQAP themselves routinely kill noncombatants:

> So within the Crusader war on Islam, the global alliance has undertaken a fierce campaign against the mujahideen in Iraq and al-Sham, especially our brothers in the Islamic State, including bombing and killing without any observance of taboos, and when the enemies saw that the airstrikes would be of no use to them- by God's permission- they began to talk about ground forces, wanting to put out the fire of God with their mouths… Indeed, this campaign is a Crusader campaign against Islam, a campaign against the rule of God's law, a campaign whose aim is to ensure that Muslims remain subservient to their enemies and have no control over their own affairs. For this end, there is an agreement on this campaign by the Christians, the Majus [Persians/Shi'a] and the traitor apostate rulers.[2]

[2] AQAP, "Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula Statement: Solidarity with the Islamic State," *Aymennjawad.org*, October 17, 2014.

In practical terms, ISIS deploys the Crusader label throughout various announcements, propaganda publications (such as the *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* magazines), videos, official administrative documents, "academic" papers, and social media. Whenever there is need for a flair of drama and intensification of the propaganda, the term Crusader finds its use.

In the realm of historical appropriation, places and figures important to the original Crusades are ripe targets for ISIS propaganda and jihadist culture as a whole. In late 2016, Krak de Chevaliers, the ancient Hospitaller fortress of the Crusader period, was the scene of an ISIS attack ending in the deaths of four Jordanian servicemen and a Canadian tourist.[3] In 1981, an assassination attempt on St John Paul the Great (then Pope John Paul II) nearly succeeded, as the Pope was shot twice in St. Peter's Square. Before the attack, during his successful prison escape in 1979, the would-be Papal assassin Mehmet Ali Agca left in his wake a letter claiming that "Western imperialists… are sending the Crusader Commander John Paul under the mask of a religious leader"[4] in reference to a diplomatic visit to Turkey. Further supporting my claim of the importance of historical appropriation to jihadist and ISIS propaganda is the usage of "Safavid" to refer to actual or supposed Shi'ite and Iranian involvement. Oftentimes there is mention of a "Safavid Crusader alliance," in the same theme of "Zionist Crusader alliance" (Zionist referencing Israel). There are also references to Iranians and Shi'ites as pagan "Majus" (seen in the Baghdadi excerpt above).

The term Crusader as used by ISIS implies a devotion to an inherently hostile and heretic ideology, as evidenced by the usage of "agent of the cross,"[5] "guard of the cross,"[6] "worshipper of

[3] CBS, "Siege at Crusader-era castle after tourist, cops killed," *CBS News*, December 18, 2016.
[4] History, "Pope John Paul II shot," *History.com*, ND.
[5] ISIS, *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, (2016; Northern Iraq: Wilayat al-Jazira ISIS Media Wing), Video.
[6] ISIS, *Shield of the Cross*, (2016; Aleppo: Wilayat Halab ISIS Media Wing), Video.

the cross"[7] and "slave to the cross"[8] used interchangeably and in conjunction with the term Crusader. It must be noted that a similar technique was used during the time of the original Crusades by Muslim writers. For example, Crusade era Muslim chronicler Ibn Dawdari referred to the Crusaders as "worshippers of crosses."[9] The cross became associated with Crusaders as they adorned their armor, heraldry, and architecture with the symbol of Christianity, a symbol that became one of derision for the Muslims of the Crusader period and the modern global jihad. These titles and substitutes for the Crusader label depict ISIS's enemies as worshippers and agents of someone other than God, to be shirkers and polytheists. These charges are among the highest crimes in Islam. During the Crusades, the cross was routinely used to identify an inclusive definition of the enemy, including those Muslims who fought with the Crusaders, and the symbolic destruction of crosses became an important aspect of Crusade era Muslim propaganda.[10] The destruction of crosses and the association of disparate groups as "Crusader allies" are likewise popular symbols for ISIS today.

For a modern example, in the ISIS video *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*,[11] the Peshmerga are the main subjects. The Peshmerga soldiers are shown under anti-armor and sniper fire being explicitly named in the montage of destruction, implicating them as fighting under the Crusaders. As the title of the video shows, the Muslim Peshmerga are classified as agents of the cross and thus Crusader allies. Oftentimes ISIS propagandists will use "Crusader alliance"

[7] Kitab al-Murabitun (AQIM), "Will of the Reassured Martyr Upon the Worshippers of the Cross in Mali," *Jihadology*, February 8, 2016.
[8] AQIM, "Arrival of the Knights upon a grouping of the slaves of the Cross in Gao city," *Jihadology*, 2016.
[9] Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades- Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 304.
[10] *Ibid*, 303-307
[11] ISIS, *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, (2016; Northern Iraq: Wilayat al-Jazira ISIS Media Wing), Video.

to denote either any Western force and its allies or any forces receiving or, perhaps more crucially, accused to be receiving aid from Western powers. Turkey is repeatedly targeted as being one of the chief Muslim allies of the Crusader alliance, one of the many charges leveled in *Shield of the Cross*,[12] a video of revenge and destruction of and by Turkish forces, for example. As mentioned in the earlier chapter on Saladin, utilizing the threat of the Crusaders to declare war on other Muslim factions in order to consolidate regional power was a tool used by both Nur al-Din and Saladin as well.

Individual soldiers and pilots of Western forces are depicted as bloodthirsty marauders with the Crusader label, bent on bringing the lands of Islam and the religion itself to its knees. In a dark irony, there is a wealth of propaganda that focuses on collateral damage and civilian death from "Crusader attacks," particularly bombings. Pilots are the targets of particular derision and malice, with some of the higher profile executions and rewards for capture/kill being offered for pilots. ISIS is extremely notorious for their rampant executions of civilians, and yet the collateral deaths of Muslim civilians at the hands of coalition forces seem to be a top priority for ISIS. In many videos, such as *Shield of the Cross*, ISIS mentions defending the Islamic Ummah and the citizens of the caliphate from Crusader attack. The video, after showing many clips of ISIS jihadists targeting "Crusaders" (non-Western forces in this video) and their Turkish allies, the video switches to a shot of Turkish artillery before artfully and dramatically changing to clips of Muslim civilian casualties, mainly dead or hospitalized children. The video then goes on to give a warning in Turkish, as ISIS executioners burn to death two Turkish soldiers captured in fighting near the Turkish-Syrian border. In other videos, ISIS records in depth the destruction from coalition bombings, described as wanton or spiteful destruction caused by the Crusaders. ISIS released a video entitled

[12] ISIS, *Shield of the Cross*, (2016; Aleppo: Wilayat Halab ISIS Media Wing), Video.

The Safavid-Crusader Bombing Upon Muslim Homes[13] in 2015, highlighting episodes of collateral damage from airstrikes on ISIS's Iraqi stronghold of Mosul, under pressure from primarily Shi'ite Iraqis and their American allies.

Many ISIS fighters recruited locally are often subjected to a series of threats, coercion, and intensive indoctrination courses. Other local fighters may join jihadist groups as a way to fight for purely political goals or simply to be a part of a strong military force in a tumultuous region. Not to say that domestic fighters are not motivated by jihadist ideology, far from it, but domestic fighters tend to be motivated by the romantic ideals of jihad less than their foreign counterparts. Foreign fighters, on the other hand, are tempted much more by the appeal of a black and white fight against an easily defined and vilified foe, by a sense of adventure and duty. This can be seen when examining the exit interviews of foreign and domestic fighters after they defect from ISIS, for example, as catalogued by Anne Speckhard and Ahmet S. Yayla.[14] In the course of the ongoing battle for Mosul, begun in 2016, at a point when all but Western Mosul had been captured and intense ISIS loses mounting, most of the ISIS bodies recovered belonged to foreign fighters. An aide to Iraqi Counterterrorism Service General Saadi, remarked to a New York Times reporter that foreign fighters "just come here to fight and die."[15] Another interesting fact that points to foreign fighters being targeted by propaganda of romanticism more so than local fighters is the outlook of Arabic language propaganda versus English language and English subtitled propaganda. Although most

[13] ISIS, *The Safavid-Crusader Bombing Upon Muslim Homes*, (2015; Ninevah: Wilayat Ninawa ISIS Media Wing), Video.
[14] Anne Speckhard and Ahmet S. Yahya, *ISIS Defectors: Inside Stories of the Terrorist Caliphate*, (VA: Advances Press, LLC, 2016).
[15] Michael Gordon, "On the Mosul Front, a Brutal Battle Against ISIS and Time," *The New York Times*, April 26, 2017.

of the sources discussed here are originally not in English but Arabic or another related language, the English language publications deal much more forcefully with the Crusader ideology.

This could be one of or a mixture of two things: the theory above wherein foreign recruits are more susceptible to propaganda based on the romanticism of historical appropriation; or the theory that ISIS propagandists must present and indoctrinate an audience with little or no contact with the Crusader mythos. As for the second theory, this could account for why the Crusader label is expounded upon so much in English language publications aimed at foreign recruitment. This is acutely evident in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah,* publications aimed exclusively at foreign audiences. Contrasting these publications to ISIS's Arabic language newsletter, al-Naba, the Crusader label is used much more thematically in *Dabiq* and more to describe actual military forces and operations in al-Naba (ex. Crusader alliance forces struck x and y versus the Crusader alliance will tremble at the resurgent caliphate), although the thematic aspect is still an inseparable part of the label's use in al-Naba.[16] Where newsletters like *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are more thematic and focus on incitement and international efforts, domestic newsletters like al-Naba and other documents are more practical and descriptive of military forces with the Crusader label, speaking more about the immediate actions concerning the enemy.

Newsletters are an important vehicle for jihadist organizations to expound upon and distribute their ideology, in addition to their version of world news. What is perhaps the largest and most professionally published propaganda utilizing the Crusader label is ISIS's English language newsletter, *Dabiq*. There can be no study of the Crusader label without taking an in depth look at how *Dabiq* utilizes the term and how it draws its thematic inspiration from the belief of combating

[16] ISIS, "Issue #8," *al-Naba,* 2017.

a modern day Crusade. The opening line of every issue is a quote from the group's founder, al-Zarqawi, which immediately illustrates the outlook of the publication and gives the context for the magazine's title. The quote is al-Zarqawi's infamous description of his jihad, that "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*."[17] In this quote, Zarqawi references a hadith of Sahih Muslim (a famously reliable collector of hadith) that claims Muhammad prophesied the end of the world occurring after the Crusaders (Romans) are defeated at the town of *Dabiq*, near the Turkish-Syrian border.

Dabiq magazine explains this hadith and its importance on the third page of the first issue, saying "Shaykh Abu Mus'ab az(al)-Zarqawi (rahimahullah) anticipated the expansion of the blessed jihad from Iraq into Sham (Syria/Levant) and linked it to this hadith…" The fourth edition of *Dabiq* is named "The Failed Crusade," its cover picturing St. Peter's Square with an ISIS flag photo shopped onto the obelisk in the center of the square. The forward of this edition also clearly reiterates the importance of fighting the Crusaders as part of a larger struggle, again quoting Zarqawi: "we perform jihad here while our eyes are upon al-Quds (Jerusalem). We fight here, while our goal is Rome…"[18] The association of the Crusader label with Rome is also apparent with ISIS's newer English language publication, *Rumiyah* (Rome), which is similar to *Dabiq* but with a more international orientation. In an almost comical photo and its caption, that become dark and horrifying within context, the readers of *Rumiyah* are told "the blood of the disbelievers is halal, and killing them is a form of worship to Allah… Even the blood of a merry Crusader citizen selling

[17] ISIS, "Issue #1 The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq*, June, 2014, 2.
[18] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, 2.

flowers to passerby."[19] With this we can see that the Crusader label is used to incite and justify attacks on literally anyone living in what are classified as the Crusader nations.



Figure 13, "Merry Crusader Citizen"

The use of newsletters extends beyond ISIS and is used by al-Qaeda and its affiliates in a similar way. In another example of the greater importance of the Crusader label in foreign language publications, AQAP's English language magazine, Inspire, refers to America's war in the Middle East as Bush's Crusade while making a direct comparison to the original Crusades:

> Should the Americans not heed our advice and invitation to guidance and righteousness, then they shall suffer the curse of Bush, who has called them to a crusade in which they will be defeated by the Mujahideen, Allâh willing, just as their crusader forefathers were sent home defeated and disgraced by our Mujahid forefathers.[20]

ISIS videos that are aimed at the West or Turkey, either in recruitment or as threats, also make greater use of the Crusader label in a thematic context. Even videos in English or another

[19] ISIS, "Issue #1 Stand and Die Upon That for Which Your Brothers Died," *Rumiyah*, September, 2016, 36.
[20] AQAP, "Issue #13 Neurotmesis- Cutting the Nerves and Isolating the Head," *Inspire*, Winter, 2014, 14.

language with Arabic subtitles that is symbolic in nature, use the Crusader mythos in a deeper and more ideological way than videos solely in Arabic. The difference between high profile executions as opposed to combat footage are often examples of this phenomenon. Arabic language videos without English or foreign language subtitles tend to use the Crusader label as a way to designate enemy forces with relatively minor screen time given to grandstanding about the Crusader enemy. There are also more "violence montage" videos that are produced solely in Arabic than in or with English subtitles. These videos use the Crusader label as a way to designate enemy fatalities, i.e. "this is a suicide bomber targeting a Crusader checkpoint." This is not to undersell the value that ISIS propagandists have in using the Crusader label in their more local recruitment. As we will see, the Crusader label is pervasive throughout internal ISIS propaganda efforts, especially in videos decrying Muslim fatalities from the various wars in the Middle East. In summary, on the issue of recruitment foreign fighters are the target audience of Crusader propaganda more so than domestic fighters, who are targeted more by Crusader propaganda intended to justify their actions, reinforce indoctrination and buoy morale.

On the subject of internal morale, discipline, and retention, in many internal ISIS documents ranging from the implementation of calendars to city charters, the looming threat of the Crusaders is used for official justification, recruitment, and galvanization. In a document banning the use and possession of GPS capable devices and apple products, ISIS used the ongoing "fierce Crusader campaign" as justification, saying:

> In accordance with the demands of the public interest and to protect the souls of the soldiers of the Islamic State and their possessions in the shadow of the fierce Crusader campaign against the state of the Caliphate… it has been decided to forbid the use of any electronic device or a system that has access to service to enable precise location of positions (GPS)…

> products of the Apple network, since the use of devices of this network- from phones and tablet computers- will be completely banned on account of the risks they create.[21]

In a bid to encourage domestic support of the jihadist regime, ISIS issued a $5,000 bounty on "Crusader collaborators" to both its soldiers and the civilians under its control. This document uses the Crusader label to attach a greater sense of urgency and necessity to ferreting out spies and even those who would speak out against the caliphate, saying:

> "Oh you who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as allies: they are allies to one another. And the one who allies with them is one of them. Indeed, God does not guide the wrongdoing people" (al-Ma'ida 51) [Qur'an 5:51] … Thus, with the entry of the Crusaders and those with them from the tyrants of the Arabs in an international alliance to wage war on the Islamic State, the Crusaders are striving to encourage agents, spies, informers and slanderers… they work to connect with the foreign intelligence services and revealing the weak spots of the mujahideen and Muslims, in order for them to be targets for the international Crusader coalition.[22]

ISIS ideologues even write academic style papers about the Crusades and modern day Western military action, such as *The Clear Evidence in the Infidelity of Helping the Crusader Campaign*,[23] an Arabic language document which speaks in length about the supposed link between the present conflict and the Crusader West. These treatises are presented in such a way as to make them appear as academically legitimate as possible, opening up recruitment avenues among more educated audiences. As stated in "Marshalling the Mind," this new erudite audience is more susceptible to

[21] ISIS, "Specimen X: General Notification: Ban on GPS and Apple devices," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.
[22] ISIS, "Specimen 12P: Reward of $5000 for catching/informing on collaborators with the 'Crusaders' (c. November 2014)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.
[23] ISIS, *The Clear Evidence in the Infidelity of Helping the Crusader Campaign* (ISIS territory: Al-Hima Library, 2015).

propaganda that they deem as coming from a legitimate source, the goal of such "scholarly" ISIS propaganda.

In their online jihad, ISIS uses the Crusader label throughout social media in quick snippets of propaganda, the tactics reminiscent of those used in WWI propaganda posters. In these posts and tweets, ISIS and their supporters make use of Crusader hashtags to evoke the Crusader mythos and send warnings or express jubilation, such as "#CrusaderFranceburns" when Paris was attacked in 2016. CGI and pictures of historical landmarks, such as the colosseum of Rome ablaze and surrounded by superimposed jihadist fighters, are used to portend inevitable victory and to display the supposed power of ISIS over their Crusader nemesis. Social media also functions as one of the primary methods of distribution for ISIS Crusader propaganda, with sites such as Twitter and Telegram posting videos and images, or links to sites like justpaste.it or even YouTube. It is important to note that although the Crusader label is used in ISIS's online media campaigns, it is often a secondary resource in social media, with non-Crusader posts about world news, generic recruitment and threats, and vanilla posts about the vengeance and authority of ISIS taking precedence.

In a general consensus spanning jihadist organizations operating across multiple continents and states, from Iraq to Algeria to India, the term Crusader is the descriptive arrow of choice in the jihadist quiver. Identifying Western and Christian forces with the Crusades was brought to new heights with the propaganda of ISIS but sees extensive use in al-Qaeda and its affiliates as well as groups pledging allegiance to ISIS, such as Boko Haram. The Crusader label is most famously used in Arabic publication with the fatwas of Osama bin Laden, as he declared the global jihad two decades ago. In his 1996 fatwa, Osama bin Laden claimed:

> The people of Islam realised that they were the fundamental target of the hostility of the Judeo-Crusader alliance. All the false propaganda about the supposed rights of Islam was

> abandoned in the face of the attacks and massacres committed against Muslims everywhere…[24]

Osama bin Laden reiterates his belief that Islam and the Muslim world are under siege by a new crusade in his 1998 fatwa entitled "Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders," stating:

> The Arabian Peninsula has never -- since Allah made it flat, created its desert, and encircled it with seas -- been stormed by any forces like the crusader armies spreading in it like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations. All this is happening at a time in which nations are attacking Muslims like people fighting over a plate of food.[25]

These fatwahs represent some of the most official pronouncements of modern jihadist ideology, which is significant in that their descriptions of America and its allies as Crusaders come from the highest levels of jihadist philosophy. These pronouncements can be seen as the official beginnings of the Crusader mythos in the global jihad, something that will be shown to have spread throughout the world on the backs of disparate and warring jihadist organizations, with ISIS at the movement's fore.

Although used by other groups, ISIS reigns supreme as the champion of the Crusader mythos. ISIS claims the most apocalyptic ideology and an integral part of that ideology is their enemy, the Crusader alliance, their war between them an epic battle between good and evil. As such they tend to use the term Crusader with a greater vigor than other groups. Where some groups can be accused of a perfunctory and copycat usage of the Crusader label, ISIS applies a deeper and ideologically significant meaning to the Crusader label. Other groups, such as Boko Haram, saturate

[24] Osama bin Laden, "Osama bin Laden's Declaration of Jihad against Americans, 1996," in *Milestone Documents in World History*, ed. Brian Bonhomme and Cathleen Boivin, (Dallas: Salem Press, 2010), 1.
[25] Osama bin Laden, "Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders- World Islamic Front Statement," *Federation of American Scientists*, February 23, 1998, 1.

many of their propaganda pieces with the most basic use of the Crusader label, using the simplest tactic of captioning their enemies and their destruction with the Crusader label.

Another interesting use of the Crusader label comes from various jihadist organizations justifying closer ties by using the threat of the new Crusade. In an announcement concerning the oaths of allegiance from five countries in 2014, ISIS declared that:

> It is right for every Muslim man and Muslim woman to rejoice today on this great occasion and thank their gracious Lord that a Caliphate on the program of the Prophets has returned… Further, he has punished the Crusaders and their Safavid and secularist followers. He has wiped out the borders; and has revived the glory of Islam.[26]

With this, ISIS framed the allegiances it received in the context of the global fight against the Crusaders and their allies, that these allegiances forming the greater "caliphate" were made possible by virtue of ISIS's ability to punish the Crusaders. In this light, allegiance to ISIS is not merely an alliance with another jihadist group or political faction, it is joining the great campaign against the greater enemy.

In an announcement of allegiance to ISIS by Jamaat Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (JABM), the group describes the war against ISIS as a war against all of Islam by "Jews, Crusaders and their allies from the Arab tyrants, Rafidites (Shi'a) and apostates."[27] With this, JABM announced themselves as the Sinai province of ISIS, joining the larger fight against the Crusaders. This announcement shows the utilization of the Crusader label as a way to group all opposition together in an easily attacked stereotype in order to justify new alliances and political gains. In a similar vein, an

[26] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Islamic State [IS] Acknowledgements of Allegiances, Translation and Analysis," *AymennJawad.org*, November 16, 2014.
[27] Aymenn Jawad Al Tamimi, "Analysis: Jamaat Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis' Allegiance to the Islamic State," *AymennJawad.org*, November 10, 2014.

announcement that declared the allegiance of the majority of Jammat Ansar al-Islam (a traditionally Jabhat al-Nusra aligned group) to ISIS, praised ISIS as being "the one [state] that has defeated the Crusaders…"[28] Both AQAP and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghrib (AQIM, al-Qaeda's North African branch) have published announcements of solidarity (not outright support, as their parent organization, al-Qaeda central, and ISIS have a bloody rivalry) with ISIS, describing their solidarity as part of an effort to combat a greater Crusader campaign against all of Islam.[29]

ISIS has taken the Crusader mythos, birthed in the waxing years of the 19th century by the Ottoman empire, propagated throughout Arab nationalism, and affixed to the modern jihad by Osama bin Laden, and employed it to create a parallel universe for themselves and their opponents. In this world, the jihadists of ISIS are the knights of yore, fighting the blasphemous enemies of the West to preserve the future of the East. Every strike is answering a grudge, every bombing a continuation of an ancient war, each call to arms a muster for a jihad began a millennium ago by sultans and emirs. In this worldview, ISIS is never the aggressor. Rather, in their minds they are waging a defensive war against men who would see all of Islam crushed and its law eternally profaned. As we will see in the coming chapters analyzing the far flung appearances of Crusader propaganda with name calling, propaganda of agitation, and atrocity propaganda, and other constructions in ISIS publications, videos, edicts and papers, and social media, ISIS takes great pains

[28] Majlis Shura Jamaat Ansar al-Islam in Iraq, "Statement of Support," in *The Islamic State (IS) and Pledges of Allegiance: The Case of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam,* Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi (Aymennjawad.org).
[29] AQAP, "Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula Statement: Solidarity with the Islamic State," *AymennJawad.org*, October 17, 2014; AQIM and AQAP, "Al-Qa'ida in Islamic Maghreb and Arabian Peninsula Statement on the U.S.-led coalition against IS," *AymennJawad.org*, September 16, 2014.

to make their universe come alive and violently indoctrinate recruits and bystanders alike into the world of the final crusade.

1.0 Chapter 1- *Dabiq*: Manifesto of the Crusader Mythos

On the second page of each edition of *Dabiq*, a quote from the deceased founder and ideologue of ISIS, al-Zarqawi, is printed in reverence:

> 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*.[1]

This quote, in reference to al-Zarqawi's apocalyptic vision for his organization and an oft referenced hadith of the end times, assigns the term Crusader its apocalyptic and overbearing pedigree. *Dabiq* is a crucial piece of jihadist literature to analyze when studying the phenomenon of the Crusader mythos in jihadist propaganda. Within the pages and PDFs of *Dabiq* lie waiting a series of propaganda tactics and themes that encompass some of the most impressive and fundamental uses of the Crusader label in jihadist propaganda. Primarily, *Dabiq* makes use of name calling to bolster its ideological claims, claims that constitute a hoard of propaganda of agitation that seeks to spur its audience to actively and violently support or join the organization. The entire magazine can be termed a piece of propaganda of agitation, exhorting its readers to rush to Syria and Iraq, to give everything they have to the cause of caliphate, and even engage in suicidal attacks, all the while exposing the reader to images and rhetoric of incredible violence and strict, black and white ideology.

ISIS, according to its own publications, firmly believes that the Crusaders are the side of evil in the battle between the servants of God and the world of apostasy, a battle foretold with the spark of jihad. Furthermore, through the various editions of *Dabiq* certain themes are expressed

[1] ISIS, "Issue #1 The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq*, June, 2014, 2.

with vividness and zeal, emphasizing that the Crusaders are not only the enemy of the end times but also the enemy of ages past and moments present. They reference the Popes from Urban II to Francis, making little to no distinction between their goals and actions. The Crusaders are not only Catholics, who make up the most symbolic of the Crusader aspect (due to the original Crusaders being mostly Catholic) but as will be shown nearly any Western, Christian, or somewhat arbitrarily assigned factions are given the Crusader label by *Dabiq*'s writing staff. It is important to remember that ISIS uses the Crusader label to define both their modern day enemies and historical references to the actual Crusades. ISIS's use of the term may seem inconsistent, but that is in itself a tactic used to promote the sense that there is no temporal distinction between any use of the Crusader label. In ISIS ideology, the present conflict is a continuation of the original Crusades.

All other anti-ISIS factions, including the Iranians and Shi'ites, referred to as Safawis (Safavid Empire of 16^{th}-18^{th} century Persia) and Rafidah (rejecters), and current governments (labelled taghut, or tyrant) are stereotyped by *Dabiq* as allies or puppets of the Crusaders. Through the mouthpiece of *Dabiq*, ISIS uses the Crusader label to achieve, or at least try to achieve, a number of objectives, such as encouraging immigration to the caliphate, justifying and calling for terror attacks on civilians, demonizing all perceived or actual Western involvement and aid, and delegitimizing any system of democracy or non-sharia law. *Dabiq* contains several recurring series, such as "In the Words of the Enemy," "From the Pages of History," and interviews with jihadist fighters, leaders, and ideologues. Through these articles, ISIS identifies certain American and other affiliated individuals as Crusaders, attempts to create a saga of Crusader enmity through a series of historical events, and showcases (or fabricates, as these interviews are non-verifiable except through ISIS) the beliefs ISIS fighters or leaders on the Crusaders, respectively.

Dabiq sees itself as "a periodical magazine focusing on issues of tawhid, manhaj, hijrah, jihad, and jama'ah. It will also contain photo reports, current events, and informative articles on matters related to the Islamic State."[2] As for clarifying its name, ISIS makes the following statement:

> As for the name of the magazine, then it is taken from the area named *Dabiq* in the northern countryside of Halab (Aleppo) in Sham. This place was mentioned in a hadith describing some of the events of the Malahim (what is sometimes referred to as Armageddon in English). One of the greatest battles between the Muslims and the crusaders will take place near *Dabiq*… According to the hadith, the area will play a historical role in the battles leading up to the conquests of Constantinople, then Rome.[3]

Dabiq takes as inspiration for its mission, of spreading ISIS ideology and issuing ISIS state of affairs reports, the apocalypse. How ISIS sees this apocalypse is excruciatingly important, as this colors nearly every article in *Dabiq*. The hadith referenced by *Dabiq* in the above statement is hadith 177 of Sahih Muslim's *The Book Pertaining to the Turmoil and Portents of the Last Hour (Kitab Al-Fitan wa Ashrat As-Sa`ah),*[4] and covers what Muhammad spoke concerning the final battle between good and evil. In this hadith, the Romans (in reference to Constantinople, which was regarded as the center of the Roman Empire after the decline of the Western Roman Empire) will square off against the "best people on the earth" in a titanic clash that will ultimately leave the Muslims victorious, before heading off to the final battle between Jesus and the devil. Al-Zarqawi importantly interprets the "Romans" to be his modern day Crusaders. As such, the name and inspiration of *Dabiq* comes from an apocalyptic endgame between ISIS and the Crusaders. With

[2] *Ibid*, 3
[3] *Ibid*, 4
[4] "177 hadith found in 'The Book Pertaining to the Turmoil and Portents of the Last Hour (Kitab Al-Fitan wa Ashrat As-Sa`ah)' of Sahih Muslim," SearchTruth.com.

these important first few pages, *Dabiq* informs its audience that the Crusaders will fit into a fundamental part of the magazine's outlook and mission.

Issue #4 of *Dabiq*, "The Failed Crusade," contains a sort of manifesto about the Crusader mythos, delivered by then ISIS spokesman al-Adnani. In these words, printed in the article "Reflections on the Final Crusade," al-Adnani describes the conflict between Crusader and jihadist. What is fully printed in *Dabiq* takes several pages and tends to be redundant at times, and in interest of the reader only the most pressing excerpts are listed below:

> O America, O allies of America, and O crusaders, know that the matter is more dangerous than you have imagined and greater than you have envisioned. We have warned you that today we are in a new era, an era where the State, its soldiers, and its sons are leaders not slaves. They are a people who through the ages have not known defeat… And so we promise you by Allah's permission that this campaign will be your final campaign. It will be broken and defeated, just as all your previous campaigns were broken and defeated, except that this time we will raid you thereafter, and you will never raid us… We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted… So mobilize your forces, O crusaders. Mobilize your forces, roar with thunder, threaten whom you want, plot, arm your troops, prepare yourselves, strike, kill, and destroy us. This will not avail you. You will be defeated. This will not avail you, for our Lord, the Mighty, the Prevailing, has promised us with our victory and your defeat. Send arms and equipment to your agents and dogs. Prepare them with the most modern equipment. Send them very much, for it will end up as war booty in our hands by Allah's permission… You will return and your proxies will not avail you. And if you are not able to return, then we will come to your homeland by Allah's permission. O Americans, and O Europeans, the Islamic State did not initiate a war against you, as your governments and media try to make you believe. It is you who started the transgression against us, and thus you deserve blame and you will pay a great price.

In addition to this, *Dabiq* writes in issue #5, "Remaining and Expanding," that ISIS was formed for the purpose of fighting the Crusaders and their allies:

> …the Khilāfah has not only returned, but is remaining and expanding, bringing Muslims of all colors under one banner and one leader to rid their lands of the tawāghīt and raise their swords in unity against the Jews and crusaders.[5]

Unity, as expressed in this quote, is for the purpose of warring against the Crusaders and their Jewish allies.

[5] ISIS, "Issue #5 Remaining and Expanding," *Dabiq*, October, 2014, 13.

1.1 Cooperation and Apostasy

As *Dabiq* would have its audience believe, anyone against ISIS is in league with the Crusaders. In ISIS's world view the very act of receiving support from the Crusaders is one of the highest forms of apostasy a Muslim can fall to, especially if also involving oneself in the proxy wars in Iraq and Syria. The PKK and the forces involved in the Anbar Awakening, the "Ahlus-Sunnah," are targets of particular derision and the victims of some of ISIS's greatest rhetorical vitriol. A group does not need to be an overt American (or Iranian or Russian) ally to be considered a Crusader ally, however. According to the following excerpt from *Dabiq* # 4, even speaking in favor of the Crusaders is enough to be called their ally and an apostate:

> The biggest form of alliance is support whether by statements, spears, or speech. So those who tread behind Bush in his crusade against the Muslims have disbelieved in Allah… and His Messenger.[6]

Being an ally of the Crusaders inherently means being a legitimate war target for jihadists, and as such the Crusader label is frequently attached to ISIS opponents who either are being, have been, or are alleged to be supported by their Western enemies in a move to justify war against any faction ISIS chooses. An important incarnation of this tactic is what ISIS calls the "Grayzone" (which will be covered in detail in the next section), by which they mean the area between the two camps, the Crusaders and the jihadists, in which there are sincere Muslims who do not support ISIS. Throughout the course of its history, ISIS claims one of its goals is to see the Grayzone destroyed. The terrorist organization also holds that the Crusaders are themselves destroying the Grayzone by increasing their persecution and attacks on Muslims. This "fading Grayzone" figures

[6] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq,* September, 2014, 44.

prominently into ISIS ideology and propaganda because it adds another dimension to an otherwise two dimensional idea, that anyone not supporting ISIS is naturally an ally of the Crusaders.

In the first edition of *Dabiq*, a statement of ISIS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi is prominently displayed in the first few pages in an article titled "The World Had Divided Into Two Camps."[7] Al-Baghdadi's statement, one of the few reproduced in *Dabiq*, speaks about the divide between ISIS and its enemies and delivers an authoritative statement on the Crusader mythos and how he, and by extension ISIS, sees the world:

> Amirul-Mu'minin (Prince of the Believers, read to be al-Baghdadi) said: "O Ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy – the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the jews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the jews."[8]

With this the die is cast, there can be no reconciliation nor acceptance of anyone not wearing the black and white of ISIS. *Dabiq* is not ignorant to President George W. Bush's statement on the division of the world either, and reprinted in the same article are the words of Osama bin Laden and ISIS's interpretation of the quote: "So the world today is divided into two camps. Bush spoke the truth when he said, 'Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.' I.e. either you are with the crusade or you are with Islam."[9]

The subsequent editions of *Dabiq* are full of references to this divide and make great use of the Crusader label in denouncing their enemies. The following are a few emblematic examples of ISIS using the name calling Crusader label to create division and hostility:

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[7] ISIS, "Issue #1 The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq*, June, 2014, 6.
[8] *Ibid*, 6
[9] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, 43.

We do not fight Kurds because they are Kurds. Rather we fight the kuffār amongst them, the allies of the crusaders and Jews in their war against the Muslims.[10]

The two sides (Islamist and secular Islamist rebel factions in Syria) compete to display more and more apostasy so as to win the favor of the crusaders and their allies – the Arab tawāghīt.[11]

The crusaders try to draw their allies onto a slippery slope of concessions until their allies no longer have any principles that they hold onto and respect.[12]

On a number of these fronts, whether in Shām or elsewhere, the Islamic State faces increased hostility and even full force aggression from factions that ascribe themselves to Ahlus-Sunnah, some of whom even raise "Islamic" banners. Due to the importance of declaring the truth concerning those who compromise on the fundamental aspects of the religion and use flimsy arguments to justify waging war alongside the apostates and their crusader masters against the Muslims…[13]

[10] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 34.
[11] ISIS, "Issue #8 Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa," *Dabiq*, April, 2015, 9.
[12] ISIS, "Issue #9 They Plot and Allah Plots," *Dabiq*, May, 2015, 23.
[13] ISIS, "Issue #13 The Rafidah- From Ibn Suba' to the Dajjal," *Dabiq*, January, 2016, 14.

1.2 Two Camps and the Grayzone

In an article entitled "The Extinction of the Grayzone," the authors of *Dabiq* lay out their argument for why now, with the creation of their "caliphate," the option to remain neutral is a slippery slope to apostasy if not outright apostasy in itself. As ISIS describes it:

> In the past, it consisted of the hypocrites, deviant innovators, and abandoners of jihād. After the Khilāfah and the subsequent crusade, the grayzone also encompasses "independent" and "neutral" Islamic parties that refuse to join the Khilāfah, as these parties claim to be independent of both opposing camps.[14]

The denizens of the Grayzone are essentially apostates who claim to be for Islam and against the Crusaders but have yet to support the ISIS version of Islam and the final battle. In ISIS thought, this Grayzone always existed, but it was only with the 9/11 attacks and the War on Terror that the Grayzone began to face extinction and the frauds began to be outed. *Dabiq* issue #7, "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy- The Extinction of the Grayzone," describes the result of the attack:

> The operations quickly exposed the different deviant "Islamic" movements, the palace "scholars," (Muslim theologians who speak out against ISIS and side with the West) and the deviant du'āt, not to mention the apostate tawāghīt, as all of them rushed to serve the crusaders led by Bush in the war against Islam. And so, the grayzone began to wither…"[15]

This fading Grayzone is key to ISIS ideology, because as a concept it forbids neutrality, forcing a group to either support ISIS or fight for their monolithic enemy, thus shepherding the end times even quicker. The propagandists of *Dabiq* believe as the wars grow larger and more pressing, the Grayzone will disintegrate as all peoples of the world are forced to take a side. The Crusader label

[14] ISIS, "Issue #7 From Hypocrisy to Apostasy- The Extinction of the Grayzone," *Dabiq*, January, 2015, 57.
[15] *Ibid*, 54

is essential to this concept as it provides the monolithic enemy allayed on the other side of the Grayzone.

The Grayzone also offers a way for ISIS to explain why other hardline Islamist groups are not joining ISIS. *Dabiq* presents the leaders of these factions, and generally not the other individual members that ISIS is still hoping to recruit, as either Crusader lackeys or traitors obstinately clinging to their personal power:

> The world was now divided further between the Khilāfah on one side and the crusaders with their apostate agents on the other. If these jihād parties recognized this giant body representing Islam – the Khilāfah – they would be delegitimizing themselves, and thus would lose personal power and influence…[16]

ISIS also finds motivation for continued terror strikes against the opposing camp, the Crusaders, utilizing the destruction of the Grayzone as a motivation. Attacks on the Crusader nations "compels the crusaders to actively destroy the grayzone themselves, the zone in which many of the hypocrites and deviant innovators living in the West are hiding."[17] In other words, increasing attacks will in turn provoke ISIS enemies and escalate the conflict, which ISIS hopes will cause more pain and suffering forcing Muslims to either reveal their support for the Crusaders or join ISIS and fight the aggression.

[16] *Ibid*, 62
[17] *Ibid*, 62

1.3 Crusaders and Hijrah

By defining the countries of the American led coalition against ISIS as the lands of the Crusaders, *Dabiq* attempts a unique tactic to encourage foreign recruitment by mandating hijrah, or immigration, to their self-declared caliphate. This immigration, what is essentially foreign recruitment for ISIS, is a key part of their strategic thinking, as evidenced by the amount of foreign fighters present in their ranks and in the amount of resources they put towards foreign recruitment. ISIS expresses the importance of a steady flow of foreign supporters into its lands via an article in the first edition of *Dabiq* entitled "From Hijrah to Khilafah."[18] In this article, emigration to jihadist war zones is emphasized with passages such as "Hijrah has been a pillar inherent to jihad, particularly in eras void of darul-Islam."[19] In Islam there is historically a loose ban on living under non-Muslim rule, generally understood by most schools of Islamic jurisprudence to mean if one is persecuted and unable to practice Islam they should leave that country for a more favorable religious climate (if they cannot first improve their local conditions). ISIS takes this to its extreme, holding that according to this tenet it is impossible to live as, and therefore truly be, a Muslim if one lives under the "oppressive Crusader rule" in the "Crusader homelands." Take for example the following excerpt from *Dabiq* #10, calling for hijrah:

> And O you who continues residing in the lands of kufr under the authority of the crusaders and the tawāghīt, in the shade of their manmade laws, hearing them revile Allah's Sharī'ah day and night in their media and describe it as backwards, oppressive, and barbaric, do not allow another Ramadān after this one to pass you by except that you have made hijrah from the lands of kufr to the lands of the Islamic State![20]

[18] ISIS, "Issue #1 The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq*, June, 2014, 18.
[19] *Ibid*, 19
[20] ISIS, "Issue #10 The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men," *Dabiq*, June, 2015, 29.

The next quote, found in *Dabiq* #12, is more descriptive of what ISIS sees as the fundamental incompatibility of Islam and the West:

> Strangeness is a condition that the Muslim living in the West cannot escape as long as he remains amongst the crusaders. He is a stranger amongst Christians and liberals. He is a stranger amongst fornicators and sodomites. He is a stranger amongst drunkards and druggies. He is a stranger in his faith and deeds, as his sincerity and submission is towards Allah alone, whereas the kuffār of the West worship and obey clergy, legislatures, media, and both their animalistic and deviant desires. For them it is strange that one manifests sincere submission to His Lord in word and deed… Thus, the Muslim in the West is in a constant struggle. His fitrah is at war with the deviant drifts of the kuffār surrounding him. The battle to preserve his fitrah and faith knows no ceasefire.[21]

By attaching the Crusader label to Western and other select countries (like Japan, for example), ISIS condemns all Muslims living under those regimes and encourages them to take their families and emigrate to ISIS administered territory. In this way, ISIS attaches a religious mandate to leave the lands of the enemy for the lands of the caliphate.

ISIS claims that to live as a Muslim under Crusader rule is to be by default oppressed or co-opted, forced to change your beliefs or live as a tormented and deviant shadow of a true Muslim. "Crusader intelligence agencies" are named a constant threat throughout *Dabiq*, the shadowy enforcers of Crusader apostasy. An honest Muslim, according to ISIS, "sleeps every night with a knife or pistol beside him, fearing an overnight or early morning raid on his home, for he regularly reminds himself and other with the obligation of jihad."[22]

[21] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 29-30.
[22] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 29-32.

ISIS reminds its readers that the dangers of living in a Crusader nation extend to a Muslim's family. The following excerpt from the article entitled "O You Who Have Believed Protect Yourselves and Your Families From Fire" [23] warns potential jihadists of the grasping allure of Western vices, capable of snatching away everything, which begins with Western education:

> But even in the case of those who eventually make the decision to leave such lands and perform hijrah to dārul-Islām after Allah guides them and opens their eyes to the dangerous situation they are in, it's often too late for their family. For many, the decision to save themselves comes after they've already lost their children, some to drugs and promiscuity, and others to kufr, shirk, and even atheism. And it all begins in the schools.[24]

The Crusaders not only bomb Muslims in Iraq and Syrian, the Crusader regimes brainwash children and steal them away from Islam through teaching vice and apostasy. Losing your children is repeated in this article as a natural consequence of living under Crusader rule, either because the Child Protective Services will take the child away for not being educated or because the child will be lost to sin. In this way, with the help of the Crusader label ISIS frames taking oneself and one's family to ISIS territory as a duty of familial love.

[23] *Ibid*, 33-35
[24] *Ibid*, 33

1.4 Terrorizing the Crusader Homeland

Also in the vein of foreign recruitment is the incitement to commit terror attacks in the "Crusader homelands," generally the second place option after immigration to the caliphate. It is generally, though not always, framed as a duty if one cannot leave their country for the caliphate, allowing those not willing or unable to actually leave their home a way to fulfill their "Islamic" ISIS defined duties. This propaganda of agitation seeks to rile up its targets to commit violence that is usually or intentionally fatal to the perpetrator, to prepare them for the attack with a steady stream of anger, zeal, and exhortation. This type of terror incitement takes its justification from not accepting "Crusader rule," refusing to live passively in the lands of the enemy. By attaching the Crusader label to entire countries ISIS assigns every citizen of that country and every inch of territory under those governments the status of legitimate military target.

Terror attacks in Crusader countries are generally considered second to hijrah, if not out rightly stated as such, because the call to immigrate is usually placed first and the exhortation to attack the "Crusader homeland" follows in the tone of succeeding despite the challenges. The following are some examples of this semantic structure:

> This is the order of the Khalīfah (hafidhahullāh). Either ones performs hijrah to the wilāyāt of the Khilāfah or, if he is unable to do so, he must attack the crusaders, their allies, the Rāfidah, the tawāghīt, and their apostate forces, wherever he might be with any means available to him…[25]

> On this occasion, we will not forget to commend the martyred "lone" knights of the Khilāfah who struck out against the kāfir and apostate enemies near them… They did not use the obstacles laid down by the kuffār on the path to hijrah as an excuse to abandon jihād against the enemies.[26]

[25] ISIS, "Issue #9 They Plot and Allah Plots," *Dabiq*, May, 2015, 54.
[26] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 3.

Even if their goal is to go back and attack European or other targets, ISIS still wants people coming to and at least cycling through their caliphate. They do this to gain more dedicated and competent adherents who will spread the ideology and more competently carry out terrorist attacks against the West.

1.5 Airstrikes

"So, until then (when proxies are sufficiently trained and equipped, which ISIS holds will never happen), the failed airstrikes are the only war tool of the crusaders."[27] Airstrikes represent the chief form of direct Crusader support, as well as the primary source of war crimes against Muslims and Islam according to ISIS. Airstrikes are by far the most common form of atrocity propaganda used by ISIS. In a picture of an aircraft dropping bombs the only label is "The Crusaders continue their war against Islam."[28]



Figure 14, "The Crusaders continue their war against Islam"

Coalition bombings are a frequent occurrence and *Dabiq* depicts them as malicious or criminally destructive. This paints a twofold picture, that Crusaders cower behind their technology (something alluded to in the earlier speech by al-Adnani) and are content with monstrous attacks against jihadists that leave terrible collateral damage in their wake. This, by extension, is used to imply that those who are supported by the Crusaders are in league with monsters. An example of each of these respectively are the following two quotes. The first is a statement of revenge referring

[27] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, 42.
[28] ISIS, "Issue #15 Break the Cross," *Dabiq*, July, 2016, 33.

to the attacks that brought down a Russian airliner on September 30, 2015, killing over 200, and targeted Paris on September 19, 2014:

> The divided crusaders of the East and West thought themselves safe in their jets as they cowardly bombarded the Muslims of the Khilāfah. {They will not fight you all except within fortified cities or from behind walls} [Al-Hashr: 14]… And so revenge was exacted upon those who felt safe in the cockpits of their jets.[29]

The second speaks about the Peshmerga, using the support of airstrikes to associate the Peshmerga with the Crusaders:

> These "commies," "terrorists," and Asad regime supporters – composed of numerous flimsy female "fighters" – are being supported by US airstrikes in Shām. Despite the air-strikes and the supposedly lengthy war experience of PKK guerillas in Turkey, the Islamic State has expelled the PKK from most of their strongholds by Allah's power and might.[30]

In the above statement, "supported by US airstrikes" comes as the culminating insult in a long and distinguished chain of insults.

Another picture (below) of a British Royal Air Force drone is captioned "The crusader Royal Air Force of Britain- A symbol of hope for the allies of al-Qa'idah."[31] ISIS is vehemently opposed to al-Qaeda, and in an effort to discredit them, ISIS claims their rivals receive support from the Crusaders. ISIS chooses to illustrate this by claiming the Crusader air forces are symbols of hope, and thus the chief symbol of support, for its al-Qaeda rivals.

[29] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 2.
[30] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, 41.
[31] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 8.



Figure 15, "The Crusader Royal Air Force of Britain- A symbol of hope for the allies of al-Qa'idah."

The following quote comes from John Cantlie, a captured Western journalist constantly threatened with execution (ISIS freely admits this in *Dabiq*, but plays off the potential bias in nonpartisan reporting this might create) and forced to pen articles for ISIS. The following excerpt was demanded and placed prominently in *Dabiq*, after a full page picture of an alleged American airstrike,[32] in order to portray a seemingly neutral (and well written) voice on the impact of coalition airstrikes:

> Incidentally, there was a heavy airstrike some time ago in the dead of night and I promise that you don't sit there thinking, "Hurray, it's the United States Air Force." As the doors shake on their hinges and the walls bulge momentarily inward from the shockwaves, you become incandescent with fury. For 20 minutes afterwards there are the sounds of babies crying in fear, mothers trying to soothe their children, and sirens as casualties are taken to hospital. It's a side to "precision" bombing that you never see back in the West.[33]

Revenge for these airstrikes is a major source of justification that ISIS uses when speaking about its operations. In a sort of eulogy for one of the suicide attackers of the Brussels airport, the man's motivation for embarking on this attack was officially given as revenge for the airstrikes:

[32] ISIS, "Issue #8 Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa," *Dabiq*, April, 2015, 8.
[33] *Ibid*, 67

> After healing for several months, he began to train in order to realize his dream of returning to Europe to avenge the Muslims of Iraq and Shām for the constant bombing by crusader warplanes. Upon completing his training, he traveled the long road to France to execute his operation. It was Abū Idrīs who prepared the explosives for the two raids in Paris and Brussels.[34]

The capture of a downed Jordanian fighter pilot in 2014 and his subsequent execution is a powerful example of ISIS's hatred towards coalition pilots and the airstrikes they conduct. The highly publicized and dramatized manner of execution, burning the pilot to death in a cage and then ceremoniously crushing his body with building debris, is what makes the horrific incident important in explaining some of the ideology that ISIS wants to convey. The use of the Crusader label with this video execution and the accompanying article function as a cyclical relationship of reinforcing stereotype. The airstrikes are convicted as evil by their association with the Crusader label, but that same association of the Crusaders with collateral damage furthers the notion of Crusaders as marauders raiding Muslim lands. Using the Crusader label in association with unnecessary and unjust death is a form of atrocity propaganda that furthers the label's use to discredit ISIS's enemies in all other contexts of the label's use. The following quote illustrates ISIS reasoning and symbolism behind the execution:

> In burning the crusader pilot alive and burying him under a pile of debris, the Islamic State carried out a just form of retaliation for his involvement in the crusader bombing campaign which continues to result in the killing of countless Muslims who, as a result of these airstrikes, are burned alive and buried under mountains of debris. This is not to even mention those Muslims – men, women, and children – who survive the airstrikes and are left injured and disabled, and in many cases suffering from severe burns that cause them pain and anguish every minute of every day. {AND IF YOU PUNISH [AN ENEMY], PUNISH WITH AN EQUIVALENT OF THAT WITH WHICH YOU WERE HARMED} [An-Nahl: 126].[35]

[34] ISIS, "Issue #14 The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq*, April, 2016, 7.
[35] ISIS, "Issue #7 From Hypocrisy to Apostasy- The Extinction of the Grayzone," *Dabiq*, January, 2015, 6-7.

In another quote from an article entitled "The Capture of a Crusader Pilot," an interview with the pilot, ISIS denies that their prisoner was a true Muslim because of his participation in the airstrikes.

> His father and brother then pleaded for his release, claiming he was a "sincere Muslim," not realizing he was a murderous murtadd (apostate) due to his military service for the Jordanian tāghūt and his participation in the crusade that killed many Muslims."[36]

It is important to note that "murderous" is not typically used with the murtad label, seemingly reserved for describing this pilot. Likewise, when mentioning "the Crusade," the addendum "that killed many Muslims" also sees seldom use outside of referencing airstrikes. In the interview, ISIS made the pilot himself state his fate by answering the question "Do you know what the Islamic State will do with you?"[37] to which he replies "Yes… They will kill me…" The added pauses in the response using "…" is something not seen in other ISIS interviews and is added for dramatic effect. Whether the pilot actually said this or was forced to, these final words of the interview add a unique aspect to the pilot's fate, to show that a fierce Crusader trembles in fear at the thought of ISIS justice.

[36] ISIS, "Issue #6 Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan- A Testimony From Within," *Dabiq*, December, 2014, 34.
[37] *Ibid*, 36

1.6 Let the Enemy Speak

"In the Words of the Enemy" (IWE) is a unique recurring series of articles appearing in each edition of *Dabiq*, beginning with the first edition. IWE presents a high ranking figure from a Western or pro-Western nation or organization, such as former CIA director Michael Morell or American Senator John McCain, declares them to be a Crusader (a few articles claim the individuals are only apostates or Rafidah) and then presents their quotes in a way that gives credence to ISIS, generally policy or opinion pieces that elaborated on the growing threat of ISIS. Mainly, this takes the form of using quotes to support an argument that the Crusaders realize their ultimate demise and the strength of ISIS. This acts in a sense as a form of invincibility propaganda, as it creates a false sense through an interesting application of the testimonial and transfer devices (as not only are these people "testifying" to ISIS superiority, they are also "Crusaders" and thus carry an ironic amount of authority concerning ISIS in this context) that the strongest of ISIS's enemies, the Crusaders, fear it and recognize its power over them. The following is an example using the words of Michael Morell, twice acting director of the CIA and a major proponent of drone strikes:

> Morell ended his article saying: "Mr. President, the downing of the Russian airliner and the attacks in Paris make it crystal clear that our ISIS strategy is not working." Yes, the crusader strategy is not working because the Islamic State is here to stay. It is a state that inflicts just terror against its infidel, pagan, and apostate enemies. And it will continue to expand until its banner flutters over Constantinople and Rome. Until then, let the crusaders get used to the sound of explosion and the image of carnage in their very own homelands.[38]

These articles are also significant in that they name specific individuals and label them Crusaders, putting faces to the otherwise faceless stereotype of the Crusader label (similarly done to the Jordanian pilot).

[38] ISIS, "Issue #13 The Rafidah- From Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal," *Dabiq*, January, 2016, 47.

American figures are the most prominent group represented in IWE. America's position as lead in the coalition against ISIS makes the words of its ranking officials particularly poignant for use by ISIS propagandists. Any statements made by government officials about the realities (logistical, strategic, etc.) surrounding the campaign against ISIS are construed to mean American officials are acknowledging the impossibility of defeating ISIS. For example:

> On "12 June 2014," the crusader John Mc-Cain came to the senate floor to rant irritably about the victories the Islamic State was achieving in Iraq… McCain had this to say: "I come to the floor this morning with great sorrow and great concern and even deep alarm about the events that are transpiring rapidly in Iraq. ISIS the most extreme, Islamist organization – radical terrorist organization – now controls at least 1/3 of Iraqi territory and is rapidly gaining more…. And of course, hourly they are experiencing greater gains while the Iraqi military and police seem to be dissolving before our very eyes."[39]

American Presidents' words on the matter are also utilized. President Obama is repeatedly accused of carrying on a war against Islam, the Crusade, began by President Bush. This is done to promote the idea that regardless of who is in command of the West, the war against Islam is an imperative that runs deep in the American government.

> On 7 August 2014, the Crusader and apostate Barak Obama announced a worldwide extension of the Crusade against Islam and Muslims of Iraq, in order to prove to his sympathizers that there is no difference between his political supporters and his predecessor - Bush - apart from its aesthetics, and superficial touches… Obama said this "Today I have ordered two operations in Iraq - targeted air strikes to protect our American personnel and a humanitarian effort to rescue thousands of Iraqi civilians trapped on a mountain."[40]

Former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, described as "the crusader and former defense secretary," is the subject of more than one IWE, taking advantage of his position of authority, experience, and

[39] ISIS, "Issue #2 The Flood," *Dabiq*, July, 2014, 31-32.
[40] ISIS, "Issue #3 Un Appel a la Hidjrah," *Dabiq*, July, 2014, 35.

assessment of ISIS. In a sub-piece entitled "CHUCK HAGEL REVISITED," the former Secretary is quoted in *Dabiq*:

> …the sophistication of ISIL – just take that for a moment. We've never seen an organization like ISIL that is so well-organized, so well-trained, so well-funded, so strategic, so brutal, so completely ruthless. We've never seen anything quite like that in one institution. Then they blend in ideology which will eventually lose*, we get that, and social media… You blend all of that together, that is an incredibly powerful new threat. So we're adjusting to this and we're trying to – we can't do it alone." THE ENEMY'S WORDS * Allah (ta'ālā) said, {It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion, even if the mushrikīn despise such} [At-Tawbah: 33].[41]

IWE does not restrict itself to direct quotations, using actual or supposed critiques of Western policy decisions in the war against ISIS. *Dabiq* uses IWE to denounce not only its Western enemies, but also to denounce its more local opposition, continuing the theme of Western support amounting to apostasy:

> One of the most despicable positions a jihād claimant can find himself in is that the crusaders and Arab tawāghīt begin to consider him a possible alternative to the Khilāfah or a partial "solution" to preventing its expansion… (This sentence is a caption of a picture showing Senators McCain and Graham conversing) The crusaders John McCain and Lindsey Graham call for protective zones defending al-Qā'idah and its allies against the Islamic State![42]

In *Dabiq* #11, ISIS actually reproduces an entire article for its IWE piece. The article, "Islamic State is winning, America must soon use its one remaining option," is penned by Michael Scheuer, the former head of the Bin Laden Issue Station that tracked Osama bin Laden and his associates from 1996 to 1999. This article denounces American interventionism and describes ISIS strongpoints throughout the world, ending with the following isolationist quote:

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[41] ISIS, "Issue #6 Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan- A Testimony From Within," *Dabiq*, December, 2014, 57.
[42] ISIS, "Issue #9 They Plot and Allah Plots," *Dabiq*, May, 2015, 60, 64.

> Turning from the bare cupboard, these poor souls will know what commonsensical Americans untainted by Ivy League educations have known all along. Namely, that it is time to put America first and to return to General Washington's foreign-policy legacy by immediately proclaiming the end of US interventionism, the termination of support for all states and groups in the Middle East, the US withdrawal from NATO, and the resumption of America's most effective national security policy — strict neutrality. And while doing this, we can all hope — perhaps with misplaced optimism — that it is not too late."[43]

ISIS describes Scheuer's article as such:

> In it, he addresses the American crusaders, calling them to end their hopeless war against Islam and its caliphate. He brings to their attention the reality that the Islamic State is winning and will continue to expand despite all the efforts of the weakened states of America. The article is presented below.[44]

American officials are not the only target of malicious quotation. Journalists and analysts are also mentioned in IWE to similar effect. Take for example the following statement concerning published interviews of RAND corporation analysts Andrew Liepman ("former deputy director of the National Counterterrorism center"), Linda Robinson (senior political analyst and author"), Ben Connable (retired Marine Corps Intelligence Officer) and Angel Rabasa ("senior political scientist"). In *Dabiq*'s reprinting, ISIS uses the words of these "Crusader" analysts and political/military thinkers to discredit the Crusaders and create an invincible air about ISIS using their enemy's words:

> RAND Corporation – a think tank formed to provide research and analysis to the US crusader forces – published two interviews with RAND "experts" discussing the US strategy and airstrikes against the Islamic State. The hopelessness and confusion present in their tone and easily readable between the lines – beneath a layer of distortion – only show the futility of the campaign and coalition launched against the Islamic State… Liepman: … But destroying ISIS, even in a couple years, is just not possible… Robinson: … every partner is problematic. Iraqi security forces have crumbled in recent months. The Shia militias are problematic… Connable: … The Free Syrian Army is the group we go to now.

[43]Michael Scheuer, "Islamic State is Winning, America Must Soon Use Its One Remaining Option," *Ron Paul Institute*, August 10, 2015.
[44] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 56.

> They've suffered battlefield defeats. They're politically disorganized… Rabasa: Airstrikes will have diminishing returns as ISIS adjusts. And standing up to the United States is likely to enhance its image among both jihadi and non-jihadi constituencies.[45]

The IWE in the last edition of *Dabiq* is a special that covers the Catholic Papacy, notably Pope Urban II (the Pope who called for the First Crusade), Pope Benedict XVI, and the current Pope Francis. This special piece blatantly links the actual Crusades called by Pope Urban II to the modern day coalition war against ISIS. It uses the papacy to represent an unbroken chain of Crusader enmity and coordination, trying to give a physical historical fact as proof of the greater conspiracy. The papacy is usually not mentioned in *Dabiq* as the spiritual guidance of the modern Crusaders, and therefore this piece needs to be noted for both its bluntness and appearance in what is the final issue of *Dabiq* before it is succeeded by *Rumiyah*. It is my theory that this piece functions as a way to reorient *Dabiq*'s audience to the accused historical and unshaking animosity of their enemy, something that is central to ISIS propaganda but may have been somewhat obscured as ISIS's serious setbacks in the modern war began to accumulate. As the decision was made to switch from *Dabiq* to *Rumiyah*, its staff wished to leave their audience with a reminder of why the magazine started: to extend a finger stretching beyond time to point at the cause of their world's ills, the Crusaders.

The following quote of this concluding IWE is the most explicit reference to the first Crusade and its links to the present day.

> [A]t the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II made the Church's stance on Islam quite clear. Claiming himself divinely inspired, he called for destroying all Muslims who spread Allah's rule, saying, "On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends." This launched the Crusades, which continue today.

[45] ISIS, "Issue #5 Remaining and Expanding," *Dabiq*, October, 2014, 34-35.

> Popes thereafter, for centuries, overtly and loudly professed their goal of eradicating Islam through war and conversion, as the 15th century Pope Callixtus III made a vow "to extirpate the diabolical sect of the reprobate and faithless Mahomet [Islam] in the East;" and as his predecessor Eugene IV expressed his hope that "very many from the abominable sect of Mahomet will be converted to the Catholic faith" (Council of Basel in 1434).[46]

As seen in this passage from *Dabiq*, the magazine is using the Papacy to illustrate a Western conflict with Islam, leeching off of the Papacy's continuity to strengthen ISIS's argument that originated nearly a thousand years after the Council of Clermont.

ISIS makes it its policy to agree rather forcefully whenever a Western figure claims that Islam is at war with the West and vice versa, using its as proof of an irreparable enmity between them. With the current papacy of Pope Francis and his repeated overtures to harmony and thanksgiving between religions and political and ethnic groups around the world, however, ISIS runs into a small problem. Their mascot for war against Islam is calling for a cessation of hostility in order to protect life and dignity. *Dabiq* authors solved this dilemma with quotes like the following:

> [The] current pope, Francis, has struggled against reality to advertise the apostate's perversion of Islamic teachings as the actual religion of Muslims. So while Benedict and many before him emphasized the enmity between the pagan Christians and monotheistic Muslims, Francis' work is notably more subtle, steering clear of confrontational words that would offend those who falsely claim Islam, those apostates whom the Crusaders found played the perfect role for their infiltration into Muslim lands.[47]

Pope Francis is trying to defeat Islam, ISIS reasons, by pacifying it. *Dabiq* claims that the Pope's words are nothing more than trickery, and that all attempts to reach a peaceful coexistence with Muslims is inherently designed to weaken the Ummah. This is made possible by the antagonistic stereotype established with the name-calling permeating *Dabiq*. Attempts to meet these calls for a

[46] ISIS, "Issue #15 Break the Cross," *Dabiq*, July, 2016, 74-75.
[47] *Ibid*, 75

mutually beneficial existence and a peaceful world by Muslim theologians are likewise treated as the actions of traitors trying to hand the power of Islam over to the Pope:

> Francis continues to hide behind a deceptive veil of "good will," covering his actual intentions of pacifying the Muslim nation… Part of this approach to subdue Muslims through appeasement involves coordinating with the infamous Ash'ari Sufi institute, al-Azhar University, falsely attributed to being representative of Sunni Muslims worldwide… While previous popes spoke against Islam due to the actual reality they faced, based on mutual enmity between the pagan Christians and monotheistic Muslims, recent popes – and especially Pope Francis – have attempted to paint a picture of heartwarming friendship, seeking to steer Muslim masses away from the obligation of waging jihad against disbelief. Assisting the Crusaders in their aim at placation, el-Tayeb (head of Cairo's al-Azhar University, a reputed center of Sunni Orthodoxy) said of his dear friend Francis, "this man is a man of peace, a man who follows the teaching of Christianity, which is a religion of love and peace … a man who respects other religions and shows consideration for their followers" (Vatican Radio) … This is all part of a plan to demilitarize Islam or, to put it more correctly, to remove the clearly Quran- and Sunnah-based duty of waging jihad against pagans until all the world is ruled by the Shari'ah.[48]

These statements hold that there can be no peace between Christianity, the West, and Islam. All attempts to persuade anyone of the contrary are traps and lies aiming to pacify and subjugate those who should be strong and ascendant. The attempts at peace by Pope Francis are presented by *Dabiq* as the latest incarnation of Papal hate, showing that once again the Crusader enemy will not rest until Islam's position in the world is destroyed. This is the main idea *Dabiq* wants its audience to remember.

[48] *Ibid*, 75-76

1.7 In History

"From the Pages of History" (FPH) is a recurrent series of articles throughout *Dabiq* beginning with the seventh edition that details historical topics from the Mongols to the Sykes Picot agreement of 1916. These series of articles are notable for their emphasis on historical continuity between times past and the present day jihadist wars, but also in their depiction of various men and peoples as Crusaders, outside of both the present time and the actual Crusades. This (also present in other articles, not solely the domain of FPH) reinforces the idea that there have been Crusaders fighting against Islam for nearly its entire history.

The first two appearances of FPH are single page affairs concerning only the times of the Prophet Muhamad, and do not refer in any capacity to the Crusades or Crusaders. The FPH from the ninth edition, however, is a four-page article with an impressive upgrade in graphics revolving around the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, the same agreement that created the borders ISIS ceremoniously destroyed in 2014 as they swept across Syria and Iraq. This piece, which appears in the *Dabiq* issue concerned with rebuffing nationalism of any sort, concentrates on the foundation of the modern states of the Middle East by British involvement, and British influence over al-Husayn Ibn Ali and his family who came to rule at one point or another Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. The British are referred to as Crusaders throughout the article. This FPH is extremely important in that it eventually lays out neatly almost every charge ISIS brings against the Crusaders in their accused manipulation and oppression of the Islamic world. The permeation of the Crusaders throughout the world and its history, another theme that is present throughout *Dabiq* as a whole, is expressed with statements like the following:

> The historical origin of the "Arab Spring" banners – rather most of the flags raised by the various apostate Arab regimes – is a flag designed by the British crusader Mark Sykes.

> Yes, Mark Sykes of the Sykes- Picot Agreement, which divided the Muslims' lands into nationalist states, the same crusader who also promoted the infamous Balfour Declaration behind the establishment of the Jewish state.[49]

ISIS holds that the flags of nations such as "Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Sudan, Syria (both regime and revolution), United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and Palestine, various Arab nationalist movements in regions of Somalia, Morocco, Mali, and Iran" all "represent the crusaders, their apostate agents, Arab nationalism, and the puppet tawaghit loyal to the crusaders."[50] The influence of the Crusaders, ISIS holds, is ever-present in both the history and governments of these nations.

The rest of this FPH edition lays out "a number of lessons" that Muslims everywhere should take from this short historical example of Crusader meddling:

> The crusaders do not have a problem with flattering their allies by propagating "Islamic" symbolism or allowing their allies to do so, as long as it is tainted with some nationalism.
>
> The crusaders rely upon the strategy of "divide and conquer." They break up Muslims' lands through nationalism, partisanship, and other forms of jahiliyyah.
>
> The crusaders do not have a problem supporting parties of their bearded agents in establishing a quasi-"Islamic" political entity… This for them is "the lesser of two evils."
>
> The crusaders try to draw their allies onto a slippery slope of concessions until their allies no longer have any principles that they hold onto and respect.
>
> The crusaders eventually abandon or betray their apostate allies for other agents drowning deeper into apostasy.
>
> The crusaders might use people with symbolism and "history" to achieve their interests.
>
> The relationship between the British, al-Husayn, and 'Abdul-'Azīz was never secret, just as the relationship between the "Islamic" Front, Qatar, Turkey, and Āl Salūl was never secret… As for the details of the past and present plots, then the apostates have hidden them from their flocks of sheep.[51]

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[49] ISIS, "Issue #9 They Plot and Allah Plots," *Dabiq*, May, 2015, 20.
[50] *Ibid*, 22
[51] *Ibid*, 22-23

These "lessons" are the majority of themes that ISIS employs the Crusader label to support. Each of these "lessons" functions as a charge of apostasy as well as a warning to fellow jihadists. If any organization is seen to be found guilty of not heeding these lessons, then they are apostates and will die. Likewise, ISIS will try to use the Crusader label to accuse groups or states with failing one of these lessons, such as accusing them of cooperating with the Crusaders, thus losing their "principles that they hold onto and respect," becoming apostates and legitimate targets.

In *Dabiq* #11, an issue primarily concerned with the various coalitions, both Western and Islamic, arrayed against it, FPH lists and gives brief histories about "a list of militants and even "mujahidin" who fell into blatant apostasy by either siding with the crusaders or the tawaghit against the mujahidin." *Dabiq*'s goal with sharing these histories of jihadists crawling to the Crusaders for help is to warn its readers that they "should not be surprised when he sees the various factions in sham or elsewhere siding with the Sahwah, the tawaghit, or the crusaders, against the Islamic State."[52] Included in this FPH are the government of Afghanistan (originally the Afghan Northern Alliance when they were fighting the Soviets), the Libyan Fighting Group, the Iraqi Sahwah, and Hamas among others.

The Iranians and their proxies are primarily referred to as "Safawi" or the Safavid empire of the 16th-18th centuries. They represent their own mythos similar to that of the Crusaders, but notably on a smaller scale and in conjunction with the Crusader label. The charge that the Crusaders and Safavids are allies is a common cry of *Dabiq* propagandists, the two stereotypes supporting each other. The FPH in *Dabiq* #13 seeks to back up this assertion with historical events, such as the cooperation between various European powers and the Safavid Empire, which it treats in the following quote:

[52] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 25.

> Like present-day Rāfidah, the Safawiyyah were known for their allegiance to crusaders. Ismā'īl (founder of the Safavid dynasty, ruled from 1501-1524)– then in control of Hormuz – allied with the crusader Portuguese between 921 and 927AH to assist them in their conquest of al-Bahrayn and al-Qatīf in the Eastern Arabian Peninsula, directly defying one of the Prophet's final command's to expel the mushrikīn from the Arabian Peninsula. But due to the Portuguese enlisting the aid of "Sunni" puppets instead of Rāfidī ones, Ismā'il's great grandson 'Abbās broke off Safawī relations with those crusaders – only to engage British crusaders in another alliance... It was 'Abbās who invited the crusaders Anthony and Robert Shirley, under the command of the Earl of Essex, to "modernize" the Safawī army in order to assist their cross-worshiping allies further. Even towards the end of the Rāfidī dynasty, in 1119AH, the Safawī Husayn sought naval support from France's Louis XIV to take control over parts of the Arabian Gulf.[53]

In this FPH, *Dabiq* makes one final claim, closing out the article with the belief that although the Safavids and the Crusaders might have disguised themselves, they are the same forces from centuries past.

> Just as the Roman Empire never fully fell, but merely adopted new names, the Safawiyyah thrive – based in Iran – with their Rāfidī aim of eradicating Ahlus-Sunnah and replacing them with a population of apostasy.[54]

The FPH of *Dabiq* #14 writes about the Mongol invasions of the Middle East at the late and post Crusader era in the 13th-14th centuries. This period in Islamic history was one fraught with existential threat and serious discussions about the possibility of having the Near East overrun entirely by the Mongols. Ibn Taymiyyah, one of the medieval fathers of Islamic extremism, was influenced greatly by the back to back Crusader and Mongol threats (mostly by the Mongols) when formulating his philosophy. ISIS notes how Ibn Taymiyyah recounts "the nature of the fitnah (trials) that gripped the Muslims and shook them to the core as the enemy marched closer and closer to dimashq (Damascus)."[55] ISIS remarks that the trials the Muslims of Ibn Taymiyyah's time faced

[53] ISIS, "Issue #13 The Rafidah- From Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal," *Dabiq*, January, 2016, 12.
[54] *Ibid*, 12
[55] ISIS, "Issue #14 The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq*, April, 2016, 44.

are similar to their own: "Ibn Taymiyyah begins by stating the importance of deriving lessons from the events that afflicted the believers before us, and the necessity of comparing our situation with theirs." "The necessity of comparing our situation with theirs" is a crucial line of this passage, illustrative of how ISIS appropriates and treats history. Although by this point in time the Crusaders were mostly defeated or entirely expulsed from their Near Eastern holdings, ISIS still manages to use this FPH to attack their Crusader adversary, using explicit references to history to condemn those who ally with the West:

> Just as the people of Shām began assuming the worst when facing the fitnah of the Mongols, so too do many Muslims today assume the worst when facing the fitnah of the tawāghīt and the crusaders, even apostatizing because of these assumptions!... These factions, rather than placing their trust in Allah and fighting for His cause, presume the worst about Allah and act on their negative presumptions by begging the crusaders to supply them with weapons and establish a no-fly zone. In exchange for crusader and tāghūt support, these factions cooperate with the kuffār against the muhājirīn and ansār of the Islamic State.[56]

The FPHs in *Dabiq* are not the only ways that history is used throughout the publication, as is made evident in the rest of this chapter. The idea of a historically real Crusade continuing to today also offers ISIS propagandists a few interesting symbolic targets, namely ancient or modern centers of Christianity, such as Istanbul and Vatican City. The use of Vatican City and of Rome in general as the symbolic goal of ISIS jihad is interesting and points to the importance of Crusader symbolism to the organization, because throughout their own writings and pronouncements the US is consistently depicted as the leading Crusader nation, not Italy. Vatican City is never mentioned in more than a symbolic or conspiratorial way. Issue #4 of *Dabiq*, "The Failed Crusade,"

[56] ISIS, "Issue #14 The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq*, April, 2016, 48.

contains the most egregious use of this symbolism of conquering the historical heart of Christianity. The cover page graphic is a picture of St. Peter's Square, with an ISIS flag photoshopped onto the obelisk in the center of the square, seen below.[57]

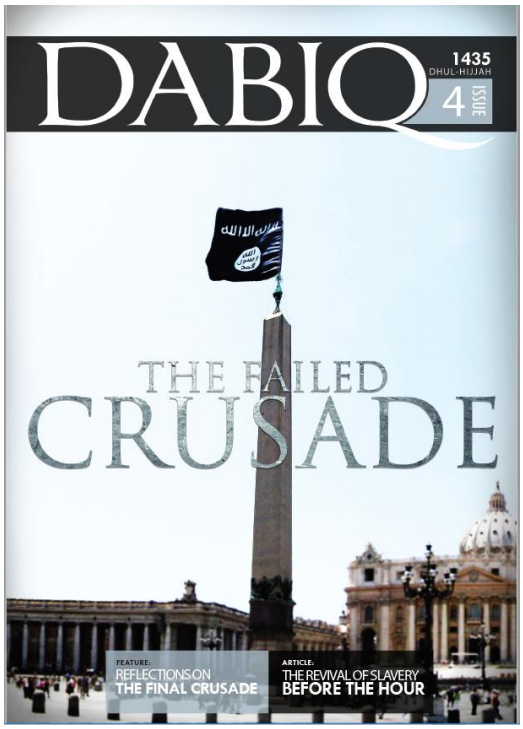


Figure 16, Cover page of Dabiq Issue # 4, "The Failed Crusade"

[57] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, Title Page.

1.8 Interviews

Interviews with "average jihadi joes" who have achieved some merit or higher ranking ISIS leaders are an important part of *Dabiq*, as the publication tries to get the "one the ground" opinions of its members. The interviewees' statements regarding the Crusaders are important in that they are taken to represent the opinions of the average fighter or officer in ISIS ranks, a classic use of the testimonial propaganda device. Whether or not these interviews are uncut and real or merely what ISIS wants to print makes little difference when studying ISIS ideology. Either way, these interviews represent what ISIS wants the outside world to think their fighters and leaders believe, the party line, so to speak. This extends to the ideological and practical application of the Crusader label.

The following was taken from an interview with the leader of the "Bengal" (Primarily Bangladesh but extending to other South Asian countries, such as Myanmar) branch of ISIS, Shaykh Abū Ibrāhīm al-Hanīf, when asked about why he and his men joined ISIS:

> Thirdly, we saw the crusaders, the Rāfidah, the PKK atheists, and all the other kāfir parties uniting against the Khilāfah and striking it altogether from a single bow. And thus, we realized that it is an obligation upon us and the rest of the believers to join the camp of īmān and fight against the kuffār, striking them altogether from a single bow as well. Allah said, {And those who disbelieved are allies of one another. If you do not do so, there will be fitnah on earth and great corruption} [Al-Anfāl: 73].[58]

Abu Ibrahim also mentions the original Crusades specifically when asked how he plans to stop the oppression of Muslims in his region:

> The kāfir regime in Burma can only be fought effectively after we bring an end to the apostate Bengali regime, bi idnillāh, just as the Jewish state can't be fought effectively until the apostate regimes of Sisi and Bashar are annihilated first, inshā'allāh. This is what we

[58] ISIS, "Issue #14 The Murtadd Brotherhood," *Dabiq*, April, 2016, 59.

> learn from the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, the history of the khulafā', and the history of the Crusades. And Allah knows best.[59]

In the middle of his interview, a picture (see below) of a US Marine training a small group of soldiers from Myanmar is shown, labelled "Bengali forces being trained by American crusaders."



Figure 17, "Bengali forces being trained by American crusaders"

Dabiq's interviewees are often from the more far flung provinces of ISIS territory, as the interview with the Shaykh above shows. The following excerpts are taken from an ISIS interview with a Somali fighter, Abu Muharib as-Sumali, who pledged allegiance to ISIS in lieu of al-Shabaab, the local jihadist group. His responses are notable in who he designates as Crusaders (African Union Mission in Somalia, an African Union peacekeeping mission with support from the UN) and for the perception that he gives an accurate depiction of ISIS sentiment at the lowest level in ISIS's Somali branch:

> This month, Dābiq had the opportunity to interview a mujāhid stationed in Somalia who has given bay'ah to the Khalīfah (hafidhahullāh). We present our questions and his responses below…

[59] *Ibid*, 62

> Dābiq: Are there regions in Somalia outside the control of the apostate government and the crusaders? What is the military situation on the ground? Who are the major enemies to the jihād mission in the region?
>
> Abū Muhārib: Currently there is a crusader AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia) presence in Somalia backing the apostate government... The main enemies to the jihād mission in the region are AMISOM – mainly Ethiopians, Kenyans, Ugandans, and Burundians who also oppress the Muslim populations living in those lands – their murtadd lackeys in Somalia, and the Americans via their surveillance, drone program, and logistical support for their proxies.[60]

Another example is an interview with Abul-Mughirah al-Qahtani, "the Delegated Leader for the Libyan Wilayat," wherein he speaks about Libyan affairs and mentions the links between the Libyan Dawn group (military wing of the Libyan General National Congress, a Muslim Brotherhood linked group) and the Crusaders.

> The "Libyan Dawn" is the official military wing for the "General National Congress" democratic government (with its "Islamic" shroud) … These apostate forces wage war… against the people of tawhīd, dragging them to prisons, and handing them over to the crusaders…They will continue to be a target for our swords, which we will not hold back until they repent from their kufr and their walā' to Allah's enemies from amongst the crusaders and the secularists.[61]

Dabiq later in the article asks the ISIS Libyan leader specifically what he believes to be the importance of Libya in "the war against the crusaders and apostates."[62] To this he replies Libya is not only the gateway to Africa, but also a country whose resources are key to Europe, and that "the control of the Islamic State over this region will lead to economic breakdowns especially for Italy and the rest of the European states."[63]

Similarly, in an interview with the head of ISIS in Afghanistan at the time, Shaykh Hafidh Sa'id Khan, *Dabiq* asks "What is the war situation between the Islamic State and the Taliban, and

[60] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 60.
[61] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 60.
[62] *Ibid*, 62
[63] *Ibid*, 63

between the Islamic State and the governments and armies of the murtaddīn in "Pakistan" and "Afghanistan" that are allied with the crusaders?" to which the Shaykh responds:

> The war between us and the Taliban carries on. As for the condition of the war against the governments and armies of apostasy in Khurāsān that are allied with the crusaders, then the jihād against the Pakistani and Afghan armies of apostasy is continuing and is proceeding with force, by Allah's grace, power, and strength. The mujahidin bravely carry on in fighting the armies of both apostate governments and their forces who have betrayed Allah, His Messenger, and the Muslims.[64]

These interviews, especially those with the governors of ISIS territory, are an attempt to show a unified concern and enthusiasm for defeating the Crusaders emanating from the branches more distant from ISIS central command.

[64] ISIS, "Issue #13 The Rafidah- From Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal," *Dabiq*, January, 2016, 50.

1.9 In Eulogy

"Among the Believers Are Men" is a recurring article series within *Dabiq* that functions as a sort of glorified obituary. These articles extol the jihadist virtues of the deceased and function as propaganda pieces, emphasizing the duties, actions, and qualities that ISIS wants of its members. Fighting the Crusaders is repeated as one of these stellar qualities, as exhibited in the following quote from the eulogy of Abu Umar at-Tunusi, a one legged ISIS emir freed during an ISIS attack on Taji prison in Iraq.

> Abu Umar at-Tunusi… On the 29th of Sha'bān in the year 1436AH, after a crusader air-strike, a warrior from the warriors of the Khilāfah travelled from this fading Dunyā to that which is everlasting… He was a thorn in the sides of the disbelieving crusaders and their slaves from amongst the apostates. We ask Allah to accept him in al-Firdaws al-A'lā.[65]

Among the ISIS believers are men mainly killed by "Crusader airstrikes," which is at once a factual aspect of the eulogy and a seeming endorsement of the romanticism given to dying in battle against the Crusaders. The eulogy of Abu Junaydah, a Moroccan raised in Germany who traveled to ISIS territory and served as a propagandist and fighter, claims for him a romantic death during a battle with traitors.

> Abū Junaydah… He took part in the battles of 'Ayn al-Islām, Tadmur, and Māri', where he finally achieved what he had for so long been yearning for, shahādah. Crusader planes came to the aid of the sahwāt of Halab – the allies of Qā'idah in Shām – and struck a position where he was performing ribāt on the outskirts of Māri'. He was killed instantly, during the most blessed days of the year, the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah.[66]

After a long life of service to jihad or a conversion to the caliphate, these men waged jihad until meeting their end at the hands of the Crusaders. The eulogy of Shaykh Abu Talhah, an ex-Taliban

[65] ISIS, "Issue #10 The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men," *Dabiq*, June, 2015, 41.
[66] ISIS, "Issue #12 Just Terror," *Dabiq*, November, 2015, 56.

who founded the Afghanistan branch of ISIS, shows a life defiant against the "crusader invasion of Afghanistan" up until the end:

> Shaykh Abu Talhah… He was appointed by the Taliban as the director of the military college in Kabul, and also went on to play an important role as a field commander on the frontlines during the crusader invasion of Afghanistan… the Deobandi partisans of the Taliban in the region set up roadblocks and checkpoints, preventing him from leaving the village until an American airstrike killed him along with five of his companions on Monday 21 Rabi al-Akhir. Shaykh Abū Talhah thereby attained shahādah at the age of 45 after a life of jihād, hisbah, and da'wah.[67]

The presence of foreign fighters in this romanticized and dramatized obituary is important in that it is an example of ISIS trying to lure foreign fighters with the promise of glorious death while fighting the Crusaders. With these eulogies, *Dabiq* sends the message to fight, believe, and die until the Crusaders silence you. That, according to ISIS, is the best way to go.

[67] ISIS, "Issue #8 Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa," *Dabiq*, April, 2015, 30-31.

1.10 Blessings

ISIS has a penchant for ending its more poignant articles with a custom ISIS "blessing." The enemies of ISIS figure into many of these blessings, especially the Crusaders, in order to create a sense of divine invincibility (or inevitability, as ISIS does not generally entertain thoughts of most of its followers surviving for very long). With these blessings, ISIS accuses its enemies of being diametrically arranged against God, and thus the subject of divine wrath. These end blessings are used to enhance symbolism and bring up more practical issues as well. Note the following example:

> We ask Allah to support the mujāhidīn of the Islamic State against the agents of the tawāghīt and the crusaders until the banner of the Khilāfah is raised high above Istanbul and Vatican City.[68]

In this small "prayer" found at the end of an article entitled "The Allies Of al-Qa'idah in Sham: Part 4" of *Dabiq* #11, the theological imperative of defeating the Crusaders ISIS is trying to construct is evident. The mention of Vatican City is a clear reference to the Crusaders, as discussed above. Conquering Istanbul has a symbolic context as well, as it was the "Rome" of the East and a notable center of early Christianity, in addition to a more military strategic one. The beginning of the article in question describes Turkey as "a member of the crusader NATO alliance. It took part in various crusader campaigns launched and led by the American," then continuing to accuse Turkey of mustering to the Crusader cause, as "Its army is assembled in defense of the Turkish taghut and their crusader allies."[69] Turkey is the object of repeated ISIS ire, as Turkey increases the pace of its military operations against the group. With this ending blessing, ISIS attempts to

[68] ISIS, "Issue #11 The War of Coalitions," *Dabiq*, August, 2015, 9.
[69] *Ibid*, 6

bring a theological guidance to both their symbolic goals of conquering Christian holy cities as well as defeating their more real enemies by using the Crusader label.

At the end of the feature article in the first issue of *Dabiq*, which chronicles the birth and history of ISIS and the importance of foreign fighters, ISIS propagandists write:

> May Allah protect this Khilafah state and continue guiding it until its legions fight the crusader armies who will gather near *Dabiq*.[70]

The first issue of *Dabiq* holds a certain degree of added importance, as it is the inaugural edition, the one charged with setting the tone for the entire publication. This blessing is a part of that charge, adding a theological emphasis on both defeating the Crusaders and growing the caliphate. The selection of these two goals, growing the caliphate and defeating the Crusaders, is significant. The mention of these two goals together in such a prominent place functions as a tool to correlate and sanctify the two in the ideology of the group.

Another example of the Crusader label in an end blessing is found at the end of "Reflections on the Final Crusade," treated above, which says

> Finally, do not forget that Allah is with the Muslims and will never abandon them to His enemies. And the Islamic State will remain until its banner flies over Rome.[71]

The banner flying over Rome uses the Crusader label as a symbol for ultimate victory, and in the context of a blessing attempts to bestow divine favor upon the conflict. That conflict is only able to gain its supposed holiness by the enemy it fights, and the enemy that ISIS chooses is the Crusader.

[70] ISIS, "Issue #1 The Return of Khilafah," *Dabiq*, June, 2014, 21.
[71] ISIS, "Issue #4 The Failed Crusade," *Dabiq*, September, 2014, 44.

These types of blessings are also used to show support for other, more distant branches of ISIS in the fight against the Crusader foe. The blessings use the Crusader label to bring together the various local and ideological conflicts, this particular one directed at the Balkan branch of ISIS: "We ask Allah to keep them firm and grant them victory against the crusaders of Russia."[72] In this call for support, the group's Russian enemies are classified as "crusaders of Russia" and targets of divine punishment.

[72] ISIS, "Issue #10 The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men," *Dabiq*, June, 2015, 37.

1.11 *Dabiq* Final Analysis

Dabiq is so crucial to understand in the quest to grasp how the Crusades are used in ISIS propaganda because it is not only one of the most poignant and accessible examples of this phenomenon, it is also emblematic of the propaganda tactics employed by ISIS on all levels when using the Crusader label. The division of the world into two dichotic camps, cooperation and support meaning apostasy, shadowy claims of malicious backroom dealings with murderers and tyrants, and the righteous fighting the enemy of the good world are all the foundational tactics used in jihadist propaganda concerned with the Crusades. As stated before, *Dabiq* in its entirety can be described as a piece of propaganda of agitation, its consistent goal to prod bystanders into becoming violent supporters or violent supporters to become short lived martyrs for the cause. With the charges of an enemy that hates you, that seeks your destruction, that will ruin everything you hold dear if you do not righteously strike them down, ISIS agitates anyone who will listen, backing up their claims with atrocity propaganda in the form of bombings and various claims of divine invincibility. *Dabiq* is treated so extensively because it provides examples of these tools, tactics, and popular descriptions used not only by ISIS but by Islamic jihadists as a whole. This is not to be mistaken for a gross generalization of jihadist propaganda tactics regarding use of the Crusader label and mythos. That being said, to say that the volumes of *Dabiq* are not prime examples of how the Crusades are treated throughout ISIS and jihadist propaganda in general would be erroneous.

2.0 Chapter 2- *Rumiyah*: Successor of *Dabiq*

Rumiyah appears to be the continuation of *Dabiq*, but with a new title and a more pointed message. The opening three issues of *Rumiyah* will be treated here.[1] Particularly, *Rumiyah*, whose title translates to "Rome," focuses less on what is happening in Iraq and Syria and more on inspiring attacks on "Crusader nation civilians." The first sign of the change from *Dabiq* to *Rumiyah* is the absence of the *Dabiq* quote of al-Zarqawi, which so dominated the spirit of *Dabiq*. Instead, the following quote is printed on the title/table of contents page for every issue:

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

This shift may be due to the setbacks that turned away ISIS's momentum, including the eventual loss of *Dabiq* in 2016 (not taken at the time of *Rumiyah*'s first edition, but ISIS might have seen the writing on the wall concerning their ability to hold this strategically negligible town), and this move represents a change in priorities and tactics for the organization. The use of the Crusader label reflects this shift, aimed at showing the Western world that not only will they remain, but that they will strike renewed terror in their hearts. *Rumiyah* continues to be a major source of propaganda of agitation supported by atrocity, invincibility, and agitating propaganda.

The Crusader label is used in *Rumiyah* primarily to instigate and justify attacks upon ISIS's Western and African Crusader enemies in terror attacks outside of the Middle East. Other tactics found in *Dabiq* continue into its new incarnation, such as demonizing their Muslim enemies while decrying airstrikes and bombing campaigns. *Rumiyah* does add a new type of series called "Just

[1] At the time of writing there were 3 issues of *Rumiyah*. At the time of publication there were at least 7 issues of *Rumiyah* published.

Terror Tactics" (JTT), wherein ISIS gives advice on how to commit terrorism as lone wolves. These terror tips sections speak about the Crusaders as the natural targets of the gruesome school lessons.

2.1 Reinvigorating Jihad against the Crusaders

In the eulogy of Abu Muhammad al-Adnani (his picture constitutes the artwork of the title page), the ISIS spokesman who delivered the ISIS manifesto concerning the Crusaders in *Dabiq* #4 and whose death is another concrete and symbolic event in ISIS's reversal of fortune, *Rumiyah* prints the following passage:

> We give tidings to the filthy cowards from the religion of disbelief and the carriers of the cross therein of what will ruin their knights, for a generation has been born in the Islamic State that has been raised upon might and defiance and that will not accept humiliation. They love death more than your love of life… The blood of their leaders will only increase their steadfastness upon the path of jihad and increase their resolve to exact revenge and strike out against the enemies.[2]

This warning is notable for two reasons: its placement within the eulogy and its goal. This passage is the last passage of al-Adnani's page long eulogy, itself the final page of the issue. As the rhetorical finale of one of the most important eulogies published by ISIS, the above passage makes use of the Crusader label to address a serious blow to ISIS leadership. Use of a "cross" derivative ("carriers of the cross") names the Crusaders, and with that the eulogy uses the death ISIS's most prominent anti-Crusader demagogue as an occasion to reiterate their dedication to jihad. The goal of the above statement is to present the theme of immortality for their organization, using the Crusaders as both an audience and a rallying point for ISIS forces. They claim there is no respite for the Crusaders because of al-Adnani's death, rather it is cause for a renewal of the jihad against the Crusaders by an army that does not fear the war against them. ISIS seeks to take what is undoubtedly a tragedy for them and turn it into motivation with the use of the Crusader label.

[2] ISIS, "Issue #1 Stand and Die Upon That for Which Your Brothers Died," *Rumiyah*, September, 2016, 37.

ISIS did not abandon its references to *Dabiq* by switching to *Rumiyah*. In the third issue of *Rumiyah*, an article entitled "Towards the Major Malhamah of *Dabiq*"[3] reinvigorates the struggle against the Western coalition using the time tested apocalyptic aspect of the Crusader mythos. Given the crucial importance that *Dabiq* plays in the Crusader mythos of ISIS, the loss of the town to coalition and resistance forces constitutes a large blow psychologically to ISIS. With this article, that loss is addressed directly:

> In this regard, the cross-worshipers and their allies (the Turks and the Sahwat) mobilized in the northern countryside of Halab, declaring *Dabiq* their main goal and claiming that if they were to defile it with their filthy feet and banners, it would be a tremendous psychological victory over the Islamic State, thinking that the soldiers of the Islamic State couldn't distinguish between the minor battle of *Dabiq* and the Major Malhamah1 of *Dabiq*, and accordingly, if the Islamic State were to withdraw from *Dabiq*, it would not be the bearer of the Prophet's victorious banner in the major malahim before the Hour, and thus, after the withdrawal, the soldiers of the Khilafah would abandon it in multitudes.[4]

The article is essentially just another retelling of the apocalypse that will begin with *Dabiq*, yet its retelling is rather telling. ISIS finds it necessary to both address the loss of *Dabiq* and the reversal of their fortunes by reiterating their belief of an apocalyptic battle, and the Crusaders role in that conflict. The authors of *Rumiyah* speculate that the divisions between the Americans and Russians, along with "the great events unfolding now in northern Sham," will "force the Crusaders- sooner or later- to accept the terms of the Jama'ah of the Muslims, a truce that is precedent to the Major Malhamah of *Dabiq*."[5] The Crusaders continued presence, and "infighting," is spun by ISIS propagandists into a positive by using the Crusader mythos. In addition to this, the only picture in the article (reprinted below) shows at least a battalion of American soldiers (probably from one of the recent conflicts in Iraq, the picture is undated and unplaced) marching through a desert, with the

[3] ISIS, "Issue #3 The Weakest House is That of a Spider," *Rumiyah*, November, 2016, 24.
[4] *Ibid*, 25
[5] *Ibid*, 26

only label being “Crusaders.” This is the only picture to appear in *Rumiyah* bearing an explicit label of Crusaders.[6]



Figure 18, “Crusaders”

[6] *Ibid*, 26

2.2 Attacking Civilians

Attacking civilians is a huge theme of *Rumiyah,* something harped on many times throughout the so far brief publication. In an article entitled "The Kafir's Blood is Hallal for You. So Shed It," *Rumiyah* propagandists describe the act of killing civilians of Crusader countries to be a religious duty, something that will be reinforced in the coming JTT articles. This article claims:

> Muslims currently living in Dar al-Kufr must be reminded that the blood of the disbelievers is halal, and killing them is a form of worship to Allah… Indeed, even the blood of the kafir street vendor selling flowers to those passing by is halal to shed- and striking terror into the hearts of all disbelievers is a Muslim's duty.[7]

The picture shown in the introduction to Part 2 (reprinted below) condoning and demanding the slaughter of even cheerful civilians comes from this article. Although the word Crusader is not explicitly used in this article, the previous treatment of the civilians ISIS wants lone wolves and its soldiers to target implies they are Crusaders. What is explicitly indicative of these proposed targets identification as Crusaders, however, is the caption of the picture below. The example used by the article to pose as the most shocking demand ("even the blood of the kafir street vendor selling flowers") is intentionally given the label of Crusader. In this instance, we see the Crusader label used to justify killing who ISIS sees as the most difficult person to justify killing to a potential lone wolf terrorist.

[7] ISIS, "Issue #1 Stand and Die Upon That for Which Your Brothers Died," *Rumiyah,* September, 2016, 36.



Figure 19, "…Even the blood of a merry Crusader citizen selling flowers to a passerby"[8]

The following passage insinuates that the reason there are any Muslims at all living in the Crusader states is that they can carry out attacks against civilian or domestic targets. The latter sentence is an interesting use of the Crusader label, equating the will of God with domestic terror attacks. Being born in a Crusader state is an opportunity from God, *Rumiyah* claims, to prove yourself valorous in deed by killing the enemies of God, the Crusaders:

> O lions of the Ummah… The Khilafah has called for you to mobilize from your dens to alleviate the pain afflicting the hearts of the Muslims by striking the kuffar in their homelands. It is only from the hikmah of Allah that he has scattered you around the earth and in the various lands of the Crusaders to see which of you are best in deeds.[9]

Some passages are even more explicit in calling for violence against non-military targets. The following quote references the San Bernardino killings in 2016, as well as an attack on a police station in Mombasa, Kenya, on the 15th anniversary of 9/11 by three women. The first line is part

[8] ISIS, "Issue #1 Stand and Die Upon That for Which Your Brothers Died," *Rumiyah*, September, 2016, 36.
[9] *Ibid*, 17

of a wider claim that all who do not take part in the indiscriminate offensive are guilty of abandoning their faith, and must repent through violent bloodshed:

> Thus, it is necessary that they hasten to repent, and then hurl themselves into the midst of the battle by attacking the kuffar nearest to them. Let them follow the example of the lions who have preceded them by striking the Crusader citizens and interests wherever they are found in the West…[10]

Furthermore, in a footnote to the paragraph the above quote was found in, the authors go on to clarify that:

> …the blood and wealth of adult, Crusader 'civilians' from democratic nations waging war against Islam and the Muslims is more deserving to be spilled than that of other kafir 'civilians'…[11]

This footnote, and the rest of the publication by extension, clarify that ISIS is switching its emphasis to attacking, with terrorism and lone wolf strikes, the Western nations that are actively involved in the punishing campaign against them.

There is an ISIS justification for attacking civilians based upon an understanding of democracy and total war theory, which was also a rationale for bombing factories and other not strictly military targets in WWII. Democracy is a system that functions (mostly) by consent of the voters and in almost every country the government is funded by taxation of the citizenry. ISIS rationalizes these facts to mean every citizen of a Western nation is a legitimate military target propping up a hostile Crusader regime:

> These Muslims (who despair over the coalition strikes) realize that the Crusader leaders who give the orders to brutally bomb the Muslims don't come from an abstract vacuum; rather, they come into power via the blessings of the constituency of their citizenry, those who partake in their democratic system or accept its results. These Muslims also realize

[10] ISIS, "Issue #2 A Message From East Africa," *Rumiyah*, October, 2016, 3.
[11] *Ibid*, 9

> that the huge costs associated with bombs dropped by these aircrafts and drones are largely financed though the tax money generated from the so-called "innocent civilians" of these democratic nations…"[12]

Democracy makes them complicit accomplices to the actions of their leaders. Democracy and taxation are the proof of their guilt.

[12] *Ibid*, 9

2.3 Just Terror Tactics

A footnote from the first sentence of JTT deals with its name (something common to ISIS propaganda, and all other well-constructed propaganda, is that they take care to define their own terms when used) and tries to deploy some counter propaganda against the "lone wolf" label:

> Instead of using the term "lone wolf," we will refer to operations in Dar al-Kufr executed by mujahidin with bay'ah to the Khalifah as "just terror operations," "just" being the adjective form for justice.[13]

In this work, however, I will continue to refer to them as lone wolves. The first installment of JTT deals with carrying out a successful knife attack, covering the technical aspects as well as the strategic goals of such an attack. Whether targeting individuals or groups, ISIS stresses that the goal of such an attack "is to bring horror and misery"[14] to the Crusaders. In the following section of advice to a prospective lone wolf terrorist, *Rumiyah* writes:

> Additionally, it should be stressed that the objective of a knife attack is to attain a reasonable kill count, while equally – if not more importantly- to inflict terror on the Crusader citizens of the land in which the operation is carried out. On this basis, the more gruesome the attack, the closer one comes to achieving the desired objective.[15]

In this case, the desired objective is to terrorize and murder as many Crusader civilians as possible. The justification for making the attacks "more gruesome" comes from the association of such tactics with striking against the "Crusader" enemy. In this way, the enemy is dehumanized and even demonized as something less than human, deserving to be killed in the most horrible of ways, with the Crusader label.

[13] *Ibid,* 12
[14] *Ibid,* 13
[15] *Ibid,* 13

The second instalment of JTT covers attacks of ramming large vehicles into crowds of people, directly inspired by the attack on a Bastille day celebration in Nice, France in 2016. In this terror attack over eighty civilians were killed and over 200 more injured. ISIS propagandists describe this attack as "harvesting through his attack the slaughter of 86 Crusader citizens and injuring 434 more."[16] This terror strike in the heart of France was an important one for ISIS propagandists, evidenced by the three page spread the attack inspired in *Rumiyah*. Aside from technical advice on how to recreate such an attack, *Rumiyah* remarks that:

> It is essential for the one seeking this method of operation to understand that it is not conditional to target gatherings restricted to government or military personnel only. All so-called "civilian" (and low-security) parades and gatherings are fair game and more devastating to Crusader nations.[17]

Again, we see how the Crusader label is used to encourage the mass killing of civilians in the name of harming the monolithic entity that is arrayed against ISIS. The propagandists of *Rumiyah* want to stress to their audience that it is among the most honorable actions of a jihadist to cause devastation to the Crusaders. This emphasis is possible because of the mythos that *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* carefully tailored and created to conjure up intense enmity, dehumanization, and justification whenever used in a name calling context.

The Crusader label, as used in *Rumiyah* and formulated throughout *Dabiq*, is critical for ISIS's switch to emphasizing lone wolf and homegrown terrorism. As shown in *Rumiyah*, the Crusader label is frequently used to justify a prolonged campaign of terror aimed at causing mass civilian casualties. It is frequently used to distance Western civilians from humanity, a crucial step towards convincing anyone to kill unarmed human beings. A person cannot be a person, they must

[16] ISIS, "Issue #3 The Weakest House is That of a Spider," *Rumiyah,* November, 2016, 10.
[17] *Ibid,* 12

be a rat, a dog, a Crusader. This is what *Rumiyah* hopes to accomplish with their use of the Crusader label.

3.0 Chapter 3- The Crusader Label in ISIS Cinema

As shown with the study of prominent print propaganda, the Crusader label is used primarily to create an association of the enemy with a demonizing moniker in order to justify killing them and provide a motivation for jihadist soldiers and supporters in the form of a powerful and evil enemy that must and will be defeated. Video propaganda differs from print propaganda in that video is able to achieve a greater level of immersion, especially when it comes to ingratiating the audience with a romantic and visceral view of violence and war. This makes the propaganda of agitation present in video much more concerning, as it has the potential to immerse its audience into scenes of violence and ideological fervor much more so than print media. ISIS propagandists are well aware of this fact, and routinely pour resources into the creation of high quality propaganda videos that have become their hallmark and claim to fame in recent years. These videos, already given an air of authority and professionalism via their production quality, associate the Crusader label with cruelty, malicious overbearing, and enmity even more dramatically than the print material. ISIS videos spotlight the destruction, both of and by, Crusader forces while specifically defining the scene with the Crusader label in a voice over or with subtitles. This is seen, for example, in *The Safavid Crusader Bombing upon Muslim Homes*, wherein alleged collateral damage from coalition bombings are showcased, and in *The Horrible Destruction of the Servants of the Cross*, which consists in part of a montage of Peshmerga mechanized forces, labelled as Crusaders, destroyed by ISIS anti-armor forces.

The following chapter is not an exhaustive list of ISIS video propaganda utilizing the Crusader label. What it does include are many prominent examples of ISIS propaganda tactics

uniquely effective in video. Propaganda of invincibility and atrocity play central roles in the following examples. Either the Crusader forces are shown being brutally pounded by infantry attacks or are indicted with scenes of vivid and heart wrenching civilian casualties, claimed to be the results of Crusader attacks. Glorification of the battlefield, including suicide bombers, is something ISIS favors in its videos. Clips of ISIS fighters defeating militarily superior forces, in either skirmishes or actual battles, as is the case in a few videos such as *Flames of War*, plays well into invincibility propaganda. Video adds another level of meaning and emotion to the philosophical ideas of the Crusader mythos, as narrators and executioners shout with passion over scenes of death and violence. Propaganda of agitation is a core effort of ISIS video productions that seek to both indoctrinate and inspire, as ISIS ideology is shoved into the face of the audience accompanied by horrible and moving scenes, evoking sorrow, anger, and feelings of revenge and action.

Aside from when mentioned, all of the following videos are in Arabic and translated here by myself.

3.1 Claiming Inevitable Victory

Flames of War, a feature length propaganda film released in 2014 that chronicles ISIS history and the capture of a Syrian air base, measuring nearly an hour in length is one of the longest ISIS propaganda films.[1] This film is primarily in English, but subtitled in Arabic and featuring speeches by ISIS figures delivered in Arabic subtitled in English. *Dabiq* and *Flames of War* are the major ISIS propaganda works in English, two materials that have notably high production values and length. This may point to the propaganda pieces in English being used to convince and introduce an unfamiliar or recalcitrant Western audience with the ideology of ISIS and the Crusader mythos. *Flames of War* focuses upon painting ISIS as a savior and liberator to true Muslims, its ranks filled with men of suicidal courage against their natural enemy. This enemy is the Crusader coalition (mostly America), and their more immediate enemy of the "Crusader ally" of Assad's Syrian forces.

Flames of War begins with "In the face of the dark wave of the Crusader force…" superimposed on a modern battleship traversing the sea (see below).



Figure 20, "In the face of the dark wave of the Crusader force"

[1] ISIS, *Flames of War,* (2015: Al-Hayat Media), Video.

Primarily, the video concerns itself with depicting the conflict, and all of the virtues ISIS heaps upon its organization and soldiers, through the lens of the Crusader mythos. As the video begins with an emphasis on the Crusaders, so to it ends with a similar dedication, warning:

> Finally, this is a message that we direct to America. Know, O defender of the cross, that a proxy war won't help you in Sham just as it didn't help you in Iraq. As for the near future, you will be forced into a direct confrontation, with Allah's permission, despite your reluctance. And the sons of Islam have prepared themselves for this day, so wait and see, for we too are also going to wait and see.[2]

In the warning not to engage in a proxy war, ISIS implies that the Syrian forces it overcame in the video are Crusader proxies, in itself a charge that the Crusaders have their agents everywhere. Through these final words, we see ISIS clearly frames its future in the light of an eventual and unavoidable conflict with the Crusaders, one that will take much time and blood to reach. *Flames of War* also interestingly tackles many negatives to portray them in a positive light, such as bragging about their tank hunter units' bravery during missions that are made essentially suicidal by the lack of proper equipment issued to the teams. The deaths of its soldiers are glorified, especially those killed in airstrikes. The glorification of death by bombing or indirect fire, also present in *Dabiq* and other ISIS propaganda pieces, shows a special concern the group has with addressing the military and psychological damage bombings are inflicting on the group.

The production and release of this video corresponds chronologically with the original releases of *Dabiq*. At the onset of ISIS's creation, a coordinated effort to enunciate the Crusader mythos as a central part of ISIS ideology can be seen across the print and video medium. As was

[2] *Ibid*, 54:37

shown, *Dabiq* directed its primary efforts toward elaborating on the Crusader label and then painting its enemies with that label, especially with its earlier editions. *Flames of War* differs from *Dabiq* by being primarily focused on ISIS itself, spending little time defining its enemy but instead using a prepackaged Crusader enemy to operate as the boogeyman ISIS is sworn to defeat. This could show an ISIS strategy to use the more spacious print medium to define in detail who the Crusaders are and what they do, while video devotes its time to using, and not creating, that label.

In fact, the actual term "Crusader" is used relatively infrequently in *Flames of War*, but references to it and to those already labelled as Crusader lackeys in other ISIS sources are spread throughout. Mentions of a group being funded and equipped by America, for example the Iraqi army (called the Safiwey, ISIS term for Shi'ites along with Safavid), can be understood as a claim that they are supported by the Crusaders, given the blatant characterization of America as the lead Crusader nation in the intro of the film. The lack of overt usage of the Crusader label and the presence of many references to it, along with the few but extremely important Crusader mentions in the beginning and end of the film, can show that ISIS is comfortable referencing and using a label created elsewhere. This points to the idea that ISIS expects a cross pollination of sorts among their audience, that they are digesting multiple sources of ISIS propaganda. The production of propaganda across multiple mediums to be used in concert with one another is a key strategy in influencing opinion through propaganda, crafting the illusion of a diversity of sources as covered in the media technology section of "Marshalling the Mind."

ISIS dedicates the beginning of *Flames of War* to a short history of ISIS, predominated by a critique of American "Crusader" involvement in the 2003 Iraq War. "Thus the war between the

eman (Faith) and the kufr (infidels) ignited."[3] This sentence is spoken over a montage of the 2003 Iraq War, mostly of American officials (including former Vice President Dick Cheney), suicide bombers, and American soldiers evacuating wounded. The video then shows a clip of President George W. Bush's famous quote "You are either with us or with the terrorists," followed by the narrator ominously musing "they thought they had won."[4] *Flames of War* follows this with another clip of President Bush's now infamous "Mission Accomplished" speech on board an aircraft carrier, to which the narrator responds "They lied! The flames were only beginning to intensify."[5] This response to Bush's declaration of victory in 2003 is a nod to the Crusader quote of al-Zarqawi, made a central part of ISIS ideology through works like *Dabiq* and references in speeches by figures such as then ISIS spokesman al-Adnani. Continuing the tactic of using their opponents' own words, *Flames of War* plays a clip of Obama declaring "Iraq's future will be in the hands of its people. America's war in Iraq will be over"[6] to which the narrator again responds "They lied!" After gloating over their rapid victories, again using references to the flames that will "burn the Crusader armies," the video plays a clip of Obama stating there will be no US ground forces redeployed to Iraq, again followed by the narrator crying "They lied!"[7] A section of a speech by al-Adnani ends this intro to Flames of War, as al-Adnani's declaration that "The fighting has just begun! And insha'allah we will be victorious, regardless of whether you leave or don't leave. For our victory will be through our persistence"[8] is played over another montage of American forces under attack, this time with a flame superimposed over them. With this intro of slightly less than

[3] *Ibid*, 0:51
[4] *Ibid*, 01:05
[5] *Ibid*, 01:15
[6] *Ibid*, 01:42
[7] *Ibid*, 03:06
[8] *Ibid*, 03:10

four minutes, *Flames of War* frames their rise and existence as a growing war, lashing out and burning the Crusader enemies of Islam. At the heart of this war are the American forces, clearly understood as Crusader forces. The use of imagery previously defined to be depicting Crusaders is a way ISIS uses the Crusader label without explicitly saying "Crusader."

The rest of the film chronicles a strategic overview of the war and a more nuanced view of individual experiences, usually ending in a smile filled meeting between civilians and ISIS forces or in the glorified death or victory of ISIS fighters. The battle for the Syrian Minagh airbase is the focus of an early chronicle, describing the assault against what ISIS describes in other literature as an ally of the Crusader coalition, emphasizing through the eyes of ISIS their soldiers' valor:

> The tank hunters equipped with only IEDs and RPGs represent the epitome of sacrifice, along with the istishhadeen (suicide bombers) and the frontline stormers… their mission is simple: destroy the tanks or achieve shahadda (martyrdom) trying.[9]

At one particularly well directed moment (see below), a jihadist is killed in an airstrike and his body turned around by the blast. A hadith is then superimposed on the now slow motion scene as a narrator recites it, and beginning with:

> Nu'aym Ibn Himmar reported that a man asked the Prophet, 'Which of the shuhada' (martyrs) are the best?' 'Those who, having taken their position on the battlefield, do not turn their faces away until they are killed.'[10]

[9] *Ibid*, 11:48
[10] *Ibid*, 15:54



Figure 21, "Which of the shuhada are best?"

ISIS also mentions the Anbar Awakening, the Sahwat, and describes it as a tragedy perpetuated by cowards. In *Dabiq* and other publications, the Sahwat forces are repeatedly described as lackeys of the Crusaders.[11] Interestingly, these attacks are defined as a "full-fledged, coordinated and multi-pronged assault against its [ISIS] fighters and their families,"[12] claiming the Crusader agents are murderers while ignoring the hypocrisy of ISIS's own stance towards killing civilians.

Flames of War exhibits a focus on an often overlooked military front, that of the media. This section of the film begins with the following:

> They (the new "citizens" of ISIS) were clear from the outset that they wanted to restore the Khilafa (caliphate) upon the prophetic methodology. This was abhorrent to many of the fighting groups in the region, so a severe media war was launched against the Islamic State on all fronts, using preconceived lies to distort the reality of events on the ground.[13]

[11] *Ibid*, 24:35
[12] *Ibid*, 24:28
[13] *Ibid*, 22:47

During this the logos of news agencies Al Jazeera, CNN, RT, BBC Arabic, and France 24 appear in that order. The first quote ISIS shows of this media assault is a quote from Abdul Aziz al-Fawzan, an Islamic scholar and author from Saudi Arabia. In the clip al-Fawzan says "'Daesh (ISIS)" is an intelligence [agency], crusader, Zionist, safawi product."[14] This quote is important in that it is the only media quote that includes a crusader reference (even though it is not an ISIS quote) and is placed first in the montage, a position of primacy. The media blitzkrieg is claimed to be full of lies, and to illustrate that claim, a quote describing ISIS as a creation of the Crusaders is used to demonstrate what ISIS hopes its audience will take as the best example of a clear lie, ISIS working with its sworn enemies.

In conclusion, *Flames of War* is a crucial point in early ISIS propaganda, utilizing the cinematic medium to emphasize the role of the Crusader mythos in ISIS's self-proclaimed destiny. *Flames of War* frames the birth and continued existence of ISIS in the scope of the war against the Crusaders, providing for its ultimate victory through a prolonged and long destined conflict. ISIS troops are given glory in deaths resulting from poor equipment in the face of near overwhelming Crusader coalition firepower, trudging ever onward towards their self-proclaimed destiny.

[14] *Ibid*, 23:21

3.2 Labelling with Violence

The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross,[15] a fourteen minute ISIS video, represents an important genre of ISIS video that is essentially a compilation of destruction montages interspersed with battlefield sermons and interviews with suicide bombers moments before detonation. These aspects are present in most ISIS videos, but are especially apparent in this video, with these scenes making up the video exclusively. The montages of destruction, identification of the victims as Crusaders or their supporters, and the constant soundtrack of nasheed acapella praise (along with actual shouts of joy and "allahu akbar" from the soldiers in the video) provide visual and audio reinforcement to the enmity demanded by the Crusader mythos. It is a propaganda of agitation, associating the easily grasped idea of the enemy with an actual group and with incredibly graphic and violent reinforcement. These types of video say: This is the enemy, this is them being violently destroyed to exultations of glory and righteousness, to destroy them is not only a good but the action of heroes and must be emulated. It is important to note that the targets in this video are Peshmerga soldiers and Kurdish civilians. In this video the Crusader label is coupled with violent visuals to forcefully associate the Kurdish enemies of ISIS with the Crusaders, as ISIS seeks to justify and motivate its attacks against the Kurds.

In *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, a title slide which consists of the title in a visually striking font (see below), is used as a transition between the various scenes of carnage and battle. This not only provides a stylistic device for the filmmakers, but functions to categorize the violence as fighting against the Crusaders. In effect, the appearances of this title slide serve to apply the Crusader label to every non-jihadist in the video, on or off screen, as the

[15] ISIS, *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, (2016; Northern Iraq: Wilayat al-Jazira ISIS Media Wing), Video.

target of jihadist aggression. This is a non-verbal form of labeling that is seen in other ISIS videos, a common way of defining with a sweeping gesture the nature of the coming scene as a battle between the good jihadists and the evil Crusaders.



Figure 22, "The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross"

After an initial slew of violence serving as a thematic introduction followed by the opening title scene, a white van declared to be supporters of the Peshmerga in Arabic subtitles is destroyed immediately after the opening title credit. The direct hit on the bus is then zoomed in on, played again, rewound in slow motion, and played again. The next minutes are similar scenes of ambush, where cargo trucks and other vehicles are destroyed with similar descriptions. At one point a freight truck and another vehicle are immobilized, with the subsequent clip showing its passengers on foot. ISIS forces shell these disembarked passengers as the camera zooms in on the scene of them fleeing their immobilized and targeted vehicle. Zooms and rewinds such as this are present in slightly more than every other of the seven clips of what appear to be civilians or plainclothes

and unarmed militiamen being bombarded. This scene is followed by a sniping montage with similar captioning.

About a third of the way through a title slide starts another montage. This time the clips are of ISIS fighters firing at distant targets, with no images of what they are aiming at. This type of scene is repeated two more times. These scenes of weapons firing off screen dramatically at the horizon are all preceded by the title screen, implying that the targets, which cannot be seen, are the "servants of the Cross." The video focuses not on the enemy here, instead focusing on using the Crusader label to bolster the image of their own fighters, shown as valiant, and potent, warriors arrayed against the Crusaders. This is a way of applying a glittering generality by way of fighting the enemy, portraying their forces gloriously prosecuting the war of heaven. At the end of the film, the title slide appears one last time, after which several dead bodies of Peshmerga soldiers are shown. The title slide appearing for this last scene labels those dead soldiers as "servants of the Cross," their corpses used to give credence to the off screen firing portrayed earlier.

The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross points a spotlight on suicide bombers, reserving some screen time to portray what is in effect their deadliest weapon. Two suicide bombers are profiled with short interviews. and their only missions are subsequently introduced by the title slide, serving to define the suicide bombers as the "destruction" levelled upon the servants of the Cross.[16]

[16] *Ibid*, 07:05, 10:58

3.3 Glorifying Suicide Bombers

As in *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, in the 2016 Arabic language video *god's Promise*, ISIS creates a montage of victory on the battlefield, a good portion of which is a glorification of suicide bombers. The footage highlights the effectiveness of its suicide bombers with aerial footage of attacks carried out by suicide vehicle born improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), most likely obtained by drones. ISIS claims that their suicide bombers are amongst the best men that fill their ranks, the epitome of Islamic retaliation against the Crusaders. At the first focus on a suicide attack, ISIS addresses the Crusaders by claiming what the Crusaders learned with their invasion is that ISIS has hundreds of thousands of suicide bombers who run towards death, eager every day to die and fight the enemies of the caliphate (see below).[17] This occurs during a montage of several successful suicide bombers pre-mission while they were alive and smiling. Another video of a successful suicide attack captured by aerial footage is then played, the narrator again praising the suicide bomber attacks against the Crusaders and their lackeys, according to ISIS, saying:

> Here is the abode of Islam (suicide bomber detonates), here is the land of the caliphate, here is loyalty and enmity, here is splendor, here is dignity, and the splendors and dignities of the Muslims is to here.[18]

In this video, ISIS uses the Crusader label to build up and glorify the image of the suicide bomber as one who is not only a defender of the caliphate and Muslims, but a righteous strike against the Crusaders. The visual and audio aspect of the footage and narration reinforces this use of the Crusader label in ways that print never could.

[17] ISIS, *god's Promise,* (2016; Ninevah: Wilayat Ninawa ISIS Media Wing), Video, 10:03.
[18] *Ibid*, 10:37



Figure 23, A suicide bomber (left) and his attack (right) as the narrator praises ISIS suicide bombers as the defenders of Islam and the caliphate

3.4 Civilian Casualties and Revenge

Atrocity propaganda, as discussed earlier, aims to depict the enemy as a monster capable of and willing to commit atrocities such as wanton destruction and murder of civilian targets. Air-strikes, by all forms of drones and aircraft, as well as artillery strikes, are a major focus of ISIS atrocity propaganda and the stated justification for their self-defined retaliation against the Crusaders. In the high profile execution video of the captured Jordanian pilot (analyzed in the next section), the executioners state the pilot's role in Crusader bombings as the reason for his symbolic execution, carried out by burning him in a cage and crushing him with rubble.[19] ISIS routinely produces videos chronicling the aftermath of coalition bombings, always portraying ISIS and the civilians under their control as innocent victims of a bloodthirsty and marauding enemy. The Crusader label figures prominently into many of these videos, reinforcing with powerful images and close up video clips of destruction and human suffering the idea of a determined enemy maliciously targeting Islam. The medium of video provides a vehicle for atrocity propaganda that achieves a more substantial degree of emotional impact than its print counter parts. Through various cinematographic techniques, whether that be from the cameraman wandering through the frantic and crowded hallways of a blood stained hospital filled with the shrieking of patients or from a climb through the rubble of a home, the sounds of pained excavation carrying on in the background, videos allow for a wider and more immersive scope of destruction and suffering to be presented. Atrocity propaganda of this kind aims to reduce the audience's field of vision to selected episodes of human suffering and limit their thoughts to the enemy that caused them and the people who die and writhe in agony. Horror and sorrow for the immediate present dampen the ability to

[19] ISIS, *Healing the Believers' Chests*, (2015; Syria: Al-Hayat Media Center), Video.

think outside of those scenes, to the horrors inflicted by the organization being bombed and the reasons why they are being bombed, for example. It is the need for revenge and to stop the perpetrators of such atrocity that is important, not the characteristics of the organization being attacked nor necessarily the organization that the propagandists would have the audience support.

The short video *The Safavid Crusader Bombing Upon Muslim Homes* reports the results of a bombing in Mosul, showing what the video claims to be a parking lot and other civilian buildings destroyed in a Crusader/Safavid airstrike. In contrast to the usually upbeat and energetic acapella nasheed chants that serve as the theme music of other ISIS videos, in this the nasheed is sung to a mournful tone. Bodies pinned under cars and rubble are given careful attention by the cameraman, and at the first car inspected a Quran is also pulled out of the rubble and focused on (over the deceased man inside the vehicle).[20] The cameraman circles a team working to fill in the massive crater and dig out the wrecks of several cars, the sounds of their digging amplified to come through and be heard over the chanting. After some more close-ups on the destruction, the scene switches to a hospital, zooming in to various patients writhing on litters and gurneys. At the switch to the hospital, the Arabic captioning reads "wounded and dead of the Crusader Safavid bombing on the Muslims in the city of Mosul."[21] The images of the dead are incredibly graphic, the cameraman going over the bloodiest of dead, camera inches away from their faces with mouths and eyes left wide agape. After this a destroyed neighborhood is shown with the caption "the bombing targeted residential homes and the Dandaan Mosque." Next, a man in a blue sweater, contrasting heavily with the rubble behind him, then cries in Arabic "That was a mosque, a house of God. A warning to the Muslim brothers in Europe, a warning of what happened to us here," before going on to

[20] ISIS, *The Safavid-Crusader Bombing Upon Muslim Homes*, (2015; Ninevah: Wilayat Ninawa ISIS Media Wing), Video, 01:00.
[21] *Ibid*, 02:26

decry the coalition "of the Crusaders, of the Jews, of the Americans…"[22] The rest of the video is devoted to chronicling with somber music the destroyed Mosul neighborhood and two morosely interviewed men contemplating the destruction.

The Bombing of the Crusader Rejectionist Alliance Upon the Muslims in al-Hawijah is another chronicle of annihilation, made up of compilations of the dead and dying alongside expansive scenes of rubble and levelled buildings.[23] This video takes a more "journalistic" flair, devoid of any chants or music and instead relying on stark visuals and the sounds of people and vehicles shifting about the rubble and various persons bustling through crowded hospital corridors. The video begins with a plain title screen before showing several still images with camera shutter sounds, transitioning between them as if they were a camera taking pictures. Within the first minute of the video a severed hand with a ring takes up the entire screen before flashing to a completely obliterated patch of urban land, then switching to men picking their way through a bombed out factory. In a hospital maimed victims of the bombing are shown. For a full minute of the four-and-a-half-minute video a child with a head injury is shown while the cameraman talks to the child, but in reality gives a speech about what the Crusader Rafidi (apostate) alliance does to innocents. In these two videos there are no enemies present. The only thing the audience can see are the results of an attack and the only descriptions are those given by ISIS. These descriptions are importantly not specifics but only the Crusader and affiliate labels. This tactic allows ISIS to create an enemy that the audience cannot see but whose actions they can see. The audience is completely reliant on ISIS for a description of the faceless perpetrator, the Crusader coalition.

[22] *Ibid*, 02:51
[23] ISIS, *The Bombing of the Crusader Rejectionist Alliance Upon the Muslims in al-Hawijah*, (2015; Al-Hawijah: Wilayat Kirkuk ISIS Media Wing), Video.

Not all videos dealing with bombings are negative, however. In *A Year Upon the Bombings of the Crusader Alliance*,[24] for example, the majority of the video is spent on scenes depicting a thriving city of Mosul. After a short introduction made from a mixture of first person clips of bombings and various media reports detailing bombing campaigns against ISIS, the video transitions entirely away from destruction. Instead, interviews, conducted on relaxing sunny days, with ISIS supporters extolling the resilience and survival of Mosul under ISIS rule make up the rest of the video. Short clips of a bustling city full of bright colors, sunshine, commerce, and healthy green vegetation are shown as the interviewees continue their spiels. These types of videos claim to show that although the airstrikes are devastating, these machinations of the Crusader enemy have no real power over ISIS. This video represents a mixture of atrocity and invincibility propaganda, especially when taking into account the type of atrocity propaganda video profiled above. With this video portraying resilience, of a city and an organization shrugging off what is at other times depicted as some of the worst fates to befall a city, ISIS propagandists portray a city and an organization that can overcome those atrocities, no matter how atrocious they become.

[24] ISIS, *A Year Upon the Bombings of the Crusader Alliance*, (2015, Ninevah, Wilayat Ninawa ISIS Media Wing), Video.

3.5 Execution in Retaliation

ISIS uses the execution of prisoners to create films of revenge against coalition bombings and attacks, using the gruesome murders as an opportunity for psychological warfare and soap box preaching. These warnings and shows of strength are addressed to whoever is the target of the Crusader label, in addition to the audience of potential recruits. In *Indeed It Was Evil that They Were Doing, Establishment of the Limit of Apostasy Upon a Client for the Nusayri Crusader Air-plane Alliance*, an ISIS prisoner is lead to a lone pile of rubble, a building destroyed in an airstrike. He is made to look at it, alone on screen, with a face dominated by a resigned grief as he awaits his execution. After this scene the prisoner appears in an orange jumpsuit surrounded by jihadists as an ISIS member reads off a speech indicting the prisoner and denouncing Crusader airstrikes that support anti-ISIS groups, of which the prisoner is allegedly a part of. After the jihadist finishes his speech the kneeling prisoner is immediately executed to primal and apish cries of excitement from the crowd. These executions and the drawn out explanation of ideology serve to marry brutality, hatred, revenge, and belief into one, the major goal of propaganda of agitation. Although the audience cannot physically engage in the violence, watching and internalizing the words and actions on film allow the viewer to experience a break down in traditional morality similar to that which those actually involved in the execution achieve. This aspect of visual media, recreating such scenes with vividness, allows the Crusader label to be much more effective in galvanizing and polarizing the jihadist propagandist's audience.

The execution of Jordanian Pilot Lt. Moaz al-Kasasbeh, in a video called *Healing the Believers' Chests*, is another video in this category, and an extremely symbolic and important one for ISIS propagandists. It is primarily addressed to Jordan but meant for distribution throughout ISIS territory and as far as distribution could reach, evidenced by several follow up videos capturing

what are essentially public screenings and crowd reactions to the video from major centers of ISIS control.[25] The Jordanian pilot was a unique prisoner, a person actually involved in the aerial campaign against ISIS, and as such he was treated with extreme and planned cruelty. The beginning of the film shows a clip of King Abdullah II of Jordan praising his pilots for volunteering to take on missions against ISIS before showing a mash up of WWII movie clips, made to look like a generic dramatic battle (at first glance it is not too apparent that ISIS staff spliced together several movies), and speaking about the Crusader campaign and Jordan's involvement in it, both by name. Clips of the Jordanian King and Jordanian forces working alongside American (called Crusader) forces and on their own are played to illustrate ISIS's claim. It is important to note that this video devotes much of its early screen time to foreign press reports on either bombing campaigns against ISIS or concerning the capture of the Jordanian pilot. This essentially puts on display for the world the amount of coverage the international community is giving to ISIS and the impact ISIS is having on the international community, raising the organizations "prestige."

This coverage, as well as the ample amount of clips showing actual Americans or Jordanians also serves to apply specified actions to specific "Crusader coalition" nationalities, in this case America and Jordan. As stressed before, the Crusader label gets much of its mileage in ISIS propaganda from being vague and easily applied through conspiratorial musings or by casting a wide net of apparent or forged cooperation between parties. In a few cases, such as this execution video, the object of the Crusader label is extremely specific and in line with the core of what the label is generally taken to represent: An American led coalition against ISIS. This occurs in *Dabiq* and

[25] ISIS, *Joy of the Muslims With the Retribution From the Jordanian Pilot*, (2015; Ninevah: Wilayat Ninawa ISIS Media Wing), Video.

other publications where pictures of American soldiers and marines are shown, either alone or alongside host nation allied forces, with minimalist descriptions such as "Crusader forces."

In the execution video of the Jordanian pilot, after the slew of foreign media coverage on the bombings and downing of the Jordanian jet, the Lieutenant is shown in an orange jumpsuit and briefly interviewed. While interviewed, an image of him in military uniform is shown at his right, labelled "Crusader ID" (see below).[26] The pilot is made to explain his mission, implicate other countries in the bombing (the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and Canada, for example), and explain the bombing capabilities and coordination of Jordan and the other countries implicated. This portion of the video is ISIS using an extremely specific and core example of the Crusader label, a pilot of coalition forces working with Americans and sent to destroy ISIS assets, to describe specific nations and bombing campaigns as part of the Crusade against ISIS. Forcing the pilot to describe the coalition nations, their capabilities, and activities is ISIS's attempt to use an inside source, an actual "Crusader," to acknowledge the Crusader mythos as factual and applicable to specific as well as vague targets. It adds a sense of realism and corporeal form to something that is otherwise formless and strictly ideological.

[26] ISIS, *Healing the Believers' Chests*, (2015; Syria: Al-Hayat Media Center), Video, 04:08.

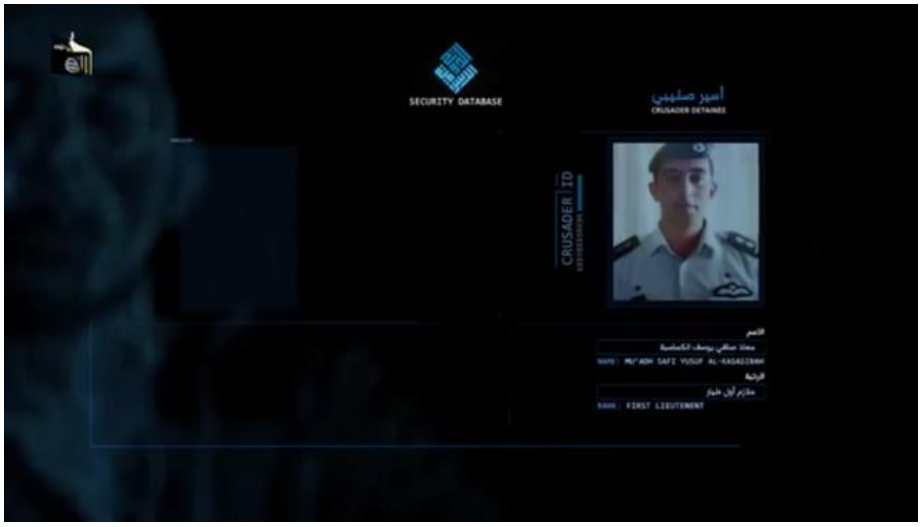


Figure 24, "Crusader ID"

After ISIS forces the captive pilot to admit to the crimes ISIS is charging him with, a montage of fighter and bomber jets striking targets is shown interspersed with bombing victims, both burnt and crushed to death. The scene shifts to the pilot being led to the cage he will be executed in (still interspersed with even more scenes of bombing victims), ringed by "elite" (dressed and armed in the best and most uniform equipment that ISIS has) ISIS fighters. Lt. Kasasbeh is then shown inside the cage and burnt alive, with a morbid amount of cinematographic attention (multiple angels, close ups, editing, speed changes etc.) before being buried with rubble by a bulldozer. Before the executioner lights the fire, the video pauses on the executioner and captions him as "Emir Ahad the Cutter (executioner) who was bombed by the Crusader coalition" (shown below), adding a personification to the revenge narrative of the video.



Figure 25, "Emir Ahad the Cutter (executioner) who was bombed by the Crusader coalition"

At the end of the video ISIS, posts a hefty reward for killing Jordanian pilots, saying:

> On this occasion, the Islamic State announces a reward of 100 gold dinars to whoever kills a Crusader pilot. The diwan for state security has released a list containing the names of Jordanian pilots participating in the campaign. So good tidings to whoever supports his religion and achieves a kill that will liberate him from hellfire.27

The names and pictures of several other Jordanian pilots are then shown in the same format of "Crusader ID" that Lt. al-Kasasbeh was labelled with.

The amount of resources, emphasis on revenge for coalition bombings, and the specific nature of the Crusader label present in this execution video mark it as one of unique importance to ISIS. It is their most forceful reaction to what their propaganda has shown to be the most damaging aspect of the coalition against them. It also ranks among ISIS's most prominent videos, both because of ISIS's own internal publicity (evidenced by follow up propaganda videos where ISIS shows screenings of the film throughout its realm) and because of the uproar the pilot's execution caused in the rest of the world. ISIS knew the reaction such a high profile and gruesome execution

[27] *Ibid*, 20:05

would bring, which adds another dimension to what type of propaganda they would use in the video. Given a rare chance of getting a video so widely distributed and analyzed, ISIS chose to use the Crusader label as their weapon of propaganda choice.

Vying for the position of ISIS's most barbaric and widely publicized video is *A Message Signed With Blood to the Nations of the Cross*, the horrifying execution of twenty one Coptic Christians on the shores of Libya.[28] In this short video, the few speaking parts are dedicated to the message of the title, sending a message to the Crusaders, specifically Rome. This video is a threat backed up by a horrible scene of violent vengeance, imbued to its core with Crusader symbolism. The approximately five-minute video begins by showing a long chain of executioners, garbed in pure black (with the exception of the head executioner, who wears a tan camouflage military uniform), each leading a prisoner in the bright orange jumpsuit characteristic of ISIS executions. After showing the title slide superimposed on this murderous stream, a description reading "The Coast of Wilayat Tarabulus (Libya) by the Mediterranean Sea" appears. A theme of this video is how close ISIS is to Europe, and to Rome. ISIS needs only to cross to another shore to be upon the Crusaders.

As the prisoners are lined up and brought to their knees, the description "The people of the cross, followers of the hostile Egyptian Church" is shown bottom screen, labelling them with an alternate term for Crusader used throughout ISIS propaganda. After this parading of their prisoners, the head executioner receives his close up and recites the following message to his enemies:

> You have seen us on the hills of al-Shaam, and on *Dabiq*'s plain, chopping off the heads of those who have been carrying the cross illusion for a long time, filled with spite against Islam and Muslims. And today, we are on the south of Rome, on the land of Islam, Libya,

[28] ISIS, *A Message Signed With Blood to the Nations of the Cross*, (2015; Western Libya: Al-Hayat Media Center), Video.

> sending another message. Oh Crusaders, safety for you will be only wishes. Especially when you are fighting us all together. Therefore, we will fight you all together, until the war lays down its burdens and Jesus, peace be upon him, will descend, breaking the cross, killing the swine, and abolishing jizya. And the sea you have hidden Sheikh Osama bin Laden's body in, we swear to Allah, we will mix it with your blood.[29]

After this the camera passes one last time over the prisoners, some of them voicelessly offering their final prayers. The prisoners are then pushed to the ground and viscerally beheaded. I use visceral here not as a thematic word but as a literal one. The severed throats of the victims, still being decapitated, are zoomed in on, the sounds of last breaths struggling through severed throats is isolated and amplified, the blood of the dead mingling with the sand and foam of the sea.

After the prisoners heads are all placed on top of their bodies, which are lined up chest down in the sand, the head executioner delivers his final warning while thrusting his still bloody knife to the sea, saying "And we will conquer Rome, by Allah's permission, the promise of our prophet peace be upon him"[30] (see below). This act is extremely symbolic, paying homage to the apocalyptic vision of ISIS and the central role that their Crusader enemy plays in that story. The message given here was to the Nations of the Cross, to the Crusaders, to Christians everywhere and to their symbolic heart of Rome. The film ends on a clip of a sea red with the blood of the executed, a nasheed chanting as the sea swirls in slow motion in the blood of the slain Christians.

[29] *Ibid*, 02:05
[30] *Ibid*, 04:17



Figure 26, "And we will conquer Rome, by Allah's permission, the promise of our prophet peace be upon him."

Another less known example of an execution in retaliation video is *Shield of the Cross*, a video that ISIS uses to accomplish three things: associate Turkey with the Crusader label as Crusader lackeys; warn/recruit from Turkey; and vengefully retaliate against Turkish bombing with psychological warfare in the form of immolating two Turkish prisoners.[31] The main theme of the short film is expressed by the title, that Turkey has sided with the Crusaders and is taking advantage of the "Shield of the Cross," aka Western (and Russian, as clips of Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin meeting are also shown) support. ISIS claims in this video that by working with their coalition allies, Turkey has submitted itself to the Crusaders for protection and promises of power in exchange for doing the Crusader coalition's dirty work, marking Turkey as one of the worst enemies of true Muslims.

The beginning of the film shows Erdogan (who actually uses the Crusader label himself in a way similar to Sultan Abdulhamid II) meeting with US dignitaries in Turkey and even with Pope

[31] ISIS, *Shield of the Cross*, (2016; Aleppo: Wilayat Halab ISIS Media Wing), Video.

Francis at one point (see below). Pope Francis is another figure that used infrequently as a historically specific and mostly symbolic identifier of the Crusaders, using the obvious connection between the Papacy and the original Crusades (as the spread in *Dabiq* corroborates). In a way similar to *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*, video clips of jihadist strikes against Turkish forces are shown, labelling it as "Targeting a gathering of vehicles of the guards of the Cross with a guided missile"[32] (see below). In another example (see below) a suicide bomber attack, where the target is not visible, is labelled "Suicide bomber convoy demolishing gatherings of guards of the Cross in the countryside of Northern Aleppo."[33] On more of an interesting side note, ISIS claims both the Kurds (with *The Horrible Destruction of the Agents of the Cross*) and the Turks (with *Shield of the Cross*) are serving the Crusaders in a similar capacity, rushing to do the Crusaders will in a bid to gain the most support from them.



Figure 27, Pope Francis with President Erdogan of Turkey

[32] *Ibid*, 06:36
[33] *Ibid*, 09:40



Figure 28, "Targeting a gathering of vehicles of the guards of the Cross with a guided missile"



Figure 29, "Suicide bomber convoy demolishing gatherings of guards of the Cross in the countryside of Northern Aleppo"

About two thirds of the way through the video, which up to this point is dedicated to associating Turkey with the Crusader label and showing ISIS forces victorious against them, the emphasis shifts to civilian damage caused by Turkish artillery and airstrikes. This shift is marked by a repetition of the title screen (see below) and a brief shot of Turkish artillery firing.



Figure 30, "Shield of the Cross"

After a brief explanation of Turkish actions against ISIS by the narrator, an ISIS fighter gives a warning (in Turkish subtitled in Arabic) to Turkey and a call for Turkish volunteers to join ISIS or carry out attacks against the Turks. Two Turkish prisoners are then shown in a cage, shackled by the neck, who are forced to introduce themselves before more clips of wounded and dying children. The two prisoners are then led like dogs, on all fours by their collars, to their execution ground, where they are chained to the earth and set on fire after delivering a warning to Turkey. After the prisoners finish their forced script, the Sura of the Bees verse 126 (the 16th Sura of the Qur'an) is superimposed on the screen. The part shown reads "And if you punish, then punish with the like of that with which you were punished." The inclusion of this Sura is ISIS's attempt at not only justifying their revenge but giving the retaliatory aspect of the Crusader mythos a divine mandate.

Shield of the Cross is an interesting and prime example of different ISIS video tactics involving the Crusader label. As seen in the beginning with the heavy emphasis on media clips and pictures of the Turkish President meeting with coalition leaders and the Pope, the video uses a visual medium to attach the Crusader label, the title of the video completing the image of a Muslim

nation that has sold itself to the Crusaders. The middle of the video represents a common tactic of ISIS propaganda videos, shown in many of the other examples above. The montage of destruction against the monolithic Crusader enemy is at once ISIS's attempt to show the valor and strength of its own forces and the inevitable defeat and weakness of its enemy. The image of the Crusader force that ISIS wants its audience to associate with its enemies is one of a group, that although powerful, is doomed to failure and devastation. The remainder of the video falls squarely into the revenge execution category. Much like the video expose of the Jordanian pilot's murder by immolation, the two Turkish soldiers executed are presented to be bloodthirsty Crusader marauders responsible for scores of civilian deaths and suffering.

In conclusion, ISIS makes use of the medium of video to create an immersive form of propaganda of agitation, atrocity, and invincibility, using the Crusader label and vivid violence in their films to achieve this effect. Specifically, attaching the Crusader label to the targets of ISIS attacks is the group exhibiting their ability to harm an imposing enemy while conditioning their audience to associate Crusaders with destruction. If a potential recruit joins ISIS, they can be a part of that retaliation as well. Differing from print media, ISIS propagandists use the enhanced visuals and presence of audio to send not just a message but to transport their audience to Syria, to Iraq, to execution grounds and battlefields. These places are romanticized, their assailants demonized as either prey lead to the slaughter or savages bent on destruction of innocents. With video, with audio, with a complete sensory picture ISIS propagandists attempt to make their audience feel exactly what they want them to feel and come to the same emotional conclusions that they want them to come to. Print relies on words, but a movie can rely on lighting and explosions.

4.0 Chapter 4- ISIS Edicts of the New Crusade

The Crusader label makes the occasional appearance in official statements from ISIS administrative sectors, with edicts from media offices to even agriculture authorities making use of the Crusader label to boost the reception of their decrees. What follows is a list of ISIS proclamations and edicts from a wide range of offices, both geographically and in their areas of responsibility. A common pattern evident in these examples is the use of the Crusader label to motivate ISIS's soldiers and captive subjects to adhere to the regulation or perform the action requested in the edict, either instigating anger or cautioning through fear (of the Crusaders or ISIS's executioners and torturers). As in the video section, these administrative, municipal, and military documents are not preoccupied with the creation of the Crusader mythos so much as they are with utilizing the label as a name calling device, already associated with the apocalyptic mythology attached to it through print media and the speeches recounted therein. However, videos differ because they are often concerned with the creation of atrocity propaganda and reinforcing the Crusader mythos through powerful audiovisuals, if not creating it. Videos (and social media, as they often link to or directly reference events, or include pictures in their own category to be covered in the next chapter) powerfully attach the Crusader label to atrocity propaganda, and so the viewer does not need to know much about the Crusader mythos because of the onscreen content. Edicts rarely have content other than their demands, so aside from perhaps a sentence or two of expose they rely entirely on other sources, such as video and print devoted to propaganda creation, for the effectiveness of their propaganda utilization.

It should also be noted that most of these examples have reasoning and incentives entirely separate from propaganda, such as storing extra grain in case of attack or imposing strict oversight

over “repentant” subjugated people instead of lambasting the Crusaders. The Crusader label is not used as the sole justification but rather to enhance the reasoning behind the various edicts, lending a greater credibility, so to speak, to what are otherwise rationale moves for an organization like ISIS. As in all propaganda, the semantics of the device used do not have a magical power over their audience. The effectiveness of the Crusader label depends on the context that the consumer perceives. It is this viewer perceived context that the Crusader mythos tries to control, imposing the creation of a new world view of Crusader and jihad on the reader. If the reader of these edicts has not been cross exposed to other ISIS propaganda concerning the Crusaders, then the propaganda value of the Crusader label in these examples (with a few exceptions, such as the Friday sermon example) is dubious. This is unique to the category of edict and not present in videos, although videos sometimes use the Crusader label in a similar way, by only employing the Crusader label in reference to the Crusader mythos and not building upon it, as mentioned above.

Also examined at the end of this chapter is an academic treatise published by ISIS in an attempt to court the more scholarly components of their audience. This genre of propaganda differs from other official ISIS documents in that it seeks not to incentivize an action but to attach an academic and legal authority to the use of the Crusader label. This functions as its own sub-category of propaganda, expanding the areas of “legitimate” ISIS propaganda into the field of academics.

The following list, as is the same case in the previous sections, is not an exhaustive archive of ISIS propaganda but rather a study of many illustrative ways that the Crusade label is used throughout ISIS edicts.

4.1 Prohibition and Bans

Anytime someone wants something banned, one of two things must occur: either the one banning has enough power to enforce their ban, or people stop wanting to use what is banned. One often affects the other. So too it is with ISIS, and as they tend to ban quite a lot of things, they rely on both mental and physical coercion. In pursuit of this, ISIS sometimes uses the Crusader label to add a tinge of justification behind the reasoning for the ban as well as to infuse some enthusiasm into the reception of the ban (whether or not that is successful is difficult to say, as ISIS utilizes incredibly repressive and cruel means to enforce their bans in the void of enthusiasm. Mentioning the Crusaders could only serve as a sort of formal justification). Phone technology, for example, creates vulnerabilities to air strikes (GPS and communication of positions), provides an avenue for leaking sensitive information, and allows its owner access to information outside of the purvey of ISIS censors. As such, ISIS generally tries to keep a tight leash on this technology, severely limiting or entirely denying access.

In statement for distribution (edict) number 17 from ISIS's General Supervisory Committee, dated December 2014, the following is published:

> In accordance with the demands of the public interest and to protect the souls of the soldiers of the Islamic State and their possessions in the shadow of the fierce Crusader campaign against the state of the Caliphate, and in order to shut one of the doors of penetration the enemy uses to attain its goals and strike with exactness by means of its war and remote-guided aircraft, it has been decided to forbid the use of any electronic device or a system that has access to service to enable precise location of positions (GPS).[1]

[1] ISIS, "Specimen X: General Notification: Ban on GPS and Apple devices," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

The edict then goes on to ban Apple products in their entirety, saying devices on the Apple network "will be completely banned on account of the risks they create."[2] As shown in the opening words of the edict, the "fierce Crusader campaign" is cited as the chief reason for the ban. It is not enough that ISIS publishes its reasoning that GPS creates military vulnerabilities, a sound reason for a terrorist organization to restrict phone access. The publishers decided to include the propaganda modifier to attach a more severe and foreboding impetus to banning GPS. Keeping with the carrot and stick tactic of enforcing a ban, ISIS mentions that "any electronic device with access to GPS will be confiscated, and the owner will be questioned as to his lack of obeying order and exposing his brothers to veritable danger."[3] Being questioned by ISIS is generally not a pleasant situation.

In an edict from the Media Office of ISIS, Mosul area, all mobile devices are banned in November 2014 to prevent aircraft from targeting ISIS targets:

> Beginning from the Islamic State's desire to preserve its mujahedeen sons in Wilayat Ninawa, and after it was confirmed that there are agents inside the wilaya spying for the interest of the Crusader-Rafidite coalition who have come together harming this young state and have used various devices of connection to provide the enemies of the Islamic State with information that has brought about losses to the Dawla of many of its knights, while the Crusader-Rafidite aircraft has been able to monitor the phones of the mujahedeen and follow their movements, the Islamic State has decided to cut off connections [mobile phone networks] and prevent their restoration.[4]

An emotional appeal is made here using the Crusader label to paint adhering to the ban as preventing the death and destruction of a gallant organization. This edict claims the Crusader-Rafidite coalition is wreaking havoc on the blossoming Islamic State, slaying many heroic mujahideen,

[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*
[4] ISIS, "Specimen 8Z: Cutting off Mobile Phone Networks, Mosul (November 2014)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

vengefully monitoring the caliphate through GPS technology, and so GPS must be banned. If anyone disobeys the prohibition, then they are accomplices in the Crusade.

4.2 Commanding and Demanding

As with enforcing the abandonment of products or practices, the enforcement of adopting products and practices can be affected by propaganda. ISIS as an organization is perpetually on a war footing, which necessitates a war time policy in the form of logistical demands on its populace and promoting ideological unity amongst its people and soldiers. In the following example, ISIS's agricultural department demands its subjects to stockpile grain in 2015 in case of siege, saying:

> The deranged war being waged against the Islamic State by the Crusader alliance and their followers is no secret, and the economic war is one of the methods of this war. Thus we must make preparations to resist it and that will be done by leaving reserve stocks of grain in every home of the homes of the Muslims, which is in compliance with the command of God Almighty to prepare material and His command for us in this sort of state of affairs to accumulate storage with His words: "And what you harvest, leave in its spikes." [Qur'an 12:47][5]

In this edict, ISIS bases its demand to fortify the grain reserves by citing the Crusaders' "deranged war" that "is no secret" and even takes the form of economic assaults. ISIS uses the Crusader label to warn its subjects of an impending Crusader siege that will affect each and every one of them. ISIS also uses the idea of their ancient rival to rally and galvanize its supporters for increased hardship in the face of what ISIS claims is a precaution of a noble total war effort.

Fitting into ISIS's obsession with removing any Western naming system from their domains, ISIS places an ideological significance on abandoning the Western calendar system. To ISIS, the Gregorian calendar is a blasphemous creation of the Crusaders meant to distance the

[5] ISIS, "Specimen 4V: General Notification: Agricultural Department," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

Muslims from true government and aid in the local tyrants' oppression of their Muslim citizens. An ISIS treatise on the subject explains that:

> In the contemporary eras the Crusaders have succeeded in appointing idolatrous tyrants loyal to them to whom they have entrusted the implementation of their plans, including making the Muslims follow these disbelievers. Among such matters is the replacement of the Hijri dating with the Miladi dating.[6]

ISIS iterates the importance of keeping time for religious reasons in the preceding paragraph, such as "for the religious [need] in knowing the entry and exit of the month, like the month of Ramadan and the month of Dhu al-Hijja, and to know the distinguished days like Arafat and Ashura…"[7] In pursuing ideological homogeneity, ISIS uses the boogeyman of the Crusaders to discredit the Gregorian calendar in an attempt to implement solely the Islamic Hijri lunar calendar (already used in parts of the Islamic world with little issue). Specifically, this edict was given to stamp out any vestige of Western influence in the realm of remembrance and the day to day use of dating, which have important religious and more mundane implications.

ISIS edicts and the propaganda that support them are not only aimed at the subjects of ISIS dominion, but also at their own soldiers. As described in the literature review, propaganda utilized to motivate and influence one's own soldiers is among the oldest and first of ancient and modern propaganda. In the following example, ISIS uses a blend of religious mandate and the Crusader label to reiterate their standard of takfir, or denouncing as infidels, of Jabhat al-Nusra and the secular rebels that it cooperates with. This document was published in 2016, a period of an intensifying military pressure on ISIS (the same year that ISIS switched from *Dabiq* to *Rumiyah*). The

[6] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Unseen Islamic State Treatise on Calendars: Full Text, Translation & Analysis," *The Archivist*, October 17, 2015.
[7] *Ibid*

edict reiterating the hostility between al-Qaeda and the evils of Crusader airstrikes could be a response to that increasing pressure, from the numerous Islamist and secular paramilitaries and various state led airstrikes:

> Indeed the Syria Qa'ida organization (Jabhat al-Nusra) and those with it in the camp of factions that the Islamic State fights are sects that have refused by force to implement the ruling of God's law and have supported the apostates who are striving for the rise of a state of kufr- 'civil democratic'… And all that is the case with cover from the Crusader campaign against the Islamic Caliphate… Therefore, it will not be accepted that there should appear among our soldiers one who falls short in declaring takfir on the notables of those whom we fight and who fight us over the Shari'a of God…[8]

With this passage, ISIS reminds its soldiers of the claim that the Islamist enemies of ISIS are actually engaged with the Crusaders, in case they needed a convenient reminder amidst the widespread air campaign pounding ISIS positions. In another example of carrot and stick with the Crusader label, after trying to convince its soldiers of the evil of its enemies by their cooperation with the Crusaders and secularists, ISIS threatens that any soldier who does not see the light "will be referred to the judiciary to seek his repentance."[9] Repentance here means either prison and forced enrollment in an intensive "Shari'a" reeducation course or torture and execution, which most people would agree are fairly strong reasons to toe the party line.

[8] ISIS, "Specimen 15W: Reiteration of takfir on Jabhat al-Nusra et al. with threat to punish soldiers who refuse to engage in it," *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi* (2015)
[9] *Ibid*

4.3 Spies, Pilots, and Rewards

Spies, informants, and enemy pilots are all monsters hiding under the bed and behind the clouds for ISIS propagandists. However, those figures common in the history of propaganda are doing enough tangible damage to ISIS for them to offer significant financial reward for identifying them. In the following examples, ISIS employs a carrot and carrot method by using the Crusader label to amplify the duty of ISIS subjects to sniff out informants before doubling down on that ethereal propaganda with an impressive corporeal monetary reward.

> Thus, with the entry of the Crusaders and those with them from the tyrants of the Arabs in an international alliance to wage war on the Islamic State, the Crusaders are striving to encourage agents, spies, informers and slanderers whose role is concealed in placing electronic chips on sites and places… in order for them to be bombed after that by aircraft… and likewise they work to connect with the foreign intelligence services and revealing the weak spots of the mujahedeen and Muslims, in order for them to be targets for the international Crusader coalition. Therefore: The Islamic State announces the observance of a financial compensation of $5000 for anyone who catches an agent for the Crusaders or supplies information leading to him. Let it be known that informing on and catching the agents and spies and whoever strives to sow corruption in the land is obligatory on every Muslim.[10]

Pilots, owing to their integral role in the air war against ISIS, have always been special targets for ISIS. The execution video of Lt. al-Kasasbeh detailed in the previous chapter put a high price on the head of any Jordanian pilot captured or killed, a bounty fleshed out more in the following example:

> By the agreement of the Majlis Shura [consultation council] of the Islamic State, a financial reward has been set for all who kill a Jordanian pilot or wound him such as to prevent him from flying or working within the Crusader alliance that targets the Muslims in the Islamic State. And the Diwan has set the reward at 100 gold dinars that the one who deserves the sum can receive it in currency of the Islamic State or any other currency of his choice that

[10] ISIS, "Specimen 12P: Reward of $5000 for catching/informing on collaborators with the 'Crusaders' (c. November 2014)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

> suits him. And the Islamic State will be obligated to send the sum to the place that he chooses by God's permission after verification of his deserving to be payed by any means of verification possible.[11]

The presence of Crusader spies, either fictional or real, and specifically their role in the bombings that prove to be a major concern of ISIS propagandists, is also used as reason to ban communication with the outside world:

> Beginning from the Islamic State's desire to preserve its mujahedeen sons in Wilayat Ninawa, and after it was confirmed that there are agents inside the wilaya spying for the interest of the Crusader-Rafidite coalition who have come together harming this young state and have used various devices of connection to provide the enemies of the Islamic State with information that has brought about losses to the Dawla of many of its knights, while the Crusader-Rafidite aircraft has been able to monitor the phones of the mujahedeen and follow their movements, the Islamic State has decided to cut off connections [mobile phone networks] and prevent their restoration.[12]

As noted in the previous section, banning mobile phone networks not only denies anti-ISIS elements with easy communication to opposing forces, it also quarantines the information of ISIS subjects in the affected area. Banning communication devices with the help of the Crusader label and the allegations of spies allows ISIS to stymy information leaks, dominate the information and propaganda presented to ISIS subjects, and if what ISIS claims is true, prevent more accurate targeting of air raids on ISIS military and administrative positions.

[11] ISIS, "Specimen 1E: Diwan al-Amn al-Aam [Public Security Department]: Reward for Killing/Wounding Jordanian Pilots," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.
[12] ISIS, "Specimen 8Z: Cutting off Mobile Phone Networks, Mosul (November 2014)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

4.4 HR Policies

In its relatively short history, ISIS has persecuted and targeted a disturbing amount of groups. With noted vitriol, ISIS seeks to root out from in its lands any Kurds that they deem are not sympathetic to their cause (ISIS also tries to recruit from these Kurds, even with propaganda claiming the Kurds to be the sons of Saladin[13]). In the following example, ISIS uses the Crusader mythos to justify their expulsion of the Kurds from Raqqa, claiming to weed out the Crusader sympathizers from among the city's Kurdish population. Unfortunately for the Kurdish population, any Kurd electing to remain in their home and not be forcibly relocated to Homs is a Crusader sympathizer, and thus legitimated in the eyes of ISIS for legal persecution and execution.

> In view of the Crusader war on the Islamic State and the alliance of the Kurdish parties with them in this war, we inform you that it has been established for us that in your midst are those who have cooperated with the Crusader alliance. Thus, and so that there is no confrontation between us and you on account of some of the foolish ones among you, we ask you to leave Wilayat al-Raqqa within 72 hours towards Wilayat Homs (Tadmur) and all who remain after this time will be arrested and exposed to Shari'a inquiry and trial.[14]

Statements of repentance are a non-negotiable requirement for any individual seeking to join ISIS or live under ISIS rule, should they have proven or imagined links to anti-ISIS organizations. Naturally, there is a risk that these penitents are not entirely sincere when they declare their desire to repent when captured or defeated by ISIS forces. As in the example above, when ISIS forces captured Fallujah they used the Crusader mythos to enhance their justification of stringent regulation and surveillance in an effort to weed out Crusader sympathizers.

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[13] Mohammed A. Salih, "How Islamic State is trying to lure Kurds to its ranks," *Al-Monitor*, August 12, 2016.

[14] ISIS, "Specimen 5M: Notification for Kurds to leave Raqqa city," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

> It has now become clear that many of the repenting policemen and soldiers have returned to apostasy again, conspiring to wage war on the Ahl al-Sunna and support the worshippers of fire, the Cross and the Rafidites; similarly conspiracies have been discovered taking place within the city to shed the Muslims' blood, violate their honor and please their Rafidite masters. Therefore the Islamic State has decided to impose conditions and restrictions for repentance and similarly for their remaining in the city and not force them out, preserving the religion, blood and honour of the Ahl al-Sunna.[15]

Such "conditions and restrictions" range from stripping the repentee of the right to bear arms, random searches of their home, revoking the right to associate with police or armed personnel, and even forcing the prospective repentee to provide a pistol or two Kalashnikov rifles to ISIS authorities as signs of sincerity.

[15] ISIS, "Specimen 6Q: New Conditions for Repentance, Fallujah (c. late 2014)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

4.5 Calling For a Doctor

It is no secret that ISIS sustains heavy casualties. Indeed, ISIS plays up this aspect of their existence in many propaganda videos, putting on display crowded hallways of bombing victims being attended to by overworked and hurrying medical staff. As war takes its toll on ISIS, these overworked and hurrying medically trained personal become more and more a valuable commodity, especially as educated ISIS subjects attempt to flee the organization's violent domains. Several documents pertaining to retaining and even recruiting foreign medical staff make use of the Crusader label, beseeching these men and women to play their special part in the war against the Crusader menace.

The following excerpt from an ISIS edict calling on skilled professionals, such as doctors and engineers, reiterates the belief of the two camps (Crusader and ISIS) in a bid to recruit such highly trained personnel to their organization:

> In the shadow of the deranged Crusader campaign that has not ceased gathering against the nascent state militarily, politically, in media and even in the Shari'i sense by means of the magicians of statement from the servants of the idolatrous tyrants… but they are soldiers brought forth and students devoted to their greatest teacher and leader of their campaign against the Islamic State- their sheikh Obama, the idolatrous tyrant of the age (may God curse him). And beginning from the hadith of the two camps that the beloved Mustafa (SAWS) told about and informed of regarding the arising of a division of the world into two camps with no third way for the two: a camp of faith with no hypocrisy in it and a camp of hypocrisy and disbelief in which there is no faith, and out of concern from the state of the Caliphate for the religion of the people and their entry into the camp of faith, we call on all Muslims to join the state convoy that represents today the camp of faith and strive to migrate to the land of Islam, abandoning the land of disbelief and tyranny. And in that we single out in particular the Ahl al-'Ilm and the professions of judges, callers, doctors, engineers and others besides them.[16]

[16] ISIS, "Specimen 10A: General notification from the Diwan al-Siha: October 2015," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

This is a direct call for doctors and engineers through a blatant appeal to the Crusader mythos. The Crusaders are wreaking bloody havoc on the true Muslims, so the ISIS edict says, and in this apocalyptic division of the world all true Muslims, especially those with marketable medical and construction skills, should immigrate to the lands of ISIS to do their part. This is edict is a war recruitment, as ISIS tries to bolster the ranks of its medical and engineer corps through the same tactics it uses to persuade foreign fighters to join the horde.

With the coming of ISIS, many attempted to flee the nightmare regime. Apparently, the efforts of a group of doctors and medical staff met with success and they were able to escape ISIS rule by traveling to safer regions, including Europe. ISIS noticed their flight and the reduction of medically trained personnel in their population base, and has been doggedly trying to persuade them to return to their homes and places of business to take up employment with ISIS. In the following edict, ISIS decries those that fled by describing them as Muslims who would apostatize to the extent of living with the Crusaders:

> For some of them have taken refuge in the fortresses of the Rafidites in the provinces of Iraq, some have established themselves with the secularists in what is called the Kurdistan region, some have headed to settle in the Arab states ruled by the idolatrous tyrants, but also some of them have chosen to live with the Crusaders in the land of Kufr- Europe!! Since the conquest, and the length of time elapsed, the Islamic State has been trying many ways to call these doctors, female doctors and health staff to their homes, hospitals, clinics, colleges and institutes in the realm of the Caliphate, many of them have continued to resist and oppose…[17]

For two reasons I do not believe the propaganda of this example to be aimed at the doctors. For one, essentially threatening and denouncing the doctors as Crusader and Rafidite supporters

[17] ISIS, "Specimen 5I: Ultimatum for Medical Professionals and Academics to return to IS-held areas, Ninawa Province (May 2015)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

offers little, if any, incentive to return to the lands they fled. Those doctors and staff would more than likely assume their property was lost as soon as ISIS realized they were gone, so threatening that property (which ISIS does later in the edict) will likewise not incentivize a hasty return. The propaganda value of this piece comes from that denouncement of the doctors and medical staff, painting them as not only shirking their duty to ISIS but also going so far as to flee to Crusader lands, the worst haven of apostasy according to ISIS. This piece serves two purposes: one, to give ISIS "legal" justification for the seizure of property (ISIS tries to portray itself as a legitimate state with legal boundaries); and to galvanize those people who are in a position to force the return of those doctors, such as armed ISIS supporters or family and friends still under ISIS rule and vulnerable to persecution or retaliatory execution.

The final example is host to a few key ISIS regulations pertaining to medical services within their territory, as well as a unique insight into the risks of charitable medical organizations administering to civilians marooned in ISIS territory. The following is an edict issued in what ISIS calls its Aleppo province, detailing the imposition of free medical services for ISIS fighters and bombing victims. What is notable is that if doctors refuse to treat anyone, ISIS soldiers and officers, for example, the recalcitrant doctors will be labelled allies of the Crusader coalition and subject to a "Shari'i reckoning," which is often a painful one:

> - In view of the current situation of slacking and the pouncing of the disbelievers and apostate enemies on the Muslim populace in the areas of the Islamic State, the following decision has been adopted:
>
> 1. All doctors without exception are obliged to heed the call to serve the Muslim populace in the event that they are sought in cases of first aid and operations.

2. All hospitals are obliged to offer medical service in what pleases God- Almighty and Exalted is He- in all events of bombing and disasters inside the areas of the Islamic State for free. And this is the least that they should do because we are in a state of war.

3. All who refrain from or slack off in undertaking this duty are to be considered to be cooperating with the Crusader and Nusayri coalition and upon them will come Shari'i reckoning.

4. The Islamic State thanks all doctors, nurses and medical staff who undertake their obligations in service of the Muslim populace and offers special thanks to the men of the Civil Defence and Ambulance Sans Frontieres.[18]

The last bullet point offers insight into the perilous status of foreign aid workers dispensing aid to people caught up in ISIS's war. If these volunteers refuse to heal the ISIS military assets used to further that war, however, they could find themselves as vulnerable as the people they seek to help.

[18] ISIS, "Specimen 13T: Notification from the Diwan al-Siha in Aleppo province (c. January 2015)," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

4.6 Direct Recruitment Drives

In any recruitment drive, the call to fight an enemy worth fighting is incredibly valuable. ISIS uses the Crusaders not only in a blanket sense of recruitment, as an ideological backdrop to increase pro-ISIS sentiment and volunteers in the foreign and domestic arenas, but also in formal recruitment drives calling for recruits within their territory. The following is a call for fresh mujahideen from the province of Hasakah to heed the call of jihad, making special note that one requirement for joining up is to be unperturbed at the thought of being evaporated in a Crusader airstrike, despite their best efforts to remain in one piece.

> We need numbers of the honest, enduring mujahideen, to resist the disbelievers' campaign on the al-Shaddadi front and break and rout them by God's permission, so long as they have the following characteristics:
>
> 1. They pledge not to flee until they are killed in the path of God or God grants them victory.
> 2. Prepared to remain steadfast by God's permission under Crusader aircraft even as they take up all available safety measures.
> 3. They do not consider, are not influenced and do not worry about false rumours stirred up by rumour-mongers, those who sneer and those inciting to abstain from fighting.
>
> So we ask whoever meets these criteria to hurry to register his name at the War Committee.[19]

This recruitment call makes use of the Crusader label by referencing them as the main enemy (indeed the only enemy mentioned in the pronouncement) and by letting the potential recruits know that airstrikes are all part of a day's work. In line with other propaganda aimed at simultaneously glorifying and downplaying the destruction caused by airstrikes, ISIS is upfront about the

[19] ISIS, "Specimen 13W: Mobilization call to reinforce fighting fronts in south Hasakah province," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

danger of airstrikes. Recruiters attach the Crusader label to the bombings in an attempt to remind their recruitment base that the enemy is out there, on the attack, and being steadfast against them is the key to victory.

4.7 General Motivation

Some ISIS edicts make use of the Crusader label to add motivation in a general sense, raising the fighting spirit of their soldiers and subjects. The following, for example, is the ISIS city charter for Sirte, a city in Northern Libya.

> Therefore, oh 'ulama of ours, sheikhs of our tribes, our imams and preachers, and oh Ahl al-Sunna entirely- men and women, young and old- strive for the ennobled stance history hearkens to and from which the dawn of prosperity: for a stance of excellence and truth to realize Islamic kinship under Shari'a, that we may be one built up rank in the face of the Safavids, secularists and Crusaders, as our Lord has desired and ordered.[20]

In the final line of the excerpt, the author of the city charter is using the Crusader mythos to give their city a sort of communal goal, standing strong in order to stand against the Crusaders and their Safavid allies. With this, the Crusader label is used as a tool to promote cohesiveness, organization and motivation of ISIS supporters in the ISIS administered territory.

In the following excerpt of a Friday sermon in Mosul, 2015, a preacher uses the Crusader label to exhort his listeners to greater feats in the war against the Crusaders in an attempt at propaganda of agitation. The sermon is primarily concerned with the two abodes, one of disbelief and the other of Islam, making the distinction that it is the type of government that determines what abode it is in, as according to the preacher:

> The abode depends on what rulings reign supreme in it… if the ruling of idolatrous tyrant, secularism and man-made laws of the moment, it is the abode of kufr, even if its people are predominantly Muslim…21

[20] ISIS, "Specimen 11L: City charter, Sirte," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.
[21] ISIS, "Specimen 1Q: Friday sermon for Ninawa Province Mosques: February 2015," in *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents* by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2015.

In the following excerpt the preacher reminds his audience of ISIS's belief that their enemies are one camp, one group under the Crusader banner with the goal of eliminating the only legitimate government on the face of the earth. Furthermore, according to the preacher, those other states that claim to rule by Shari'a (Saudi Arabia in this example) only rule with Shari'a to the extent that it does not displease their Crusader masters:

> …when the enemies of Islam have seen this Caliphate which rules in this good land by the ruling of God alone, look how quickly they marshalled against it from everywhere, striking at it from one bow, from their east and west, Arabs and non-Arabs. All have agreed on waging war on the Islamic State because the Islamic State rules by the Shari'a of God, and because the religion of Islam is a comprehensive religion and program for life, for it is a whole not to be divided and it is not as the Al al-Salul [House of Saud] and others besides them from the lands of apostasy claim when they assert the rule of the Shari'a and believe in a part but declare another part to be disbelief. For they apply what does not conflict with their interests and the interests of America and others besides them from the states of dis-belief so they are close to/assist the enemies of God against those close to God for the sake of pleasing the Crusader alliance.[22]

ISIS subjects are yet again reminded by the preacher's claims that the world is against them, against ISIS, and against God. All enemies of ISIS are either lackeys or staunch allies of a greater menace, their Crusader masters who pull all of the strings and send out their minions to scour and scourge the face of the Muslim earth. There can be no peace against such a foe, so do not demand one, and instead steel yourself for hardship and war.

ISIS uses the Crusader label at times in visual media other than video or magazine graphics. In a billboard located in Tel Afar (see below) ISIS posted the Zarqawi Crusader quote that speaks about burning the Crusader armies in *Dabiq*. The goal of this billboard is to remind the passersby of ISIS rule, as well as motivate ISIS subjects to keep up the struggle against the Crusader foe, using a medium seen by many as they pass underneath the ominous wording.

[22] *Ibid*



Figure 31, Billboard in Tel Afar reading "And here is the spark that has been struck in Iraq, and its blaze will grow by God's permission until the Crusaders' armies are burnt in Dabiq."[23]

As ISIS's stronghold of Mosul came slowly under siege in 2016, efforts were undertaken to stiffen the resolve of the garrison and of those civilians trapped amidst the conflict in the ISIS held city. Pursuant to this, regulations were promulgated with respect to the coming assault, covering motivational, logistical, and tactical requirements. In the words of the document, ISIS describes the goal of its edict as such:

> As it is necessary to organize matters of the city so that its fronts should be stable, the Islamic police apparatus in the city of Mosul has undertaken to notify the Muslim populace of principal matters to be adhered to without violation, because that is a cause of chaos and bringing out hypocrisy in the chests of the believers.[24]

[23] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "The Islamic State Billboards and Murals of Tel Afar and Mosul," *The Archivist*, January 7, 2015.
[24] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Unseen Islamic State Regulations for the Mosul Operations," *The Archivist*, December 31, 2016.

In order to encourage adherence to these policies and ensure their warm reception, ISIS propagandists couched the new and stringent regulations as necessary precautions for a Crusader advance, that all are aware of:

> Not one of you will be unaware of the size of the Crusader conspiracy in all its forms against the Islamic State, east and west, from Aleppo to Mosul. For the paths of kufr have gathered under one banner and one objective: to lower the banner, tear out the Qur'an, smash the hudud (borders), and sow corruption so that no other foundation can arise for Islam.[25]

With this statement, ISIS announces that this fight is all or nothing, and if the police have anything to say about it, it will be all for the people.

[25] *Ibid*

4.8 Academia

There are a few academic treatises, produced to have the air of an official and serious academic treatment about the current conflict, that make use of the Crusader label. One such treatise is *The Clear Evidence in the Infidelity of Helping the Crusader Campaign*[26], a sixty seven page work complete with index and publication info in its second edition. The treatise covers what it calls the "science and the evidence" proving anyone who joins the Crusaders is a de facto apostate. In its own words, the treatise describes its mission as the following:

> Here the nations have fallen on the Ummah of Islam, on the forefront of the Mujahideen in Iraq and in the Levant. They came with their own iron and they fight God, His Messenger and those who believe. Whoever supports them and helps them in this campaign, there is understanding about them in the rulings of religion and the Hereafter and the evidence of that from the books and the Sunnah is frequent. In this regard, we have been presented with a treatise named "The Clear Evidence in the Infidelity of Helping the Crusader Campaign" prepared by the brothers in the library of Alima "according to God," and we found a useful message that has brought together the science and the evidence…[27]

The "rulings of religion and the Hereafter and the evidence of that from the books and the Sunnah" will be displayed with acute care in the later pages of the treatise, a work filled to the brim with quotations and analysis.

Throughout the treatise, the ISIS authors attempt to spin a legal Islamic ruling on warring against their enemies on grounds that they are apostate Crusaders bent on the destruction of Islam. This treatise differs remarkably from most pieces of propaganda, even those in *Dabiq* that seek to justify the same. In *Dabiq* and other print articles that desire to veil themselves in shrouds of scholarly reasoning, proposing their premises in arguments with sound logical structuring (the

[26] ISIS, *The Clear Evidence in the Infidelity of Helping the Crusader Campaign* (ISIS territory: Al-Hima Library, 2015).
[27] *Ibid*, 3-4

main flaw being the actual premises and their chosen given facts), they are only articles focused on a preaching like platform. In this treatise, however, the author is not constrained by space and the attention span of their audience. Flowing and overly academic verbiage and vocabulary, as well as an emphasis on using flamboyantly correct grammar (when writing Arabic, it is not always necessary to add the case endings unless it is a religious piece, but most grammatical markings are present in this treatise), present this work of propaganda as a serious academic submission. The presentation by a library and a group of scholars, the peer review commendations, and the formatting of a serious essay instead of a traditional propaganda piece all lend themselves to this air of official philosophy. Note the cover, publication information, and index pages pictured below.



Figure 32, Cover, Second, Third, and Index pages respectively

The following two examples illustrate well how the Crusader label and mythos is presented as a topic of serious and legitimate academic discussion. In this first example, the author lists the sources of his conclusion to be all the major sources of Islamic law, from the Quran to the consensus of the community (the author makes double usage of the community source by implicating that only those who agree with him are part of the true community). They then go on to lay out their

next chapter, referencing how they will go in depth about their specific legal reasoning in the coming section:

> When I learned that the Crusade led by the enemies of Allah (the Americans) and their agents of the apostates and parties of the hypocrites targeted Islam and Muslims; I knew that any aid to them in war, whether this aid is of body, or weapon, or heart, or pen, or money, or opinion, or otherwise, they are forms of disbelief and apostasy about Islam, - God forbid them - and the evidence on this issue is too much, from the Koran, the Sunnah, and the consensus, and the words of the companions, and measurement, and the words of the scholars and their fatwas, as we will deal with in the following six research topics.[28]

What follows are the six "research topics," which all at a minimum include a lengthy quotation from one of the sources mentioned above, most with several. It is not only the sources provided and quoted, but their layout in formal academic style that lends to this propaganda's official appearance. The fact that the Crusader label appears at the beginning of this quotation heavy section is significant in that the author tries to lay out a formal, religiously, and academically backed support for ISIS's use of the Crusader label. This section seeks to prove with evidence, not declare with a few catchphrases, that the Crusaders are the enemies of God and aiding them is therefore apostasy.

At the end of the treatise, the author lays out historical instances of Muslims being engaged in apostasy for giving aid to Crusaders, as declared by contemporary Islamic scholars ranging from the actual Crusades, with demands to kill the Muslims who gave passage to the owner of Karak (the greatest Hospitaller fortress of the Crusades) to Egypt, to the present day with condemnations of America's invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. The last three points are specifically referring to 19th and 20th century incidents with local Muslims cooperating with Europeans or Americans:

[28] *Ibid*, 26

> 8. In the early 14th century AH (early 1900s): some of the tribes of Algeria helped the French Crusaders against the Muslims, said the Moroccan jurisprudent Abu al-Hassan al-Tasuli of their apostasy.
>
> 9. In the middle of the fourteenth century AH (After Hajj, approximately 1910s to 1940s): The French and British Crusaders attacked the Muslims in Egypt and elsewhere, as Sheikh Ahmed Ahmed Shaker said of the disbelief of those who gave them any aid. For them he said: As for cooperation with the English, cooperation of any kind, to any degree, is unbridled apostasy...
>
> 10. The American Crusaders' invaded Afghanistan in the year 1422 AH (2001) and they invaded Iraq in the year 1424 AH (2003), said a great collection of Islamic scholars and leaders of jihad about the disbelief of the nations for any kind of their aid.[29]

With these, the author attempts to provide a historical link and precedence for declaring any who aid the Crusaders to be apostates. It is not a new idea to label them apostates, maintains the author, but rather a validated concept distinguished by an extensive historical record of precedence.

If the author succeeds in persuading their audience, probably constituted of more educated readers given the context, then they not only persuade those not as susceptible to other forms of propaganda, but also win over to their side individuals capable of their own persuasion. As stated in the propaganda chapter, the educated are often susceptible to propaganda with the appearance of solid rationale. This is because they are at risk of falling into the trap of believing something to be a legitimate source of information if they cannot immediately refute the argument. Academic treatises like the one treated here represent ISIS's tapping into the educated market for converts, valuable individuals who could use their more polished faculties of logical persuasion to convince

[29] *Ibid*, 61-64

others to join the group. Moreover, providing propaganda in mediums other than standard magazine articles, speeches, or videos strengthens the illusion of variety in the information ISIS is putting out, painting the picture that the information comes not from one place but many.

The use of the Crusader label and mythos in edicts is interesting because it offers a view into the more day to day usage of the propaganda, as opposed to the grandiose recruitment campaigns and incitement to violence that it is usually used for. As stated above, ISIS utilizes the Crusader mythos and label with edicts in ways similar to video, in that in lieu of elaboration there is mostly quick usage and association. Edicts, however, employ the Crusader label uniquely in ways engaging the audience to perform or abstain from certain actions or thoughts. The Crusaders are more often than not used as they typically are, as a name calling boogeyman label associated with atrocity propaganda used to galvanize the consumer of the propaganda. Treatises, on the other hand, tackle establishing a veracity and acceptance of the Crusader mythos via the academic route, eschewing space limitations for copious religious, legal, and historical citations they believe supports their argument. Each of these types of ISIS edict and document are published with the objective of being received as official, trustworthy, and most importantly, imbued with authority. The label that harkens to the storied Crusader mythos adds an extra emphasis to the words ISIS authorities dearly wish to have the weight of law.

5.0 Chapter 5- A Call to #Jihad

With social media, poignancy and abruptness are key in forging a catchy message and grabbing attentions. Since its 2014 debut, ISIS has made a name for itself as a pioneer and dark savant of utilizing social media to spread its call and message. Chiefly, this takes the form of small and compact tidbits of propaganda, reminiscent in their goal and structure of the WWI propaganda posters that originally pioneered the mass dispersion of catchphrase and emotion to mobilize a populace for war. Central to that type of propaganda was the deft application of stereotype and emotional appeals that struck the gut of its audience. Deployed alongside these arrows of vocabulary were powerful images, designed to inspire or distress. ISIS social media posts build upon this propaganda heritage using hashtags, links, and pictures both real and computer generated, while maintaining the structure of slogans, emotional appeal, and most importantly for our purposes the use of stereotype.

With the crackdown on official ISIS social media accounts, it is common to see much of ISIS propaganda coming from supporters instead of official outlets. The fact that so much of ISIS propaganda is spread by supporters and not official outlets (which has always been a tactic of ISIS) showcases how the Crusader label is being picked up outside of official ISIS sources. The Crusader label is not quite prevalent in social media generated propaganda, however, and is often dwarfed by references to America and more general ISIS events (not to say the Crusader is not used online by ISIS, far from it). ISIS does, however, utilize social media as an important tool for the distribution of their Crusader material. *Flames of War* was publicized using social media and multiple

platforms, such as YouTube and Vimeo, for example.[1] Websites like Twitter, Facebook, and Telegram are all used to post images, messages, and links to videos an new releases. Telegram is a more closed and secure mass messaging/posting site that often requires invitations to join certain groups, which can reach up to 5,000 members and support hashtags much like Twitter.[2] This means that all those receiving the propaganda through telegram are generally declared ISIS supporters, most likely privy to other forms of ISIS propaganda. This section will not concern itself with the distribution efforts of Crusader propaganda, but instead specifically with propaganda pieces generated on social media which use the Crusader mythos and label. The use of hashtags relating to Rome, the attacks on France, Brussels, and Krak de Chevaliers (the ancient Hospitaller turned Muslim fortress in modern day Jordan, attacked 18DEC16) will be analyzed.

In ISIS social media propaganda, the tactics used in regards to the Crusader mythos rely heavily upon the stereotype already created through other sources of propaganda. Hashtags are a literal way of attaching that stereotype. Take the following post using #RoadtoRoma (a hashtag typically used by tourists but appropriated by ISIS, another common online tactic of the organization):

[1] Ali Fisher and Nico Prucha, "ISIS is Winning the Online Jihad Against the West," *The Daily Beast*, October 1, 2014.
[2] "Telegram FAQ," Telegram.



Figure 33, #RoadtoRoma[3]

In this piece, ISIS uses the collage of armed militant convoys and the hashtag to show its audience the idea that ISIS is a powerful and organized group on the warpath to Rome. #RoadtoRoma has a sort of inevitability about it, that these forces pictured in the post are already on their way to Rome, not that they need to conquer their way across large swathes of territory or infiltrate their way through Europe to do so.

[3] "TRAC LIBRARY: Collection of Islamic State Propaganda (Official and Unofficial) on Rome, Italy 2015 – 2017," *Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium*.

5.1 A CGI Crusade

The following is an example of a CGI laden employment of the Crusader mythos in its relation to Rome. In the following invitation to an ISIS telegram account, a quote used in the *Rumiyah* magazine is used to attract new followers:



Figure 34, Invitation to join ISIS telegram account using #Rumiyah[4]

In this piece of propaganda, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem appears at the center directly above groups of ISIS fighters waving their black flag across the countryside. These are indicators of the rest of the Crusader mythos, that after Rome falls the final battle will begin at Jerusalem. The hashtag is able to wield this air of projection because of the Crusader mythos associated with Rome, already and extensively explained in detail through other ISIS propaganda sources such as *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

[4] *Ibid*

Compare the above piece to the WWI British recruitment poster below. It is important to note that the symbolism and imagery are not the same but the tactics are. Both, in a way, point towards their goal while waving a literal flag draped with symbolism and flanked by motivated men rushing towards the conflict. In the WWI poster it is the spirit of Britain personified by Athena who is holding the immense flag and sending off her people to defend their island on the shores of France and Germany. In the ISIS poster it is Jerusalem, surrounded by images of the ISIS flag, that encourages the fighters superimposed on the faceless jihadist fighter, embodying the spirit of ISIS. Images of men galvanized for war rallying to the flags of the respective bodies are critical parts of each. In both of these images a magnified personification of the state or organization, flanked on all sides by eagerness and the flag, rallies its members to fight. Looking at the wording in each, further similarity can be observed. The WWI poster says "Defend your island from the grimmest menace that ever threatened it," while the ISIS post says "For Allah, we will not rest from our jihad except beneath the Olive trees of *Rumiyah* (Rome)." In both, a supreme authority gives a command (the spirit of Britain in an age of intense patriotism and claims of divine mandate for the jihadists) to go forth and wage just war in a distant land, to fight against the gravest threat that has ever faced them (the German empire in WWI and the Crusaders for the ISIS jihadists). Both also importantly rely in large part on other sources of propaganda or context. The British poster requires an understanding of WWI as a threat to British sovereignty in an almost doomsday like scenario for liberty, whereas the ISIS poster requires an understanding of the Crusader mythos and how Rome and Jerusalem fit into it.

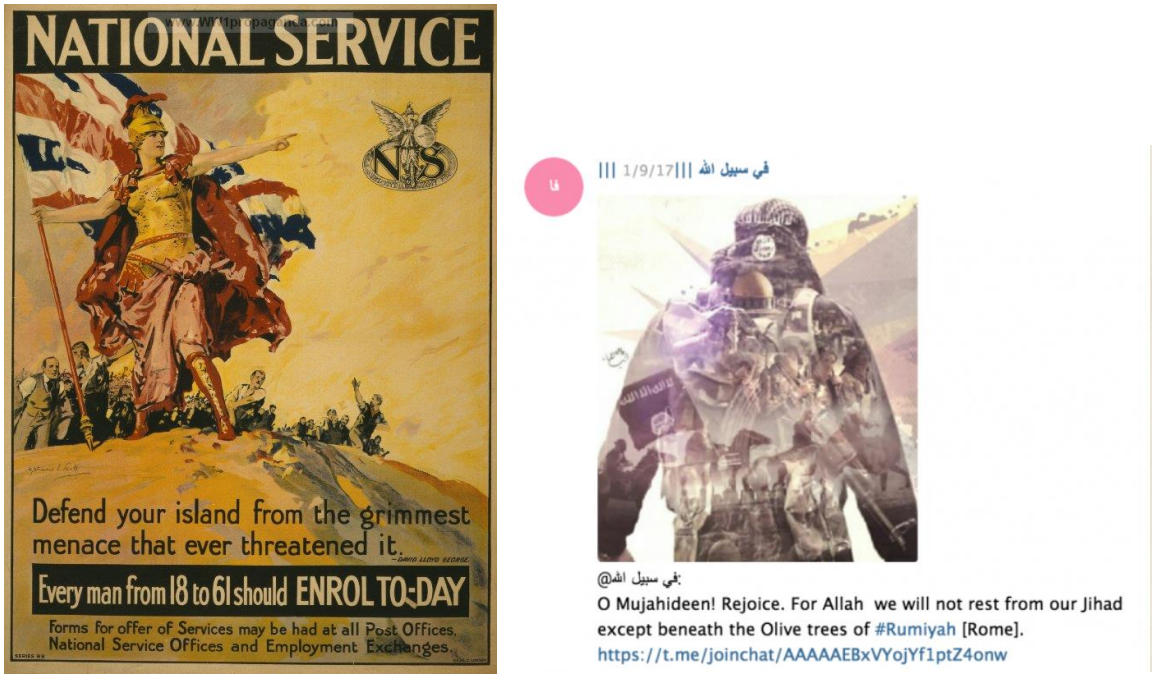


Figure 35, British WWI Recruitment Poster next to ISIS Recruitment Post[5]

References to actual ISIS attacks, such as the attack on Paris, are used to bolster the legitimacy of the ISIS's claim that their jihadists will reach Rome. Take for example the following graphic, posted on ISIS social media accounts depicting a masked jihadist tearing apart the colosseum of Rome and the Eifel Tower of Paris. The visual construction of this piece of propaganda is powerful and evocative of impending destruction, utilizing the symbolism of real and theoretical attacks to lend credence to ISIS's claim and urging to invade Rome. In this, the mass casualty event in Paris is used to act as a foreshadowing device for what will eventually happen in Rome, according to ISIS. In a vice versa way, the idea that the jihadists are destined to conquer Rome also gives a legitimacy to the Paris attack. The strike against Paris is legitimated as a step in the

[5] D.A. & S., Ld, *National Service, Defend your island*, 1917.

prophecy, so to speak, a concrete event showing ISIS inching ever closer to its goal. The destruction and gloomy overcast setting of the propaganda piece is used to create a feeling of apocalypse and crushing defeat for the Crusaders, who the propaganda is ostensibly aimed at. This propaganda can also be effective for pro-ISIS supporters, as it attempts to portray ISIS as an inexorable and inevitable conqueror of the greatest cities of Europe.



Figure 36, "Soon, in your own city will be the battle" [6]

[6] "TRAC LIBRARY: Collection of Islamic State Propaganda (Official and Unofficial) on Rome, Italy 2015 – 2017," *Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium*.

5.2 Retaliation Is Not Enough

In the wake of the Paris attacks, #Franceisburning or #CrusaderFranceburns[7] (in Arabic) were used by ISIS supporters to celebrate the attacks on the French capital. In the aftermath of the Brussels attack, ISIS supporters also tweeted against "Western Crusaders" using a similar hashtag, #BrusselsonFire.[8] In the example below, an ISIS supporter tweeted about "Crusader France" and how they are now the ones under siege, that they are the ones who will now suffer. The caption of the post reads "Crusader France: today we invade you in your home." In the image, cobbled together from various sources (the soldier is even from a popular video game series, Battlefield, which ISIS seems to hold in high esteem as the dramatic figure is used repeatedly in ISIS propaganda pieces to represent the American soldier), a quote from the Sura of the Bees favored by ISIS is superimposed upon graphics of blood, fire, and general symbols of war. This sura, which says "they will be punished with what they punish," was also used in the execution section of the *Shield of the Cross* video, wherein two Turkish soldiers were burnt alive, and in ISIS reporting on the execution of the captured Jordanian pilot, also burnt alive.

This tweet is an example of an often used type of ISIS propaganda, where a relatively short amount of text poignant for the target audience is superimposed against a provocative background. The images jar and are meant to instill feelings of anger, violence, and revenge against the Crusaders. This effect is enhanced when combined with the divine mandate from ISIS's interpretation

[7] "Twitter: #فرنسا_الصليبية_تحترق".
[8] Maayan Groisman, "ISIS Supporters on Social Media Celebrate Lethal Brussels Bombings," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 22, 2016.

of the sura. In light of the comments and the nature of the sura in the ISIS tweet, anyone understanding the Crusader mythos would realize that the calls to violence are revenge for attacks against ISIS in the Middle East. No longer will ISIS be attacked, and instead, ISIS will deliver the same violence onto the Crusader coalition. The specific construction of the piece differs from much of WWI propaganda posters in that it is offensive in nature, (although in ISIS discourse is technically a defensive strike against the invading Crusade) instead of the overriding sense of defense that constitutes the core of WWI propaganda philosophy. That being said, however, the themes of destruction and corresponding retaliation are common throughout propaganda, even if not used in such a hyper aggressive way as in the ISIS example. In the piece of British propaganda below, a scene of a bombed out street is printed with a casualty toll of women and children, asking if the men of Britain will stand for such an atrocity. The piece asks the rhetorical question if the men of Britain will allow atrocity to go unanswered.

It is important to note the differences in these two pieces, as they point to themes of ISIS propaganda that differ greatly from most preceding propaganda. Where most propaganda of this nature is retaliatory, (retaliatory being understood as being a legal and just response to aggression) ISIS is vengeful, urging its supporters and soldiers to not only retaliate in order to halt the conflict and preserve honor, but to actively commit war crimes and target civilians. Interestingly, ISIS sees such intense revenge as purely and justly retaliatory. ISIS claims they are being targeted unjustly, that their civilians and families are murdered in the streets by the Crusaders. This is corroborated by the speeches given in the revenge execution videos treated in the video chapter. A specific example is in the *Flames of War* scene wherein ISIS propagandists focused upon what they called the criminal deaths and targeting of their soldiers and their families. In ISIS philosophy and propaganda, the only things that can constitute as genuine and proportional retaliation to the Crusader

campaign are essentially acts of terror, designed to inflict immense civilian and emotional pain. It is not enough to stop the attacks and preserve honor, you must fight them until they all die or submit.



Figure 37, "Today we invade you in your home"[9]

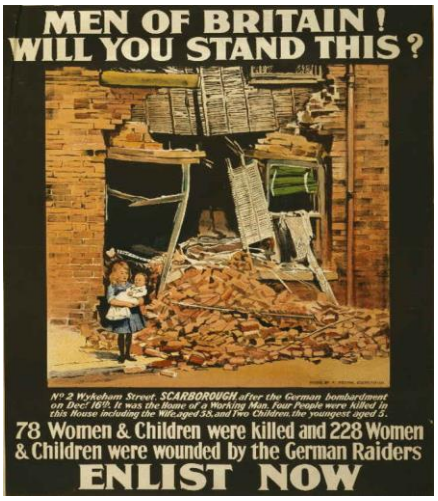


Figure 38,"Men of Britain! Will you stand for this?"[10]

[9] "Twitter: #فرنسا_الصليبية_تحترق".
[10] Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, *Men of Britain! Will You Stand for This?* 1915.

Krak de Chevaliers in present day Jordan is the same fortress used by the Hospitaller Crusader order as a major military fortification in the Crusader period, defending against incursions from the realm of Saladin. It serves today as a prominent Jordanian tourist site. ISIS's attack on it had dual symbolic and economic implications, wounding both a historic landmark and the source of major revenue for the local town. In the following ISIS telegram posts, the attack on Krak de Chevaliers is portrayed as vengeance for Jordan's role in the anti-ISIS coalition and execution of ISIS supporter Sajida Al-Rishawi (Jordan executed her and one other ISIS prisoner in retaliation for the murder of Lt. al-Kasasbeh) and a call for lone wolf attacks. In the third example, the Krak attack was claimed to only be the beginning, as a picture of captured Jordanian pilot al-Kasasbeh's execution, who was victim to one of the most intense Crusader labelings and symbolic executions, is imposed next to the text.



Figure 39, "You bomb innocents in Al-Raqqa, while we strike against your soldiers and Crusader masters in Al-Karak, and tomorrow, with Allah's help, we will strike the heart of Amman" [11]

[11] MEMRI, "ISIS Launches Anti-Jordan Campaign Following Karak Attack: Threats To Continue Attacks, Harm The King And Security Forces, And Target Tourists In The Country," *MEMRI*, December 25, 2016.



Figure 40, "Oh, partisans of the Islamic State in Jordan – do not make do by simply supporting. Become soldiers who kill the crusaders and apostates, and cause the dwarf tyrant [meaning King 'Abdallah] to lose sleep. Oh, you Crusader tourists – you have seen what we did to you in Al-Karak. You will not be safe in Muslim lands." [12]



Figure 41, "The donkey of religious rulings, Al-Maqdisi – tell your masters that this was our revenge for our sister Sajida Al-Rishawi. The Al-Karak raid was only the first rainfall. The future will be even worse and bitterer."

Notice how the language of these posts is similar to the language referring to the "Hun" and Kaiser Wilhelm of WWI Germany in Allied propaganda posters. "You bomb innocents in Al-Raqqa" can be compared to the myriad references to German U-boat attacks against allied shipping, although the WWI claim was far more substantiated. The language of the second example is reminiscent of the posters that belittled the Kaiser or focused on recruiting supporters to active military service. In these, support is not exactly belittled but declared to not be enough to stop the true enemy. Diminishing the opposing leader is also a popular tactic in propaganda, one seen in both the second example of the ISIS piece and the American WWI poster lampooning the Kaiser as an unsweetened pantry item.

[12] *Ibid*



Figure 42, "Loyal Talk Won't Beat KAISER KRUPP KULTUR"[13]

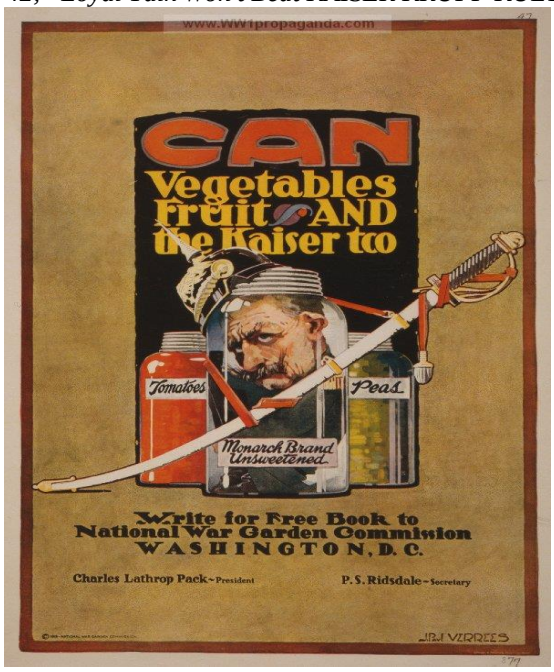


Figure 43, "Can Vegetables, Fruit, And the Kaiser too"[14]

ISIS propaganda on social media focuses on short bursts of text flanked by evocative graphics steeped in symbolism. Through the use of the Crusader label, ISIS is able to employ a strong and easily applied family of stereotypes and easy to grasp symbols, such as Rome and other famous cities. Within these propaganda productions an observer can see the fundamental theories and tactics of propaganda at work, tactics pioneered and in use since the beginning of the previous

[13] National War Garden Commission, *Can Vegetables, Fruit, And the Kaiser too*, 1918.
[14] Central Recruiting Committee, *Loyal Talk Won't Beat Kaiser Krupp Kultur*, 1914-1918.

century. In the place of addresses for recruitment centers there are hashtags and links, instead of paintings there are CGI collages, where once the Hun was used the Crusader now finds a place, proving that the same techniques can be used for widely varying motivations in pursuit of vastly different goals.

6.0 Chapter 6- Jihad and Crusaders Around the Globe

It is important to understand that the phenomenon of the Crusades in jihadist propaganda is not limited to ISIS. In fact, the Crusader label is used across organizational boundaries by groups ranging from Afghanistan to North Western Africa. This is true of al-Qaeda especially, the fore-runner of ISIS and one of, if not the first, major jihadist organizations to make use of the Crusader label. It is important to note, however, that there are many ISIS specific additions to the Crusader mythos, namely their emphasis on the apocalyptic understanding of the Crusaders and their obsession with naming every enemy Crusaders or their allies. Al-Qaeda's philosophy, which will be shown to have an emphasis on the Crusader label, carried over into their affiliates and successor organizations. ISIS affiliates likewise copy ISIS ideology, which includes the Crusader mythos. Whether or not these other organizations have ingrained and thorough belief of the Crusader mythos as ISIS does is up for debate. In the main, no other organization devotes as much time and resources to developing and using the Crusader mythos, especially and uniquely in regard to the apocalyptic vision of ISIS. It can be useful to think of al-Qaeda's Crusader mythos centering around the idea of a new crusade, whereas ISIS's Crusader mythos concerns an idea of the final crusade.

Nevertheless, there are bountiful examples of non-ISIS or ISIS affiliate organizations utilizing the Crusader label with gusto. ISIS's blitzkrieg across the Middle East and into the jihadist limelight coincided with an increase in Crusader rhetoric, as ISIS fame and influence spread to become one of the dominant organizations in the jihadist world. This trend was already on the rise before ISIS, however, and statements by al-Adnani in 2011, while ISIS was only an Iraqi branch

of al-Qaeda, shows a use of the Crusader mythos that would come to typify ISIS Crusader propaganda.[1] An interesting category of non-ISIS jihadist usage of the Crusader label is in the declarations of allegiance to or support (or in one example a refusal to support) of ISIS. When declaring allegiance or beseeching an end of inter jihadist hostility towards ISIS, the Crusader label has been used as the main propaganda resource to legitimate the statements.

What follows are examples illuminating the use of the Crusader label in the distant corners of the jihadist cause, illustrating a trend that extends, both in time and territory, beyond the scope of ISIS. The groups covered are mainly al-Qaeda affiliates, the more powerful and vocal of the jihadist organizations around the globe, as well as other groups such as al-Shabaab (allied to al-Qaeda), the Taliban, and more localized jihadist groups throughout the Middle East. They all make use of the Crusader label using generally the same family of tactics, namely as propaganda of agitation using name calling and glittering generalities, atrocity and invincibility propaganda.

[1] Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, "The State of Islam Will Remain Safe", Speech, Anṣār al-Mujāhidīn English Forum, August 7, 2011.

6.1 The Fatwahs of Osama bin Laden, Father of Modern Jihad

Perhaps the most famous instances of the Crusader label pre-2014 are the fatwahs of Osama bin Laden declaring jihad against Americans and Jews. In these rather short documents of monumental importance for al-Qaeda, its affiliates, and offshoots, the overriding propaganda tool used is the Crusader label. The fatwahs of Osama bin Laden primarily denounce the American involvement in Saudi Arabia with the Crusader label. Other forms that link Crusaders specifically to Judaism, such as Judeo-Crusader or Crusader-Zionist alliance, are also favored al-Qaeda rhetoric. Osama bin Laden's use of his own Crusader mythos (which differs from the Crusader mythos of ISIS) centering around these terms informed much of his and his organization's philosophy, as well as ISIS, in fundamentally opposing America and Israel. In this version of the Crusader mythos, America and the Jews were the chief enemies of Islam, desecrating the Holy Cities, and their blood needed to be spilled wherever it could be found.

Osama bin Laden made use of the Crusader label in his 1996 and 1998 fatwahs by employing the label whenever decrying American military forces with other negative language, functioning as a name calling device and an early association of Crusader with negative terms in official jihadist discourse. This is done by either claiming Crusader atrocities against the Muslims or simply using negative language. Take the following excerpt from the 1998 fatwah declaring jihad against "Jews and Crusaders," issued by the World Islamic Front, wherein bin Laden is on the second of his three points about the Crusader-Zionist alliance:

> Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded 1 million... despite all this, the Americans are once against trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as

> though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation.[2]

The Crusaders, who Osama bin Laden describes as "spreading in it (the Arabian Peninsula) like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations,"[3] are in Osama bin Laden's view inherently destructive, evil, and focused on the slaughter of Muslims and the destruction of Islam. In Osama bin Laden's 1996 fatwah declaring jihad against Americans, bin Laden remarks "so the people of Islam realized that they were the fundamental target of the hostility of the Judeo-Crusader alliance."[4] Osama bin Laden, in the document establishing his fundamental opposition to America, describes the Judeo-Crusader alliance as having in its very nature a hostility for all the people of Islam. It is not, according to the chief demagogue of jihad, any normal enemy that they are fighting This is a jihad against the natural enemies of Islam, the Crusaders. Osama bin Laden goes on to say in the same fatwah that:

> …today, in the same peaks of Afghanistan, we work to do away with the injustice that has befallen our umma at the hands of the Judeo-Crusader alliance, especially after its occupation of Jerusalem and its appropriation of Saudi Arabia.[5]

Osama bin Laden here references the defeat of the Soviet army when he mentions "the same peaks of Afghanistan," implying the Judeo-Crusader alliance is inflicting a similar level of injustice as the Soviets, and like the Soviets (which his group was originally formed to fight, which it did successfully) the Crusaders too will be expelled. In these two documents, Osama bin Laden, the

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[2] Osama bin Laden, "Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders- World Islamic Front Statement," *Federation of American Scientists*, February 23, 1998, 1.
[3] *Ibid*, 1
[4] Osama bin Laden, "Osama bin Laden's Declaration of Jihad against Americans, 1996," in *Milestone Documents in World History*, ed. Brian Bonhomme and Cathleen Boivin, (Dallas: Salem Press, 2010), 10.
[5] *Ibid*, 11

father of the modern global jihadist movement, proves in the most official way possible the integral belief of the Crusader mythos in al-Qaeda ideology.

6.2 Pronouncements- AQIM and the Taliban

The Introduction of Sheikh Moulayi Hibatullah Akhunza is essentially an announcement concerning the bio and qualifications of Sheikh Moulayi Hibatullah Akhunza, leader of the Taliban (also called the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan) after a drone strike in 2016 killed his predecessor Mullah Mohammad Akhtar Mansoor. This document concerns itself mainly with presenting the new head of the Taliban as a jihadist leader of impeccable character, Islamic education, military record fighting both the Soviets and the Americans, and the main element unifying the present Taliban. The piece goes on in length to note his respected family and proper upbringing and education, his striving resistance against the Soviets, his role in founding the Taliban, several prominent roles he held in the course of his career, and his role in uniting the jihadists of Afghanistan against the American "Crusader" invasion.

A section of the pronouncement entitled "His Vital Role in Re-launching Jihad Against the Foreign Invasion" speaks about how he rallied the mujahideen together, along with the help of several noble Afghani Sheikhs, to fight the Crusaders:

> Late 'Sheikh Ghulam Haider', 'martyred Sheikh Abdul Salam' and 'honorable Sheikh Abdul Hakeem (may Allah protect him)' were the main and heroic figures who worked indefatigably with 'Sheikh Hibatullah Akhunzada' to invite and unite the Muslim masses of our country to resist and fight against the infidel crusade invaders. Due to his deep learning, 'Sheikh Sahib' was quite successful in inviting and convincing the people in the light of Quranic teachings and sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) by telling them that defending our creed and country is one of the foremost obligations which cannot be avoided.[6]

[6] Taliban, "The Introduction of Sheikh Moulayi Hibatullah Akhunza," *Jihadology*, December 13, 2016, 9.

The piece goes on to describe the invasion that Habibullah fought against as "the coalition of crusaders headed by brutal American invaders and armed with sophisticated weapons and modern technology."[7] This was made all the more impressive because of the war weariness and infighting of the Afghani people, according to the article. A subtheme of the article is the continuation of the Afghani people, already devastated by the Soviet wars and the subsequent chaos in Afghanistan, to wage jihad against foreign invaders. Instrumental to this will to fight was the inspiration of Habibullah, and according to the pronouncement:

> Actually it was the courage and strong determination of brave leaders like 'Sheikh Hibatullah Akhunzada' and his faithful colleagues that encouraged and inspired Mujahidin of the Islamic Emirate and the Muslim masses of our country; which resulted in a humiliating and embarrassing defeat for American super power and NATO – the greatest military alliance of crusade forces in the world.[8]

As shown with the excerpts above, this piece, concerned with glorifying and legitimizing the new Taliban leader, uses the Crusader label to present Habibullah as a champion standing against the warring and malicious Crusaders, the driving force behind the present invasion. In fact, the only times the Crusader label is used in this piece are in the "His Vital Role in Re-launching Jihad Against the Foreign Invasion" section. This section intends to send the message to the membership of the Taliban that not only does their new leader stand for Islam and jihad, he stands against the mightiest of our foes, the Crusaders, and stands victorious, one of the many reasons to support him in his new role as our leader.

A Statement Marking 10 Years Since the Start of the Crusader War on Afghanistan was posted on the Ansar al-Mujahideen English language forum (a web forum which sees the release

[7] *Ibid*, 9
[8] *Ibid*, 10

of a large volume of jihadist propaganda) in 2011 by either a supporter or member of the Taliban. The statement essentially speaks about the inevitable defeat of the Americans in Afghanistan and claims an enduring jihad that will never cease until the Crusaders have been defeated and driven from Afghanistan. The statement begins by describing the war in Afghanistan as a brutal effort by the Crusaders:

> It has now been 10 years since the start of the brutal Zionist-Crusader war on the long-suffering Afghan people. On October 7th 2001 virtually the entire Western world joined the Zionist-Crusader war on the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.[9]

The statement goes on to list the ways that the war is now in favor of the jihadists, describing it first as a series of calamity befalling the Crusaders:

> The Crusaders are being made to taste defeat on a daily basis – and each defeat they taste now is merely an appetizer for the final defeat that awaits them, when they finally flee Afghanistan – never to return. The Crusaders are being attacked in devastating new ways, and all their technology is powerless to defend them… They are being killed again and again by Mujahideen who have successfully infiltrated the security forces, to such an extent that there is no longer a single puppet that is fully trusted by his Masters. The Crusaders – principally those from Canada and France – are tripping over themselves in their rush to escape from the Mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. America and Britain will soon find that all of their coalition partners have deserted them, and left them to be annihilated by the Mujahideen.[10]

The statement then describes the power and tenacity of the mujahideen in their jihad against the Crusaders:

> On the other hand, in the ranks of the Mujahideen the situation is the exact opposite. The Mujahideen are increasing in number and morale every single day, and Allah bestows victory after victory upon them. The Mujahideen are securing town after town, district after district, indeed they are now controlling parts of Afghanistan that they did not control during the glorious rule of the Emirate prior to the Crusader invasion in 2001… And as for the

[9] Ansar al-Mujāhidīn English Forum, "A Statement Marking 10 Years Since the Start of the Crusader War on Afghanistan," *Jihadology*, October 6, 2011.
[10] *Ibid*, 1

> recent comment by Leon Panetta that the defeat of 'Al-Qaeda' (the blanket label under which all Jihad against the Crusaders is known) is now within reach – that all that remains is to eliminate a few more key individuals?! Have you not seen that as Allah bestows Martyrdom on one of the Believers that dozens, hundreds or thousands of others rush to take his place?[11]

In this online posting, the author is trying to spread the word of emerging Taliban supremacy using the Crusader label as their primary propaganda tool, grouping together all of the militaries that invaded after 2001 and subjecting them under that connotation heavy label to claims of their destruction, devastation, and defeat. This is a typical example of the Crusader label used to portray the mujahideen as larger than life warriors capable of fighting and winning against unsurmountable odds, by claiming their victories against the Crusaders. Glittering generalities are often propped up by a name called opponent.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghrib's (AQIM, al-Qaeda's West African branch) *Arrival of the Knights Upon a Grouping of the Slaves of the Cross in Gao City* is an announcement about a successful three pronged terror attack launched against the Mali government in the city of Gao. The government of Mali recently received aid, in the form of military intervention, from the French government in 2013 to uproot jihadist forces that had taken control of much of Northern Mali following a separatist movement beginning in 2012. AQIM is still been active in the region, with the publication date of this piece being in 2016.

[11] *Ibid*, 2

The statement begins with a quick recap of the situation, the rebellion in Mali that was put down by the French, while chastising the French for "beginning with their arrogance and traditional insolence, repeating its historic mistakes…"[12] The statement recounts how in the insurrection of the Awazad (the original rebels of Northern Mali), the Awazad explicitly announced that "The crusaders in our land have no place in our house, nor any of our goods."[13] Immediately after this, the statement reads:

> Then came the uprising from the Knights of the "Almoravids" whose actions were frankly confirmed by their words. They chose three goals in the city of "Gawa" that the Crusaders use as a military base, where they launched their armies and their planes to conquer and humiliate the Muslims.[14]

Importantly, when describing the various stages of the attack, the Crusader and affiliate labels are used, often with graphic wording:

> The hero suicide bomber, "Musab Al-Ansari", launched his car bomb, demolishing a barracks of the UN, where there were soldiers of the Crusaders and their apostate agents, and their bodies, praise be to god, were blown away and their carcasses launched through the air.[15]

Each of the three targets mentioned above were all described as Crusader targets, either the "Crusader headquarters" or "the third objective where Crusader soldiers resided."[16] Having the targets specifically labelled as Crusader assets legitimizes them as goals and glorifies their attackers as they are depicted as striking down great devils.

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[12] AQIM, "Arrival of the Knights upon a grouping of the slaves of the Cross in Gao city," *Jihadology*, 2016.
[13] *Ibid*, 1
[14] *Ibid*, 1
[15] *Ibid*, 1
[16] *Ibid*, 1

At the end of the statement, AQIM reiterates the three main points they wish to accomplish with these and other attacks, the first point reading:

> To remind the Crusader invaders that their repeated crimes will not go unpunished, as long as a vein pulses in us and our eyelid blinks.[17]

With the consistent description of the French and government targets as Crusader assets, the verbal attacks specifically against Crusaders, and the title concerning "the slaves of the Cross," AQIM is using the Crusader label in an effort to demonize their enemies and attach their local conflict to a much larger struggle against the Crusader foe. This example is an important one in that it demonstrates the reach of the Crusader label, that it is used not only in the Middle East but in lands as far away as the shores of the Atlantic.

[17] *Ibid*, 2

6.3 Publications- Inspire by AQAP

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is typically described as al-Qaeda's more militarily elite branch, holding territory in the East of Yemen. AQAP also boasts the publication of their own English language magazine, *Inspire*, which produces articles from reminiscing about 9/11 to home tutorials for assassination and improvised grenades. As in *Dabiq*, *Inspire* makes similar use of the Crusader label to motivate and recruit. Inspire does, however, not generally focus on the creation of a Crusader mythos like *Dabiq*. Indeed, it makes noticeably less us of the Crusader label then *Dabiq* and uses it mostly in reference to America, and not in the monolithic sense that ISIS has created. In fact, in the 6th issue of *Inspire*, which covers the elimination of Osama bin Laden at the hands of Seal Team Six, there is no mention of Crusaders at all. There is, however, a noticeable change in later issues that make use of the Crusader mythos in a way more consistent with the beliefs of ISIS, notably that the agents of the Crusaders are behind various ills of the Islamic world.

The first issue, published in 2010, contains an article entitled "Message to the People of Yemen," an exhortation by Ayman al-Zawahiri, the present leader of al-Qaeda and a powerful ideological figure under Osama bin Laden, to rise up against the pre-civil war dictator of Yemen, Abdullah Salih. In this article, the Crusader label is repeatedly used to denounce Yemen, Abdullah Salih, and any refusal to fight in al-Qaeda's jihad. Zawahiri used the Crusader label several times in the following excerpt:

> I ask Allah to grant resolve to our brothers, the mujahidin on the Arabian Peninsula and in beloved Yemen, and to protect them from the Crusaders and their agents, and to send down upon them His strong help and illuminating conquest and near release, and to make them a thorn in the throats of the Crusaders and their agents like the House of Sa`ud and `Ali

> `Abdullah Salih, who sold their religion, honor and countries so Crusader America would be pleased with them.[18]

With this Zawahiri uses the Crusader label to exhort his soldiers, and possible recruits, to be successful in their war against America and the Yemeni government, to be wary of the Crusaders and their agents, and to denounce Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government for their cooperation with America. Notice that the final line deals with denouncing Saudi Arabia and Yemen by essentially accusing them of selling their soles to the American Crusaders for power. This accusation is an extremely common one in ISIS propaganda as well, evidenced with the *Shield of the Cross* video.

In an extremely explicit enunciation of al-Qaeda's understanding of the Crusader mythos, found in issue number three of *Inspire*, AQAP propagandists write about the goals of "Operation Hemorrhage," a campaign to strike American cargo planes in order to cause economic damage. In the article entitled "The Objective of Operation Hemorrhage," ostensibly written by AQAP's "Head of Foreign Operations," the authors explain their understanding of the conflict with the Crusaders and the inspiration for the symbolic names chosen for use in the operation. These symbols include Reynald de Chatillon and his execution at the hands of Saladin:

> We are fighting a war against American tyranny. This is a new Crusade waged by the West against Islam. Therefore we wanted to put things into proper perspective. This current battle fought by the West is not an isolated battle but is a continuation of a long history of aggression by the West against the Muslim world. In order to revive and bring back this history we listed the names of Reynald Krak and Diego Diaz [an inquisitor during the Spanish inquisition] as the recipients of the packages. We got the former name from Reynald de Chatillon, the lord of Krak des Chevaliers who was one of the worst and most treacherous of the Crusade's leaders. He fell into captivity and Salahuddeen personally beheaded him… Today we are facing a coalition of Crusaders and Zionists and we in al Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula will never forget Palestine.[19]

[18] AQAP, "Issue #1 May Our Souls Be Sacrificed for You!" *Inspire*, Summer 2010, 11.
[19] AQAP, "Issue #3 $4,200," *Inspire*, November, 2010, 7.

This article contains one of the few explanations of the Crusader mythos found in *Inspire*, as well as one of the most explicit explanations of the symbolism of the Crusades in the entire global jihadist movement. As explored in the chapter on Saladin and the Third Crusade, Reynald de Chatillon is one of the major characters in the years leading up to the Third Crusade and one of Saladin's (here spelled Salahuddeen) most antagonistic rivals.

AQAP publishes another article in *Inspire* by Zawahiri that links the present day conflict to the Crusades of nearly 800 years ago. In "Letter to the American People," Zawahiri concludes:

> Should the Americans not heed our advice and invitation to guidance and righteousness, then they shall suffer the curse of Bush, who has called them to a crusade in which they will be defeated by the Mujahideen, Allah willing, just as their crusader forefathers were sent home defeated and disgraced by our Mujahid forefathers. Should the Americans not take heed, they shall meet the fate of the Soviets, who fled Afghānistān to face military defeat, political disintegration, ideological collapse, and economic bankruptcy.

The curse of "Crusader" Bush is the same as the curse of the original Crusaders in this excerpt. There appears to be a pattern, in that most of the Crusader heavy articles in *Inspire* are written by Zawahiri, which points to him being one of the main ideological proponents of the Crusader mythos in al-Qaeda, and therefore in the entire jihadist movement. Zawahiri was, alongside Osama bin Laden, a major student of Sayid Qutb, who as mentioned earlier was the main ideological proponent of a Crusader mythos being used in violent Islamism (who was executed under Gamal Abdel Nasser, a proponent of his own type of Crusader mythos revolving around Saladin).

Al-Qaeda makes repeated claims that the creation of images and satire of Muhammad the Prophet is in fact an arm of the new Crusade, an ideological assault in the war against Islam. Al-Qaeda also treats the respect of the West for freedom of speech and tolerance as hypocrisy, in context of the continued wars in the Middle East. A quote of Osama bin Laden's concerning this is actually used in the al-Shabaab video analyzed below. An *Inspire* article entitled "Let Your

Hearts Be Prepared, to the Freedom of our Actions," the magazine decries what they describe as a mockery of Islam worthy of death, writing about the duty of Muslims to repay such blasphemy of the new Crusade with blood:

> Then came your publishing of these drawings, which came in the framework of a new crusade ... All that is your confirmation of the continuation of the war, as well as a test for the Muslims in the religion: "Is the Messenger more beloved to them than their lives and wealth? The answer is what you see, not what you hear. And may our mothers be bereaved of us if we fail to help the Messenger of Allah.[20]

In one of the first references of the Safavids in *Inspire*, in another article penned by Zawahiri, the al-Qaeda leader says:

> As for our Muslim Ummah, we say to it: Perhaps it is now clear to you that your rulers are tools in the hands of the secular Safawi (Safavid) Crusader alliance - the alliance of the devil led by America and the West. And perhaps it is now clear to you that you will not put your foot on the path to salvation unless you make takfir on those ruling tools and remove the mask of betrayal from their ugly faces.[21]

Again, the idea of the Muslim enemies of al-Qaeda being Safavids or allies of the Crusaders is used in order to rouse potential al-Qaeda supporters and to denounce those who are opposed to the jihadist group. The idea of unifying in the face of this otherwise overwhelming alliance, a tactic also used by ISIS (to ironically denounce al-Qaeda), is present in the article, as Zawahiri goes on to say:

> O Mujahideen of Islam: Unity, unity, and togetherness, togetherness in the face of this secular campaign of the Safawi-Crusader alliance. If we do not unite in confronting it, when will we unite? Our Muslim Ummah: The agents of America stole the sacrifices of your revolutions through movements attributed to Islam, which led you to slaughter, and

[20] AQAP, "Issue #14 Assassination Operations," *Inspire*, Summer, 2015, 17.
[21] AQAP, "Issue #16 The 9/17 Operations," *Inspire*, Autumn, 2016, 15.

> left you as prey for the wolves, because they were raised and they brought up their followers like sheep, and sheep not made to fight wolves. Wolves, however, are killed by lions.[22]

In an interesting nod to the Arab Spring, the series of revolutions that swept through the Middle East beginning in 2010, toppling or destabilizing most regimes in the region with promises of change and progress, Zawahiri attaches America and the Crusader label to the failures of the Arab Spring to materialize meaningful improvements in most countries. What's more, Zawahiri attributes that theft, as he calls it, specifically to Islamic agents of Crusader America, the non al-Qaeda movements that eked out spheres of influence for themselves in the power vacuums following the wake of the Spring. The above example represents a shift from the first issues of the magazine, in that it represents an expansive usage of the Crusader mythos reminiscent of how ISIS employs it. Zawahiri uses the Crusader label to imply a wider web of Crusader influence, alliance, and hidden agents.

[22] *Ibid*, 15

6.4 Video- Al-Shabaab Battle Report

Al-Shabaab is an East African based jihadist group that pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012, but is recently experiencing a rift amongst its members as some try to defect to ISIS (actually mentioned in *Dabiq*, see section on interviews in *Dabiq*).[23] Al-Shabaab has been using the Crusader label for years and there are many examples of what can be described as propagandized battle reports which make heavy use of the Crusader label, essentially using it whenever government forces are mentioned. These battle reports use the Crusader label to glorify the defeats of government forces by attaching the label to copious descriptions and images of government soldiers' deaths, bolstering the image of the enemy that al-Shabaab jihadists defeated in the video. These tactics appear to mimic ISIS propaganda of the sort in terms of video construction, if less sophisticated. However, there are videos that resemble the ISIS pattern but with less production and cinematographic quality well before the advent of ISIS, such as the al-Shabaab video *Punish Them Severely to Disperse Those who are Behind Them, Part 1: Ambush on a Kenyan Crusader Army Convoy: Bibi- Islamic State of Juba,*[24] which also deals with the Crusader label. This points to ISIS not inventing but becoming the most successful user of the technique, and the increase in frequency of the Crusader label between *Ambush on a Kenyan Crusader Army Convoy* and *Avenging the Honor of our Prophet, Storming the Burundian Crusaders' Base,* which will be examined in the following section, demonstrates a correlation (if not causation) between the rise of ISIS and an increase in the popularity of the Crusader label.

[23] Robyn Kriel and Briana Duggan, "Al-Shabaab faction pledges allegiance to ISIS," *CNN*, October 23, 2015.
[24] Al-Katai'b Media (al-Shabaab), "Series: Punish Them Severely to Disperse Those Who Are Behind Them, Part 1: Ambush On a Kenyan Crusader Army Convoy: Bibi – Islamic State of Juba," *Jihadology*, April 20, 2013.

The following video is an example of the Crusader label used in non-ISIS propaganda videos. The Crusader label here is actually used more so than in many ISIS videos, which often elect to use the terms which denote alliance to the Crusaders for local forces (unless airstrikes or other Western involvement are shown), whereas al-Shabaab uses the Crusader label against its main enemies, the local government forces. This could be because of the larger presence of Christians in those fighting al-Shabaab, as in the following video for example, a cross used by a group of Burundian soldiers is destroyed. Soldiers from nations such as Ethiopia, Burundi, Uganda, Somalia, Kenya, and peacekeepers from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are all labelled specifically as Crusaders, in many cases with their country of origin placed before Crusaders.[25]

Avenging the Honor of our Prophet, Storming the Burundian Crusaders' Base is an al-Shabaab propaganda video detailing their successful attack against a Burundian military encampment. The video follows the popular video construction used by ISIS, with an intro based on impressive looking graphics followed by an overview of the battle interspersed with speech excerpts, propaganda captions, slow motions, and other cinematographic devices. This video relies heavily on the Crusader label for its captions in the video, using the device in its most basic form as a name calling label to delegitimize and demonize the Burundian soldiers and give glory to the jihadists who defeated them. This video is interestingly captioned in both Arabic and English.

Almost five minutes into the video, following the intro, which includes a quote from Osama bin Laden saying "Then you published these caricatures, (in reference to pictures of Muhammad) which came against the backdrop of a new crusade and which the pope of the Vatican played a

[25] "Al-Shabaab," Counter Terrorism Guide.

major role"[26] and a short interview and praise of the suicide bomber who would initiate the attack, the upcoming battle is described with the following:

> The battle plan: The battle will begin with a Martyrdom operation carried out by brother 'Amar' at the gates of the Crusaders' base in Leego. This will then be followed by a quick raid executed by Mujahideen fighters from the 'Sheikh Mukhtar Abu Zubeyr Battalion' who will storm the base, overrun it and massacre the Burundian Crusaders inside.[27]

The various steps of this plan are shown with captions making use of the Crusader label. A convoy of jihadists racing towards the fight is captioned "Storming into the Crusader base"[28] amidst the screaming and cracking of rounds and a flurry of tracers, the sounds emphasized in the production of the video. About a third of the way through the video the bulk of the fighting is over, having been shown in spectacular violence throughout the previous minutes. At this time, jihadists are videoed crawling over a berm topped with barbed wire, captioned as "Mujahideen plunge into the heart of the Crusader base."

A quote of Osama bin Laden dominates the screen in the middle of the bloody raid into the Burundian base, sandwiched between shots of massacred Burundian soldiers. The quote reads "Indeed this is the verdict of our Prophet against anyone who mocks him and belittles the religion and ridicules it."[29] Amidst the abundance of Crusader mentions and the Osama bin Laden quote about the "new Crusade" at the beginning of the video, this is a clear indictment of the "Burundian Crusaders" belittling Islam, a major and oft repeated charge against the Crusaders in the Crusader mythos. After the montage showcasing the aftermath of the battle that constitutes the midsection

[26] Al-Shabaab, "Avenging the Honor of Our Prophet: Storming the Burundian Crusaders' Base Leego – Lower Shabelle," *Jihadology*, September 23, 2015.
[27] *Ibid*, Intro
[28] *Ibid*, 05:30
[29] *Ibid*, 09:53

of the film, an al-Shabaab soldier is shown walking into a tent in the now captured Burundian base, a tent which has a modest cross erected in the corner. The jihadist throws down the wooden cross, stomping and destroying it in slow motion while the Quranic verse 11:101, which speaks against beseeching other gods instead of God, playing as the cross is ripped apart.

A subcategory of this video is emphasizing the retreat of the Burundian soldiers. This includes superimposing speeches by al-Shabaab leaders, Osama bin Laden, and Quranic verses, which deal with the enemies of God fleeing in the face of righteous men, over scenes of Burundians fleeing. In a scene of al-Shabaab soldiers and a heavy machine gun mounted on a truck parading down a road, the results of the battle are displayed with the caption "8 towns in the Wilaayah of Lower Shabelle returned to the authority of the Islamic Shari'ah after the crusaders and their apostate allies fled in fear…"[30]

"Finishing off the remaining Crusaders"[31] captions some of the last scenes of the film, wherein wounded and dying Burundian soldiers are executed as al-Shabaab jihadists review the battlefield. After this a line of dead soldiers is shown, stopping to show a close up snapshot of who is claimed to be an Ethiopian soldier. This shot is captioned with "an Ethiopian crusader who fled to the Burundian camp escaping death after his convoy was massacred in an ambush by the Mujahideen two weeks prior to this battle,"[32] accompanied by a picture of a burnt out military transport imposed on the right half of the screen. The video ends with a scene of a troop transport laden with jihadists dragging three Burundian corpses behind their vehicle, ropes tied around their necks creating a gruesome chain of corpses. In this video, the Crusader label is used mainly in association

[30] *Ibid,* 19:50
[31] *Ibid,* 22:17
[32] *Ibid,* 24:56

with graphic and forceful imagery, with brutal violence and defeat being leveled on the Burundians. This is done to create the image of an organization, al-Shabaab, capable of visiting total and horrible destruction, and revenge, upon their Crusader enemies. It is deployed to project might and confidence over an easily recognizable enemy, which by extension gives al-Shabaab greater recognition, locally and internationally.

6.5 The ISIS Pledge of Allegiance

Politicians are sometimes accused of "wrapping themselves in the flag," whereby they couch their motives in unabashed patriotism. This type of activity is not exclusive to legitimate governments, as various jihadist organizations and members wrap themselves in the black flag of jihad against the Crusaders. Especially with the onset of ISIS's self-declared caliphate, legitimizing expressions of solidarity or outright allegiance are prominent manifestations of this. Declaring allegiance and coalition is never a small decision, and these groups and spokesmen might feel the need to provide a sound ideological defense of their actions. Within the context of ISIS's birth and the current plethora of jihadist movements, there is a growing "anti-fitna" movement, whereby various jihadist organizations call for an end to infighting and a refocusing upon their non-Islamist enemies. Many organizations subscribing to this movement attempt to avoid ISIS's demands for outright allegiance by following what jihad scholar Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi calls a "third way," whereby these organizations declare support for ISIS but skirt the issue of outright allegiance.[33] The expressions of solidarity and support mentioned above are a major component of the third way, and there are powerful examples of the Crusader label and mythos being used to support such statements. Even al-Qaeda aligned groups use this cover when announcing their support for ISIS.

AQAP published a statement in 2014, the year ISIS declared their caliphate, denouncing the bombing and killing of ISIS fighters by the "Crusader Alliance" and affirming AQAP's support of ISIS in the face of the Crusaders. Specifically, the statement repeats several times the need for

[33] "Those within the global jihadi community trying to uphold this 'third way' are doing so on *anti-fitna* grounds: namely, the notion that since all jihadis have the same end goal of a world-wide Caliphate, they should put aside differences and unite ranks as 'brothers' in creed and *manhaj* ('program'), while confronting the common enemies."- Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi

jihadists to band together and wage war solely against the Crusader campaign, forbidding attacks against ISIS:

> So within the Crusader war on Islam, the global alliance has undertaken a fierce campaign against the mujahideen in Iraq and al-Sham, especially our brothers in the Islamic State… In this context we affirm our support for our brothers against the global Crusader campaign, and we share their enmity against this campaign. We also affirm that it is forbidden to participate in the war against them [IS] on the grounds that they are khawarij, and indeed they are no such thing. We call on all the mujahideen to forget their disagreements, put an end to the infighting between themselves, and strive to push back the Crusader campaign that is targeting all [of them] … Indeed this campaign is a Crusader campaign against Islam… Therefore, we call on all Muslims to strive to support their brothers against the Crusaders by any means they themselves can- in wealth or tongue.[34]

This message does not mean a full truce against ISIS, as al-Qaeda still refuses to acknowledge ISIS's declared caliphate, a rather nonnegotiable demand from the viewpoint of ISIS. In line with the anti-fitna movement described above, AQAP issued the statement in a bid to not necessarily support ISIS in terms of cooperation, but to stymy the potentially lethal infighting that threatens to destroy the jihadist movement in Syria and Iraq. The Crusaders are used as the primary propaganda tool to add a sense of urgency in and to instill the value of fighting a common enemy that is far deadlier than any rival jihadist group. The boogeyman of the Crusaders is used to convince the jihadists mired in civil war to redirect their efforts away from an otherwise tempting target.

A joint statement issued by AQIM and AQAP entitled "Support for Muslims Over the Alliance of Crusaders and Apostates"[35] in the same year as the AQAP statement above, follows the anti-fitna agenda and uses the Crusaders in a similar capacity. The Crusaders, specifically

[34] AQAP, "Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula Statement: Solidarity with the Islamic State," *Aymennjawad.org*, October 17, 2014.
[35] AQIM and AQAP, "Al-Qa'ida in Islamic Maghreb and Arabian Peninsula Statement on the U.S.-led coalition against IS," *Aymennjawad.org*, September 16, 2014.

America, the chief enemy of al-Qaeda never far from their Crusader references, are declared to be using the destruction of ISIS as a pretext for ramping up their war to destroy Islam. Even in the war against ISIS, there is supposedly an ulterior motive far dastardlier then another conquest, something that warrants special consideration by other jihadists:

> Then there is America- the head of disbelief- and the symbol of the enemy and tyranny, rearing its head again, enlisting behind it allies from the Crusaders and their apostate collaborators, leading the Crusader attempt to wage war on Islam and Muslims, to increase the misfortunes of the Ummah, under the pretext of striking the Islamic State and annihilate it- so they have claimed!![36]

In an opening to a slew of bullet points strongly condemning the violence and loss of jihadist life and manpower to the infighting, the Crusaders and their alliance are again named the true enemies of Islam and the reason for a need to halt the civil conflict:

> As for this oppressive Crusader effort, we can only stand with Islam and Muslims, against Crusader America and its alliance (Jewish-Crusader-Safavid-Apostate) that is the true enemy of the Ummah and the Path and the first to wage war on Shari'a, so we declare this stance of ours to please God, to support our mujahideen brothers over the disbelievers, and defend our Muslim people wherever they are.[37]

One of these points calls on Muslims everywhere to stop their sons from joining the militaries arrayed against the jihadists, to prevent them from "participating in this oppressive enemy war that aims in truth to preserve American Crusader hegemony over our Muslim Ummah…"[38] In this rare joint statement, these two far flung branches of al-Qaeda see fit to use the Crusader mythos to incentivize their strategic goal of halting the infighting, which is apparently becoming a serious drain on al-Qaeda resources. The true enemy must take precedence over the near and lesser enemy,

[36] *Ibid,* 3
[37] *Ibid,* 3
[38] *Ibid,* 4

especially when the true enemies are the bloodthirsty and otherwise overwhelming Crusaders and their supporters.

Majlis Shura al-Mujahideen, a Gaza and Sinai based jihadist group that took a third way anti-fitna stance in 2014, cited, as AQAP and AQIM did above, the Crusader menace for the need to support ISIS. In a statement entitled "Support for the Islamic State in the Face of the Crusader Attack," Majlis Shura al-Mujahideen opens with the following:

> In these days the mill of a new Crusader war is turning against the Ummah of Islam, through a Crusader alliance led by America and standing with it the creeds of disbelief and organizations of apostasy despite their differences, in an attempt to stop the Islamic expansion embodied in the Islamic State's conquests and their expansion over wide portions of terrain of Iraq and al-Sham, and in light of those developments we say good luck by God.[39]

In these words, the Crusader alliance's war is framed specifically in terms of stopping ISIS's advances (in a similar but more forceful way than the sentiments expressed in the joint AQIM/AQAP statement). This puts an interesting spotlight on ISIS and acknowledges their lead in the war against the terrible Crusaders, something which denotes a greater degree of deference to ISIS than the al-Qaeda aligned statements above. Expanding upon this, the statement goes on to speak about the necessity of supporting ISIS in the face of the Crusader war, going so far as to claim denouncing ISIS is apostasy, saying:

> With the growing seriousness of that Crusader alliance (rendered helpless by God's permission), responsibility and faithfulness on the shoulder of the Muslims in every place as regards what is happening are growing greater and more serious: thus support for the Islamic State is obligatory on every Muslim with any means he has…[40]

> And it was from God's preference that the new Crusader attack… revealed many of the dark faces that have been made to drink hypocrisy for some time… the sheikhs of the

[39] Majlis Shura al-Mujahideen, "Support for the Islamic State," *AymennJawad.org*, October 10, 2014, 2.
[40] *Ibid*, 2

> authorities and the scholars… who are not ashamed to express frankly their hostility to the Islamic State and publicly support the Crusader attack on it, showing no regard for the fact that supporting the disbelievers over the believers constitutes recalcitrant apostasy…[41]

For this organization in Gaza and the Sinai, the jihad against the Crusaders is championed by ISIS, but for reasons of their own they will not declare allegiance.

There are also instances of previously al-Qaeda aligned groups using the Crusader mythos as part of their justification for defecting to ISIS. Jamaat Ansar al-Islam was a group that came out of al-Qaeda's Ansar al-Islam, originally a group operating around Iraqi Kurdistan that suffered critical defeats during the 2003 US led invasion. After reconsolidating into Jamaat Ansar al-Islam in 2007, the group was often at odds with ISIS, even when ISIS was still aligned to al-Qaeda as the Islamic State of Iraq. Brief spurts of cooperation between the two organizations appeared during the capture of Mosul and Tikrit, ending in ISIS double crossing their partners and repressing Jamaat Ansar al-Islam. In a wave of mass defection from the fading Jamaat Ansar al-Islam to ISIS (around 90% of their fighters by some estimates),[42] resulting essentially in the dissolution of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam, a statement announcing the mass allegiance to ISIS had the following to say:

> It (ISIS) is also the one [state] that has defeated the Crusaders, broken the thorn of the Safavids, annihilated the apostate Sahwa forces, bloodied the nose of the secularist Kurds, opened up the abode of the Muslims, and got rid of the artificially imposed borders among the land of the Muslims.[43]

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[41] *Ibid*, 2

[42] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "The Islamic State (IS) and Pledges of Allegiance: The Case of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam," *AymennJawad.org*, November 28, 2014, 1.

[43] Majlis Shura Jamaat Ansar al-Islam in Iraq, "Statement of Support," in *The Islamic State (IS) and Pledges of Allegiance: The Case of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam*, Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi (Aymennjawad.org), 2.

In this somewhat controversial announcement of allegiance, the group's representative chose to use the Crusader mythos as the chief reasoning for said allegiance (after the representative states that the defectors were persuaded that ISIS was religiously legitimate in claiming their caliphate). ISIS is credited as being the one entity to successfully stand against the Crusade and its allies (it is important to note that Crusaders were placed first in the list of enemies, all claimed vociferously to be agents of the Crusaders in ISIS propaganda), and in light of that success the overwhelming body of soldiers from Jamaat Ansar al-Islam would join ISIS's jihad against the cross.

This reason for allegiance to ISIS, that they are the most successful in the jihad against the Crusaders, is quoted by ISIS itself when announcing the initial round of allegiances from five countries following the official declaration of their caliphate. In a statement from ISIS's General Media Committee, issued before al-Baghdadi's speech concerning the allegiances, ISIS declared:

> …an exalted Imam of the Quraysh [Prophet Muhammad's tribe], who has established the jihad, recruited the soldiers and has resisted- along with his righteous/upright soldiers- the violence of the people of shirk [idolatry/polytheism] and apostasy. Further, he has punished the Crusaders and their Safavid and secularist followers. He has wiped out the borders; and has revived the glory of Islam.[44]

The Crusader mythos did not originate in the minds of ISIS propagandists, nor is it their exclusive domain today. It was popularized by al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, who were in turn influenced by men like Sayyid Qutb who had his own ideas of a new crusade. Although the Crusader mythos takes on a more intense and fleshed out manifestation within the ranks of ISIS as the final crusade, the idea of waging a jihad against a new or continuing crusade against Islam is used throughout the jihadist world, both geographically and historically. The propaganda tactics used

[44] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Islamic State [IS] Acknowledgements of Allegiances, Translation and Analysis," *Aymennjawad.org*, November 16, 2014, 2.

in video and print involving the Crusaders are used by other organizations in efforts to achieve goals similar to the goals of ISIS's films and publications. The Crusader phenomena is one that permeates the world, just as the jihadist movement it lives through is spread throughout the globe. It is ISIS who takes it to new heights, but it is the modern jihad that is truly its father and keeper. The Crusader is used as an easily grasped symbol for a universal and evil enemy, one that is used at once to denounce and to glorify, to decry and to unify, to be vague and specific, and to make what is local global. It is only natural that such a tool, so easily steeped in symbolism, would find a place in the arsenal of organizations dedicated ostensibly to the same goal.

Conclusion

The Crusader mythos of ISIS is a bit of an enigma. It can be absurdly inclusive or presciently specific. It can function as a sharp critique, encompassing a flawed but nuanced vision of the past or a generic slander used to steal property. At once, it both represents a connection to genuine history and rejects that historical reality for an alternative conspiracy. When employing the label, ISIS plays fast and loose with the boundaries that they themselves set for the term. They either go so far as to claim al-Qaeda and Bashar al-Assad are in league with the primarily American "Crusaders," or they become ultra-specific with a detailed study of the Papacy, from the Council of Clermont held by Pope Urban II to the recent overtures for peace from Pope Francis I. ISIS uses their terms, their ideology, and their malleable propaganda as they wish in a seemingly random and chaotic way. But even with this lack of coherence in the label's actual meaning, there is a certain cunning in the intended misdirection of the term's use. Claiming two opposing ideas simultaneously does not necessarily invalidate either of them. In a chilling use of double speak, ISIS propagandists browbeat their audience into believing there is only one truth; that the ideas they represent are not contradictory but mutually supportive, contradictory to reason. Historical truths are merged with present falsehoods and exaggerations to reshape memory into a new history. The truth of the past is infected with a parasite, the Crusader label, that retroactively shapes the motivation and actions of people or groups, past and present, into whatever ISIS wants.

The Crusader label is a cheap and efficient way to tap into this parallel historical world. As a major asset in ISIS's propaganda of agitation, the Crusader label is used in name calling and glittering generalities, atrocity, and invincibility propaganda. The propagandist stirs up the passions of those who would believe them, pointing to a foe that buries children in rubble and burns

Qurans, a Crusader who once waded through a sea of Muslim blood come again to burn down the law of God. Any true Muslim, holds the propagandist, would not stand for these evil strongmen returning to their streets, breathing again the holy air of God's people. Any true Muslim would rejoice at their executions, praise the heavens when their apostate servants are brought low, cheer at the blood of their children pouring into the gutters. The propagandist agitates with atrocity, moving their audience to fanaticism in the name of defeating their Crusader foe. Any organization capable of resisting, even defeating, such a powerful and evil enemy is thus worth joining. The hero of the propagandist's tale of unending enmity, the knights of the East, are ISIS.

If anyone falls prey to ISIS propaganda of agitation, often made easier by the real suffering they feel from wars, sectarianism, or romanticism that threaten them every day, then their opinions become putty in the hands of those who can attach the Crusader label. By assigning someone an agitating role in the final Crusade, ISIS corrupts them with an association to an alternate reality of permanent hatred. The actions of those called Crusaders cannot be seen in the way normal actions are, because their fabricated precedent is abnormal. Their urges and actions cannot be judged normally, as their motivations come from an imaginary place. The end game of the Crusader mythos is to distance its adherents from the real world of facts and morality, to indoctrinate them into this idea of the final Crusade, this end times struggle between good and evil. Even the Crusaders and jihadists of the actual Crusades held a shred of respect and honor for each other as warriors and human beings. ISIS holds nothing for those it seeks to destroy. The absolute hatred that they hold dictated the course of over 800 years of history has never existed, except in themselves.

Propaganda has and is continuously proving itself to be a cornerstone of ISIS' state building enterprise. As they swept through the states of Iraq, Syria, and other countries such as Afghanistan through the allegiance of other extremist groups, ISIS propaganda accompanied them. The

widespread and concerted efforts at broadcasting their propaganda to the territories under their control are proof of the importance that ISIS places on their propaganda. As the Crusader mythos is one of their most favored tools in their war of words and images, one can reasonably conclude that the idea of an enemy, an idea that ISIS shapes and controls, is one of their favored tools of statecraft. They use it in internal coercion to promote both acceptance of the rule of their black flag, and as an outward facing tool to garner legitimization and support for their statehood. It is their goal not to be seen as a group or an organization at war, but rather as a people fighting for the future of their nation.

Propaganda, in this sense, is nothing new. History, both ancient and modern, is replete with examples of propaganda used to bolster the idea of a new state or nation. Saddam Hussein tried to strengthen his own image as a proud national father of Iraq and the Arab cause by not just supporting the Palestinian cause, but by demonizing his enemies. The Nazis galvanized the German people into vigorous support of the new regime in part by the demonization of the Jews. Rallies and even riots were formed not out of a sense of outright nation building, as was the intent, but out of the idea of Nazis fighting Jews. It is one thing to appear to stand for the oppressed, it is another thing to stand against the oppressor. The act of creating and fighting an enemy through the use of propaganda is a powerful method of state building, one that ISIS is clearly interested in. ISIS goes extremely far in this, seeking to change not just the political or even social realities around them, but life in its entirety. By fighting against the Crusaders, ISIS is trying to forge its conquests from the possessions of a terror group and warlords into a bona fide state with a devoted and rabid people. Delving deeper into the comparison of propaganda between ISIS, Saddam, and the Nazis, we see another facet of propaganda in the course of state building. Each of these groups glorified and legitimated themselves using the glory of the past in a bid to cement their power. One of the

first tasks for any group that has seized power is to solidify it, and a shortcut to real legitimacy is claiming succession to a group that is already legitimate. Saddam claimed to be the spiritual continuation of a great line of Iraqi leaders. The Nazis claimed guardianship of the German spirit, Teutonic heritage and the essence of Germaness stretching back to Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire, what they called the first of the three Reichs. ISIS, employing this technique, claims the mantle of leadership in an age old fight that they claim is as intrinsic to Islam as its people.

The presence of these propaganda techniques in the lands of ISIS begs the question: are these techniques working? The declarative theory of statehood, a theory that requires no recognition from other states (which has generally been quite the hurdle for ISIS), defines a state as a sovereign entity exhibiting four qualities: holding a defined territory; a government; a capacity to enter into relations with other states; and a permanent population. Propaganda can aid the achievement of each of these, but ISIS has shown little fortune in obtaining them. As of 2017, ISIS' capital of Raqqa is under siege, after a debilitating loss of Mosul, its chief holding in Iraq, along with much of its territory. The retrograde of the organization from a government to its traditional terror roots is beginning to show, as new terror attacks loom for Iraq, Syria, and the larger world. Where ISIS once held sway in the affairs of the Middle East, they are now hunted. The increase in defections, the joy with which people are liberated, and the lack of overt support for the group in many of its once held areas is evidence that ISIS' propaganda did not take root as well as they had hoped. Yet, as new bouts of sectarian violence and revenge killings erupt across the former territories of ISIS, one has to wonder whether or not ISIS succeeded in some way. Their vision of a coherent and legitimate state, no matter how powerful or realized it was, is now dead. That being said, ISIS may not have failed entirely. A new chapter in the global war on terror was penned by ISIS, and

their propaganda may be writing the next one. The foundations of a new generation of terrorists consumed with traditional hatreds and ISIS propaganda may be the outcome of ISIS' vast effort. Their caliphate may be crumbling, but their vision of a nation under an extremist and anti-Western Crusader ideology may be beginning. ISIS has clearly failed in three of the four criteria for state-hood, but they may have succeeded in establishing a permanent population to nurture their dream.

Where is the Crusader label going? It is difficult to say. A quick glance at the historical record shows that it is an ever changing thing, used and abused in a slew of contexts. Unfortunately, the parallel between Western involvement in the Middle East and the historic Crusades of so long ago is an easy one to make. In the hundred years since its inception, the term has only accumulated more material to work with. ISIS and its apocalypse certainly represent the newest evolution of the Crusader label, especially in the course of jihadist discourse. With that being said, the future of the Crusader label and the mythos that ISIS created is linked to the fate of the organization that nurtured it to its present state. ISIS is a new peak in the popularity of the Crusader mythos, spreading their ideas more forcefully around the globe as they expand or coopt local organizations. As ISIS falls from grace, the ideology that they champion so forcefully might also experience a decline, or at least a stagnation in usage. Or, if ISIS manages to hold on to their international control (or influence, control is always a strong word to use when describing jihadist franchises and their parent organizations) the label could experience a surge in growth, as the embattled group clings ever closer to their philosophical motivations. A continued expansion of the idea into Africa and Central Asia, where the Crusader mythos already takes root, is something to watch for. Even if ISIS is completely wiped off the face of the earth by their "Crusader" foe, their contagion has already spread wide and far into the minds of supporters the world over. If ISIS' influence is too powerful and invasive, then successor groups will take up the call of jihad against the Crusaders

in honor of their fallen caliphate. The splintering of the jihadist movement could therefore not result in any decrease in ISIS's Crusader mythos, or even see a new wave of the vengeful ideology.

Regardless of the clash between mujahideen and their sworn Crusader foe, the idea of comparing the Crusades to the present Western involvement in the Middle East is low hanging fruit. In his speech regarding the controversial referendum enhancing his executive power, President Erdogan of Turkey said the following about Western criticism of the referendum:

> The crusader mentality in the West and its servants at home have attacked us. We neither see, hear, nor acknowledge the political reports you'll prepare. We'll continue on our path. Talk to the hand. This country has carried out the most democratic elections, not seen anywhere in the West.[1]

A year earlier, in response to Pope Francis's visit to Armenia, where he acknowledged the Armenian genocide, infuriating Turkey, Erdogan said that "It is unfortunately possible to see all the reflections and traces of Crusader mentality in the actions of the papacy and the pope."[2] Tweets from people completely unaffiliated with ISIS use the Crusader label as a hashtag. The term floats across the internet as people decry the violence and foreign presence permeating the Middle East. Hardline clerics from Saudi Arabia and other gulf nations have been known to use the term Crusader when describing American or Western operations inside the Middle East. The idea of a continuing Crusade, if not the Crusader mythos forged in jihad by ISIS and other extremists, will continue to exist throughout the Middle East as a representation of East versus West conflict.

[1] Gulsen Solaker, Tuvan Gumrukcu and Daren Butler, "Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan denounces West's 'crusader mentality,'" *The Sydney Morning Herald,* April 18, 2017.
[2] Reuters, "Vatican Hits Back at Turkey for Calling Pope 'Crusader,'" *The Jerusalem Post,* June 26, 2016.

In reaching the end of this voyage into ancient history and modern war, of visions of glory and spiteful deeds, I leave you with a passage lamenting the conflict between Christians and Muslims from a man who saw it from the plains of Syria so many centuries ago:

The Muslims and the Franks are done for. The land is ruined, utterly ruined at the hands of both sides. Property and lives on both sides are destroyed. This matter has received its due.[3]

- Richard the Lionheart to Saladin after the Siege of Acre

[3] Baha' al-Din ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, (New York: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 186.

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Conclusion

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