

Western Foreign Fighters in the Conflict in Syria and Iraq:  
A Critical Reflection on the Role of Muslims' Identity and Integration in the West

by

Seyedmehdi Hashemirahaghi  
B.A., Islamic Azad University of Tehran, 2008

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Political Science

© Seyedmehdi Hashemirahaghi, 2016  
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy  
or other means, without the permission of the author.

## **Supervisory Committee**

Western Foreign Fighters in the Conflict in Syria and Iraq:  
A Critical Reflection on the Role of Muslims' Identity and Integration in the West

by

Seyedmehdi Hashemirahaghi  
B.A., Islamic Azad University of Tehran, 2008

### **Supervisory Committee**

Dr. Scott Watson, Department of Political Science.  
**Supervisor**

Dr. Andrew Wender, Department of Political Science.  
**Committee Member**

## Abstract

### **Supervisory Committee**

Dr. Scott Watson, Department of Political Science.

**Supervisor**

Dr. Andrew Wender, Department of Political Science.

**Committee Member**

The current conflict in Syria and Iraq has attracted a large number of foreign fighters (FFs) from Western countries. The main question of this thesis is why these countries do not have a similar pattern for their proportions of FFs. This thesis explores this question in nine Western countries with varying proportions of FFs: Finland, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, England, Canada, Australia, and America. Through a case study of Islamic State's online FF recruitment campaign, it will be shown that common religious identity is the main part of the group's recruitment message. However, comparing the identified countries on factors related to Muslims' identity and integration uncovers that common Muslim identity itself is not capable of answering the question; instead, it is Muslims' integration into their surrounding societies that correlates with proportions of FFs from identified countries.

## Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee .....	ii
Abstract .....	iii
Table of Contents .....	iv
List of Tables .....	vi
Acknowledgments .....	vii
Dedication .....	viii
Introduction .....	1
Background .....	1
Definition .....	3
Literature Review .....	4
Radicalization Literature .....	5
Foreign Fighter Mobilization Literature .....	12
Research Structure .....	15
Case Selection .....	15
The Islamic State .....	19
Methodology .....	19
Limitations .....	20
Conclusion .....	21
Chapter 2: The Islamic State’s Recruitment Message .....	23
Introduction .....	23
Relevant Literature .....	24
Background .....	25
Internet: the Main Way for Communicating with the Audiences .....	26
The Key Means of Communication .....	27
Videos .....	27
Written Materials .....	28
Audio Messages .....	28
Posters and Images .....	29
The Content of the Message .....	29
The Group’s Ideology .....	30
Terrorizing the Enemies .....	33
Responding to the Western Media .....	37
Portraying the Group as a ‘State’ .....	38
Hijra or Jihad .....	39
The Current Conflict: a Battle between “True Islam and Its Enemies” .....	41
Analysis: Characteristics of the Target Audiences .....	45
Chapter 3: Muslims’ Identity and Integration in Selected Countries .....	50
Introduction .....	50
Identity .....	51
History of Muslims’ Presence in the West .....	52
Size of the Muslim Population .....	53
Religious Division: Sunni or Shia? .....	55
Nationality: Iraqis and Syrians .....	57

Which One Comes First? Religion or Citizenship? .....	62
Ethnicity .....	64
Age Structure .....	66
Gender .....	67
Integration .....	69
Integration Models .....	71
Status of Islam and Its Relationship with the State.....	74
Religious Education .....	80
Education .....	84
Housing .....	88
Employment .....	90
Conclusion .....	93
Chapter 4: Conclusion.....	96
Introduction.....	96
Findings.....	97
Theoretical Implication .....	100
Policy Implications .....	101
Recommendation for Future Research.....	101
Conclusion .....	103
References .....	105
Appendix A: List of the Islamic State’s Propaganda Materials Examined in Chapter 2	119

## List of Tables

Table 1: Western Countries with FFs in the Conflict in Syria / Iraq .....	17
Table 2: Muslim Populations in Selected Countries .....	54
Table 3: Sunni-Muslim Population in Selected Countries.....	56
Table 4: Syrian Population in Selected Countries .....	57
Table 5: Iraqi Population in Selected Countries .....	58
Table 6: Middle Eastern Muslim Countries with Highest Proportions/Numbers of FFs .	59
Table 7: Tunisian, Saudi, Moroccan, Jordanian, Lebanese, and Libyan Populations in Selected Countries .....	61
Table 8: Arab-Muslim Population in the Selected Countries (Sorted by ratio of FFs) ....	64
Table 9: Arab-Muslim Population in Selected Countries (Sorted by Number of FFs) ...	65
Table 10: Muslim Gender Ratios in Selected Countries.....	67
Table 11: Integration Models in Selected Countries.....	73
Table 12: State-Religion Relationship in Selected Countries.....	79
Table 13: Islamic Religious Education in Selected Countries.....	82

## Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Scott Watson for his continuous support of my master's study and research, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor for my master's study.

Besides my advisor, I would like to thank Prof. Andrew Wender my thesis committee member for his insightful comments and encouragement, but also for helping me with his deep knowledge on my research's topic. He was my inspiration and support since the very first day that I met him.

My thanks also goes to Dr. Bonner, Dr. Cutler, and Dr. Eisenberg, who showed me the way and equipped me with their expertise. Without their precious support this thesis would not be what it is now. I also want to thank Dr. Baker, for his consistent words of encouragement and wisdom.

I would also like to thank Dr. Sajedi and Dr. Shirzad in Azad University in Iran who supported me at different stages of my MA program. I would never be here without their support and guidance.

Moreover, I want to thank Heather Del Villano, Gill Atkinson, Karyn Marczak, Elizabeth West, and Mice Albano, my wonderful ESL instructors at Camosun College, for equipping me with the language skills that I needed to complete my MA and write this thesis. Thank you for helping me to make this happen; for a 'dream' that came true!

My thanks also goes to my family: my parents Nahid and Abbas, my brothers Hadi and Parsa, and my sister Zahra for their presence, support, and encouragement. Finally, I want to say thank you to Mariya, my lovely wife; this would not have happened without your patience, support and encouragement. Thank you!

## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to:

All victims of the war in Syria and Iraq,

Those who have lost their lives, homes, and hopes in an ugly and horrifying war.

# Introduction

## Background

While the sparks of hope for a better future for the Middle East were lit by the non-violent revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia in 2011, the Syrian people's uprising turned into a protracted civil war that faded the initial hopes. This civil war in Syria became a magnet for foreign fighters (FFs) from different nationalities who joined the Islamic State (IS) and other militant groups such as Al-Nusrah Front (ANF). The conflict in Syria, and then in Iraq, has attracted the largest number of FFs engaged in any similar civil war in the Muslim world since 1945 (Neumann, 2015).<sup>1</sup> According to an estimate by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR), the total number of FFs engaged in this conflict is currently over 20,000 (Neumann, 2015).<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, a large proportion (almost 4,000) of these individuals have come from Western countries, in which Muslims are identified as religious minorities.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> FFs have been present in several civil wars since the end of the Second World War. Prior to the current conflict in Syria/ Iraq, Afghanistan was the most attractive place for FFs. During the Mujahidins' battle against the Soviet invasion (from the beginning of the war in 1978 until the collapse of the Soviet Union 1992), 5,000 to 20,000 FFs travelled to Afghanistan, to defend the nation against the 1979 Soviet invasion. Even after the Soviet withdrawal, Afghanistan remained a popular destination for FFs. During the civil war between the Taliban and the Northern Allies (1992-2001), between 1,000 and 1,500 FFs arrived in the country to join one of the sides. After the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq a new wave of FFs travelling to Afghanistan began. Since then, 1,000-1,500 FFs have travelled to the country to join the Taliban or Al-Qaeda. Besides the conflicts in Afghanistan, the civil wars in Serbia (Bosnians vs. Serbs/ Croats) and Russia (Chechens vs. the Russian federal government) have been the main cases in which FFs were present (Hegghammer, 2010; 61).

<sup>2</sup> This estimate includes statistics for 50 countries with sufficient and reliable data available. Southeast Asia is not included due to lack of reliable data. Also, countries with fewer than 5 FFs are removed from this list. "With the exception of some Middle Eastern countries, all figures are based on data from the second half of 2014 and refer to the total number of travelers over the course of the entire conflict" (Neumann, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> This report does not explain what proportion of FFs in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq are converts. That being said, I will demonstrate, in the next chapter, that there are a number of converts, at least, shown in IS's recruitment videos. Therefore, while it seems that converts make up a proportion of the FFs, it is not possible to have a clear picture of their significance. For this reason, I do not discuss the role of converts in this thesis, and for methodological purposes I assume that all FFs are of Muslim background (considering no significance for converts), but I must acknowledge that having the specific numbers of convert FFs from Western countries could have directed this thesis to a different conclusion.

What puzzles me most is that the numbers of FFs from Western countries do not follow a clear pattern as the numbers do not represent certain proportions of the countries' overall or Muslim populations. For instance, the United States (US), with a population of over 300 million, and a Muslim community as large as over two and a half million, has given rise to only 100 FFs (0.04 per 100 thousand Muslims). This is while Belgium, with just over eleven million overall population including only 638,000 Muslims, has so far supplied 440 FFs (0.69 per 100 thousand Muslims) to the conflict in Syria and Iraq (Neumann, 2015 and "world fact book" nd.).<sup>4</sup> Finding accounts for such discrepancies is the overall purpose of this thesis.

Throughout this thesis I will argue that the discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries are rooted in how Muslim communities identify with IS's cause and message, and how they are integrated into their surrounding societies. To elaborate, the more closely Western Muslims identify with IS's message, and the more poorly they are integrated into their surrounding societies, the likelier they are to accept the call to join the group.<sup>5</sup> Identity on its own cannot explain why Western countries have different ratios; instead, a combination of both identity and integration is capable of providing accounts for the discrepancies among the ratios of FFs from Western countries.

---

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this thesis, I use the phrases "the conflict in Syria and Iraq" or "the Syria/Iraq conflict." I do not separate this war into two distinct conflicts because the Islamic State's geographical spread encompasses areas in both Syria and Iraq. Hence, when speaking of the group's FF recruitment, it is inaccurate to say "the conflict in Syria" due to the fact that IS is fighting in Iraq, as well.

<sup>5</sup> In this thesis I will use "ratio of FFs to Muslim populations," "ratio of FFs," "proportion of FFs," "proportion of FFs to Muslim population," "ratio," and "proportion" interchangeably. When referring to other rates, I will specify (for instance ratio of FFs to the overall population).

**Definition**

Looking at the background and definition of the FF phenomenon is the first step towards investigating the literature on FF movements. The conflict in Syria/Iraq is not the first instance in which FFs have been involved. Malet, one of the leading scholars in studies of FFs, suggests that FFs have been present in 67 out of 331 recorded civil conflicts since the 1821 civil war in Greece against Ottomans (2009; 58-59).

Despite this history of FF movements, the phenomenon has been significantly understudied for multiple reasons. The field of international relations, in general, and studies of war, specifically, are centered on the state and state actors. FFs as non-state actors have not been a subject for international relations studies. Also, FFs form a middle category between “local rebels, on the one hand and international terrorists, on the other” (Hegghammer, 2010; 55). This means that FFs are often confused with either local rebels or terrorists.

The notion of FF has become closely linked with terrorism in the post-9/11 era. Following the 9/11 attacks, this notion became prominent due to the presence of foreigners among the Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan (Kraenmann, 2014; 3). Consequently, the notion of FF became associated with al-Qaeda, and thus with terrorism. Nonetheless, most FFs mainly use paramilitary tactics in civil wars, and “do not blow up planes” like the 9/11 attacks (Hegghammer, 2010; 55). Another reason that links FFs with terrorism is the fear that FFs who are supposedly highly trained and skilled can potentially plan and execute terrorist activities in their home countries when they return. Such security concerns are evident in the United Nations Security Council’s (UNSC) resolutions regarding the presence of FFs in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq. These resolutions require the United Nations (UN) member states to take preventive actions against FFs, or as the resolutions call them, foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). Resolution 2178 (2014)

defines FTFs as “individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict, and resolving to address this threat.”

In contrast to the UNSC’s definition, which ties FFs with terrorism, Malet (2009) provides a more appropriate definition. In his cross case study of FF movements, he defines FFs “as non-citizens of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflicts” (2009; 9). This definition has the potential to encompass all transnational insurgents who have joined civil conflicts in the past few centuries. This is the definition that I will use mainly because it does not use the notion of terrorism. The pejorative term terrorism is highly problematic, and it is not analytically useful in this case. Therefore, with this definition in mind, I am now going to explore the existing literature to find accounts that might help to explain the discrepancies among the ratios of FFs to Muslim populations in Western countries.

## **Literature Review**

In this section, I review two bodies of literature that provide answers for my research question: works on radicalization, and FF mobilization. The radicalization literature focuses on acts of violence within a given country (often at the individual level), but it can point this study to societal factors that are implied in individual motives, such as unemployment and discrimination. By contrast, FF mobilization studies provide explanations for the flow of individuals who take part in conflict zones abroad. I study these two bodies of literature because they are both focused on the reasons why individuals

commit acts of violence. In the following pages, I will first explore the radicalization literature, and then review the studies of FF movements.

### **Radicalization Literature**

The literature on radicalization is centered on homegrown terrorism, and sheds light on FF mobilizations. Regardless of motivations of individuals who join conflicts abroad, the fact that they engage in extremely violent actions makes radicalization literature a highly relevant lens to study FFs. This literature provides theoretical frameworks to study why individuals radicalize and commit acts of violence; this is an inevitable part to this thesis. The radicalization literature leads me to societal indicators that I will examine in the countries that I will identify in subsequent sections. King and Taylor (2011), in their theoretical review of Islamist radicalization, introduce five models: Borum's "pathway to terrorism," Wiktorowicz's "theory of joining extremist groups," Moghaddam's "staircase to terrorism," the New York Police Department's "radicalization process," and Sageman's "prongs" models (604-608).

In the first model, Borum's pathway to terrorism, personal grievance plays a key role. Individuals find themselves in undesirable conditions that they perceive as 'unfair' and 'unjust'. When they compare their situation with others, they find an 'illegitimate' inequality that leads them to look for a specific 'other' to blame. Once they find the group that they perceive as responsible for the inequality, violence becomes legitimate. This is how individuals become radicalized (Borum, 2003). This model suggests that inequality and grievance are key causal factors in the radicalization process. These two factors can potentially have a similar function in the FF recruitment process. In other words, the notions of 'inequality,' 'injustice,' and 'grievance' can potentially suggest accounts for

discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries. The challenge, though, is to modify these notions in such a way as to render them measurable on a societal level.

The next model is Wiktorowicz's 'theory of joining extremist groups.' This model is based on a case study of the Al-Muhajiroun movement, a transnational Islamist organization that promotes a global Islamic revolution.<sup>6</sup> This organization calls Muslims, wherever they are, to restore an Islamic state by use of military force. Based on his study, Wiktorowicz presents a model that contains four stages for an individual to join an extremist organization. According to him, the first stage is the consequence of a personal crisis, such as discrimination. This event works as a gateway to a religious-seeking stage, in which the person will consider worldviews of extremist organizations. In the next stage, the person frames those worldviews as matching with her/his views. Finally, the individual accepts the group's identity, and becomes an official member (Wiktorowicz, 2004). This model focuses on psychological aspects of radicalization, and does not clearly provide an answer to this study's research question. What it does suggest, however, is that common identity or religious motives are significant factors. It also suggests that such factors are not the only ones involved in the radicalization process.

In Moghaddam's staircase to terrorism model, the radicalization process is described in six stages.<sup>7</sup> At the ground floor, individuals experience feelings of 'deprivation;' they compare their group to others and feel that theirs is deprived or disadvantaged.<sup>8</sup> Thus, they

---

<sup>6</sup> In Arabic, Al-Muhajiroun means "the migrants," which refers to Muslims who left their homelands and settled in other countries.

<sup>7</sup> Moghaddam's model works as a decision tree: "where the individual's reaction to factors at each stage may or may not lead the individual to the next stage, bringing them closer to legitimizing terrorism" (King and Taylor, 2011; 606).

<sup>8</sup> Deprivation is a popular term in radicalization literature, which refers to structural inequalities such as low educational attainment, high unemployment, and poor housing (Christmann, 2007).

move up to the next floor. Individuals on this floor try to improve their group's status among others. If the individuals do not find legitimate ways to improve their status, they are likely to move up to the next floor. In contrast, if they view decision making processes as just, they are less likely to radicalize. However, Moghaddam does not explain what he refers to as a just decision making system; for instance, do liberal democratic countries have just decision making systems? If so, why are individuals in such countries, with liberal social mechanisms, attracted by radicalization? The next stage is where the target is identified; often, the West, or more specifically the US, is blamed and consequently targeted for the individuals' undesirable situation. At this floor, individuals are ready to consider radical actions against the sources of the perceived injustice. At the next floor, they try to morally justify 'terrorism,' and then, they join a 'terrorist' group in which the dominant mentality is 'us vs. them,' and eventually they are ready to commit acts of violence<sup>9</sup> (Moghaddam, 2005).

Similar to the first two models, Moghaddam's theory does not explain why individuals leave their countries of residence and take part in conflicts abroad, as FFs; nor does it clearly explain why there are discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries. That being said, what gives relevance to Moghaddam's model is the way "the other" is framed. In his model, the conflict is not between the individuals and the society around them; instead, they define the conflict in a broader scale, with the West and the US being in the center of the target board (Ibid.).<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> In this model, individuals in each level have two choices: giving up, or moving up to the next level of radicalization. Obviously, the individuals who reach the final stage of committing a terrorist act are those who have chosen to continue in the earlier stages (Moghaddam, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, IS portrays the current battle in Syria/Iraq as a battle between Islam and its enemies: "Crusader armies," "tyrants," "infidels," and others. Therefore, the battle is not described as a war between IS and the Syrian or Iraqi governments; they portray this battle in a significantly broader scope.

Silber and Bhatt (2007), in their radicalization model, which is based on several case studies in the US and the Western Europe, identify four stages in the radicalization process. In the first stage, pre-radicalization, Silber and Bhatt introduce several traits for individuals who are at risk for radicalization. According to them, young male Muslims who belong to the middle class in a patriarchal society are more likely to radicalize. Such individuals are often second or third, and not first generation immigrants or converts who do not have a criminal record. In the second stage, such individuals turn to extreme interpretations of Islam as a result of a personal crisis, such as discrimination or job loss. Next, the individuals accept these extreme worldviews, and see themselves in a war that the West has waged against Islam. In a significant development, the self-serving goals which came out of the personal crisis shift to non-personal objectives that are centered on protecting Muslims in general. In the final stage, these individuals identify themselves as jihadists who are ready to undertake violent actions. At this stage, they might try to travel abroad to jihadi training camps in their preparation path for committing acts of violence (Silber and Bhatt, 2007).

The traits that Silber and Baht count for radicalized individuals are interesting, but they cannot be studied except through interviews and surveys, which are far beyond the capacity of this study. Regardless, there is one factor that connects this model to the FF phenomenon. Similar to Moghaddam's theory, this model frames the conflict as a battle between Islam and the West, in general, not between the individuals and their surrounding society. In other words, the geographical dimensions of the conflict are transnational, not local or even national.

In the next model, Sageman (2008) argues that radicalization is the outcome of four factors existing in an individual. The first factor is a sense of outrage, which is the result

of a moral violation perceived by the individual. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US could serve as a prime example of such violation. The second factor is about the way the individual frames the world: a retaliatory war waged against Islam by the West. At this point, the individual perceives the world as a dichotomy: us vs. them. The third factor refers to the individual's personal moral violation experiences, such as discrimination. And the last factor, according to Sageman, refers to the interactions of likeminded individuals, through which the mobilization movement begins.

Individuals having these four factors are likely to radicalize and join terrorist groups. Sageman defines radicalization as a social movement, rather than a directed and organized strategy by a terrorist group (Sageman, 2008). While this model provides an understanding of radicalization, from an individual perspective, it can shed light on FF mobilizations, as well. Both the moral outrage and the personal grievance can potentially have explanatory power for the FF phenomenon, if the notion of common identity is present. In other words, individuals would take part in a conflict abroad if their outrage and grievance are related to the circumstances of the conflict. Yet, this model is not capable of providing further explanations for FF mobilization movements, specifically when it comes to the discrepancies among FFs coming from Western countries.

Besides these models, there are several studies that provide rich explanations for the radicalization phenomenon. Some authors argue that teenagers radicalize because they want to do something significant, and there is nothing more appealing to them than acts of violence (Maclean quoted in Bizina and Gray, 2014; 73). For these authors, geography, religion, and heritage have little explanatory power. Others argue the radicalization process typically begins with a sense of anger and disaffection in teenagers. According to these

writers, the individuals turn to radical ideologies as a result of their personal suffering caused by their surrounding society. A radical Islamist worldview helps the individuals to escape from their grievance and humiliation (Reitman, 2013).

Many experts say that, in the case of radicalization in Europe, Muslim youth, often belonging to second or third generation Muslim immigrants, return to Islam as a result of disenfranchisement in the societies that do not accept them; all they need at this point is to meet an extremist Muslim imam to radicalize them (Archick et al., 2005). Therefore, the source of radicalization is the poor integration of parallel Muslim societies (Ibid.).

In sum, there are a few similarities across the discussed models and explanations that I want to highlight. The main point is that, in all of these models and explanations, radicalization is seen as a process, in which certain inputs create the output of radicalization. This is how the FF recruitment process works within the context of potential recruits' societies; certain societal factors have causal effects in FF mobilization movements.

Perhaps the most important factor is a sense of grievance that exists in radicalized individuals. This seems to be the central factor for Borum, Silber and Bhatt, Moghaddam, Wiktorowicz, Bizina and Gray, and Archick. This grievance is often caused by a personal experience that traumatizes the individual, through discrimination, disenfranchisement, and alienation that are perceived to be caused by the individuals' surrounding society. In other words, these are the issues for which the individuals blame the society.<sup>11</sup> This is an important factor that can have explanatory power for the differences in the ratio of FFs to Muslim population in Western countries. What seems to be highly relevant in this process

---

<sup>11</sup> This factor is also supported by findings of social psychological studies (King and Taylor, 2011; 610).

of radicalization is the degree to which individuals are integrated into their surrounding societies; a more effective integration of Muslims produces a reduced chance for their radicalization.

The next commonality is that, in all of these models and theories, there is a strong sense of identity that plays a key role in the radicalization process (Choulhury, 2007). The individuals who are already dealing with grievances usually see themselves as being in a conflict with the society. Therefore, they look for a group identity that is strong, and has the potential to help them in their conflict against the perceived suppressor society. In their search for an identity, these individuals find Islam, often in its most extreme narrative, and meet extremist imams and likeminded people. In their confrontation, they find a sense of identity through which they share a common enemy: Western societies, particularly the US. At this point, the individuals accept the new identity and its respective worldview. Consequently, they become ready to commit acts of violence. This shared identity is a key factor in FF mobilization processes, as well. Further, factors such as size of Muslim population, ethnic and national background of Muslims, and Sunni/Shia divisions are among the demographical indicators that might explain this study's research question.

While the literature on radicalization provides a comprehensive number of models and explanations for homegrown terrorism, it does not directly discuss the FFs phenomenon in general, and this thesis's research question, specifically. This is because in the radicalization literature violence is carried out not against the host society but in a foreign state.

### **Foreign Fighter Mobilization Literature**

In the literature on FF movements there are a few models that cover a range of theories from material gain to transnational identity. Yet none of them has a clear explanation for the difference in the ratios of FFs to Muslim populations from different Western countries. In this section, I will first review the theories that are centered on material gain. Then, I will focus on transnational identity in the FF literature. In the next chapter I will study IS's recruitment message to assess the extent to which material gain and transnational identity are important in the context of the current conflict in Syria/Iraq.

Collier's and Hoeffler's model (CH model) is the most relevant theory that focuses on the idea of material gain. The CH model, which is also known as the Greed and Grievance model, presents a theoretical effort to explain the causes of civil conflicts, and while doing so, identifies the motives behind FF mobilizations. As suggested by the name of this model, it has two components: grievance and greed. According to this model, civil wars occur in two situations: 1) when there is a severe grievance caused by "high inequality, a lack of political rights, or ethnic divisions in society"; or 2) when there is an unprecedented opportunity for forming a rebel organization (2004; 563). The first component has the potential to explain the local mobilizations in a civil war, but it does not explain the FF phenomenon. Inequalities in country A do not relate to citizens of country B; thus, since citizens of country B do not suffer the inequalities in country A, they are not likely to engage in the conflict. However, the result would be different if the source of the conflict is framed in a way that is not exclusively about the residents of the conflict country. For instance, if the conflict is portrayed as a battle over political power in a country, it is not likely that individuals from other countries would join one of the sides of the conflict, unless to support a transnational ideology. In contrast, if the conflict is framed as a battle

between two distinct identities, it is more likely for foreigners to join one of the sides of the conflict. This narrative is what Malet presents, and I will discuss it when I review his model.

The second component of the CH model has more to offer when it comes to the FFs phenomenon. According to Collier and Hoeffler, economic opportunities, even more than grievance, have explanatory power (Ibid, 565). When there are ‘atypical’ (extraordinary) economic opportunities, it is more likely for a country to face a civil war. Consequently, foreigners who are motivated by material gain would be attracted to join one of the sides of the conflict. This is how this research connects to the NW theory.

Advocates of NW theory describe FF mobilizations as side effects of the modern civil war’s economy.<sup>12</sup> According to Kaldor, weak states lose a significant portion of their tax revenue due to their lack of effective control over their territory; meanwhile, new forms of private finance including “loot and pillage, ‘taxation’ of humanitarian aid, diaspora support, kidnapping, or smuggling in oil, diamonds, drugs, people,” as well as other illegal economic activities (2013; 3). A variety of non-state actors such as private security service providers, paramilitary groups, mercenaries, and warlords, alongside state actors such as regular armies, play a significant role in such a political-economic environment. This is where FFs appear in two forms: as paid mercenaries and volunteer fighters such as global jihadists (ibid, 2). Mercenaries, who are often confused with FFs, are purely motivated by material gain. On the other hand, foreign jihadists are motivated by a sense of identity and belonging. In other words, what attracts them to a conflict is their identity connection to

---

<sup>12</sup> For additional reading on New Wars theory, see Dannreuther (2011), Duffield (2001), and Holsty (1996).

the conflict; they usually join one side of the conflict because they perceive a threat to their broader identity. This sense of identity is central in Malet's FF recruitment model.

In Malet's model (2009), the recruitment message plays a substantial role. Insurgencies try to appeal to their audiences outside of a conflict state by outlining the civil war as a battle in which audiences' transnational community is under threat. The message sent to the audience emphasizes the shared identity, which is often ethnicity or religion (or ideology). By defining the conflict in this way, recruiters call their audience to join them in their fight against an enemy that threatens the community's existence. In other words, the recruiters change the geographical dimensions of the conflict and portray it in such a way as to make the audiences feel they are under threat. The logic behind it, according to Malet, is that the audience is urged to fight the enemy somewhere else rather than their home: *if you don't come to help us and we lose, you're gonna be the next* (Ibid). This is the key difference between FFs and radicalization literatures.

In this model, since the weaker side in the conflict is looking for outside support, recruiters do not have sufficient resources to motivate foreigners to join them. In other words, they have to appeal to outsiders with something different than material gain. As opposed to the CH model, greed does not have much explanatory power when it comes to the case of FFs. This is what I found in IS's recruitment message; recruiters do not appeal to their audiences on the basis of material gain, but on the notion of common identity.<sup>13</sup> What matters most in this model is the degree to which the outsiders identify themselves with the causes of the local insurgencies. But how does it explain the difference in the ratio

---

<sup>13</sup> In the next two chapters, I study significance of shared identity both in IS's recruitment message and within the selected Western countries.

of FFs who have travelled from different countries? Why does Belgium, with a fairly small Muslim population, have a relatively similar number of FFs as compared with Germany with over four million Muslims? Why do proportionately more Belgian Muslims self-identify with IS than those in Germany?

While Malet's model mostly focuses on the message, it touches on the audience as well. He describes the members of the audience as individuals who closely identify with their transnational community. For instance, those who identify first as Muslim and secondarily, Pakistani, Belgian, German, Turk, or otherwise, are those who are more likely to take part as FFs in a civil conflict in the Muslim world. Besides being Muslim, if the individuals share ethnicity with rebels, the chances their taking part in the conflict would be significantly higher. FFs join the insurgencies because they believe that their involvement is obligatory for "the survival of their people and, ultimately, their own" (2009; 5).

However, the problem is not that straightforward. Take Saudi Arabia as an example; a Muslim majority country with a population of over 27 million, with perhaps one of the strictest interpretations of Islam, and geographically located close to Syria and Iraq. Why has this country given rise to a number of FFs similar to France? While acknowledging the fact that identity plays a significant role in FF mobilization in this conflict, I argue that there are other factors contributing to the number of FFs from each country, as well.

## **Research Structure**

### **Case Selection**

The ICSR's estimate reveals that FFs have traveled from over 50 countries to Syria/Iraq to join the local militant organizations, with the most attractive one being IS

(Neumann, 2015).<sup>14</sup> The large number of countries providing FFs is itself significant, but closely looking at the regions and countries in this list makes the estimate even more interesting. The Middle East holds the first place for supplying FFs to the conflict, with up to 11,000 recruits (Ibid.). The location of Syria and Iraq in the heart of the Middle East, and the fact that the region is made up of Muslim majority countries, makes the estimate unsurprising (“world fact book” nd.).

Besides the Middle East, 3,000 FFs have traveled from the Asian countries of the former Soviet Union to the conflict zone to join IS or other groups (Neumann, 2015). The fact that the majority of these are countries with Muslim majority populations makes it easier to comprehend this relatively high number.<sup>15</sup> In other words, based on the shared identity thesis, one might expect to have such a high number of FFs from these countries.

Yet, none of these are as puzzling as Western countries: the estimate shows that 4,000 individuals from Western countries have travelled to the conflict countries to join mainly IS. These are countries that have relatively small Muslim populations. For instance, Muslims in Finland make up only 0.7 percent of the population (42,000 people), and yet this country has given rise to up to 70 FFs. This is while Muslim majority countries such as Bahrain (with 12), Afghanistan (with 50), Qatar (with 15), and United Arab Emirates (with 15) have smaller numbers of FFs in the conflict zone (“world fact book” nd. and Neumann, 2015).

---

<sup>14</sup> There are estimates claiming that the number of countries that are home for FFs in Syria/Iraq is greater than 80 (Ackerman, 2014).

<sup>15</sup> For instance, according to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Muslims make up over 70 percent of Kazakhstan’s, 90 Percent of Tajikistan’s, and 88 percent of Uzbekistan’s populations. That being said, the fact that over 3,000 FFs traveled to Syria/Iraq conflict from countries of the former Soviet Union reveals that there is a need for further research on these countries (“world fact book” nd.).

**Table 1: Western Countries with FFs in the Conflict in Syria / Iraq**

Country	FFs Estimate	Population	Muslim Population	Muslims % of Overall Population	FFs. Per 100k. Muslim Population <sup>16</sup>
Finland	50 -70	5,476,922	42,000	0.20	1.19
Belgium	440	11,323,973	638,000	2.40	0.69
Denmark	100 - 150	5,581,503	226,000	4.00	0.44
Sweden	150 - 180	9,801,616	451,000	1.00	0.33
France	1,200	66,553,766	4,704,000	9.00	0.26
Australia	100 - 250	22,751,014	399,000	2.20	0.25
Holland	200 - 250	16,947,904	914,000	5.00	0.22
Austria	100 - 150	8,665,550	475,000	4.20	0.21
UK	500 - 600	64,088,222	2,869,000	4.40	0.17
New Zealand	6	4,438,393	41,000	1.10	0.15
Germany	500 - 600	80,854,408	4,119,000	3.70	0.12
Canada	100	35,099,836	940,000	3.20	0.11
Italy	80	61,855,120	1,583,000	1.10	0.05
Spain	50 - 100	48,146,134	1,021,000	1.00	0.05
USA	100	321,368,864	2,595,000	0.60	0.04

**Source: Neumann 2015 and “world fact book”**

From these fifteen countries I will identify nine to study throughout this thesis. I divide these nine countries into three sets: countries with significantly high ratios of FFs, countries with moderate ratios, and countries that have moderate to low ratios.

Finland with 1.19, Belgium with 0.69, and Denmark with 0.44 ratios of FFs to Muslim population create the first set of countries that I will study. These are the countries that are located in Europe, and similar to the other six, are parts of the coalition against IS.

I select these three countries because they have the highest ratios of FFs in this list. It is

<sup>16</sup> I calculated these numbers based on the minimum number of FFs from each country. For instance, the 1.19 ratio for Finland is based on 50 FFs, not 70, which is the maximum estimate for this country.

worthwhile to study the similarities between these three on the one hand, and their differences from the countries in the other two sets on the other.

The second set encompasses three Western countries that have moderate ratios of FFs to their Muslim populations: France, the United Kingdom (UK), and Germany. Besides the fact that these three Western countries have the highest absolute numbers of FFs in Syria, they also have the largest Muslim populations. These two statistics make these countries interesting cases for this study; however, there is another reason that I select these countries. Since these three are located in Europe, it is appropriate to compare them with countries in the first set. In other words, it is interesting to find out why these countries with significantly larger Muslim populations have smaller ratios of FFs, as compared with the other European countries in the first set.

For the third set, I select three countries that are not located in Europe, and have small ratios of FFs: Australia, Canada, and the US. Their geographical location makes them reasonable comparisons to the European countries that are in the first two sets. Since the first two categories comprise European countries, it is interesting to expand this comparison to non-European countries. Besides, there are other facts that make these countries important parts of this study. All three are considered as settler societies and immigrant destinations; these are countries that have been dealing with issues of immigration and integration since their establishments as settler countries. Thus, it is interesting to study if there is any significant differences in their approaches toward immigration and integration compared with European countries. The last reason is solely related to the US. Surprisingly, the US, as the leader of the coalition against IS, and the country that is portrayed as the main enemy of the group by its propaganda, has the smallest

ratio of FFs among all Western countries. This and the other facts about these three countries makes them ideal cases for this research.

### **The Islamic State**

When speaking of FF mobilization in Syria and Iraq, it is methodologically important to specify what group or organization is in the center of the discussion. Unfortunately, the ICSR estimate does not specify the destination groups/ organizations of FFs. In other words, it does not state what proportion of FFs have joined each of the groups active in the conflict in Syria / Iraq. To overcome this issue, I take IS as the case study for this thesis. I do so because of this group's territorial and military influence in the conflict on the one hand, and its highly organized, coherent, and yet sophisticated recruitment mechanism, on the other.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, throughout this thesis I will focus on IS as my prime case among all groups active in Syria / Iraq conflict.

### **Methodology**

In this thesis, I will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. In the second chapter, I conduct a discourse analysis of IS's recruitment message, such as videos, audio files, and written materials. I complement my analysis of IS's recruitment material by utilizing the existing literature where it is appropriate. In the third chapter, using official and academic statistics and surveys, as well as scholarly works, I will compare the identified Western countries on two themes of identity and integration. For each of these themes, I identify several indicators that I extract from the existing literature and my analysis of IS's recruitment message in chapter two.<sup>18</sup> Throughout this comparison, I will

---

<sup>17</sup> For more information regarding the Islamic State's recruitment message see chapter two: Islamic State's Recruitment Message.

<sup>18</sup> I outline these indicators in the following section.

try to study all of the identified countries on every factor that I analyze. However, due to the limitations that I discuss in the following section, I will inevitably exclude countries for which the related information is not available.

The other important methodological note regards this study's level of analysis. Studying individual motives might seem to be an appropriate approach for this thesis, but unfortunately it falls far beyond the scope and limitations of this Master's thesis. Since I do not have the means to survey individual motives of the active or returning FFs, I will set my study on a societal level. Hence, in the third chapter I establish correlations between the identified indicators and ratios of FFs from the selected countries. I measure the significance of each indicator based on its consistency across the countries. To elaborate, an indicator that correlates with the ratios of FFs consistently across all the countries in the three categories suggests more explanatory power than an indicator that correlates with countries in one or two categories. Therefore, I develop my analysis based on such correlations as are established on a societal level.

### **Limitations**

In conducting this study I face several limitations. First, as I demonstrated in my review of the related literatures, the FF phenomenon is an understudied and fairly recent topic. Thus, the number of academic works related to this study are fairly limited. Moreover, since the conflict in Syria / Iraq is currently continuing, there is a highly limited number of scholarly works already published or accessible. Hence, analytical reports by think tanks such as Pew Research and Research and Development Corporation (RAND) seem to be among most relevant and reliable sources available at present. Finally, since many Western countries do not collect data on their citizens' religious beliefs, it is difficult

to extract information for all nine countries on every societal factor, such as education, housing, or employment.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis is centered on the notion of FFs and their presence in the current conflict in Syria / Iraq. More specifically, the question that I aim to address in this thesis is why there are discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries. Why do their ratios not appear to follow a similar pattern? My review of the existing literature suggests that identity plays a significant role in FF mobilization. It also suggests that certain societal factors such as discrimination and marginalization are among the important factors that are suggested by the radicalization literature. That being said, none of the models and theories that I reviewed in this chapter has a definitive answer for this study's research question.

Throughout this thesis, I will argue that the current flow of FFs to the conflict in Syria / Iraq is dependent on the degree to which Muslim communities in Western countries identify with IS's message and how they are integrated into their surrounding societies. Despite the fact that identity plays a major role in the current FF mobilization process, it is not capable of explaining the discrepancies among ratios of FFs to Muslim populations from Western countries. In the presence of the shared identity, the level of integration of Muslims into Western countries correlates with ratios of FFs from those countries.

To examine the stated thesis, I will divide my analysis into two parts: the recruiters' message, and the potential recruiters' identity and integration into the identified countries. Based on this division, I will have two main chapters for each end of the recruitment message. In the next chapter, I will analyze IS's recruiting message to find out how the group is trying to appeal to its audiences. I will specifically examine the significance of

common identity and material gain in IS's recruitment message. I will survey sources of identity that the group utilizes to appeal to its audiences. In the third chapter, I will study the receiving end of the message, by looking at Muslim communities' identity and integration into the selected countries. I will examine the degree to which Muslim communities in these countries identify with IS, and how they are integrated into their societies. In this chapter, which will have two parts on identity and integration, I will study factors that I extracted from either the literature or my analysis of IS's recruitment message. These factors are, for the first part, the size of Muslim populations, Sunni-Shia divisions, Arab ethnicity, and nationality; and for the second, integration policies, Islam's status, and Muslims' education, housing, and employment rates. In the final chapter, I will conclude by providing an overview of my empirical findings, theoretical and policy implications, and further research suggestions.

## Chapter 2: The Islamic State's Recruitment Message

### Introduction

Examining IS's recruitment message works as a gateway to find out more about the differences among the numbers of foreign fighters (FFs) from Western countries. It can reveal information about the group's appeal and target audiences, such as the group's ideological and religious views, and its audiences' ethnicity, nationality, age, and gender structure. This information could possibly explain why some countries have higher numbers of FFs.

In this chapter, I will provide specific accounts for the appeals that IS uses to recruit from among its audiences. Through an empirical analysis of IS's recruitment message, I will answer the following questions: what methods does IS use to deliver its message? Who is the target audience? What is the audience's nationality, ethnicity, religion/sect, language, gender, and age? How are recruiters trying to convince their audience? Do they mention their audiences' employment, education, housing, or integration situation? How do they define their conflict? How do they portray Western states? Do they differentiate between the states participating in the coalition against IS?

To explore the answers to these questions, I will focus on the group's online recruiting machine, because at this point it is nearly impossible to explore any potential local or on the ground recruiting networks.<sup>19</sup> For this empirical analysis, I will use videos, posters, written publications (such as magazines), and tweets used by recruiters.

---

<sup>19</sup> I must acknowledge that local and on the ground recruiting networks, in places such as mosques, prisons, and colleges, might play important roles. Studying these networks is beyond the limitations of this thesis, but it is an interesting topic for separate researches.

Accessing such documents is difficult and highly time consuming, as recruitment materials are often quickly removed by social media or file/video sharing websites such as Twitter.com and YouTube.com. Hence, finding them on the Internet requires an extensive amount of searching. Despite such limitations, I examined more than 55 videos, 10 publications and 7 posters released by IS.<sup>20</sup>

### **Relevant Literature**

The existing scholarly works on IS primarily focus on the origins and rise of the group. One of the earliest works on IS belongs to Patrick Cockburn (2014), in which he discusses the rise of IS. He explains how IS transformed, in a short period of time, from an ordinary jihadi group to a so called caliphate. Another work, which also focuses on the rise of IS, is written by Joby Warrick (2015). Warrick comprehensively explores the origins of IS in Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi's era, and uncovers how IS developed over the past decade.<sup>21</sup> In another work, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* by Hassan Hassan and Michael Weiss (2015), the authors try to uncover several aspects of IS's origins, leadership, and development. They discuss the rise of IS in the context of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the 2011 uprisings in Syria. Relevant to this thesis, the authors discuss the group's jihadist recruitment, as well. Through interviews with former and current recruits, the authors demonstrate the effectiveness of the group's recruitment process. Finally, in his book *Islamic State: the Digital Caliphate* (2015), Abdel Bari Atwan looks at the theological origins, and the transformation of IS from an al-Qaeda affiliation to a 'caliphate.' He

---

<sup>20</sup> Appearing in Index A is a complete list of these materials in appendix -1. The author used his knowledge of Persian, Dari, Turkish, and Arabic languages (to varying degrees), to analyze these videos.

<sup>21</sup> Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi was a Jordanian who was the founder of the present Islamic State in Iraq (Teslik, 2011, and Chossudovsky, 2015).

demonstrates how IS exploits the Internet to advance its ideology. On the topic of FFs, Atwan discusses the contemporary history of FFs in the Muslim world and traces back to the first instances in the Six-Day War in 1967, a conflict between Israel and Arab countries. He demonstrates that an established international network of jihadists, has developed over the past few decades. He also outlines a number of IS's recruits' features, which I will discuss in this chapter as I develop my analysis. That being said, neither Atwan, nor others provide a comprehensive image of IS's online recruitment message. Thus, I will provide an empirical analysis of IS's recruitment material in the rest of this chapter.

## **Background**

Propaganda or "media war," as Osama Bin Laden described it, has played a significant role in post 9/11 jihadist movements (Klausen, 2014; 3). In the early years of the post 9/11 era, al-Qaeda realized the potential of the Internet; in 2002, Bin Laden, in a letter to Mullah Muhammad Omar, the then Taliban leader, stated: "It is obvious that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach ninety percent of the total preparation for the battles" (Ibid.). Similarly, Bin Laden's advisor and successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, stated to Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi following the 2003 United States' invasion of Iraq that: "We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Ummah [the global Muslim community]" (Ibid.). The use of media by IS reveals that, despite the fact that the group split from Al-Qaeda, its leaders have well received Bin Laden and al-Zarqawi's advices.

Al-Qaeda and its leaders understood the significance of media, but they did not have the means to fulfill their goal to reach their audiences through the media. That group's

leaders tried to influence their audiences through statements, audio/video tapes, and CDs that they sent to Arab television channels like Al-Jazeera or print media such as Asharq Alawsa. Al-Qaeda tried to make use of the Internet, by uploading its propaganda material on its website (al\_nida.com), but this was not comparable with the degree to which IS has exploited the Internet during the current conflict in Syria and Iraq (“Al-Qaeda Propaganda,” 2007).

### **Internet: the Main Way for Communicating with the Audiences**

IS exploits many file-sharing and social media platforms in order to deliver its message to its audiences. It uses platforms such as “Ask.fm, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, PalTalk, Kik, Viber, JustPaste.it, YouTube, and Tumblr” (Klausen, 2014; 1). Among all, Twitter is the most popular application that has been widely used by IS<sup>22</sup> (Ibid.). For instance, on the day IS fighters stormed the Iraqi city of Mosul in June 2014, the Dawn (smart phone) application’s pro-IS users sent nearly 40,000 tweets (Spri, 2014). Another study suggests that IS supporters used at least 46,000 Twitter accounts in a four month period of September through December 2014 (Berger and Morgan, 2015, 2). This use of the Internet and social media reveals two facts about the group’s target audiences: 1) they are assumed to have access to the Internet, and 2) they are able to work with the Internet, social media, and cellphone applications. Hence, the target audiences belong to generations that are familiar with such modern technologies. This finding is in accordance with several radicalization models. For instance, Silber and Bhatt (2007) and Archick et al. (2005)

---

<sup>22</sup> Twitter is so popular because it is particularly engineered for cell phones; this application is free and easy to use. Tweets (posts), which usually contain images, text, or links to other platforms, can easily be received or sent. The other attractive fact about this application is that while some social media platforms require either 3G or WiFi, Twitter can be used without them (Klausen, 2014; 1).

suggest that younger individuals are at a higher risk for being radicalized. This finding is also supported by Atwan's study of IS's FFs, which is based on his interviews with extremist youths (2015; 177-178). After highlighting the significance of the Internet and social media platforms for IS's recruitment machine and its implications for this thesis, I will analyze the means by which IS presents its message to its audiences, in the following section.

## **The Key Means of Communication**

### **Videos**

Producing propaganda videos is the main method used by the group to communicate with its audiences. Among all jihadist groups, IS has been able to maximize the effectiveness of this method by using advanced audio-visual technologies.<sup>23</sup> IS's use of technology goes so far that there is even some footage on the Internet suggesting that IS rehearses and records some of its videos in a highly equipped studio.<sup>24</sup> It is important to note that this group produces videos that serve different purposes. For instance, in a short video titled "I wish I had Come Sooner," a young Australian man, with blue eyes and blond hair, introduces himself as a medical doctor who has migrated to Syria to live under the

---

<sup>23</sup> Among all the groups active in the Syria/ Iraq conflict, IS has the most sophisticated and developed recruiting mechanism. After IS, al-Nusrah Front (ANF) seems to be the most active group in cyber space. That being said, the technology and skills used in materials produced by IS is not comparable with that of ANF. For instance, while videos released by IS are professionally directed, filmed, and edited, videos produced by ANF are mostly recorded by regular cameras or even cell phone cameras. The Flames of War (2014) a 55 minute long video produced by Al-Hayat, the Islamic State media wing, reminds viewers of Hollywood action movies. The video contains high quality images of the group's fighters in the actual war, as well as audio-visual graphics, and archival U.S. news footage. In contrast, in one of ANF's videos, which even does not have a name, the filming quality is poor, and the scenes are not directed or planned properly. Also, while IS video features a native English speaking narrator and full Arabic subtitles, the ANF video is in Arabic language with no English subtitles. In sum, the technology that IS utilizes is by far the best of its kind among all the groups active in the Syrian civil war.

<sup>24</sup> This video shows that a male insurgent in a black uniform, similar to Jihadi John, who seems to be a British man serving as the main executioner of IS, is rehearsing the beheading scene of one of IS hostages in an orange jumpsuit. It shows that the rehearsal is happening in a studio, in front of a massive blue screen.

“caliphate’s rule.” As it appears in its title, he regrets that he did not do it so sooner, and encourages Muslims from around the globe to migrate to “the land of the caliphate.”

### **Written Materials**

Publishing written recruitment materials is the second frequently used method by IS. Not surprisingly, IS is the leading group in the conflict to use this method in a highly organized and professional manner. The group issues a “periodical magazine” called 'Dabiq' that so far has had ten issues focusing on the issues of “tawhid [unity of Allah], manhaj [truth-seeking], hijra [migration ‘to IS’], jihad and jama'ah [congregation]” (Dabiq 1: 3).<sup>25</sup> This magazine “also contain[s] photo reports, current events, and informative articles on matters related to the Islamic State” (Ibid.). This range of topics makes Dabiq a comprehensive literary outreach not only to this group’s potential recruits, but also to people who might consider living within the group’s territories. In other words, it is an ambitious articulation of IS’s vision (Gambhir, 2014: 10).

### **Audio Messages**

Another less frequently applied method is the use of audio messages. In most of the cases, an audio message is released in the form of a video file, with an Arabic narrator addressing the audiences, and English subtitles running on the screen. For instance, in an audio message called “a Message to the Muslims of the West,” the narrator invites his audiences to free themselves from the ‘disbeliever Western rulers’, and to defend their

---

<sup>25</sup> This magazine’s name is taken from “the area named Dabiq in the northern countryside of Halab (Aleppo) in Sham. This place was mentioned in a hadith [In Arabic, the word ḥadīth (Arabic: حديث) means a "report, account, narrative," which refers to the collections of the reports purporting to quote what the Prophet Muhammad said on any matter. The Arabic plural for the term hadith is aḥādīth (Arabic: أحاديث) (Abou El Fadl, 2011)], which describes some of the events of the Malahim (what is sometimes referred to as Armageddon in English). According to this hadith, one of the greatest battles between the Muslims and the Crusaders will take place near Dabiq (Dabiq 1: 4).

Muslim brothers and sisters who are ‘under attack’ by Western governments (“Message to the Muslims of West,” nd.). He urges them to kill the ‘disbelievers’ as a response to the war that Western governments have waged against Muslims:

If you can kill an American or European or Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be (Ibid.).

### **Posters and Images**

Using posters and images, which are often incorporated into other forms of messaging such as videos and written materials, is the next method that IS uses to communicate with its audiences. In one of the most powerful examples that encourages its audiences with such words as jihad and martyrdom, a poster states: “you only die once, why not make it martyrdom” (Kingsley, 2014). Hence, as discussed here, there are a variety of methods used to communicate with the audiences, which broadens the message’s reach and effectiveness. Thus, IS tries to maximize its reach by presenting its message in a variety of formats.

### **The Content of the Message**

The materials that I examined for this study suggest that IS’s recruitment message has five key components: 1) explaining the group’s ideology and who they are; 2) terrorizing their enemies; 3) responding to claims made against IS in the media; 4) emphasizing that IS has established a ‘state,’ and that people who live within IS territories live ordinary lives; and 5) inviting Muslims from around the globe to migrate to the territories controlled by IS, or to wage war against its enemies wherever they live. In the

following pages, I will explain how these components contribute to IS's general FF recruitment campaign.

### **The Group's Ideology**

When speaking of IS's ideology, the first and foremost question is regarding the group's understanding of Islam and its place among different branches such as Wahhabism and Salafism. IS's origins can be partly traced from the 14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyya to the 18<sup>th</sup> century Muhammad ibn 'Abd al Wahhab to contemporary Salafism. Salafism demands a strict rejection of "any innovation since the time of the Prophet" (Barrett, 2014; 18). Therefore, no one is permitted to reinterpret literal readings of the Quran and ahadith. Consequently, Shias, Sufis, and anyone who does such innovative practices (such as interpreting the Quran and ahadith) must be punished. This is how IS legitimizes and justifies its violent actions; everything they do is claimed by them to be in the interest of reviving and purifying Islam, and ultimately reuniting Muslims under the true rule of Allah (Atwan, 2015; 201-216).

The second driving force behind IS's ideology is traceable in three violent Islamist groups that were active in later decades of the twentieth century in the Arab world: the Armed Islamic Group (in Algeria), the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (in Algeria), and the Islamic Group (in Egypt). These groups were ideologically inspired by Sayyid Qutb who was a prolific ideologue for the Muslim Brotherhood. His doctrine advocated a radical and revolutionary activism that encouraged Islamist groups to replace established governments with Islamic states (Bunzel, 2015; 9). This strand, which is called Jihadism, explains an important aspect of IS's ideology; thus, IS's ideology can be understood as Salafi-Jihadi. However, IS has one trait that distinguishes it from other Salafi-Jihadi groups

like al-Qaeda; IS upholds a severe version of Salafism- Jihadism that is completely uncompromising on doctrinal matters and endorses an unforgiving strain of Salafism (Ibid.).

IS's efforts to explain its theology go beyond the Quranic verses and ahadith used in the videos produced by the group.<sup>26</sup> In the first issue of Dabiq, the editors designate a section (10 out of 49 pages) of the magazine to explain the theological necessity of caliphate and imamah (Islamic leadership). In this section there are several Quranic verses and ahadith quoted, in one of which the Prophet Mohammad says: "Indeed every man is a shepherd and every shepherd is responsible for his flock. So the imam of the people is a shepherd and he is responsible for his flock," and the Prophet is depicted as continuing:

Stick to the jama'ah (congregation) of the Muslims and their imam." I (the reporter) said, "And if they have neither a jama'ah nor an imam?" He (the Prophet) said, "Then avoid every group, even if you have to bite onto the root of a tree until death reaches you while you're in that condition" (Dabiq 1: 22).

This hadith clearly aims to convince its (Muslim) readers that they must have a leader. Imamah, according to this article, encompasses both religious and political leadership, and this is the main point that the group tries to explain for its audiences. In other words, IS tries to remove what it represent as the boundaries between political and religious leaderships:

... [T]he people today have failed to understand that imamah [leadership] in religious affairs cannot be properly established unless the people of truth first achieve comprehensive political imamah over the lands and the people (Dabiq 1: 25).

---

<sup>26</sup> In most of the material produced by al-Hayat, there are constant references to Quranic verses and ahadith. For instance, in a 15 minute long video, called "although the disbelievers dislike it," the narrator reports a hadith from the Prophet, in which he urges Muslims to jihad. Following this hadith, a young man, accompanied with a large group of IS fighters sitting around him, starts to reads out loud some Quranic verses (At-Tawbah: 38-39) that affirm the hadith, and promises that believers who accept the call to jihad will go to paradise, while those who reject it will be punished by Allah. This is only one example of the references made to the Quran and ahadith in IS propaganda materials.

This message implies that Muslims ‘must’ live under a political system that enforces a particular modeling of sharia. Therefore, since there is no such ‘state’, IS is the ‘only legitimate entity’ that is formed on this foundation. Now that this ‘state,’ the IS’s caliphate, has been established, all Muslims are required to give pledge to the caliph and obey him. This is not a choice, but a vital obligation: “Whoever dies without having bound himself by a bay’ah (pledging obedience), dies a death of jāhiliyyah (ignorance)” (Dabiq 2: 4). Therefore, based on IS’s theology, all Muslims are to obey the caliph, and rejecting to do so merits the afterlife punishment (Ibid.).

Using the terms ‘caliph’ and ‘caliphate’ are highly significant.<sup>27</sup> These terms appeared in Islamic doctrine following the death of the Prophet Mohammed.<sup>28</sup> In that time, caliph was a title used for the Prophet’s successors, and caliphate referred to a political system that was established to rule the political and religious lives of Muslims. Hence, using this terminology means somehow seeking to claim legitimacy for IS and its leaders. This is an important element with respect to IS’s FF recruitment because its audiences are not asked to join an ordinary jihadi group like many others, but are specifically called to join an entity that resembles the example of the Prophet’s successors. Therefore, IS’s message appears to be significantly stronger and more ambitious than other jihadi groups like al-Qaeda, which understand caliphate as something belonging to the future.

---

<sup>27</sup> According to the Oxford dictionary, Caliph (Arabic: *خليفة*) means “deputy of God” or “successor of His Prophet.”

<sup>28</sup> After the Prophet’s death in 632, his father-in-law Abu Bakr became the first caliph. After Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Uthman, and Ali assumed the mantle of caliph. These four are referred to by Sunnis as the Rashidun (rightly guided) caliphs. Shias, conversely, believe that it was Ali’s legitimate right to be the Prophet’s successor and not Abu Bakr’s, Umar ibn al-Khattab’s, and Uthman’s. This difference of opinion is crucial because it divided Muslims into two main groups: Sunni and Shia. (Adam et al, 2014).

## **Terrorizing the Enemies**

Terrorizing its enemies was the first feature of IS's propaganda machine, which was evident in videos of hostages (held by the organization) that it held being beheaded. It was the video of James Foley's beheading that first shocked the world in August 2014 about the nature of IS's activities. In a short video titled "a Message to America," the executioner claimed that the American hostage was going to be executed for the American President's having authorized airstrikes against IS. The executioner, who is now known as Jihadi John and is believed to have since been killed, cut off the American hostage's head in front of the camera. The interesting fact is that this was not a spontaneous behaviour, and IS repeated similar actions continually afterwards. This group shows extreme brutality in videos against its enemies: the US and its allies, the "Safawi" (Iranian) forces, Pishmarge (Kurdish forces), and the governments of Syria and Iraq and people who are loyal to them.<sup>29</sup> Besides terrorizing its enemies, this tactic delivers a message to IS's potential recruits as well; IS is the weaker side of the conflict (compared with the coalition or the Iraqi and Syrian armies), and it needs its audiences' support, but the group nonetheless presents itself as strong enough to gain victories in its battles against its enemies. This strategy is slightly different from Malet's model, in which the weaker side of a civil conflict seeks to recruit FFs. Interestingly, the case of IS does not follow this model; while it is seeking support from its audiences, it does not present itself as a weak group that is about to lose the battle. It seems that IS is taking an exactly opposite direction, which has so far been fairly

---

<sup>29</sup> The Safavid dynasty (16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>c.) was one of the most important dynasties of Persia (Iran) after the Muslim conquest of the country. The reason the Islamic State insists on calling Iranians Safawis or Safavids is that this ruling dynasty established Twelver Shia Islam as the Safavid Empire's official religion, which significantly deepened the gap between Sunnis and Shias. The Safavid Empire had several battles with the Sunni Ottoman Empire throughout its existence. Therefore, using this term re-signifies the battles between Sunnis and Shias, a key reason why IS uses this term in its propaganda materials (Ghasemi, 2015).

effective; the audiences are invited to enjoy the honor of being a part of such victories. They are invited to win.

#### The United States and Its Allies

IS's main target is the United States (US) and its allies in the coalition against the group, and who are often called the 'Crusader armies.' This terminology is significant because it gives religious and historical dimensions to the conflict. The US and its allies are not just some foreign countries; they are representing a rival religious identity that has been historically in conflict with Islam. Presenting the enemies with this terminology plays a significant role in encouraging audiences to join IS because it provides legitimacy and justification for IS and its battle. This approach is evident in one of the main chants of the group that is a quote from Abu Mus'ab az-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" (Dabiq 1: 1). In a series of execution videos, several hostages, whose state of citizenship supported, or was part of, the coalition against IS, were beheaded in front of a camera. All these videos had a similar format: threatening the US and its allies, demanding them to stop the war against IS, and executing hostages in an extremely brutal manner. What seems to be puzzling is that all nine identified countries are part of or supporting the coalition; yet they have different FFs ratios. Even more interesting is that the US as the leader of the coalition has one of the lowest ratios of FFs per Muslim population among the nine. This suggests that there is no direct correlation between the number of FFs from a country and its participation in the coalition against IS.

### Iranian Forces and the Shia Militants in Iraq and Syria

Throughout the conflict in Syria, and then Iraq, the Iranian government explicitly supported the Shia government in Iraq and Alawi-based (a Shia sect, although not accepted by all Shias) regime in Syria (Saul and Hafezi, 2014 and Chulov, 2014). This support and IS's Salafi ideology led IS to target Iranian forces and Shia militants supported by Iran, such as the Lebanon-based Hizbollah, in its propaganda videos. In Dabiq magazine, there are images that show destroyed military vehicles. One of the images is captioned: "the aftermath of an assault against the Safawis in Al-Anbar" (Dabiq 5: 11). The Iranian forces and Shia militants are a common target of IS propaganda videos as well. For instance, in a video called "The Flames of War," IS fighters are shown attacking the so called "Safawis" (Iranians) or "rafithin" (heretics); the footage shows the dead bodies of their soldiers and their destroyed military vehicles, while there is a heroic / epic song playing on the background. This widens the scope of the conflict and tightens the identity of the group. By using the terms "Safawis" and "rafithin" for addressing Shia forces, IS highlights the historical conflicts between the Shia Safavid Empire, and the Sunni Ottoman Empire, which exploits the Shia-Sunni division.<sup>30</sup> This helps IS to demonstrate that their "pure" interpretation of Islam is under threat not only by the "Crusaders," but also by other "unjust" interpretations of Islam, which have been historically in conflict with Sunnism. Therefore, while excluding Shias from their audiences, they exploit the Shia-Sunni division in order to mobilize their Sunni audiences.

---

<sup>30</sup> The Ottomans and the Safavids fought protracted wars, which were based on territorial and religious differences, for over a century. These wars started in 1514 when the Ottoman Sultan Selim I declared a holy war against the Safavids, whom he considered heretics. The subsequent 1639 peace treaty between the two empires ended these wars and established borders that are almost identical to those shared by present-day Iraq and Iran. The two empires stayed enemies but no further warfare broke out (Dale, 2010).

### Pishmarge: Kurdish Forces

The other group that is sought to be terrorized in IS propaganda is Pishmarge or Kurdish military forces, who are referred to as “kuffar” (infidels), “atheists,” or “seculars.” IS uses such religious/ideological labels for Kurdish fighters to portray them as Muslims’ enemies. Such labels help IS to justify its battle on the one hand, and to demonstrate the wide scope of “threat against Islam” in order to appeal to its audiences on the other. In a video titled “Deterrence of Spies 1,” an alleged Kurdish spy is being crucified, similar to Jesus on the Cross.<sup>31</sup> Besides showing such brutality, in a different tactic serving the same purpose, during the 2014 battle for the Syrian-Turkish border town of Kobane battle the group released a video titled “From inside Ayn al-Islam (Kobane),” and claimed that the Kurdish Pishmarge were wiped out from the city. John Cantley, a British hostage, reports from inside the city and claims that despite the coalition airstrikes against IS, the Pishmarge forces lost the battle and the city fell into the hands of IS mujahidin. Showing such brutality against Kurdish forces, and claiming victories in the battle against them can be interpreted as a method that IS uses to encourage its audiences to join the group. This is a message that appears to be consistent in all of IS’s materials about its enemies.

### Syrian and Iraqi Forces

Finally, the IS propaganda machine tries to terrify government forces in Syria and Iraq in an orchestrated manner. There are several videos that show corpses of Syrian or Iraqi soldiers. In one of them, “The Flames of War,” captured Syrian soldiers are shown digging their own grave before their execution. While doing so, they urge their friends and

---

<sup>31</sup> In its videos, IS uses several methods of execution including, but not limited to, crucifying, exploding, choking, and beheading. Surveying the reasons why IS uses such diverse methods of execution requires a separate analysis that does not fit into this thesis.

relatives to leave the Syrian army if they do not wish to have a similar fate. At the end, the captured soldiers are executed and buried in the graves that they dug with their own hands. Therefore, the group deliberately attempts to terrify its enemies by showing their defeats. As I mentioned in the previous sections, I argue that this strategy has another function as well: by showing the group's victories, and its enemies' defeats, IS tries to give its audiences confidence and courage to join the group; joining IS seems more justifiable when the group is capable of defeating its enemies.

### **Responding to the Western Media**

Another component of IS's propaganda messaging is reflecting and responding to the Western media. The group closely monitors the Western media; in all ten issues of Dabiq, for instance, there is a section called "In the Words of the Enemy," in which the editors of the magazine bring direct quotes from Western politicians, policy analysts, or journalists, which were published by well-known international organizations. In one of the issues, the entire section is designated to what RAND corporation suggests about IS (Dabiq 5; 34-35).

Besides Dabiq magazine, the group released several videos specifically responding to the Western media reports on IS. In one of the video series called "Lend Me Your Ears," John Cantley, the British hostage, directly responds to the claims of the Western media about IS and criticizes the US and its allies' political and military strategies in their battle against IS. In the second episode of this series, for instance, he reflects on President Obama's address on the thirteenth anniversary of 9/11 attacks. Cantley, who is wearing an orange prisoners' jumpsuit, criticizes President Obama's four-staged strategy for

confronting IS.<sup>32</sup> This is an important function of IS's recruitment machine, for it tries to introduce the group's narrative to the audiences who have not experienced the war first hand.

### **Portraying the Group as a 'State'**

As is underscored by the group's name, claiming to be a "state" with its ordinary functions is a vital component of IS's strategy and propaganda. IS is attempting to establish its theological-historical legitimacy. In another series of videos, John Cantley reports from "inside" the territories controlled by IS, as he tries to convince his audiences that people who live within IS's territories have ordinary lives. He reports that there is no power outage, no famine or shortage, and people have no difficulty finding what they need. In "From inside Mosul" he visits the city's market, and shows all the fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats that are on sale in the stores. In another video from a different series, dozens of kids are running joyfully in a park, and a few IS fighters are treating them with ice cream ("MTmujatweets 2"). Interestingly, a young couple are seen in the background having a peaceful picnic in the park, and no one seems to bother them (Ibid.). In another video from this series, a busy fast food restaurant is shown serving Turkish Doner sandwiches. The cook in the restaurant, who is wearing a clean black cook's uniform and hat, explains that under IS's leadership, people have what they need for life ("MTmujatweets 3").

In videos circulating on the Internet, the group is portrayed as a 'state' that provides public services such as (sharia) law enforcement and health care. For instance, in a

---

<sup>32</sup> 1. President Obama's strategy entails four parts: 1) U.S. airstrikes; 2) supporting foreign ground forces; 3) counterterrorism with the main purpose of preventing FFs from joining IS; 4) humanitarian assistance for people in danger of being driven out of their homes by IS (Shear and Baker, 2014).

documentary released by the Wall Street Journal, the group's police stations are depicted. In the same video, there are scenes in which the group's justice system executes individuals who were guilty of breaking its strict sharia laws ("Life inside Raqqa," 2014). IS tries to assure its audiences that IS is a strong 'state' that will be able to provide all of its 'citizens' with their material and spiritual needs. On this basis, IS urges all Muslims to support the group.

### **Hijra or Jihad**

IS urges its audiences to do one of the following options: to leave their countries of residence and migrate to IS, or if they cannot, they should pledge obedience to their caliph and fight against Muslims' enemies wherever they reside. However, since IS tries to have more Muslims migrating to its territories, the priority in IS's propaganda is given to the former option. Therefore, one of the main focal points of the group's media is on the hijra (migration). The term hijra evokes the Prophet Mohammed's migration from Mecca to Medina (on the Arabian Peninsula) in order to escape his persecution and to establish an Islamic community ("Life of the Prophet," nd.).<sup>33</sup> The Prophet and his followers migrated to Medina in order to be able to establish and practice Islamic principles. Thus, using the term hijra compares Muslims' lives under Western states with those of Mohammed's followers under non-believers in Mecca. Similarly, their migration to IS's territories is compared with Mohammed and his followers to Medina, as well. Hence, by this comparison, IS tries to encourage Muslims' migration to its territories.

---

<sup>33</sup> The Prophet Mohammed was settled in Mecca after starting his mission as a prophet to preach Islam. Soon after, The Quraysh (the ruling tribe in Mecca, and to which the Prophet belonged) started persecuting him and his followers. The pressure increased so much that it became virtually impossible for the Prophet to continue preaching in Mecca. Therefore, in 622, the Prophet Mohammed and his followers settled in the area of Yathreb, or later Medina ("Life of the Prophet," nd.).

This aim is explicitly explained in the propaganda material released by IS. In a video titled “There Is No Life without Jihad,” three British and two Australian fighters, who are between eighteen and thirty years of age, urge their fellow Muslim brothers and sisters in their home countries and elsewhere towards hijra to IS. In another video, featuring a “martyred,” a young Canadian fighter explains for the viewers that he had an ordinary life like any other Canadian citizen. He (who dies at the end of the video) urges Muslims of Canada and the rest of the world to join IS. He claims that there is a role for everyone in the caliphate, and individuals do not have to fight in the fronts if they do not have the skills for it. In another video that delivers the same message, a young Australian man calls Muslims to hijra to IS. In this video, which is titled “I Wish I Had Come Sooner,” the man, wearing a medical doctor’s uniform and walking in a bright and welcoming hospital, claims that he migrated to IS to support the caliphate with his skills as a medical doctor. An important note to make is that material gain has no place in IS’s recruitment message. As suggested in the above examples, recruits are not promised anything with material value; instead they are always invited to join IS in order to fulfil their own religious obligation of living under a just political entity and defending Islam and Muslims against enemies. Martyrdom is an important aspect of their spiritual gain; they are promised to enjoy the rewards of afterlife. Therefore, IS’s recruitment process is based on spiritual, not material gains.

Besides the recruitment materials that inveigh Muslims to hijra, there are a significant number of recruitment videos urging Muslims to carry out attacks in their countries of residence if they cannot migrate to IS. This is an important finding as it fades the existing borders between FFs and radicalization literatures. In other words, IS provides the same

logic for committing acts both within and outside of its audiences' country of residence. This makes radicalization literature an important part of this study. To elaborate, in a video titled "Message of the Mujahid," John Maguire, a Canadian IS fighter, calls on Canadian Muslims to attack targets within the country in the name of jihad and support of IS. He says: "A Muslim has absolutely no place living in a land such as Canada, America, or Europe today, except to carry out his duty of fighting in Allah's cause." Then he continues:

... the mujahidin continue to call you to one of two options: hijra or jihad; you either pack your bags or you prepare your explosive devises; you either purchase your airline ticket, or you sharpen your knife; you either come to the Islamic State and live under the laws of Allah, or you follow the example of the brother Ahmad Rouleau<sup>34</sup> ("Message of Mujahid," 2014).

Thus, migration to IS's territories and joining the group or attacking targets in Western countries are the two options that are in the heart of IS's message to Muslims outside of Syria and Iraq.

### **The Current Conflict: a Battle between "True Islam and Its Enemies"**

A careful examination of the propaganda materials produced by IS shows that the group tries to convince its audiences by 1) portraying the conflict as a battle in which kuffar (infidels) and Crusaders indiscriminately oppress and kill Muslims; and 2) suggesting that it is every individual Muslim's religious obligation to defend their Ummah (the global Muslim community).<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, while the conflict in Syria is generally defined by the media as a civil war, IS does not portray the conflict as a struggle to replace the Assad regime; on one side of the battle is IS, which represents true Islam, and on the other side

---

<sup>34</sup> Ahmad Rouleau is the person who allegedly hit and run over two members of the Canadian Forces as they were walking in a strip mall just outside St-Jean-sur-Richelieu in Quebec in October 2014 (Bell, 2014).

<sup>35</sup> While the US-led coalition has so far confirmed only two civilian deaths, there are reports suggesting that the air campaign against IS in Iraq and Syria has killed "more than 450 civilians" (Ross, 2015).

are the group's various enemies, who are repeatedly labeled as 'Crusaders,' tawaqit (tyrants) who are often referred to as "Crusaders' puppets," kuffars (infidels), and "rafithin" (heretics, which usually refers to Shia Muslims). This is the terminology that is used in "The Flames of War" and "Although the Disbelievers Dislike It" videos. Therefore, the battle is not primarily against a tyrant regime in Syria, and as a result, being Syrian or Arab is not the only, or even the primary, shared identity; instead, Muslims (who fit into IS's interpretation), as a whole, are under attack by Islam's enemies. In one of the videos released by the group, the narrator says:

[Muslims] are facing a battle which is [one] of the decisive, critical battles in the history of Islam. If the Muslims are defeated, they will be humiliated in such a manner that no humiliation compares to. And if Muslims are victorious,... they will be honored with all honor by which Muslims will return to being masters of the world and kings of the earth ("Message to Muslims of West ," nd.).

This message portrays the situation as a dichotomy: 'you will either lose and get humiliated, or win and get honored;' there is no middle way. In other words, this is a battle between good and evil. Thus, according to this message, the scope of this conflict is significantly broader than an ordinary civil war (in Syria, at least); this is a battle in which Muslims, as a whole, are under an existential threat, and thus they all need to take part and defend their identity.

In order to influence its audiences, the group tries to show the 'cruelty' against Muslims in the current conflict in Syria/ Iraq. In one of Dabiq magazine's issues, for instance, there are images of corpses of civilians killed by the enemies (Dabiq 1: 16). One of the images that shows dead teenage boys is titled "Sunnis Murdered by the Safawis (Iranian forces)" (Ibid.). In another article covering the execution of the Jordanian pilot, al-Kasāsibah, published in Dabiq magazine, the writer claims that this execution was a

response to massacres of Muslims by Crusaders (Dabiq, 7: 5-8). This article is accompanied with images of two kids burned alive during the coalition's airstrikes. At the bottom of these images, there is a caption saying: "the murtadd (infidel) pilot was killed in retaliation for airstrikes against Muslims such as those pictured above" (Dabiq 7: 6). This tactic is used in the group's propaganda videos as well.

There are several videos released by IS that deliver the same message to their audiences. For instance, in a video called "The Bombing of the Crusaders on Muslims," dead bodies of infants and kids who were killed during the coalition's airstrikes are shown, and parents who lost their children are crying and asking for Allah's justice. The video contains uncensored images of the victims, and it can easily obtain its viewers' sympathy. In another video titled, "Although the Disbelievers Dislike It," dead bodies of civilians are shown and the same message is delivered to the audiences.

Displaying cruelty against Muslims is vital to make the ultimate message more appealing and effective: the Ummah (the global Muslim community), is under attack and all Muslims' support is needed. This message targets those who have not experienced the war, but have sympathy for the people who are killed by IS's enemies. In a video titled "Message from the Mujahid" (standing on debris of a ruined building in Syria) John Maguire, a Canadian IS fighter, addresses Canadians, and says: "You have absolutely no right to live in a state of safety and security when your country is carrying out atrocities on our people." Then, he goes on to urge Muslims to attack the enemy. In another video, titled "a Message to the Muslims of the West," the narrator says:

If you can, kill an American or European... or Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against IS, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be.

Therefore, Muslims are “obligated” to either jihad or hijra. This message contains a significant theological shift regarding the nature of jihad. IS’s definition of jihad seems to be a developed version of Azzam’s FFs doctrine, which differs from the orthodox understanding of jihad. While the modern Sunni theorists of jihad such as Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Faraj described this notion primarily as a means for eliminating corrupt rulers (revolutionary jihad), Azzam shifted the focus to the outside enemy. As a result, Azzam’s doctrine offered a rationale for privatized warfare, as opposed to the orthodox jihad’s revolutionary tactics (Hegghemmer, 2011: 74). In other words, he justified military engagement of non-governmental actors in a conflict in a foreign country.

Prior to Azzam, the majority of Islamic scholars agreed that jihad may be declared when a clear hostility happens against a Muslim nation by non-Muslims.<sup>36</sup> While they emphasized that the local population has the responsibility for fighting, Azzam argued that it is every Muslim’s responsibility to defend oppressed Muslims. According to the orthodox understanding of jihad, fighting against the oppressors /invaders was seen as a collective duty for non-local Muslims that was not binding for the individual. They were permitted to fight, if they had consent from their parents, husbands, political authorities, or any creditors. In contrast, Azzam argued that defending Muslims is an individual duty of every Muslim in the world; hence, when there is a call for jihad, individuals are obligated to accept it, and no permission from anyone is required. This shift in the understanding of

---

<sup>36</sup> The word “jihad” (Arabic: جهاد) means “struggle” or “striving” in God’s way or to work for a dignified cause with boldness. Unlike the medieval Christian notion of “crusade” (“war for the cross”), jihad does not mean “holy war” (holy in Arabic is muqadassa, and war is harb). That being said, in the classical period of Muslim history (the first three centuries), Jihad was interpreted as armed action and most Islamic jurists understood it to be in a military sense in the context of a conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims (Knapp, 2003). It is important note that jihad is one the most controversial notions in Islam, and scholars and jurists have different perspectives towards its meaning and application.

jihad led to the modern Islamic FF movement. This is the reason that the Arab-Afghan mujahedin case is the first Islamic FF mobilization in contemporary history. Interestingly, Azzam's doctrine is different from al-Qaida's global jihad. While Azzam promoted conventional military tactics, al-Qaeda adopted occasional terrorist attacks (Ibid.).

IS's definition of jihad resembles Azzam's understanding of this notion. IS calls not only Syrians or Arabs, but all Muslims to defend oppressed Muslims, in general. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, ranks of mujahidin from different nationalities are shown in IS's recruitment videos, and all Muslims are addressed in different languages including Arabic, English, German, French, Turkish, Russian and others. Committing acts of violence is the alternative for those who cannot take part in the primary tactic: the group asks individuals to join its conventional military operations within Syria and Iraq that are designed to conquer territories. Finally, similar to Azzam's argument, IS presents jihad as an individual, not a collective, duty, which means that every individual Muslim is responsible to defend Islam, and in doing so he/she does not need anyone's permission. In a video called "A Message to the Muslims of the West," the narrator invites Muslims to jihad, and tells them: "Do not ask for anyone's advice, and do not seek anyone's verdict." This opens the doors to individuals whose communities would not give them permission to join the group. Therefore, presenting jihad in this manner expands the group's reach significantly.

### **Analysis: Characteristics of the Target Audiences**

Having analyzed the methods and content of IS's recruitment message, I am now going to identify the group's target audiences. By doing so, I will introduce indicators that I will be examining in the countries that I have identified in the following chapter. I am

hoping that doing this would partly explain why there are differences between the numbers and ratios of FFs from the countries that I have identified.

One of the most important facts about IS's recruitment process is that it is based on the assumption that its audiences have access to the Internet. With the group's heavy reliance on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, and video/file sharing websites such as YouTube, IS suggests that the primary audiences should belong to young generations who are familiar with the Internet and social media platforms and can effectively work with them. This means that the target audiences roughly range from teenagers to individuals up to forty years of age.

This demographic assumption is supported by other evidence as well. In most of the videos released by IS, individuals who invite their countrymen/women to join IS appear to be well under forty years of age. For instance, in "I Wish I'd Come Sooner," "Flame of War," "A Message for Muslims," "Words from the Heart to Our Brothers in the Caucasus," "MTmujatweets 1," "MTmujatweets 4," "MTmujatweets 5," "Message of the Mujahid," and "There Is No Life Without Jihad," all the FFs, who invite others to join IS are men who seem to be under forty, with most of them being in their early 20s. The individuals shown in these videos are used as role models for the audiences receiving the message. Therefore, the reliance on the Internet and social media as modern technologies, and use of young (under forty) FFs in the recruitment videos make it logically correct to conclude that the group's target audiences are under forty years of age. Silber and Bhatt's radicalization model (2007), discussed in the first chapter supports this finding, as well: younger people are at a higher risk of being radicalized.

In regards to the audiences' gender, I must mention that IS's recruitment message does not explicitly differentiate between female and male audiences. There is no evidence regarding the gender of target audiences, and the message does not specify the gender of its target audience. However, while all the examples presented in the recruitment message are male FFs, I could not find a female recruit or recruiter. Therefore, it seems that IS uses different materials for its female audiences that I did not find, or uses other methods such as local recruiting networks that I have not studied; hence, this is a topic that requires further study. As far as the findings of the present study go, IS's recruitment message seems to be primarily designed to appeal to male audiences. This is consistent with the literature on civil war that finds young men are most likely to participate (Eck, 2010).

Also significant are the languages used in IS's recruitment message. There are two languages that are mainly used in the videos released by IS: Arabic and English. Out of the 55 videos that I examined for this chapter, 16 are in Arabic language and 23 have Arabic subtitles. After Arabic language (used in 39 videos), English is the second most prevalent; 24 videos are in English and 8 of them have English subtitles. Of course, the materials that I examined might not accurately represent the proportion of the languages used in all recruiting materials used by IS, but as far as this sample goes, Arabic and English languages are the primary languages used in IS's recruitment message.

Arabic, which is the language of the Quran, is spoken in a large number of Muslim countries, and thus many Muslims even in Western countries know this language. For instance, this is the language that Moroccans, Tunisians, Algerians, Lebanese, Iraqis, Syrians, and Saudis as well as many others speak as their mother tongue. English on the other hand, has an even broader reach as an international language because many people

in different countries speak English, to varying levels, besides their mother tongues. While the use of English makes the reach of IS's message considerably broad, the use of Arabic language specifically targets audiences who know the language or identify themselves as Arabs and as Muslims. Therefore, I will study the number of Arabic speaking individuals in the identified countries.

Besides the methods and means, the content of the propaganda materials reveals a few more details about the target audiences. The first detail comes from the way that the group tries to justify its existence. As discussed earlier, IS explicitly claims that it is the only legitimate Islamic political entity, and whoever wants to live a true Muslim life, must hijra (migrate) to IS. Therefore, individual Muslims who want to faithfully practice sharia are to migrate to the group's territories. Therefore, being a Muslim, and not Arab or Syrian, is the primary source of shared identity that can potentially bring an individual to Syria or Iraq.

That being said, Muslim identity, as depicted by IS, does not encompass all Muslim sects, such as Shias and Alawis. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, Shias and Alawis are portrayed by IS's media as enemies; hence, when speaking of IS's identity, it is clear that such world views have no place in the group's claimed identity. This helps to establish a more accurate analysis of Muslims' demographic features in the identified countries in the following chapter.

The other fact that this analysis suggests is that the audiences are nourished with a heavy dose of anti-West material, which aims to create or develop hatred towards the West, in a general and broad sense. The US and its allies are pictured as Muslims' enemies who oppress and humiliate Muslims, within Western societies and in the Muslim world. This

hostile relationship between Muslims and the West is often described by an apocalyptic terminology. The best example of this is the use of name Dabiq for IS's periodical magazine, which refers to a place that, according to ahadith, will be the battlefield for Crusader armies' battle against Muslims in the last days. This terminology is an important way to influence the audiences. Relating this battle to the events of the last days could have a greater influence on the audiences as they are not called to an ordinary battle; instead, they are called to an extraordinary battle that has been prophesied. Hence, as I illustrated throughout this chapter, religious identity is the central component of IS's recruitment message.

## Chapter 3: Muslims' Identity and Integration in Selected Countries

### Introduction

Western Muslims are one of the primary targets of IS's recruitment message. Through my analysis of IS's recruitment message, I found that the group uses a single basic message to appeal to its audiences across Western countries. This suggests that the discrepancies among the ratios of FFs in the identified countries are not rooted in how IS appeals to its audiences in different countries. Though the US and Finland have high and low ratios, respectively, it is not because the group has sent two different messages to its audiences in these countries. Therefore, in order to find the answer to the question of why different Western countries have different ratios of FFs, I looked at the other end of the message, which entails the audiences who receive the message in the West. Thus, in this chapter I try to draw a picture of Muslims in the nine identified countries: Finland, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the UK, Canada, Australia, and the US.

Based on the findings of my first two chapters, I examine Muslims' situation in their respective countries under two themes of identity and integration. Identity, which is the first part, is the common denominator of nearly all of the radicalization and FF mobilization models that I reviewed in the first chapter. Besides the emphasis on identity in the literature, IS's recruitment message clearly presents and appeals to a specific identity, which generally fits into the Sunni denomination of Islam.<sup>37</sup> Putting these two pieces together leads towards examining Muslims' identity in the identified countries. Similarly, integration is a crucial part of both the literature and IS's message. In most of the models reviewed in the first chapter, marginalization and disenfranchisement play an important

---

<sup>37</sup> To learn more about IS's theological background see chapter 2.

role in leading individuals to commit acts of violence. This fits with IS's message to its audiences, when the group emphasizes that Muslims do not belong to Western societies, and that they should therefore not live under Western states' rule. In this sense, integration and belonging seem to play a central role in the group's appeal to its audiences in the West. Hence, in this chapter, I will study Muslims' identity and integration, respectively, in the selected countries.

### **Identity**

David Malet's "Foreign Fighters; Transnational Identity in Civil Conflicts" is one of the leading works on FF movements that specifically focuses on the notion of identity (2009). According to him, FF mobilizations have one element in common: shared identity.<sup>38</sup> IS's case is not an exception in this regard; as discussed in the previous chapter, IS explicitly tries to appeal to members of a transnational community belonging to a specific common identity: Sunni Muslims. Hence, it is vital to find out the connection between Muslims in these countries and IS's identity. I must also examine the gender and age structure of Muslims in the selected countries because my analysis of IS's recruitment message, in the previous chapter, suggests that male audiences in a certain age group seem to be the main target of the group's recruitment message. Therefore, in this section, I look first at the three main sources of common identity discussed in Malet's work, namely

---

<sup>38</sup> Based on the notion of shared identity, Malet divides FFs into four categories:

Diasporans: individuals who join with nationalist revolutionaries to promote shared nationalist objectives.

Encroachers: individuals who join with secessionist insurgents in neighboring countries aiming to pursue political control of region.

Liberationists: individuals who join anti-colonial rebels for defending the perceived common ideological objectives.

True Believers: individuals who join ideological rebels to defend institutions of common identity (2009; 58-60).

religion, nationality, and ethnicity. Then, I will study gender and age structure of Muslims in the identified countries.

### **History of Muslims' Presence in the West**

Before moving on to explore Muslim communities' identity, it is particularly important to have a historical review of their presence in their host countries as it provides a proper context for the analysis and leads the examination towards my discussion on Muslims' identity. Generally speaking, Muslims' presence in Western countries has a long history, but their number was sharply increased in the post 1945 era (Fitzer and Soper, 2004; 2). A large number of them migrated to Europe, for instance, as workers from the countries of Eastern Europe, Mediterranean, and former African colonies. These workers were brought to Europe in particular, to rebuild what was destroyed in the Second World War. Due to the 1970s' economic recession, European states put an end to the flow of low-skilled workers. However, this was not the end of Muslims' increasing presence in the west as family reunion and asylum seeking already started a second wave of Muslim immigration to Europe (Ibid.).

Meanwhile, the US, Canada, and Australia, as settler or immigration-based countries, had similar situations. In Australia, for instance, there was a small community of Muslims dating back to the time when Europeans arrived, but it was not until the post 1945 era that a wave of Muslims from the former Yugoslavia, Cyprus, Poland, Hungary and Russia settled in the country (Yasmeen, 2008; 5). That being said, the number of Muslims in Australia sharply increased as a result of political events of the 1970s such as the instability in Lebanon and the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) and the Iraq-Kuwait (1990) war and its aftermath in the Persian Gulf region (Ibid.). In Canada, Muslims have a similar

history compared to Europe or Australia; there are Muslim communities with a fairly long history, but over 60 percent of Muslims are foreign born (Selby, n.d.). The US has a fairly similar situation. While Muslims have a long history in the US, the majority (65%) of them belong to first-generation immigrants (“Islam in US,” n.d.).

Speaking of Muslims’ presence in the West, it is vital to consider the fact that while Muslims’ settlement in Europe is a result of the decolonization policies and guest worker programs following the Second World War, a relatively large number of Muslims in the US, Canada, and Australia have settled as skilled worker immigrants, scholars, or investor immigrants.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, it is vital to keep in mind that there is a fundamental difference in the nature of Muslim communities in European countries as opposed to that of the non-European countries studied in this thesis. European Muslims have supposedly lower levels of education, wealth and job skills.<sup>40</sup> I will survey this correlation in details when I examine Western Muslims’ education, housing, and employment in the second part of this chapter. I will demonstrate that European Muslims tend to have poorer education, housing, and employment conditions compared with their counterparts in the US, Canada, and Australia.

### **Size of the Muslim Population**

Shared religious identity is often seen as one of the main motivations for individuals participating in foreign conflicts. This notion has a heavy presence in several radicalization models introduced by authors such as Wiktorowicz (2004), Moghaddam (2005), Silber and Bhatt (2007), and Sageman (2008). This notion is also at the core of Malet’s work on FFs,

---

<sup>39</sup> Obviously throughout the past few decades, resettling refugees, to varying degrees, has been a commonality of all Western countries.

<sup>40</sup> I will compare Muslim communities in the identified countries on these matters later in the second part of this chapter.

*Foreign Fighters: Transnational Identity in Civil Conflicts* (2009).<sup>41</sup> One of the ways of measuring this notion is to study the size of Muslim population in the selected countries.

Two interesting findings arise from a careful attention to sizes of Muslim populations in the selected countries. First, the countries having larger Muslim populations tend to have higher absolute numbers of FFs in the Syria/ Iraq conflict. Second, countries with smaller Muslim populations are more likely to have larger proportions of FFs to their Muslim population.

**Table 2: Muslim Populations in Selected Countries**

Country	Foreign Fighters	Muslim Pop.	Muslim % of Pop.	FF. per 100K Muslims
France	1,200	4,704,000	9.00	0.26
Germany	500-600	4,119,000	3.70	0.12
UK	500-600	2,869,000	4.40	0.17
USA	100	2,595,000	0.60	0.04
Canada	100	940,000	3.20	0.11
Belgium	440	638,000	2.40	0.69
Australia	100-250	399,000	2.20	0.25
Denmark	100-150	226,000	4.00	0.44
Finland	50-70	42,000	0.20	1.19

**Source: CIA Factbooks**

Interestingly, France, Germany, and UK, with the highest absolute numbers of FFs, also have the largest Muslim communities. Bringing into account the proportion of FFs to Muslim population in each country makes this relationship even more interesting, and yet puzzling. Finland, Belgium, and Denmark, countries with smaller Muslim populations, are those having higher proportions of FFs compared with other European countries in this list. Interestingly, the three non-European countries do not follow these two trends.

---

<sup>41</sup> To read more about these models please refer to the first chapter of this thesis.

These findings have a significant contribution to this thesis's research question. In the European countries in this list, numbers of Muslims have a correlation with numbers of FFs: higher number of Muslims equals higher number of FFs. However, this appears to be a misleading conclusion because if this formula were accurate, then one could expect the US, Canada, and Australia to have higher numbers of FFs since they have higher absolute numbers of Muslims. The fact that countries with smaller Muslim populations have higher ratios of FFs confirms that having a large Muslim community does not explain the whole issue. For instance, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands, with larger Muslim populations have smaller numbers of FFs compared with Belgium. Or, Spain, as another example, with over a million Muslims has a fewer number of FFs than Belgium with just over 600,000 Muslims. Similarly, the fact that the US, Canada, and Australia do not follow this pattern supports that the size of Muslim population cannot explain why there is a discrepancy in the numbers of FFs from the selected countries.

### **Religious Division: Sunni or Shia?**

Sunnism and Shiism are the two main branches in Islam.<sup>42</sup> Since IS defines itself under the flag of Sunnism, and appeals to its Sunni audience, and directly attacks Shias, it is important to study the proportion of Shia and Sunni in each selected country.<sup>43</sup> The reason for this is that I want to find out if the discrepancies among the ratios of FFs to Muslim populations in the selected countries are connected to the division of Sunni/Shia Muslims in these countries. Therefore, in this section, I will try to find out what portions

---

<sup>42</sup> Both Sunnism and Shiism have their own subcategories. Wahhabism, for instance, is a subcategory of Sunnism, while Twelvers are a prime subcategory of Shiism.

<sup>43</sup> In fact, as illustrated in the previous chapter, IS heavily condemns Shia Muslims in its propaganda materials, and does not consider them as true Muslims.

of Muslim populations in these countries are Sunni. To do so, I must rely on the government statistics, where available, and unofficial estimates that are produced by academics or Islamic organizations, such as Euro-Islam<sup>44</sup>. Based on this information, I generate a table that divides Muslim populations to Sunni and Shia in the selected countries.

**Table 3: Sunni-Muslim Population in Selected Countries<sup>45</sup>**

Country	Muslim Population	Sunni %	Shia %	FFs Per 100K Muslim pop.
Finland	42,000	80	20	119.048
Belgium	638,000	95	5	68.966
Denmark	226,000	95	5	44.248
France	4,704,000	95	5	25.510
Germany	4,119,000	90	10	12.139
UK	2,869,000	95	5	17.428
Australia	399,000	95	5	25.063
Canada	940,000	N/A	N/A	10.638
USA	2,595,000	81	19	3.854

**Source: Euro-Islam and US. CIA Factbooks**

This information reveals that Sunnis dominate Muslim populations in these nine countries; in all of these countries, Sunnis make up 90 percent of the Muslim populations on average.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, since the Shia-Sunni division in these countries follows a similar pattern, it is logical to conclude that this factor is not capable of explaining the discrepancies among the ratios of FFs in the selected countries. Relatively speaking Finland

<sup>44</sup> Euro-islam.org is a website that provides information about Muslims in Europe and North America. The information presented by Euro-Islam varies from demographics to education, to politics, and to daily news.

<sup>45</sup> Where there was no official data available, which was the case for a majority of these countries, I extracted the information based on immigrants' countries of origin. In other words, I reflected on the proportion of Sunni/ Shia in each country and used the proportion in the home countries to calculate the proportions in the countries of residence. For instance, since 65 percent of Iraqis are Shia and 33 percent are Sunni, I assumed the Iraqi Muslim population in the West would have a similar division. Therefore, if country A had 1000 immigrants with Iraqi background, I assumed that 650 of them would be Shia, 330 would be Sunni, and the rest would belong to other religions. Indeed, this method is not 100 percent accurate, but it is the only available option that would hopefully reflect the reality.

<sup>46</sup> This finding reflects the global population of Shia and Sunni Muslims; according to a 2009 Pew research, a vast majority of Muslims are Sunnis, and an estimated 10-13% are Shias ("Mapping Muslim Population," 2009).

has a high number of Shias, but a large number of FF proportionately. This suggests that the actual proportion of FFs, once Shias are excluded, is actually much higher. This is true for the US as well.

### **Nationality: Iraqis and Syrians**

The other identity-related factor, which I borrow from Malet, is the nationality of Muslims in these nine countries. He argues that if audiences share both religious and national identity with recruiters, it is likelier that they accept the call to take part in a conflict abroad (2009). Thus, it is highly relevant to discover what role nationality plays in this complex case of FFs mobilization. Even though Syrians and Iraqis might not identify with IS due to the group's violent actions in the two countries, it is still highly relevant to explore the significance of common Syrian and Iraqi identities. This is because they are hypothetically connected to their homelands, which are Syria and Iraq, and according to Malet's thesis they are likely to join either side of the conflict. In this section, I will try to find out the relationship between sizes of Syrian and Iraqi communities in these countries on the one hand, and numbers of FFs from them on the other. For this purpose, I generate two separate tables; one for Iraqi and the other one for Syrian diasporas.

**Table 4: Syrian Population in Selected Countries**

Country	Syrian Pop.	% of Muslim Pop.	FFs
USA	76,000	0.039	100
Germany	44,000	0.015	500
Canada	22,000	0.020	100
France	17,000	0.003	1200
UK	10,000	0.004	500
Australia	10,000	0.020	100
Denmark	4,000	0.018	100
Belgium	2,000	0.007	440
Finland	1,000	0.042	50

**Source: Migration Policy Institute (“International Migrant Population,” 2013)**

As it appears in the above table, the relationship between the number/ percentage of Syrians in the selected countries and ratios of FFs from the countries is highly complex. In all of the nine countries, Syrians make up a significantly small portion of Muslim communities. Finland and the US have the highest percentages of Syrians. This is while Finland has the highest and the US has the lowest proportions of FFs in this list. To add to the complexity of the issue, it is worth noting that Finland and the US respectively the lowest and the highest absolute numbers of Syrians. To further explain the problem, the number or percentage of Syrians in the nine countries does not correlate with their respective ranking based on their proportions or absolute numbers of FFs. This suggests that Syrian nationality cannot explain the discrepancies among ratios of FFs from the identified countries. In the table below, I examine the significance of Iraqi identity, as well.

**Table 5: Iraqi Population in Selected Countries**

Country	Iraqi Pop.	% of Muslim Pop.	FFs
USA	182,000	0.094	100
Germany	94,000	0.031	500
UK	74,000	0.026	500
Australia	52,000	0.104	100
Canada	39,000	0.035	100
Denmark	22,000	0.099	100
Finland	9,000	0.375	50
France	6,000	0.001	1200
Belgium	2,000	0.007	440

**Source: Migration Policy Institute (“International Migrant Population,” 2013)**

My examination of Iraqi nationality suggests a highly similar finding to my analysis of Syrian identity: Iraqi national identity does not seem to be capable of explaining the discrepancies among ratios of FFs from the identified countries. Finland and Australia have

the highest concentrations of individuals with Iraqi background, while the former has the highest ratios of FFs, and the latter has one of the lowest proportions of FFs among the nine countries. In addition, France with the highest absolute number of FFs has the smallest percentage of Iraqis in this list. Finally, this table suggests the number or percentage of Iraqis, similar to Syrians, in the identified countries does not correlate with their respective ranking based on their proportions or absolute numbers of FFs. This is a significant finding as it suggests that common nationality does not seem to attract individuals to the conflict in Syria and Iraq. In fact, it seems that Syrians and Iraqis are not motivated to support either side of the conflict, including the two governments, IS, and other rebel groups. This is an important finding for it reveals that shared nationality has relatively limited explanatory power in this case. It rejects Malet's assumption that existence of common national identity increases chances of an individual's participation in a foreign civil conflict.

Besides Iraqi and Syrian identities, there are five other nationalities that I wish to analyze in this section: Tunisian, Saudi, Moroccan, Jordanian, Lebanese, and Libyan. In the list of Middle Eastern Muslim countries supplying FFs to the conflict in Syria/Iraq, these six countries stand out for having the highest ratios and absolute numbers of FFs.

**Table 6: Middle Eastern Muslim Countries with Highest Proportions/Numbers of FFs**

Country	Pop.	Muslim Pop.	FFs	Ratio of FFs / 100K
Lebanon	6,184,701	3,339,739	900	26.95
Jordan	8,117,564	7,890,272	1,500	19.01
Tunisia	11,037,225	10,937,890	1,500 -3000	13.71
Libya	6,411,776	6,193,776	600	9.69
Saudi-Arabia	27,752,316	27,752,316	1,500 -2500	5.40
Morocco	33,322,699	32,989,472	1,500	4.55

**Source: Migration Policy Institute ("International Migrant Population," 2013)**

The fact that these countries have the highest ratios and numbers of FFs among Muslim countries in the Middle East, raises the question of whether immigrants with these nationalities are more likely to join IS or other sides of the conflict in Syria and Iraq. Indeed this is a question that requires a separate profound study, but I will briefly survey this question in this section as it is highly relevant to this study's discussion about identity. In table 7, I provide information about the number of immigrants with these six nationalities in my identified Western countries.

The information provided in table 7 suggest a few interesting findings. In the three countries in the first set, Finland, Belgium, and Denmark, individuals with the indicated six nationalities make up a higher average percentage (23.7 percent) of Muslim population than the countries in the second and third sets. In addition, countries of the third set, namely Australia, Canada, and the US, have a higher average (22.36 percent) of individuals with the indicated nationalities, compared with the countries in the second set (with 12.91 percent on average). This is while the average number (118,333) of individuals with the six nationalities is significantly lower in the countries of the first set, compared with those in the other two. While individuals with the six nationalities in the countries of the third set make up a fairly similar percentage of Muslim population compared to the countries in in the first set, and also have considerably higher numbers of the individuals, countries of the third set still have significantly lower proportions and numbers of FFs.

**Table 7: Tunisian, Saudi, Moroccan, Jordanian, Lebanese, and Libyan Populations in Selected Countries**

Country	FFs	Ratio / 100k M.	Muslim Population		Tunisians	Saudis	Moroccans	Jordanians	Lebanese	Libyans	Total							
			Overall	Sunni							Pop.	% of Sunni. Pop.						
<b>Finland</b>	50-70	2.08	24000	19200	1000	0.042	0	0.000	2000	0.083	0	0.000	1000	0.042	0	0.000	4000	20.83%
<b>Belgium</b>	440	1.57	281000	266950	4000	0.014	0	0.000	91000	0.324	0	0.000	2000	0.007	0	0.000	97000	36.34%
<b>Denmark</b>	100-150	0.45	223260	141550	1000	0.004	0	0.000	5000	0.022	1000	0.004	13000	0.058	0	0.000	20000	14.13%
<b>France</b>	1200	0.23	5324301	5058085	395000	0.074	2000	0.000	928000	0.174	1000	0.000	47000	0.009	2000	0.000	1375000	27.18%
<b>UK</b>	500-600	0.18	2819882	2537893	9000	0.003	36000	0.013	23000	0.008	7000	0.002	18000	0.006	20000	0.007	113000	4.45%
<b>Germany</b>	500-600	0.17	2991613	2842032	27000	0.009	1000	0.000	94000	0.031	10000	0.003	67000	0.022	3000	0.001	202000	7.11%
<b>Australia</b>	100-250	0.20	500522	475495	1000	0.002	14000	0.028	2000	0.004	6000	0.012	97000	0.194	3000	0.006	123000	25.87%
<b>Canada</b>	100	0.09	1123195	898556	9000	0.008	16000	0.014	46000	0.041	9000	0.008	88000	0.078	4000	0.004	172000	19.14%
<b>US</b>	100	0.05	1928213	1561852	9000	0.005	64000	0.033	69000	0.036	76000	0.039	126000	0.065	1000	0.001	345000	22.09%

Source: Migration Policy Institute (“International Migrant Population,” 2013)

These findings suggest that there is some correlation between the proportion of individuals with the six nationalities and ratio of FFs from their hosting countries in the first two countries; however, there is not enough evidence to highlight this finding as a key causal factor for the discrepancies among ratios of FFs from the identified countries. Also, comparing the number and proportion of individuals with each of the six nationalities against the ratio of FFs from each of the nine countries explains that these nationalities are not capable of shedding light on this study's main question.<sup>47</sup> This supports my earlier finding about Syrian and Iraqi identities: nationality does not have a direct connection with ratio of FFs from the identified Western countries.

### **Which One Comes First? Religion or Citizenship?**

When it comes to the notions of religious and national identity, it is interesting to find out how Muslims in these countries identify themselves. What do they consider themselves first? A citizen of a given country or a Muslim? This question is particularly important as it can potentially explain why in some western countries a larger number of Muslims self-identify with IS. According to a report released by the Pew Research Center in 2006, "religion is central" to the identity of European Muslims ("Muslims in Europe," n.d.). For instance in Great Britain 92% of Muslims put their Muslim identity before their citizenship. In Germany, similar to Great Britain, a substantial majority of Muslims identify with Islam, before their nationality; 83% of them consider Islam as the primary source of

---

<sup>47</sup> That being said, further studies are required on each of these nationalities in each of the identified countries in order to find out more about their role in the current recruitment process.

their identity (Ibid.). In other words, a significantly large portion of Muslims in Europe predominantly identify themselves with their religious identity, and not citizenship.<sup>48</sup>

While in Europe, in general, a significantly large proportion of Muslims identify with religion before their European identity, in the US the situation is different. According to a poll conducted by Gallup in 2009, almost half of Muslims in the US identify with their American identity before their religion (Johnson, 2011). The fact that a larger proportion of Muslims in Europe identify with religion before nationality/ citizenship may partly explain why the European countries have been supplying a higher number of FFs for Islamist groups in Syria. This way of self-identification might be rooted in the way Muslims are integrated into their societies. I will examine this in the second part of this chapter, to find out if integration can explain this finding.

However, the FFs phenomenon seems to be more complicated. Interestingly, in France, as a Western country that has been home for 1,200 FFs, Muslims are split on this matter; while 52% of them identify themselves first as Muslim, the rest consider their French citizenship as the main source of their identity (Ibid.). Therefore, the fact that US and France have similar situations on this matter, and yet have significantly different numbers of FFs indicates that while this self-identification has a fairly strong explanatory power, other factors must be considered for a better understanding of the difference in the numbers of FFs from these countries.

---

<sup>48</sup> It would be beneficial and methodologically more appropriate if I could provide information on this matter on each of the nine countries, but unfortunately the related information was not available for all of the selected countries.

## Ethnicity

Even though my analysis of IS's recruitment message suggests that the group uses religion as the source of shared identity, it is still highly relevant to study the significance of Arab ethnic identity in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq. Being an Arab is particularly important because the current conflict in Syria and Iraq is taking place in the Arab world. Moreover, the heavy reliance of IS on Arabic language in its recruitment message makes it essential to analyze the ethnic background of Muslims in the nine countries.<sup>49</sup> Therefore in this section I will scrutinize the relationship between ethnic (Arab) background of Muslims in the countries on the one hand, and the ratios of FFs to the Muslim populations on the other.

**Table 8: Arab-Muslim Population in the Selected Countries (Sorted by ratio of FFs)**

Country	Muslim Population	Arab-Muslim Population	Arab-Muslims %	FFs	Ratio of FFs
France	4,704,000	3,292,800	70-75	1200	0.26
Belgium	638,000	382,800	60-65	440	0.69
Finland	42,000	23,100	55-60	50	1.19
USA	2,595,000	648,750	25-47	100	0.04
Denmark	226,000	56,500	20-30	100	0.44
Australia	399,000	79,800	20-25	100	0.21
Canada	940,000	188,000	20-25	100	0.11
Germany	4,119,000	205,950	5-10	500	0.12
UK	2,869,000	143,450	5-10	500	0.17

**Source: Euro-Islam and US. CIA Factbooks**

In the first glance, the information on the size of Arab-Muslim population in these nine countries does not seem to have a correlation with the rank of each country based on its

<sup>49</sup> To find out more about the Islamic State's recruitment message in general, and its use of Arabic language particularly, please refer to the second chapter of this thesis.

ratio of FFs. However, the outcome would be different if the size of Arab-Muslim population in each country is compared with the absolute number of FFs from them.

**Table 9: Arab-Muslim Population in Selected Countries (Sorted by Number of FFs) <sup>50</sup>**

Country	Muslim Population	Arab-Muslim Population	Arab-Muslims %	FFs	Ratio of FFs
France	4,704,000	3,292,800	70-75	1200	0.26
Germany	4,119,000	205,950	5-10	500	0.12
UK	2,869,000	143,450	5-10	500	0.17
Belgium	638,000	382,800	60-65	440	0.69
USA	2,595,000	648,750	25-47	100	0.04
Canada	940,000	188,000	20-25	100	0.11
Australia	399,000	79,800	20-25	100	0.21
Denmark	226,000	56,500	20-30	100	0.44
Finland	42,000	23,100	55-60	50	1.19

**Source: Euro-Islam.org and USA World Factbook**

The information in this table suggests that there is some connection between the size of the Arab-Muslim community in and the number of FFs from each country. A larger size the Arab-Muslim community in each country corresponds to a higher number of FFs from that country.<sup>51</sup> However, the proportions of FFs are significantly higher in the countries with smaller number of Arab-Muslim populations. This reverse relationship is similar to what I found earlier when examining the sizes of Muslim populations, and it can be an interesting topic for a separate study.

This correlation can be questioned with a similar argument to what I used in response to the connection between the size of Muslim population and the number of FFs

<sup>50</sup> In this table I focus on Arab Muslims, and not Arabs, obviously due to the fact that IS primarily uses Islam as the main source of shared identity. Therefore, any examination of ethnicity must include religious identity as well. I collected data for this table, similar to the Sunni-Shia division table. This means that I extracted the information based on immigrants' countries of origin. In other words, I reflected on the proportion of Arabs in each country and used the proportion in the home countries to calculate the proportions in the countries of residence.

<sup>51</sup> The only exception, though, is the case of Belgium; according to the size of its Arab-Muslim population, it should have a slightly higher number of FFs.

in the selected countries. The fact that this trend is not consistent across all nine countries suggests that other factors must be examined to reach the deeper layers of the problem. It is vital to note that if this was the only causal factor, one could assume that Arab Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Kuwait would have considerably higher numbers of FFs because they have significantly larger Arab-Muslim populations.<sup>52</sup>

### **Age Structure**

The existing literature on conflict suggests that it is predominantly young, unemployed men who take part in violent conflicts (Silber and Bhatt 2007, Bott et al 2009, Bizina and Gray 2014, and Archick et al., 2005). Although these studies apply mostly to conflicts within states, it may be the case that this is influential in the case of foreign fighters. Hence, in this section I examine the age and gender demographics of Muslim communities in the host states, to see if there is a relationship between a preponderance of young men and number of FFs as percent of Muslim population. Such a probable relation is suggested by IS's recruitment message, examined in chapter two. There, I found that the group targets Muslim individuals who are relatively young (18-40). Therefore, in this section, I will try to find out the relationship between the age structure of Muslim populations and the proportion of FFs in the selected countries.

In Europe, 51.1% of Muslims are between 15 and 44 years; 16% are 45-59, 10.5% are over 60, and 22.5% are under 14 (Grim and Mehtab, 2011).<sup>53</sup> The situation in the US

---

<sup>52</sup> Saudi Arabia with around 28 million population has been home for 1500-2500 FFs. Jordan with 6.5 million has provided 1500 FFs, and Kuwait with 3.3 million population has supplied 900 FFs to the conflict in Syria. This while United Arab Emirates with 9.3 million population has only 15 FFs in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq. Similar to UAE, Qatar with over 2 million population has been home for only 15 FFs (Neumann, 2015 and "World Factbook" nd.).

<sup>53</sup> It would be beneficial to examine the age structure of Muslims in each of my European case countries, but unfortunately, there is no reliable data available on this matter.

is fairly similar to Europe; 51.6% of American Muslims are between 15 and 44. According to the 2001 national census, 16.3% of Canada's Muslims are between ages 15 and 24, and more than a third of them (34.9%) are 25-44. This means that 51.2% of Canadian Muslims belong to the age group of 15-44. Australia, on the other hand, has a similar situation to the Europe, Canada, and the US; 52.3% of Muslim Australians are between ages 15 and 44 (Ibid.). Therefore, since these countries have a similar age structure, I conclude that this factor does not have anything to offer for explaining why these countries have different numbers of FFs.

### **Gender**

Even though the body of literature suggests that there is no link between gender and radicalization, my analysis of IS's recruitment message in chapter two suggests that the group's main focus is on its male audience.<sup>54</sup> There are chances that IS has other methods or strategies for recruiting female audiences, but as far as the findings of this thesis goes men are the ultimate target of IS's recruitment message. Thus, in this section I focus on the information regarding the gender structure of Muslim populations in these nine countries. I am particularly interested in knowing the proportion of Muslim men to women. The reason for this is that I want to examine whether the discrepancies among ratios of FFs to Muslim populations in the selected countries has anything to do with the proportion of Muslim men to women in each of them.

**Table 10: Muslim Gender Ratios in Selected Countries**

Country	Men per 100 Women	FFs	Ratio of FFs
Finland	150.90	50-70	1.19
UK	116.00	500-600	0.17
Denmark	111.40	100-150	0.44

<sup>54</sup> To learn more about the relationship between gender and radicalization see "Roots of Violent Radicalisation" (2012).

Belgium	110.70	440	0.69
Germany	109.50	500-600	0.12
Australia	109.00 <sup>55</sup>	100-250	0.25
Canada	107.00	100	0.11
US	101.00	100	0.04
France	97.30	1200	0.26

**Source: Pew Forum (Grim and Mehtab, 2011)**

This comparison suggests that in most of these countries Muslim men are slightly more in number compared with Muslim women. That being said, there are two countries that suggest different findings: Finland with a significantly higher ratio of Muslim men to women and France a slightly higher number of Muslim women to men. The fact that Finland's ratio of Muslim men to women is off the charts might correlate with this country's high proportion of FFs; however, since a similar correlation does not exist for other countries, it is problematic to reach such conclusion. The interesting fact, though, is that while Finland, with the highest ratio of FFs to Muslim population, is holding the first place in this table, France, with the highest absolute number (and a moderate proportion) of FFs among the nine countries, is at the bottom of the table. While this indicator does not explain why there are differences in the numbers or ratios of FFs from each country, it definitely does require further studies that do not fit into the scope of this thesis.<sup>56</sup>

So far, in this chapter, I have studied several demographic and identity-related features of Muslim communities in the selected countries: the history of Muslims' presence in the country, size of Muslim population, Shia-Sunni division, ethnicity, nationality, age structure, and gender. While some of these indicators had relatively little explanatory

---

<sup>55</sup> While all the information in this table are from a PEW research, the information regarding Australia is extracted from a report by the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship ("Muslims in Australia Snap Shot," n.d.).

<sup>56</sup> Indeed, IS's recruitment of Muslim women and their role in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq is an interesting topic that needs to be further studied.

power, others correlated with the numbers of FFs from these countries. For instance, while gender (except for Finland), age structure, Sunni-Shia division, and nationality do not appear to account for the proportion of FFs, other factors such as sizes of Muslim and Arab Muslim populations suggested some correlation with the ratios of FFs in the selected countries. What seems to be clear is that shared identity plays a significant role in IS's FF recruitment process; however, it does not provide adequate evidence to answer the question of why Western countries have different ratios of FF to their Muslim populations. Therefore, in the rest of this chapter I will have a closer look at Muslims' situation in the identified countries; I will specifically study the issue of Muslims' integration into their surrounding societies as it can hopefully reveal deeper layers of Muslim communities' situations in the identified countries. It will provide adequate accounts for the difference in the proportions of FFs in the selected countries and put in place the final pieces of this puzzle.

### **Integration**

There are several reasons that integration is a key part of this research. In the first chapter, I found several radicalization and FF mobilization models that stressed the notion of marginalization in one way or another, which relates to the issue of integration of Muslims, as minority groups, into their surrounding societies (Reitman 2013, Sageman 2008, and Silber and Bhatt 2007). Moreover, my examination of IS's recruitment message revealed that the group seems to have a plan for Muslims in the West. What IS seems to be deliberately targeting is Western Muslims' loyalty and belonging; the group aims to convince its audiences that they need to shift their loyalty from Western societies to Islam and 'the Islamic Caliphate' (the Islamic State). The general message is that Western

governments are ‘hostile’ to Islam and Muslims, and it portrays them as “infidels” who oppress Muslims. Therefore, it is vital to find out how well Muslims are integrated into their societies, and what relationship their integration has with the proportions of FFs from their respective countries.

In the body of literature on integration, there are several indicators such as education, employment, and housing that are commonly used to measure the integration process of an immigrant or minority group in a given country.<sup>57</sup> However, in order to have a more detailed and comprehensive analysis, I will expand these indicators to six. First, I look at the integration approach that each of the nine countries has adopted. Then, I will try to find out Islam’s legal position among other religions in these countries because this can show Islam’s and Muslim organizations’ relationship with their respective governments in terms of funding and financial support. It also reveals the degree to which Muslims are treated equally with other major religious groups. Next I will study Islamic religious education, imam training, and Islamic programs within higher education in the selected countries. Finally, I will study Muslims’ educational achievement, employment, and housing situation in order to have a clearer picture of them in their respective societies. Despite the fact that these indicators can only offer an ‘estimate,’ I expect that at the end of this part I would have a clearer picture of Muslims’ integration into the selected countries, a picture that will help me to answer this study’s research question.

---

<sup>57</sup> These indicators are found in such sources as Entzinger and Biezeveld (2002), Ager and Strang (2004), and Bloemraad (2007).

## **Integration Models**

Integrative approaches towards religious, ethnic, or any other forms of minorities are nearly as diverse as the number of countries implementing them because each society has its own unique characteristics. That said, there are a few integration models that are more commonly recognized: the multicultural model, the laissez-faire approach, and the republican or universalist model (Bloemraad, 2007; 319-321).<sup>58</sup> It is important to note that these are not inflexible and fixed frameworks; instead, as I will demonstrate, there are major distinctions among states implementing each of them.

The first approach is commonly known as multiculturalism. This is a system in which the government actively encourages and endorses group rights and minority identities. In this model countries hosting immigrants not only recognize their cultural diversity, but also try to accommodate their cultural minorities' needs (Taylor, 1994 and Kymlicka, 1995). By this definition, Canada and Australia are 'strong' multicultural countries. The UK, Finland and Germany, on the other hand, are "moderate" examples of multiculturalism in Europe (Bloemraad, 2007; 319 and Entzinger and Biezeveld, 2003; 48-49). It means that the degree to which they accommodate cultural needs of their minority groups is lower compared with Canada and Australia.

The other approach is called the laissez-faire system, which is fairly close to multiculturalism in meaning, and yet there is a key distinction between the two. As opposed to a multicultural system, in which the government tries to accommodate the cultural needs of minority groups, the government in a laissez-faire system does not spend taxpayers' money to accommodate minority groups' needs. The state remains neutral, and leaves it up

---

<sup>58</sup> Indeed integration is a complex topic and a thorough discussion on it requires separate research. My study of integration in this chapter is in introductory, and not a comprehensive form.

to the minority groups to form their civic associations and to advance their interests in a plural political system (Ibid.). Hence, in the absence of required resources or efforts, these groups can integrate into the broader society or so called mainstream life. The best example of this model, which is the preferred model for scholars such as Brian Barry (2001), is the US. The American government acknowledges the cultural needs of immigrants and other minority groups, but avoids interfering in their affairs. In other words, the key principle here is freedom of choice. The government gives freedom to individuals or groups to pursue their interests, but it is not responsible for accommodating their religious/cultural needs.

The third approach is commonly known as the republican or universalist model of civic citizenship that the French government holds (Oberty, 2007). Generally speaking, according to this model, the government must stay blind to religious, ethnic, and other differences coming out of an individual's private life in the public sphere. In this system, the government avoids using ethnic, racial, or religious classifications of individuals, and does not collect statistics that associate individuals with any of these labels. This 'culture-blind' universalism emphasizes equal treatment of individuals regardless of their cultural memberships<sup>59</sup> (Laborde, 2001; 716). Thus, the French government is widely criticized for falling into an assimilatory approach which understands all individuals with their distinct characteristics as beings with similar needs (Oberty, 2007 and Laborde 2001). This is what heavily affects minority groups, such as Muslims, who may require special accommodations in the public sphere: for instance, letting Muslim women wear head scarfs

---

<sup>59</sup> The French government's strong homogenizing approach leads some scholars to call this model "a coercive monoculturalism" (Duyvendak et al., 2009).

in the school or work place, in as much as it seems to be a practice that is potentially perceived as vital for their religious lives. Hence, the head scarf and veil are often in the core of public debate over Muslims' integration (Lettinga and Saharso, 2012).<sup>60</sup>

A more moderate example of this approach is Denmark, in which the government has taken an assimilatory approach towards integration. For the Danish government, a successful integration refers to immigrants' cultural transformation into Danish society. This is rooted in the way the notion of equality is understood by Danish government; equality is strictly tied to the perception of being a culturally homogeneous country. Thus, inclusion in Danish society refers to being 'similar' to native Danish people, or becoming like them. This difference in understanding led to the 2006 controversy over the Prophet Mohammed's cartoons which turned into an international crisis<sup>61</sup> (Jensen et al, 2009).

Among the selected cases, there is one country that has a combination of these models, which is Belgium. In the Flanders part of Belgium, the government has an integration approach that is a combination of both multiculturalist and assimilationist or universalist models. However, in the French speaking parts of the country as well as Brussels, the government's approach seems to be influenced by the French republican or universalist model (Mandin, 2014).

**Table 11: Integration Models in Selected Countries**

Country	Integration Model
USA	Laissez-Faire

<sup>60</sup> To learn more about these controversies see Amiraux (2007), Scott (2005), and Gordon (2008).

<sup>61</sup> In September 2005, Jyllands-Posten, one of the largest newspapers in Denmark, published twelve cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. These cartoons were interpreted as an insult to the Prophet by the Danish and broader Muslim society, and soon after, riots occurred against the cartoons, in Denmark and across the Muslim World. Danish Muslims demanded the government give an official apology and assure them that such insults would not happen in the future; however, the Danish government took a non-dialogue, no-compromise, and no-apology approach, and justified the cartoons with the liberal value of freedom of speech (Brenden, 2006).

Canada	Multicultural
Australia	Multicultural
UK	Moderate Multicultural
Germany	Moderate Multicultural
Finland	Moderate Multicultural
Denmark	Universalist / Moderate Multicultural
Belgium	Moderate Universalist
France	Universalist

In sum, considering the ratio of FFs to Muslim population in these countries reveals that there is a fairly consistent correlation between the governments' integration approaches and their respective ratios of FFs. It seems that countries having laissez-faire or 'strong' multicultural models, respectively the US, Canada and Australia, are having smaller ratios of FFs to their Muslim populations. With the exceptions of France and Finland, it is appropriate to state that ratios of FFs are smaller in countries having more multicultural approaches. In contrast, countries closer to the universalist or assimilationist model are facing higher proportions of FFs. That being said, since this trend is not consistent across all the nine countries, it is problematic to conclude that governments' integration approach has a 'solid' correlation with the ratio of FFs from a given country. Hence, it is important to study other integration-related factors in the identified countries to see if they support this correlation.

### **Status of Islam and Its Relationship with the State**

Islam's legal status is one of the key indicators defining the relationship between the state and Muslims, and more specifically Islamic organizations, in the selected countries. Freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed in all of these nine countries, but the state-religion relationship in them varies greatly. In most cases, recognition is granted to Islam, but the authority is given to a specific organization that represents the

religion. This is an important issue because Muslim communities are often highly diverse in their religious practices or their ethnic or national backgrounds; hence, it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to establish such inclusive entities. Belgium is a prime example of such dilemma; the Muslim Executive Council, Muslims' representative body in the country, has been facing tensions during its existence (since 1996), mainly due to the competitions between Moroccans and Turks who form the major Muslim communities in the country. This problem has, at times, prevented Belgian Muslims from enjoying their rights as a recognized religious group ("Islam in Belgium," n.d.). That being said, even where Islam is not recognized as an official religion, Muslims still have considerable access to such privileges, often through lobbying and representation ("Muslims in the EU," 2006; 30).

Finland, Belgium, and Denmark, as the countries with high proportions of FFs, have fairly similar situations in terms of Islam's legal status. In Finland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Church of Finland enjoy a special status, and all other religions, including Islam, are dealt with according to the Freedom of Religion Act (1923, revised 2003). As a Muslim Umbrella Organization, the Islamic Council of Finland (Suomen Islamilainen Neuvosto or NISE) receives public funding (Pauha and Martikainen, 2014; 220).

Belgium's government, on the other hand, carries a neutral position towards religion, which is different from the concept of *Laïcité* (secularity or neutrality of the state towards religious beliefs, and the complete isolation of religious and public spheres). Based on constitutional provisions adopted in 1831, state and religion are separate, but Belgian law permits the public authorities to legally recognize and financially support different

religions (Fadil, 2014; 87). Thus, Islam, along with Judaism, as well as the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant Churches are the recognized religions (Ibid; 88). While Christians have four separate bodies, Muslims, with diverse theological, ethnic, and national backgrounds, have only one representative body, and thus they have difficulties creating and running such an entity. This is an important factor because a full enjoyment of the status of a recognized religion is dependent on having a representative body, and Muslims are facing troubles accessing their rights and privileges due to the absence/weakness of their representative body (Ibid).

Finally, in Denmark, while freedom of religion is granted to everyone, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as the national church, has privileges that are not available to other religious groups (Jacobson, 2014; 191).<sup>62</sup> Overall, it seems that in two of these countries, while Christian denominations have national recognition status, in all three of them Islam, along with other religions, to some extent, enjoys public funding and official recognition.

The second category comprises the countries with a moderate ratio of FFs. France has a unique situation; in this country, as a secular republic, while the Catholic church is a prominent presence, no religion has official status, and the government does not provide public funds for any religious activities, nor does it allow religious education in public schools<sup>63</sup> (Fregosi, 2014; 230).

---

<sup>62</sup> For instance, the national church receives funds and state subsidises from the tax system (Jacobsen, 214; 191).

<sup>63</sup> That being said, in the north east of France, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism are recognized religions that enjoy the local government's support. While Islam is not among the recognized religions in this area, Muslim communities can benefit from public funding to some extent (Fregosi, 2014; 230-231).

In Germany, the core principle in the state-religion relationship is secularity. It means that while the state is neutral towards different religions, it guarantees freedom of religion for individuals and religious groups. It also means that all religious communities are able to be active in the public space and to cooperate with the state on different issues<sup>64</sup> (Rohe, 2014; 263-265). Similar to France, despite the German government's secular approach, Christianity is still prominent, and there are major political parties with Christian names, such as Christian Democratic Union of Germany (the ruling party) and Christian Social Union of Bavaria.

In the UK, there is no shared constitutional arrangement for the state-religion relationship, and each constituent country has established its own regime. That said, based on the UK's legal tradition and the Human Rights Act of 1998, freedom of religion is guaranteed. In England, specifically, the monarch is considered as the Church of England's head (Hussain, 2014; 267). Therefore, the Church of England enjoys a special status. During the 1980s, based on the principle of multiculturalism, Muslims received a local recognition in issues such as education (Ibid.)

In Australia, Canada and US, as countries with low proportions of FFs to Muslim population, Islam has a fairly similar status. In Canada, the defining principle is multiculturalism, which seeks to accommodate cultural (or religious) needs of minority groups. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and legal needs of multiculturalism faded the existing shadow of Protestantism, which was rooted in the country's colonial background; this shift moved the country towards a greater religious equality (Joppke and Torpey, 2013;

---

<sup>64</sup> Despite this common ruling principle, since Germany is a federal state, religion's role in the public space slightly varies from state to state (Rohe, 2014; 263-266).

86-87). In this context, Muslims, similar to other religious groups, can enjoy their rights, and the government tries to accommodate their cultural needs.<sup>65</sup>

In the case of the US, on the other hand, the First Amendment of the Constitution states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances” (Moen, 1996; 787). The main point about the US is that its founders resisted the temptation to grant the status of state religion to any religious denomination (Joppke and Torpey, 2013; 88).<sup>66</sup> Also, it is worth noting that based on this background, there is no immigrant integration policy at the US federal level (Ibid. 89). Thus, under the principles of state neutrality and freedom of religion, Muslims can enjoy their rights equal with other religious groups, and the state does not interfere in religious groups’ affairs. In practice, nonetheless, Christianity is the dominant religion that has a great influence in the public sphere. For example, nearly all of the U.S. presidents have been Christians (except for John. F. Kennedy) (Masci, 2016)

Modern Australia has been commonly known as “the world’s most secular society” (Maddox, 1999).<sup>67</sup> In Australia, there are a number of ‘rights’ provisions that are spread throughout the Constitution. Section 116, which imitates the US Constitution,

---

<sup>65</sup> Similar to other liberal democratic countries, the challenge of integrating Muslims into broader societies that are often based on Christian heritages has generated serious debates regarding the kinds of cultures and cultural, or religious, practices that are actually acceptable.

<sup>66</sup> It is worth mentioning that while France distanced from religion for the sake of maintaining secularity, Americans did so, in order to maintain “the vibrancy of religion”, whereas in France the aim was much more to maintain the secular purity of the state (Joppke and Torpey, 2013; 88).

<sup>67</sup> However, in recent years New Zealand has been seen as a more appropriate candidate to have the title of the world’s most secular society (Maddox, 1999).

states: “The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth” (Moens,1996;787). However, the effectiveness of section 116 is highly limited due to the fact that the Commonwealth Parliament, in Australia’s federal system, does not have authority to pass laws regarding religion. This means that states can regulate religious affairs separately (Ibid. 788-789). Hence, while states can have their distinct approaches towards Islam, state neutrality is the key principle that rules the relationship between Islam and the government. In the realm of practice, however, Christianity has played a major role in electoral politics, in which major Christian denominations were seen as the main supporters of the country’s two major parties, at least until 1960s (Maddox, 1999).<sup>68</sup>

**Table 12: State-Religion Relationship in Selected Countries**

Country	State Religion Relationship	
	Policy	Practice
Australia	Neutral - state cooperates with Muslim organizations	Christianity has been dominant
Canada	Neutral - state cooperates with Muslim organizations	Christianity has been dominant
USA	Neutral - state does not interfere in religious issues	Christianity is dominant
France	Neutral - state does not interfere in religious issues / does not allow religious signs in public sphere	Christianity is dominant
Germany	Neutral – state cooperates with Muslim organizations	Christianity is dominant

<sup>68</sup> To learn more about Christian denominations’ significance in politics in Australia, please see *For God and Country Religious: Dynamics in Australian Federal Politics* by Maddox (1999).

UK	Church of England has a special status and is headed by the Queen– freedom of religion is guaranteed	Christianity is dominant
Denmark	Islam, Judaism, the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant Churches are recognized	Muslims have only 1 representative body, while Christians have 4
Belgium	Evangelical Lutheran Church is the national church - freedom of religion is guaranteed	Christianity is dominant
Finland	Evangelical Lutheran Church and Orthodox Church are national churches – freedom of religion is guaranteed	Christianity is dominant

This comparison suggests that while Christianity is, or has been, dominant to varying degrees in all the nine countries, the distance between state and religion becomes more and more from first category to the second and to the third. It also suggests that while in Finland and Belgium (but not Denmark) Christian denominations enjoy a national status, countries in the other two categories do not recognize any national religion (with the exception of the UK). In Germany, France, Canada, the US, and Australia, states try to stay neutral, with different purposes. Indeed, there are fundamental differences between these countries, but the fact that they do not recognize a national or an official religion is a commonality that separates them from the countries of the first category, and to some extent the UK. Therefore, while this status does not seem to affect Muslims' overall situation in their respective societies, it is important to acknowledge that such differences between these countries correlates to some extent with their respective proportions of FFs.

### **Religious Education**

There is a fairly recent and interesting body of literature on radicalization that puts emphasis on the role of religious education in preventing radicalization. The main argument here is that providing a moderate interpretation of Islamic values in schools or

mosques can counter radical perceptions available on the Internet and social media (Al-Jadda, 2014). In other words, instead of waiting until the time teenagers learn about the notion of jihad from a radical perspective, it is safer to educate them in the school or through ‘properly trained’ imams in a local mosque.

A comparative examination of Islamic education in the identified countries suggests that regardless of the minor differences, all of them seem to follow a fairly similar approach. In nearly all of these nine countries, religious education is taught in public schools. While in Finland,<sup>69</sup> Belgium, Denmark,<sup>70</sup> and England<sup>71</sup> religious education is compulsory in the entire country, religious education is a part of the curriculum in some provinces or states in other countries. That said, it must be mentioned that in all of these countries parents are allowed to withdraw their children from religious education courses

---

<sup>69</sup> In Finland, in regards to children’s education, the Religious Freedom Act of 2003 made it mandatory to establish religious education for Muslim, and other religious minority, pupils. In 2014, more than eight percent of children in elementary schools in Helsinki participated in Islamic religious education, and this number has been rising since 2003. The Islamic Society of Finland had the only private Muslim school from 2001 to 2005, but it could not eventually gain official status. In higher education in Finland, Islamic law and theology cannot be studied as independent programs, but Arabic and Islamic studies do not follow this rule. Also, there are several courses on Islam that are taught in different disciplines at a handful of universities in the country. Universities of Helsinki and Turku, and Abo Akademi are among those that provide Islamic courses mainly as a part of their comparative religious studies (Pauha and Martikainen, 2014; 222).

<sup>70</sup> In Denmark, primary and secondary schools offer religious education under “Christian Studies,” and parents are permitted to withdraw their children from these classes on the basis of religion. Topics on Islam and other religions are included in these courses as well. Parents are also able to establish “independent schools.” While a majority of Muslim pupils go to public schools, a relatively small portion of them attend the 22 independent Muslim schools. In the higher education, Islamic studies are taught under programs of Arabic and Middle Eastern studies. It is worth noting that the government does not yet have any policies regarding the official training of imams (Jacobsen, 2014; 198- 200).

<sup>71</sup> In the UK, prior to 1870, churches were in charge of education. Religious education is still mandatory in schools, but parents can withdraw their children from such classes. Starting in the 1970s, religious education has taken a multi-faith approach, which offers content on Islam. Besides public schools, there are 167 private Muslim schools that serve five percent of Muslim pupils in the whole country. In higher education, Islam and Islamic topics are taught in a large number of universities, in the context of Arabic, Middle Eastern, or religious studies. It is worth mentioning that while there is no publicly funded imam training programs, there are private Islamic colleges that offer such trainings (Hussain, 2014; 633-636).

if they wish to. In terms of Islamic education, there are two common approaches; 1) including Islamic topics in religious education courses (or designating Islamic education courses), and 2) letting Muslims establish and run their private schools. While in all of these countries Muslim communities are allowed to establish private Muslim schools, in some of them such as Denmark, Finland, Germany,<sup>72</sup> and the UK religious education courses have a multi-faith approach that includes Islamic elements.<sup>73</sup>

**Table 13: Islamic Religious Education in Selected Countries**

Country	Islamic Religious Education in Public Schools	Publicly Funded Muslim Schools	Number of Private Muslim Schools
Finland	X		1
Belgium	X		8
Denmark	X		22
France			45
Germany	X	X	N/A
UK	X	X	167
Australia	X	X	30
Canada	X	X	N/A
USA			54

<sup>72</sup> In Germany, according to Article 7 Section 3 of the Constitution, confessional religious instruction is a topic in public schools. On this basis, Muslim organizations try to attain the official recognition in order to be able to cooperate with the state on religious education. The Turkish Alevi community is an example of a recognized religious community that has been able to work with the federal and local states on religious education. In terms of higher education, a few German universities are offering programs for training Muslim teachers. Erlangen-Nurnberg, Munster, and Osnabruk are the universities that offer such programs. Islamic theology, Islamic studies, or Islamic religious studies are programs that are offered in six universities in the country (Rohe, 2014; 268-272).

<sup>73</sup> France seems to have a relatively stricter approach towards religious education due to its principle of laicite. In France, due to the principle of laicite, religious education has no place in public schools. That being said, in recent years Muslims have been active in establishing private Muslim schools. Currently, there are over 45 private Muslim secondary schools running in France, among which some have access to public funding. Averroes (est. in 2003), Al Kindi (est. in 2008), and Ibn Khaldun (est. in 2009) are examples of the secondary schools that have been able to receive public funding. Similarly, imam training programs and Muslim higher education are offered only at private institutions that are somehow linked to Muslim federations (Fregusi, 2014; 234-235).

Sources: Jorgen (2014), Jones (2012), and Keyworth (2011)

In terms of higher education and imam training these countries have a relatively similar position too. In all of these countries Islam is mainly studied under Arabic, Middle Eastern, and religious studies. However, Islamic theology does not seem to have a place in higher education in any of these countries. Finally, imam training, as a recent trend in the public debate on Islam, has more attention in the three countries of Finland, Belgium<sup>74</sup>, and Denmark. For instance, Belgium has established and funded official Islam teacher and Imam training programs in universities. That being said, in nearly all of the countries there are private institutions that offer imam training programs backed by local Islamic organizations (Fadil, 2014; 96).<sup>75</sup>

While countries in the first category (with a high proportion of FFs) tend to be more active in regulating religious education, it seems that the overall situation in all of these countries is fairly similar in the sense that Muslims do have access to Islamic education through public or private schools. Hence, there is not enough evidence to

---

<sup>74</sup> In Belgium, students in elementary and secondary schools are able to take religion classes up to two hours per week. It is worth noting that The Belgian government has been organising and funding classes on Islam since 1975. Moreover, Belgian legislation allows the establishment of private denominational schools that can potentially have access to public financing. The very first Muslim school of this kind was the Al-Ghazali School in Brussels, which was established (1989) and run by the Cultural and Islamic Centre of Brussels. The other private Islamic school, called Avicenna, was founded in 2007 in Molenbeek of Brussels. In addition, there are six more private Muslim schools that are run across the country. Imams' training is another controversial part of religious education in Belgium. Prior to the 9/11 attacks in the United States, almost all Imams officiating in mosques were trained abroad; Turkish Mosques used Imams who were trained in Turkey's theological schools, and Moroccan mosques had to rely on imams who were poorly trained in Morocco. In 2000s the government started to organize and fund higher education training for Islam teachers, and a few universities offered programs on Islam and Islam teachers. The Catholic University of Louvain in the French speaking part of the country has been providing courses in Islamic studies since 2007. The University of Antwerp, in Flander, has been offering similar courses since 2009 (Fadil, 2014; 95-98).

<sup>75</sup> It would be highly relevant to have a clearer picture of such institutions, but unfortunately I did not find details about them.

conclude that there is a connection between Islamic education, on the one hand, and the proportion of FFs to Muslim population in these countries on the other.

### **Education**

Relative deprivation, which refers to structural inequalities such as low educational achievement, high unemployment, and poor housing, is a common aspect of a large number of works on radicalization (Christmann, 2007). The body of literature, which I reviewed in the first chapter, suggests that indicators such as low educational attainments, poor housing and high unemployment lead individuals to feelings of segregation and discrimination, and eventually prepares them for committing acts of violence. These factors are often studied on an individual level, but due to the limitations of this thesis I will utilize them in a societal level. In the following pages I examine these three factors in the identified countries.

While the FFs literature does not discuss the role of education in the FF recruitment process, there are a number of works on radicalization that emphasize the importance of education. Their overall argument is that individuals with lower levels of educational attainment are at a higher risk of radicalization.<sup>76</sup> In other words, this literature suggests that under-educated men might be more willing to fight than their more educated counterparts (“Tracking Radicalization,” 2015). Thus, it is interesting to find out whether education has a similar role in IS’s FF mobilization among Muslims in the West.

Studies suggest that Muslims’ educational attainment has a similar pattern across Europe. For instance, an Open Society Institute study on Muslims in Belgium suggests that the average educational attainment level for the active Muslim population is significantly

---

<sup>76</sup> A prime example of this line of argument is found in “The Role of Education in Countering Radicalization in Bangladesh” (2015).

lower than the native Belgians or even other immigrants. According to this study, 39% of the active Muslim population has attained primary education, 51% has attained no higher than the secondary education, and only 10% has been able to attain higher education<sup>77</sup> (Bousetta and Bernes, 2007; 21). While the information regarding Muslims' educational attainment in Denmark and Finland is not available, there are adequate accounts suggesting the existence of discrimination against Muslims in the overall educational systems of the two countries (Hussain, 2007; 16-18).

Muslims in the second category of countries seem to have a similar situation to their counterparts in the first category. In Germany, while it is difficult to find data regarding Muslims' educational attainment, it is possible to extract that information for immigrants in general. Studies suggest that immigrants have notably poor educational attainments. For instance, a comparative study of native German and immigrant pupils suggests that 17 percent of young foreigners did not accomplish any "qualifying school certificate in the year 2004/2005, compared with 7.2 per cent of the German pupils" (Muhe, 2007; 26). According to this study, 41.7 percent of students with immigrant background did not attain more than high school, and only 8.2 percent of them achieved a university entrance diploma (Abitur).<sup>78</sup> Another study suggests that young foreigners have more limited opportunities in professional education. In 1998 about 30 percent of immigrants between 20 and 29 years

---

<sup>77</sup> These numbers for native Belgians are as follows: 9% primary education, 57% secondary education, and 33% higher education (Bousetta and Bernes, 2007; 21).

<sup>78</sup> This is while 23.2 percent of the Germans accomplished high school, and 25.7 percent of them could manage to attain the qualification for university entrance (Muhe, 2007; 26).

old remained with no professional qualification while this number was only 8 percent for the natives of the same age group<sup>79</sup> (Ibid.).

In France, as another example of this category, immigrants seem to have a significantly lower level of educational attainment compared with the national public; while the percentage of individuals with a university degree seems to be fairly similar for both Muslims (21) and the public (23), the number of people who have a high school diploma or a professional certificate is sharply different for Muslims (27 percent) and the public (41 percent). This means that 41 percent of Muslims have “no diploma or elementary school level” of education (Tabbakh, 2007; 28). In the UK, on the other hand, this situation seems to be different. While 52 percent of Muslims aged 16-24 were enrolled in higher education programs in 2001, which was above the national figure (41 percent), one third of Muslims in the active age had no qualification (Choudhury, 2007; 22).

Countries in the third category seem to have a fairly different situation. In the US, Muslims seem to have a higher educational attainment compared with their counterparts in Europe. A Pew study (2007) reveals that Muslims’ educational achievement is highly similar to that of the public in the country; while the number of Muslim Americans (14%) with a college degree is close to that of the general public (16%), in graduate studies the number of Muslim Americans (10%) is even higher than the general public (9%). A similar trend exists in lower levels of educational achievement as well; while 55 percent of Muslims have “some college” or high school degree, this number for the general public is 59 percent. Finally, while 21 percent of Muslims do not have a high school degree, this

---

<sup>79</sup> This pattern exists in the higher education as well. While the number of foreign background individuals in age of 22 found in universities is almost half of the natives, this number for foreigners at the age of 26 becomes one third of that of native Germans (Muhe, 2007; 26).

number for the general public is 16 percent<sup>80</sup> (“Muslim Americans,” 2007; 18). Canadian Muslims seem to have fairly high educational achievements too; roughly 1.5 percent of them have doctorate degrees, and 6 percent of them have master’s degrees<sup>81</sup> (Mujahid; n.d.). Finally, a 2009 study suggests that Muslims in Australia have fairly high educational attainments as well: 41 percent of them have a bachelor’s degree; 21.4 percent have attained a master’s degree, and 4.5 percent of them have achieved doctorates (Akbarzadeh et al, 2009; 12).

While it is difficult to directly compare these nine countries directly due to differences in data collection, the general trend seems to be that educational attainment of immigrants is significantly lower than the host population in European countries (with the exception of the UK). This comparison also suggests that Muslims in Europe have a lower educational attainment level compared with Muslims in the US, Canada, and Australia. While Muslims in Europe have a significantly lower level of educational attainment compared with the general public, in the US, Canada, and Australia Muslims and the general public are highly similar on this matter. This might partly explain why the six European countries in the first two categories are having significantly higher proportions of FFs. Thus, with some considerations, it is appropriate to conclude that Muslims in countries with a higher proportion of FFs are likelier to have a lower level of educational attainment compared with the non-immigrant population or Western countries with lower proportions of FFs.

---

<sup>80</sup> Interestingly, the number of individuals with no high school degree is the same for “native born Muslims” and the public (“Muslim Americans,” 2007; 18).

<sup>81</sup> Unfortunately, further information on the percentage of Muslims with a high school diploma or a bachelor’s degree was not available.

## Housing

Housing is one of the key elements that helps to draw a bigger picture of a minority group in a broader context of the society. It can potentially contribute to an explanation of the income, economic, and social class of given individuals or groups, and explain the degree to which they are integrated into their society (“Muslims in Europe,” 2007; 135). In this section, I will study the housing conditions of Muslims in the selected countries. I will particularly try to answer the following questions in my three categories. What percentage of Muslims own their house? And what proportion of them live in government housing? I will check the findings of this section against the ratio of FFs to Muslim population in my three categories.

In Denmark, as a country in the first category, half of the non-Western immigrants, mostly from Muslim countries, live in social housing facilities, where its residents are defined as socially deprived: “overrepresented by low-income households, long-term unemployed, single parents, alcoholics and immigrants” (Hussain, 2007; 24). In Belgium, a comparison of the housing conditions of immigrants and that of the general public suggests that immigrants are more likely to live in segregated and deprived areas. Immigrants, and Muslims, “are overrepresented in the cheapest rented sector,” studies suggest (Bousetta and Bernes, 2007; 30). The other interesting factor is home ownership. While 65 percent of Turks and 30 percent of Moroccans own their houses, a significantly large number of them live in low-quality housings, according the National Institute of Statistics (Ibid.).<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> It would be highly relevant to expand this comparison to Finland too, but unfortunately this information was not available for that country.

A brief study of the countries in the second category suggests that Muslims seem to have a similar housing situation to the countries in the first category. In the UK, for instance, Muslims are highly overrepresented in the most deprived urban areas; more than 30 percent of them reside in the most deprived neighbourhoods (Hussain and Choudhury, 2007; 32). In France, Muslims have a similar, if not worse, situation. According to the 1999 Census, 56 percent of immigrants were living in social housing (Tebbakh, 2007; 50). A survey conducted in 1996 revealed that more than 50 percent of Algerians, 47 percent of Moroccans, 42.5 percent of Tunisians and 40 percent of immigrants from Turkey and Africa were living in social housing facilities (Ibid.).<sup>83</sup>

In the third category, however, Muslims seem to have a better housing situation. In Australia, for example, 52 percent of Muslims are either home owners or owner-purchasers, and interestingly, while 46.1 percent of them live in privately rented houses, only 1.6 percent of them reside in public housing. This is a striking fact that differentiates Muslims in Australia from their counterparts in Europe (Hassan, 2015; 43). In the US, as another example, 41 percent of Muslims are home owners (“Muslim Americans,” 2007; 18). While there is less information on Muslims’ housing situation in the US, I found that Muslims in this country have a significantly better financial situation; a 2007 Pew poll revealed that only 2 percent of American Muslims belong to the “lowest income bracket,” whereas 20 percent of Muslims in Western Europe (Germany, France, and the UK) are considered as “low-income populations”<sup>84</sup> (Johnson, 2011).

---

<sup>83</sup>Unfortunately there is no information on the number of Muslims living in social housing facilities or the number of Muslims owning a house, but what can be found in various reports is that Muslims in Germany tend to have a lower quality of housing compared with the public, but interestingly they often pay more than do Germans (Muhe, 2007; 39-41).

<sup>84</sup>The related information for Canada was not available.

As with the previous section on educational attainment, this short comparison suggests that while the six countries in my first two categories seem to have a fairly similar situation in terms of Muslims' housing, they are dramatically different from the third category of countries. A large proportion of European Muslims live in social housing facilities, fewer own houses of their own, and those that do are located in low-income neighborhoods. This suggests that the selection and/or integration models of the settler states are more conducive to successful integration and lower levels of FFs. Muslims in the US, Canada, and Australia seem to have significantly better housing conditions. This is another factor that is capable of explaining the difference in the numbers of FFs from my selected European and non-European countries; thus, poorer housing, and ultimately financial, situation can be seen as a causal social factor for the FF mobilization.

### **Employment**

The body of literature on radicalization suggests that unemployment is among the key factors that can increase individuals' risk of being radicalized (Christmann, 2007). Studies suggest that Muslims in the first two categories tend to have higher unemployment rates compared with the countries in the third category. This is in accordance with my findings on Muslims' educational attainment and housing conditions in these nine countries.

In Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the UK, and France, Muslims struggle with unemployment or underemployment to varying degrees. As noted earlier, un- and underemployment is one of the key factors contributing to people in taking acts of violence (Christmann, 2007). In Belgium, for instance, a 2004 study suggests that while the unemployment rate for native Belgians is 7 percent, this rate for Moroccan and Turkish

nationals is 38 percent, which is five times higher (Ibid. 45). In Denmark, as another country with a high proportion of FFs, a 2005 survey revealed that one third of migrants, including Muslims, felt that they had faced discrimination in employment (Ibid. 45-46).<sup>85</sup>

Studies suggest that Muslims in Germany, the UK, and France, with moderate proportions of FFs, have a similar situation to their counterparts in the countries of the first category. In the UK, for example, a study carried out by the BBC Radio Five Live programme in 2004 showed that among individuals who applied for a job, candidates with names suggesting white British heritage (25 percent) were more likely to be invited to an interview, compared with applicants with names suggesting African (13 percent) or Muslim (9 percent) background (Ibid. 44). Thus, not surprisingly, Muslims in Britain face a high unemployment rate of 46 percent (“Few Signs of Backlash,” 2006). In Germany, according to a 2004 study, while the unemployment rate of foreigners was twice as high as that of the general public, this rate for Muslims was 52 percent (Ibid.). Finally, in France, a 2005 study revealed that individuals of foreign background are struggling with an unemployment rate significantly higher than that of native French citizens: French Muslims have an unemployment rate of 56 percent, which is the highest among the countries in this category (Ibid.). Therefore, it seems that Muslims are facing high unemployment rates and religious based employment discrimination across European countries (“Muslims in the European Union,” 2006; 44).

Similar to their European counterparts, Muslims’ unemployment rate in countries of the third category, is significantly higher than the nationals of their host countries.

---

<sup>85</sup> It would be beneficial to study Muslims’ employment situation in Finland too, but unfortunately the related data for this country was not available.

Muslims' unemployment rates in the US, Canada, and Australia are significantly lower than their European counterparts in the first two categories. In Canada, for instance, Muslims have the second highest unemployment rates; the unemployment rate for Muslims (14.4 percent) is twice as higher than the general average (7.4 percent) (Selby, n.d.). In Australia, Muslims have a similar situation. They had unemployment rates twice higher than the national average in 2011; while Muslims had the rate of 12.1 percent, this rate for the national average was 5.2 percent (Masanauskas, 2014). Finally, in the US, the unemployment rate for Muslims is higher than for the general public; while 20 percent of the general public are unemployed or looking for fulltime employment, 29 percent of American Muslims are in these circumstances ("Muslim Americans," 2001; 18). Therefore, while Muslims' unemployment in these three countries is more than the general public, there is a significant distinction between Muslims in the third category and their counterparts in European countries. Muslims' unemployment rates in the countries of the third category is significantly lower than that of their counterparts in the first two categories.

This comparison reveals that similar to educational attainment and housing, Muslims in the US, Canada, and Australia have a significantly better employment situation compared with their counterparts in the six European countries that I studied in this chapter. Despite the fact that Muslims experience inequality in employment across the nine countries in the three categories, American, Canadian, and Australian Muslims' unemployment rates are considerably lower than that of their European counterparts. This suggests a meaningful relationship between these nine countries' ratios of FFs and their Muslim populations' unemployment rates.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I tried to provide a clearer picture of Muslims' presence in the identified countries. In doing so, I divided my analysis into two parts of identity and integration. I studied several demographic and societal factors related to identity and integration of Muslim communities in the selected countries: history of Muslims' presence in the country, size of Muslim population, Shia-Sunni division, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age structure, integration policies, Islam-state relations, religious education, education, employment, and housing.

A number of these variables are not capable of answering this study's question due to the fact that they have a similar pattern across all nine countries. Sunni-Shia division seems to be consistent in all of the countries; a large proportion of Muslims in all nine countries are Sunni (90 percent on average), which mirrors the proportion of Sunnis and Shias on a global scale. The other neutral factor is the age structure, which is consistent across the nine countries; Muslim populations are fairly young, with a large proportion of them being between 15 and 45. Gender is the next neutral factor that I studied in these countries. In all of the selected countries, except Finland, numbers of male and female Muslims are relatively close, and in most of them males are slightly higher in number. Finally, I found that nationality does not seem to be of any significance in the FFs mobilization in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq.

I also found factors that, to varying degrees, correlate with the numbers of FFs from the identified countries. The first factor comes from the way Muslims have been introduced to these nine countries. While Muslim communities in Europe were largely formed as a result of the post Second World War foreign guest worker programs, Muslims in Australia,

Canada and the US largely arrived as immigrants from the 1970s onwards.<sup>86</sup> Thus, European and non-European (American, Australian, and Canadian) Muslim communities are different in nature, and this mirrors the fact that the European countries have considerably higher numbers and proportions of FFs. The size of Muslim populations in the selected countries revealed two interesting findings: countries with a higher number of FFs have higher absolute numbers of FFs, and countries with lower numbers of FFs have higher ratios of FFs. Interestingly, none of these trends seem to be consistent in the non-European countries. This suggests that Muslim identity itself is not capable of answering this thesis's question.

The other factor similar to the size of Muslim population is ethnicity; while nationality has relatively little explanatory power, ethnicity has more to offer. The number of Arab-Muslims in each country seems to correlate with the number of FFs in the selected European countries. That said, the fact that sizes of Muslim or Arab-Muslim populations do not correlate with the numbers of FFs in the non-European countries reveals that these two factors cannot be perceived as the main causal factors for the discrepancies among ratios of FFs in the selected countries.

In the second part of this chapter, I found that Muslims in North America and Australia are more effectively integrated into their host societies compared with their counterparts in European countries. However, my analysis does not firmly explain variations within Europe. My first finding in this part was that, with some considerations, countries following *laissez-faire* or strong multicultural models of integration have lower

---

<sup>86</sup> Obviously refugees and asylum seekers, to varying degrees, are the common characteristic of all nine countries.

proportions of FFs compared with those having universalist or assimilationist approaches. I also found that the space between the state and religion becomes greater and greater from countries with high ratios, to those with low proportions of FFs to Muslim populations. Finally, I found that American, Canadian, and Australian Muslims have a notably better situation in terms of employment, housing, and education compared with Muslims in the selected European countries. This suggests that Muslims' socio-economic integration plays a highly important role in explaining why some Western countries are facing higher ratios of FFs to their Muslim populations; countries having a more effectively integrated Muslim population have lower ratios of FFs, and countries having less integrated Muslim communities have higher ratios of FFs to their Muslim populations.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> I must acknowledge that despite the correlations between socio-economic integration and ratios of FFs shown in this chapter, in order to have a more accurate analysis, one should interview returning or current FFs. More importantly, highlighting such correlations does not mean that this thesis neglects the significance of the theological motivations of FFs. In other words, it is important to understand that, as demonstrated in the second chapter, IS's theological narration of Islam is highly important, and perhaps this group's FFs, before anything else, are mobilized by such theological beliefs.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

### Introduction

This study set out to explore the foreign fighter (FF) phenomenon in the current conflict in Syria and Iraq, and the main question it tried to answer was why ratios of FFs from Western countries in the conflict in Syria and Iraq do not represent a certain proportion of their Muslim populations. Why has Belgium, for instance, with a small Muslim population, supplied a number of FFs similar to the US, with a significantly larger number of Muslims?

The issue of Western FFs in the conflict in Syria and Iraq has been at the core of public debates. The main concern for policy makers in Western countries is that individuals who travel to the conflict zone can freely return to their countries of citizenship in the West. These individuals who have received ideological and military training in the conflict zone can potentially pose security threats upon their return. Moreover, it is important to find out what has been the reason that while some Western countries have faced large numbers of FFs, others have had significantly lower numbers. Having an answer to this question could potentially help policy makers to take measures that ultimately prevent similar movements in the future.

Throughout this thesis I argued that while common identity is an important factor in the current FF mobilization, what can ultimately explain why some Western countries have higher proportions of FFs is the degree to which these countries have been able to integrate Muslims into their societies. I examined this argument in nine countries that I identified in the first chapter. I divided these nine countries in three sets. In the first set, I identified three countries that have the highest ratios of FFs, namely Finland, Denmark, and Belgium. For the second set, I selected three countries that have relatively moderate

ratios: France, Germany, and the UK. And for the third set, I identified three settler (and multicultural) countries that have significantly lower proportions of FFs.

The first task was to define indicators for conducting a comparison across these countries. Since identity and integration were the main components of my thesis, I had to find measurable indicators that could provide the ground for my comparison. I extracted these indicators from the first two chapters, and applied them to these nine countries in the third chapter. In the first chapter, in my discussion on the existing literature on radicalization and FFs, I found indicators such as education, housing, employment, and common identity (religion, nationality, and ethnicity). In the second chapter, where I analyzed IS's recruitment message, I found elements related to audiences' identity and demographics; these indicators were the Sunni-Shia division, gender, and age structure of Muslims in these countries. Finally, I compared the identified countries on each of these indicators, in the third chapter, where I developed my thesis argument.

## **Findings**

This study's main findings are chapter specific and summarized within the respective chapters: Introduction, Analysis of IS's Recruitment Message, and Muslims' Identity and Integration in Selected Countries. Throughout these three chapters I tried to answer this study's main research question: why do ratios of FFs from Western countries not represent a certain proportion of their Muslim populations? In each chapter, I approached this question from a different perspective.

In chapter one, I studied the existing literature on radicalization and the FF phenomenon. I found that both radicalization and FF literatures emphasize the notion of common identity. Malet (2009), Silber and Bhatt (2007), Moghaddam (2005), Sageman

(2008) and others agreed that identity plays a central role in radicalization and FF mobilization. While the radicalization literature put a considerable emphasis on other psychological and societal factors (e.g. integration), the FF literature seemed to be split on explanations on the basis of material gain and common identity; it barely discussed societal factors. The radicalization literature tackles the issue of domestic violence and not FFs, but I borrowed the notion of integration from this literature. Hence, I found that identity and integration are key notions that can be used to answer my research question.

I dedicated the second chapter to IS's recruitment message. I tried to answer the following questions in this chapter: how does IS try to appeal to its audiences? Does this group use a single message to communicate with its audiences? What is the common identity to which IS appeals? What does IS's message reveal about its audiences? To answer these questions, I conducted an empirical analysis of IS's recruitment message. For this purpose, I analyzed 55 videos, and dozens of other materials such as magazines, posters, and tweets. I found that IS appeals to young male audiences in Western countries who identify with Sunni Islam. I also found that the group does not appeal to members of a specific nationality; instead, its heavy reliance on Arabic language suggests that Arabs or people who speak Arabic have a central place in IS's recruitment message. These empirical findings confirmed the presence of a strong identity in IS's appeal. They also provided the second set of indicators that I needed for my analysis in the third chapter.

In chapter three, I compared the nine countries based on the indicators that I found in the first two chapters. In the first part of this chapter I studied the size of Muslim population, Sunni-Shia division, and Muslims' nationality and ethnicity in the selected countries. I found that nationality has relatively limited explanatory power for my research

question, but religion and ethnicity are among more relevant variables. I found that common religious and ethnic identities exist in all nine countries. However, the relationship between sizes of Muslim and Arab Muslim population and proportion of FFs in the selected countries is complex and sophisticated.<sup>88</sup> In this part, I also found that gender and age structure have a similar pattern across all the selected countries; hence, they are not capable of explaining this study's research question.

In the second part of chapter three, I analyzed several integration related indicators in the selected countries. I found that countries implementing a 'strong' multicultural model, or a laissez-faire approach are likelier to have lower proportions of FFs. That being said, France did not seem to follow this trend. Similarly, I found that in countries where the government does not recognize a religious denomination as the state religion, numbers of FFs are lower. However, this trend is not consistent across the nine countries, and Denmark and the UK do not follow this pattern. I also found that religious education is not a determining factor to the question of why there are discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries, as they all follow a similar pattern, which has no connection to their ratios of FF. Finally, I found that Muslims in Canada, Australia, and the US have significantly better situation in terms of educational attainment, housing, and employment. This clearly correlates with ratios of FFs from the selected countries. While European countries have higher proportions of FFs, the non-European countries have significantly lower proportions.

---

<sup>88</sup> I will explain this complexity in the following sections of this chapter, when I discuss further research suggestions.

## **Theoretical Implication**

The theoretical dimensions for FF mobilization therefore need to be revisited in order to further understand impacts of societal elements on this phenomenon. The existing literature on FFs suggests two main causal factors: material gain and common identity. While material gain is central to CH model (2004) and NW theory, common or ‘transnational’ identity is the main factor in Malet’s model (2009). These theoretical frameworks do not seem to place the appropriate emphasis on societal factors. Thus, the main theoretical implication of my study is that FFs would be better understood if they are approached through the lens of radicalization. I demonstrated that the radicalization literature is capable of explaining the FF phenomenon.

Radicalization is often seen exclusively tied with terrorism, and not the FF phenomenon, but my study reveals that this distinction does not seem to be relevant anymore, at least in the case of Islamic FFs. On the one hand, Moghaddam (2005), Silber and Bhatt (2007), Sageman (2008), and Reitmann (2013) try to explain why individuals become radicalized to commit acts of violence, within their societies, and on the other, Malet (2009), Collier and Hoeffler (2004), and NW theorists aim to explain why individuals join foreign conflicts. My study suggests that this distinction does not exist in the case of Islamic FFs in the conflict in Syria and Iraq. The prime piece of evidence for this is found in the second chapter, where IS calls its audiences to either join the group in its battle in Syria and Iraq, or to commit acts of violence wherever they reside. This seems to be theoretically highly significant, as the borders between the FF phenomenon and radicalization literature seem to be faded. This means that people who commit acts of violence in the West, and individuals who travel to the conflict zone and fight for IS are

inspired by a similar motivation. Therefore, at least in the case of IS as an Islamic movement, radicalization and the FF phenomenon merge.

### **Policy Implications**

My analysis in this thesis suggests that Muslims' integration must be perceived as a highly important factor in preventing Islamic FF or radicalization in Western countries. My empirical findings in chapter three suggest that there is a strong correlation between Muslims' integration in and ratios of FF from Western countries. Thus, my study's key policy implication is that improving Muslims' integration in Western societies is an important step in preventing Muslim radicalization and FFs. More specifically speaking, improving Muslims' housing, education and employment can have a major impact on preventing FF mobilizations in Western countries. This can ultimately strengthen their belonging and loyalty to their surrounding societies. Canada, Australia, and the US are prime examples of this suggestion, in which Muslims have high educational attainment levels, good housing conditions and lower unemployment rates (compared with European countries); they have lower ratios of FFs to their Muslim populations.

### **Recommendation for Future Research**

The scale of the debate on IS's FF mobilization is extensive and multifaceted. Thus to generate achievable policy strategies with regards to Islamic FF movements, there is a need for further studies. Throughout this thesis I faced several questions that were highly relevant and important, but they did not fit into the scale of my research. I am now going to outline some of these questions and research ideas.

The first question regards the role of gender in IS's recruitment of FFs from Western countries. My empirical analysis of IS's recruitment message suggests that the group's primary targets are male; however, there have been several cases of female recruits joining, or trying to join IS as 'Jihadi brides' (Atwan, 2015; 182-188). Then the question is how IS recruits female audiences if its recruitment message is centered on male audiences? There are two possibilities regarding this question. First, a psychological analysis of IS's recruitment message might reveal some deeper dimensions that I did not have the expertise to find. The second possibility is that the group might have other strategies for its female audiences that are not present in its online campaign. A local network, for instance, might be the strategy that IS uses to recruit its female audience.

This probable local network of FF recruitment in Western countries is another interesting topic for further studies that did not fit into my research. The main question here regards the existence of such networks and their leadership and functions. Does IS have local networks of FF recruitment in the West? How do such networks operate? How do they appeal to their audience? This is a highly relevant and important study as it can help anti-terrorism and anti-radicalization authorities develop proper policies that can prevent further recruitment of FFs from these countries.

The next question that I faced during this research was regarding the position of IS' recruitment among other Islamic FF mobilization cases, such as the Arab-Afghan Mujahidin case in 1980s in Afghanistan. What do temporary Islamic FF movements have in common? What distinguishes IS from other FF cases in the Muslim world? Is it possible to identify a model that is capable of explaining all contemporary FF mobilizations in the

Muslim world? A cross case study of contemporary Islamic FF mobilizations could be an effective and interesting method to approach such questions.

The next topic comes out of the Islamic theology behind the so called Islamic FF movements. There are several questions that can be asked on this topic. Considering the Islamic notion of the Ummah, does FF mobilization have any meaning in the Islamic tradition? Looking at the issue of FFs through the lens of the Ummah, which refers to the global community of Muslims and fades the modern political boundaries and borders, it is interesting to find out how the notion of FFs can be conceptualized in Islamic literature.

Finally, it is interesting to study the notion of FFs in the two main Islamic traditions of Sunnism and Shiism. Where do FFs fit into ideologies and practices of Sunnism and Shiism? Is there any difference between these two traditions on this matter? A comprehensive comparison of Sunni and Shia movements/organizations, IS and Hezbollah for instance, could be an appropriate approach to answer such questions.

As discussed in this section, there are several ways to approach the FF phenomenon, and my research has been just one of the many. This means that there are still a large number of questions on this topic that need to be answered.

## **Conclusion**

In spite of what is often suggested about the causal factors behind FF mobilization in theoretical debates, common identity in the case of IS's FF recruitment has only offered some degree of explanation for the problem of discrepancies among ratios of FFs from Western countries. The role of common identity have been shown to be neither comprehensive nor adequate for answering this study's question of why Western countries have different proportions of FFs in the conflict in Iraq and Syria. My analysis in the

present study suggests that the degree to which Muslims are integrated into their respective societies has a direct correlation with the proportion of FFs from their countries. Therefore, in order to have a precise understanding of FF mobilizations in Western countries, both shared identity and integration must be part of the examination and analysis.

## References

- “A Canadian Fighter Urging Muslims in Canada to Immigrate to Syria.” (2014). *New York Times*: <http://www.nytimes.com/video/world/middleeast/100000003001205/a-canadians-pitch-for-isis.html>
- “A Message for Muslims.” (2015). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXt13LUzrAo>
- “A Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross.” (nd.). *Vimeo*: <https://vimeo.com/119705104>
- “A Message to America: Beheading of James Foley.” (2014). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2014/08/19/graphic-video-islamic-state-beheads-american-journalist-james-foley/>
- “A Message to the Allies of America: Beheading of David Cawthorne Haines.” (2014). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2014/09/13/graphic-video-islamic-state-beheads-british-aid-worker-david-haines/>
- “A Message to the Muslims of the West.” (2015). *LiveLeak*: [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=6db\\_1420941687](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=6db_1420941687)
- “A Message to the Government and People of Japan.” (2015). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2015/01/20/islamic-states-jihadi-john-in-new-hostage-video-demands-200-million-ransom-for-2-japanese-citizens-within-72-hours/>
- “A message to the government of Japan.” (2015). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2015/01/31/graphic-video-islamic-state-beheads-japanese-journalist-kenji-goto/>
- “A Second Message to America: Beheading of Steven Sotloff.” (2014). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2014/09/02/graphic-video-islamic-state-beheads-american-journalist-steven-sotloff/>
- Abou El Fadl, Khaled. (2011). “What is Shari'a?” *ABC*: <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2011/03/22/3170810.htm>
- Ackerman, Spencer. (2014). “Foreign Jihadists Flocking to Iraq and Syria on 'Unprecedented Scale' – UN,” *The Guardian*: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/30/foreign-jihadist-iraq-syria-unprecedented-un-isis>
- Adam, Fadzli, Asyraf Ab Rahman and E. Muhammad Tajuddin E. Ali. (2014). “Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) in the History of Muslim Civilization: The Conflict between Sunni and Shi’I,” *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 22 (8): 1253-1258.

- Ager, Alistair and Alison Strang (2004). "Indicators of Integration." London:  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr28.pdf>
- Akbarzadeh, Shahram, Gary D. Bouma, and Rachel Woodlock. (2009). "Mapping Employment & Education among Muslim Australians." *Centre for Muslim Minorities & Islam Policy Studies*: [https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/01\\_2014/muslim-mapping-report.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/01_2014/muslim-mapping-report.pdf)
- Ali, Sundas. (2015). British Muslims in Numbers; A Demographic, Socio-economic and Health Profile of Muslims in Britain drawing on the 2011 Census. *The Muslim Council of Britain*: [http://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf)
- "Al Qaeda: Propaganda and Media Strategy." (2014). *The Canadian Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies, the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University* (2): 1-20.
- Al-Jadda, Souheila. (2014). "Islamic Education Key to Preventing Radicalization," *The Islamic Monthly*: <http://theislamicmonthly.com/islamic-education-key-to-preventing-radicalization/>
- "Although the Disbelievers Dislike It." (2015). *Archive*:  
<http://www.Archive.org/details/disbelievers>
- Amghar, Samir, Amel Boubekeur, and Michael Emerson. (2007). *European Islam: Challenges for public policy and society*. Brussels: Center for European Policy Studies.
- Amiriaux, Valerie. (2007). "The Headscarf Question: What Is Really the Issue?" in Amghar, Amir, Amel Boubekeur, and Michael Emerson. 2007. *European Islam: Challenges for public policy and society*. Brussels: Center for European Policy Studies.
- "Annual Average Unemployment Rate in Germany from 1995 to 2015." (n.d.). *Statista (The Statistics Portal)*: <http://www.statista.com/statistics/227005/unemployment-rate-in-germany/>
- "Another Message to America and Its Allies: Beheading of Alan Henning." (2014). *LeakSource*:  
<http://leaksource.info/2014/10/03/graphic-video-islamic-state-beheads-british-aid-worker-alan-henning/>
- Archick, Kristin, John Rollins and Steven Woehrel. (2005). "Islamist Extremism in Europe," *Congressional Research Service*. July 29:  
<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RS22211.pdf>.
- Atwan, Abdel Bari. (2015). *Islamic State: the Digital Caliphate*. London: Saqi.

- Barrett, Richard. (2014). "The Islamic State," *The Soufan Group*: <http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/TSG-The-Islamic-State-Nov14.pdf>
- "Bay'at." (2015). *Archive*: <http://www.Archive.org/details/bay3at>
- Bell, Stewart. (2014). "Soldier dies after being run down in suspected terror attack near Montreal." *National Post*: <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/driver-who-ran-into-canadian-soldiers-near-montreal-was-known-to-counter-terrorism-officials-rcmp>
- Berger, J.M. and Jonathon Morgan. (2015). "The ISIS Twitter Census Defining and describing the population of ISIS supporters on Twitter," *Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings* (20): 1-64.
- Bizina, Margarita and David H. Gray. (2014). "Radicalization of Youth as a Growing Concern for Counter-Terrorism Policy," *Global Security Studies*, 5 (1): 72-79.
- Borum, Randy. (2003). "Understanding the Terrorist Mindset," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 7-10.
- Bott, Catherine, W. James Castan, Robertson Dickens, Thomas Rowley, and Erik Smith. (2009). "Recruitment and Radicalization of School-Age Youth by International Terrorist Groups," *Homeland Security Institute*: <http://www.cleanitproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2009-recruitment-and-radicalization.pdf>
- Bunzel, Cole. (2015). "From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State," *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World*, No.19 <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/03/ideology-of-islamic-state-bunzel/the-ideology-of-the-islamic-state.pdf>
- Choudhury, Tufyal. (2007). *The Role of Muslim Identity Politics in Radicalisation: A Study in Progress*, London: Department for Communities and Local Government.
- Chossudovsky, Michel. (2015). "Who is Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi? From Al-Zarqawi to Al-Baghdadi: "The Islamic State" is a CIA-Mossad-MI6 Intelligence Asset." *Center for Research on Globalization*: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/who-is-abu-musab-al-zarqawi-from-al-zarqawi-to-al-baghdadi-the-islamic-state-is-a-cia-mossad-mi6-intelligence-asset/5391731>
- Christmann, Kris. (2012). "Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: a Systematic Review of the Research Evidence," *Youth Justice Board for England and Wales*: <file:///C:/Users/hashe/Downloads/PreventingViolentExtremismSystematicReview.pdf>.
- Chulov, Martin. (2014). "Iran Sends Troops into Iraq to Aid fight against ISIS Militants," *the Guardian*: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/14/iran-iraq-isis-fight-militants-nouri-maliki>

- Cockburn, Patrick. (2014). *The Rise of Islamic State; ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution*. New York: Verso.
- Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. (2004). "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56: 563-595.
- "Conduct of Battles; Suicide Bomber-Operation of Turki al-Ashari." (2014). *LiveLeak*: [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=c5a\\_1392249482](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=c5a_1392249482)
- "Dabiq 1: The Return of Khilafah." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/09-2014/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-Issue-1-the-return-of-khilafah.pdf>
- "Dabiq 2: The Flood." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/09-2014/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-Issue-2-the-flood.pdf>
- "Dabiq 3: A Call to Hijrah." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/09-2014/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-Issue-3-the-call-to-hijrah.pdf>
- "Dabiq 4: The Failed Crusade." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/islamic-state-isis-magazine-Issue-4-the-failed-crusade.pdf>
- "Dabiq 5: Remaining and Expanding." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue-5-remaining-and-expanding.pdf>
- "Dabiq 6: Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan: A Testimony from Within."(2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue-6-al-qaeda-of-waziristan.pdf>
- "Dabiq 7: From Hypocrisy to Apostasy." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/islamic-state-dabiq-magazine-issue-7-from-hypocrisy-to-apostasy.pdf>
- "Dabiq 8: Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue+8-sharia-alone-will-rule-africa.pdf>
- "Dabiq 9: They Plot and Allah Plots." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue%2B9-they-plot-and-allah-plots-sex-slavery.pdf>
- "Dabiq 10: The Laws of All or the Laws of Men." (2014). *Al-Hayat*: <http://www.clarionproject.org/docs/Issue%2010%20-%20The%20Laws%20of%20Allah%20or%20the%20Laws%20of%20Men.pdf>

- Dale, Stephen Frederic. (2010). *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Cambridge, UK; New York; Cambridge University Press.
- Dannreuther, Roland. (2011). *International Security: The Contemporary Agenda*, Malden, MA; Cambridge, Cambs, UK: Polity.
- “Defiant Response to bombing of Tyrants.” (2015). *BareNakedIslam*:  
<http://www.barenakedislam.com/2015/04/20/the-islamic-state-isis-releases-new-propaganda-and-beheading-video-also-featuring-body-parts-which-they-claim-are-the-result-of-enemy/airstrikes/>
- “Deter Spies 1.” (2014). *Heavy*: <http://heavy.com/news/2015/06/isis-islamic-state-crucifies-spy-crucifixion-crucify-uncensored-youtube-video/>
- Duffield, Mark. (2001). *Global Governance and the new wars: the merging of development and security*. Zed Books.
- Duyvendak, Jan Willem, Trees Pels, and Rally Rijkschroeff (2009). “A Multicultural Paradise? The Cultural Factor in Dutch Integration Policy.” In Jennifer Hochschild and John Mollenkopf (Eds.), *Political Incorporation of Migrants*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Eck, Kristine. (2010). Raising Rebels; Participation and Recruitment in Civil War. *Report/Department of Peace and Conflict*. University of Uppsala: <https://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:304382/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Entzinger, Han and Renske Biezeveld (2002). “Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration.” *European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations*:  
<http://www.epim.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Benchmarking-in-Immigrant-Integration1.pdf>
- “Execution 1: Beheading of U.S. hostage Peter Kassig.” (2014). *LeakSource*:  
<http://leaksource.info/2014/11/16/graphic-video-islamic-state-claims-beheading-of-former-u-s-army-rangeraid-worker-peter-kassig/>
- “Execution 2: Beheading of Syrian Pilots and Military Forces.” (2014). *LeakSource*:  
<http://leaksource.info/2014/11/16/graphic-video-islamic-state-claims-beheading-of-former-u-s-army-rangeraid-worker-peter-kassig/>
- “Execution of 15 Iraqi Spies.” (2014). *Heavy*: <http://heavy.com/news/2015/06/isis-islamic-state-executes-drowns-in-cage-blows-up-spies-brutal-video-propaganda-uncensored-youtube-iraqi-espionage-men-killed/>
- “Execution of One of the Kuffar’s Commanders.” (nd.) *Archive*:  
<http://www.Archive.org/details/Sa7wa1>

- Fadil, Nadia. (2014). Belgium. In Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6, pp. 83-107. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill
- Fetzer, Joel S. and J. Christopher Soper, (2004). *Muslims and the state in Britain, France, and Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- “Flames of War.” (2014). *LeakSource*: <http://leaksource.info/2014/09/21/flames-of-war-islamic-state-feature-length-propaganda-recruitment-film/>
- Fregosi, Franck. (2014). France. In Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6, pp. 229-243. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill
- “From inside Halab” (2015): *ViableOpposition*:  
<http://viableopposition.blogspot.ca/2015/02/from-inside-aleppo-inside-look-at-isis.html>
- “From inside Mosul.” (nd.). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZqnE7aC6Ko>
- Gambhir, Harleen K. (2014). “Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State,” *the Institute for the Study of War*.  
[http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Dabiq%20Backgrounder\\_Harleen%20Final.pdf](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Dabiq%20Backgrounder_Harleen%20Final.pdf)
- Ghasemi, Shapour. (2015). “Safavid Empire 1502 – 1736,” *Iran Chamber Society*:  
<http://www.iranchamber.com/history/safavids/safavids.php#top>
- Gordon, Daniel. (2008). “Why Is There No Headscarf Affair in the United States?” *Historical Reflection*, 34 (3): 37-60.
- “Graduation of a New Sharia Class for the New Adherents to Jabhat al-Nuṣrah in Turkmān Mountain.” (2014). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net>
- Grim, Brian J. and Mehtab S. Karim. (2011). “The Future of the Global Muslim Population; Projections for 2010-2030,” *Pew Forum*:  
<http://www.pewforum.org/files/2011/01/FutureGlobalMuslimPopulation-WebPDF-Feb10.pdf>
- Hamid, Mustafa, and Leah Farrall. (2015). *The Arabs at War in Afghanistan*, London: Hurst & Company.
- Hassan, Riaz. (2015). Australian Muslims: A Demographic, Social, and Economic Profile of Muslims in Australia 2015. *International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding*:  
[https://www.unisa.edu.au/Global/EASS/MnM/Publications/Australian\\_Muslims\\_Report\\_2015.pdf](https://www.unisa.edu.au/Global/EASS/MnM/Publications/Australian_Muslims_Report_2015.pdf)

- “Healing the Believers’ Chests.” (2015). *LeakSource*:  
<http://leaksource.info/2015/02/04/jordanian-pilot-kaseasbeh-burned-alive-by-islamic-state-jordan-executes-is-requested-prisoner-rishawi-in-response/>
- Hegghammer, Thomas. (2010). “The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and Globalization of Jihad,” *International Security*, 35 (3): 53-94.
- Holsti, Kalevi J. (1996). *The State, War, and the State of War*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hussain, Mustafa. (2007). Muslims in Europe; City Reports – Denmark. *Open Institute Society*.  
[https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesden\\_20080101\\_0.pdf](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesden_20080101_0.pdf)
- Hussain, Serena. (2007). Muslims in Europe; City Reports – United Kingdom. *Open Institute Society*.  
[https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesuk\\_20080101\\_0.pdf](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesuk_20080101_0.pdf)
- “I Wish I’d Come Sooner.” (nd.) *YouTube*: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=ITqfWniEtp0>
- “Iman, Hijrah, and Jihad.” (nd.). *LiveLeak*: [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=787\\_1393449781](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=787_1393449781)
- “Inside Ayn-al- Islam (Kobane)” (2014). *YouTube*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8IJzYY-hpk>
- “Interviews on the Jordanian Pilot’s Execution.” (2015). *Archive*:  
<http://www.Achive.org/details/altaearLeqa>
- “International Migrant Population by Country of Origin and Destination.” (2013). *Migration Policy Institute*: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/international-migrant-population-country-origin-and-destination?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>
- “ISIL Calls for ‘Conquest of Istanbul,’ Slams Erdoğan.” (2015). *Hurriyet*:  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/isil-calls-for-conquest-of-istanbul-slams-erdogan.aspx?pageID=238&nID=87140&NewsCatID=338>
- “Islam in the United States.” (n.d.). Euro Islam: <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/united-states/>
- Jacobsen, Brian Arly. (2014). “Denmark.” In Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6, pp. 189-209. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill
- Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.). (2014). *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill.

- Jensen, Tina Gudrun, Garbi Schmidt, Mette Kirstine Tørslev, Kathrine Vitus, and Kristina Weibel. (2009). "Analysis of Integration Policies and Public State Endorsed Institutions at National and Regional Levels in Denmark." *The Danish Centre for Social Research*: <http://www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/tolerance/media/WP2/WorkingPapers%20Denmark.pdf>
- Johnson, Toni. (2011). "Europe: Integrating Islam" *Council on Foreign Relations*: <http://www.cfr.org/religion/europe-integrating-islam/p8252>
- Johnson, Toni. (2011). "Muslims in the United States" *Council on Foreign Relations*: <http://www.cfr.org/united-states/muslims-united-states/p25927>
- Joppke, Christian, and John Torpey. (2013). *Legal Integration of Islam: A Transatlantic Comparison*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Kaldor, Mary. (2013). "In Defence of New Wars," *Stability*, 2 (1): 4, 1-16.
- Keyworth, Karen. (2011). "Islamic Schools of the United States: Data-Based Profiles." *Institute for Social Policy and Understanding*: [http://www.ispu.org/pdfs/609\\_ISPU%20Report\\_Islamic%20Schools\\_Keyworth\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.ispu.org/pdfs/609_ISPU%20Report_Islamic%20Schools_Keyworth_WEB.pdf)
- "Killing the Apostates 1." (2015). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/2015/06/18/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-killing-the-apostates-in-revenge-for-the-monotheists-1-wilayat-khurasan/>
- "Killing the Apostates 2." (2015). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/the-islamic-state/>
- King, Michael and Donald M. Taylor. (2011). "The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 23 (4): 602-622.
- Kingsley, Patrick. (2014). "Who is Behind ISIS Propaganda Operation." *The Guardian*: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/23/who-behind-isis-propaganda-operation-iraq>
- Klausen, Jytte (2015). "Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 38:1, 1-22.
- Knapp, Michael G. (2003). "The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam," *Parameters* (Spring 2003): 82-94.
- Kraenmann, Sandra. (2014). "Foreign Fighters under International Law," *Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. Academy Briefing No. 7*.
- Kramer, Martin S. (1980). *Political Islam*. Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications.

- Kymlicka, Will. (1995). *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Laborde, Cecile. (2001). "The Culture(s) of the Republic: Nationalism and Multiculturalism in French Republican Thought." *Political Theory*, (29) 5: 716-735.
- "Lend me your Ears 1." (2014). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vcew3qmidRI>
- "Lend me your Ears 2." (2014). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcSk7KVO99c>
- "Lend me your Ears 3." (2014). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxhdVD8Bnlo>
- "Lend me your Ears 4." (2014). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UVBKNhip2Y>
- Lettinga, Doutje and Sawitri Saharso. (2012). "The political debates on the veil in France and the Netherlands: Reflecting national integration models?" *Comparative European Politics*, (10) 3: 319–336.
- "Life inside the ISIS Home Base of Raqqa, Syria." (2014). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C14Yu0nJCVg>
- "Life of Prophet Muhammad: In Medina." (n.d.). *The Prophet Muhammad*: [http://www.the-prophet-muhammad.net/biographies/in\\_medina.html](http://www.the-prophet-muhammad.net/biographies/in_medina.html)
- Maddox, Marion. (1999). *For God and Country Religious Dynamics in Australian Federal Politics*. The Department of the Parliamentary Library of Australia: <http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/monographs/maddox/maddoxmonograph.pdf>
- Malet, David Samuel. (2009). *Foreign Fighters: Transnational Identity*, PhD dissertation, The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences of the George Washington University. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 2009. (Publication No. 3359978).
- Mandin, Jérémy. (2014). An Overview of Integration Policies in Belgium. *INTERACT Project*: <http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/33133/INTERACT-RR-2014%20-%2020.pdf?sequence=1>
- "Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population." *Pew Research Center*: <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2009/10/Muslimpopulation.pdf>
- Masci, David. (2016). "Almost all U.S. Presidents Have Been Christians." *Pew Research Center*: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/02/12/almost-all-u-s-presidents-have-been-christians/>

- “Message of the Mujahid.” (2014). *Breitbart*: <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2014/12/10/canadian-isis-fighter-releases-recruitment-video-experts-call-it-silly/>
- “Millatu Ibrahim for Allah and his Messenger.” (nd.). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/countries/germany/>
- Moen, Gabriel A. (1996). Church and State Relations in Australia and the United States: The Purpose and Effect Approaches and the Neutrality Principle. *Brigham Young University Law Review* 1996 (4): 787.
- Moghaddam, Fathali. (2005). “The Staircase to Terrorism; a Psychological Exploration,” *The American Psychological Association*, 60 (2): 161-169.
- Mohammed, Hafez. (2009). “Jihad after Iraq: Lessons from the Arab Afghans,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 32 (2): 73-94.
- Msanauskas, John. (2014). “Number of Unemployed Muslims More than Twice National Average.” *Herald Sun*: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/number-of-unemployed-muslims-more-than-twice-national-average/news-story/719c039483fea7b395e169055670516b>
- “MTmujatweets 1.” (2015). *Archive*: <https://archive.org/details/muj-ep>
- “MTmujatweets 2.” (2015). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tk-2CTHvqZw>
- “MTmujatweets 3.” (2015). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMUcsjUuoXw>
- “MTmujatweets 4.” (2015). *LiveLeak*: [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=501\\_1408294201](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=501_1408294201)
- “MTmujatweets 5.” (2015). *Archive*: [https://archive.org/details/HMC\\_MJT5](https://archive.org/details/HMC_MJT5)
- “MTmujatweets 6.” (2015). *YouTube*: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX2\\_tijFAog](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX2_tijFAog)
- “MTmujatweets 7.” (2015). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OppfKBQ8T1I>
- “MTmujatweets 8.” (2015). *YouTube*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjkEZEEdWvg4>
- “Muslim Americans; No Signs of Growth in Alienation or Support for Extremism.” (2011). *Pew Research Center*: <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/Muslim%20American%20Report%2010-02-12%20fix.pdf>
- “Muslims in America; a Statistical Portrait.” (nd.). *The U.S. Department of State: Embassy of the United States in Baghdad Iraq*: <http://iraq.usembassy.gov/resources/information/current/american/statistical.html>

- “Muslims in Australia Snap Shot.” (n.d.). *The Australian Government’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship*:  
[https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CB8QFjAAahUKEwioi\\_rsMXIAhUO42MKHR-QDw8&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dss.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Ffiles%2Fsettle%2Fmulticultural\\_australia%2FMuslims\\_in\\_Australia\\_snapshot.pdf&usg=AFQjCNFUqK72llr-lurhOPKhJoU0m2nHQ&sig2=YFbOsDBrXlgK0lTtlx45-A](https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CB8QFjAAahUKEwioi_rsMXIAhUO42MKHR-QDw8&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dss.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Ffiles%2Fsettle%2Fmulticultural_australia%2FMuslims_in_Australia_snapshot.pdf&usg=AFQjCNFUqK72llr-lurhOPKhJoU0m2nHQ&sig2=YFbOsDBrXlgK0lTtlx45-A)
- “Muslims in the European Union- Discrimination and Islamophobia,” (2006). *European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia*:  
[http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/156-Manifestations\\_EN.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/156-Manifestations_EN.pdf)
- “My Oath to the Islamic State.” (nd.). *Jihadology*:  
<http://jihadology.net/category/countries/germany/>
- “National Arab American Demographics.” (2012). *Arab American Institute Foundation*:  
[http://b.3cdn.net/aai/44b17815d8b386bf16\\_v0m6iv4b5.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/aai/44b17815d8b386bf16_v0m6iv4b5.pdf)
- Neumann, Peter R. (2015). “Foreign Fighter Total in Syria/Iraq Now Exceeds 20,000; Surpasses Afghanistan Conflict in the 1980s,” *The International Center for the Study of Radicalization*: <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/>
- Nielsen, Jørgen. (2013). *Muslim political participation in Europe*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Oberti, Marco. (2007). “The French Republican Model of Integration: the Theory of Cohesion and the Practice of Exclusion. Some sociological reflections after the riots in France,” *Notes & Documents*, 2007-02, Paris, OSC.
- O’Leary, Brenden. (2006). “Liberalism, Multiculturalism, Danish Cartoons, Islamist Fraud, and the Rights of the Ungodly.” *International Migration*, 44:5, 22-33.
- “Our Hijrah in the Way of God.” (nd.) *Jihadology*:  
<http://jihadology.net/category/countries/germany/page/3/>
- “Our State is Victorious.” (2015). *Archive*:  
[http://www.Archive.org/details/OurStateIsVictorious\\_201508](http://www.Archive.org/details/OurStateIsVictorious_201508)
- Pauha, Teemu, and Martikainen, Tuomas. (2014). Finland. In Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6, pp. 218-228. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill Publications.
- Jones, Peter D. (2012). Islamic Schools in Australia. *The La Trobe Journal* (89): 36.

- “Quick Facts about Arab Americans.” (2012). *Arab American Institute Foundation*: [http://b.3cdn.net/aai/fcc68db3efdd45f613\\_vim6ii3a7.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/aai/fcc68db3efdd45f613_vim6ii3a7.pdf)
- “Receiving Muslims Displaced from the Areas of the Regime.” (2015). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/the-islamic-state/>
- Reitman, Janet. (2013). “Jahar’s World,” *Rolling Stone*, 1188: 46-57.
- Sageman, Marc. (2008). *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Shay, Shaul. (2002). *The Endless Jihad: The Mujahidin, the Taliban and Bin Laden*, Herzliya, Israel: International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya.
- Rohe, Mathias. (2014). Germany. In Jorgen S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, Volume: 6, pp. 262-287. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill
- “Roots of Violent Radicalisation.” (2012). *The House of Commons*. London: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmhaff/1446/1446.pdf>
- Ross, Alice. (2015). “Hundreds of Civilians Killed in US-led Air Strikes on ISIS Targets – Report.” *The Guardian*: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/03/us-led-air-strikes-on-isis-targets-killed-more-than-450-civilians-report>
- Saul, Jonathan and Parisa Hafezi. (2014). “Iran boosts military support in Syria to bolster Assad,” *Reuters*: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/21/us-syria-crisis-iran-idUSBREA1K09U20140221>
- Schouten, Lucy. (2015). “Why Is Finland a Top Destination for Iraqi Asylum-Seekers?” *The Christian Science Monitor*: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2015/0930/Why-is-Finland-a-top-destination-for-Iraqi-asylum-seekers>
- Scott, Joan. “Symptomatic Politics. The Banning of Islamic Headscarves in French Public Schools”, *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 23 (3): 106-127.
- Selby, Jennifer (n.d.). Islam in Canada. Euro Islam. *Euro-Islam.org*: <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/canada/#Z>
- Shear, Michael D. and Baker, Peter. (2014). “Obama Says Strategy to Fight ISIS Will Succeed.” *New York Times*: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/17/world/europe/obama-says-paris-attacks-have-stiffened-resolve-to-crush-isis.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/17/world/europe/obama-says-paris-attacks-have-stiffened-resolve-to-crush-isis.html?_r=0)
- Silber, Mitchell D. and Bhatt, Arvin. (2007). “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat,” *New York: NYPD Intelligence Division*.

- Speri, Alice. (2014). "ISIS Fighters and Their Friends Are Total Social Media Pros," *Vice News*: <https://news.vice.com/article/isis-fighters-and-their-friends-are-total-social-media-pros>
- Taylor, Charles (1994). "The Politics of Recognition." In Amy Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism*, pp. 25–73. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tebbakh, Sonia. (2007). "Muslims in Europe; City Reports – France." *Open Institute Society*. [https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesfra\\_20080101\\_0.pdf](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesfra_20080101_0.pdf)
- Terrazas, Aaron. (2009). "Iraqi Immigrants in the United States," *Migration Policy Institute*: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/iraqi-immigrants-united-states/>
- Teslik, Lee Hudson. (2006). "Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi." *Council on Foreign Relations*: <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/profile-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/p9866>
- "The Bombing of the Crusaders on Muslims." (2015) *Heavy*: <http://heavy.com/news/2015/05/new-isis-islamic-state-propaganda-youtube-videos-photos-pictures-screengrabs-screenshots-stills-may-2015/>
- "The Day of Rewards." (2015). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/al-%e1%b8%a5ayat-media-center/>
- "The People of Australia: Statistics from the 2006 Census." (2008). *Department of Immigration and Citizenship*: [https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=8&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CEcQFjAHahUKEwiuo8G296HIAhUHOogKHWjXDVE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dss.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F01\\_2014%2Fpoa-2008.pdf&usq=AFQjCNEXDpYlITK3VliP5SwnHILfPuEw\\_w&sig2=y46M5Sfqu4CzmwgMs1c3UA](https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=8&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CEcQFjAHahUKEwiuo8G296HIAhUHOogKHWjXDVE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dss.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F01_2014%2Fpoa-2008.pdf&usq=AFQjCNEXDpYlITK3VliP5SwnHILfPuEw_w&sig2=y46M5Sfqu4CzmwgMs1c3UA)
- "The Role of Education in Countering Radicalization in Bangladesh." (2015). *Bangladesh Enterprise Institute*: <http://bei-bd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/The-role-of-education-in-countering-radicalization.pdf>
- "The World Factbook." *The United States of America: Central Intelligence Agency*. [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region\\_eur.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_eur.html)
- "There Is No Life without Jihad." (2014). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/2014/06/19/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-sham-there-is-no-life-without-jihad/>
- "Tracking Radicalization through Education and Youth Action." (2015). *European Commission*: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/fact-sheet-post-paris\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/fact-sheet-post-paris_en.pdf)
- "Trading Economics." (n.d.). <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/countries>

“Unemployment Rate in the United Kingdom (UK) from 2000 to 2015.” (n.d.). *Statistica (The Statistics Portal)*: <http://www.statista.com/statistics/279898/unemployment-rate-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/>

Volpi, Frédéric. (2010). *Political Islam Observed*. London: C. Hurst.

Warrick, Joby. (2015). *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS*. New York: Doubleday.

“We Only Fear Allah.”(2014). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/countries/germany/>

Weiss, Michael and Hassan Hassan. (2015). *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*. New York: Regan Arts.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan. (2004). “Joining the Cause: Al-Muhajiroun and Radical Islam,” *paper presented at The Roots of Islamic Radicalism Conference, Yale University*: <http://insct.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Wiktorowicz.Joining-the-Cause.pdf>

“Words from the Heart to Our Brothers in the Caucasus.” (2015). *Jihadology*: <http://jihadology.net/category/the-islamic-state/>

“Words Watered with Blood (part 2).” (nd.) *Archive*: <http://www.Archive.org/WORDS5>

Yasmeen, Samina. (2008). *Understanding Muslim Identities: From Perceived Relative Exclusion to Inclusion*. Centre for Muslim States and Societies; University of Western Australia.

Zibouh, Fatima Mona Moufahim. (n.d.). “Ethnicity, religion and identity: the case of Muslim politicians in Belgium,” 1-9: [http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper\\_14986.pdf](http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_14986.pdf)

## Appendix A: List of the Islamic State's Propaganda Materials Examined in Chapter 2

#	Title	Format	Length	Date	Language	Subtitle	Produced by	Source
1	A Message for Muslims	Video	0:02:47	N/A	Arabic/ Russian/ English	N/A	IS- N/A	YouTube.com
2	A Message to America: Beheading of James Foley	Video	0:04:40	2014	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com
3	A Message to the Allies of America: Beheading of David Cawthorne Haines	Video	0:02:27	2014	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com
4	A Message to the Government and People of Japan	Video	0:01:40	2015	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com
5	A Message to the Government of Japan	Video	0:01:07	2015	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com
6	A Message to the Muslim of the West	Video	0:09:04	2015	English/ French	Arabic	IS-N/A	LiveLeak.com
7	A Second Message to America: Beheading of Steven Sotloff	Video	0:02:46	2014	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com
8	Abu Muslim from Canada	Video	0:02:46	2014	English	N/A	IS-Al-Hayat	NYTimes.com
9	Although Disbelievers Dislike It	Video	0:15:53	2015	Arabic	English	IS-Al-Forqan	Archive.org
10	Another Message to America and Its Allies:	Video	0:01:11	2014	English	Arabic	IS-Al-Forqan	LeakSource.com

	Beheading of Alan Henning							
11	Baby Lying on Flag Surrounded by Kalashnikov and Grenades	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	Independant.co.uk
12	Bay'at	Video	0:02:36	2015	Uzbek	N/A	IS-Khorasan	Archive.org
13	Conduct of Battles: Suicide bomber- Operation of Turki al-Ashari	Video	0:10:50	2014	Arabic	N/A	ANF- Al-Bayza al-Manaragh	LiveLeak.com
14	Dabiq 1: The Return of Khilafah	Magazine	49 pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
15	Dabiq 10: The Laws of All or the Laws of Men	Magazine	78 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
16	Dabiq 2: The Flood	Magazine	43 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
17	Dabiq 3: A Call to Hijrah	Magazine	40 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
18	Dabiq 4: The Failed Crusade	Magazine	55 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
19	Dabiq 5: Remaining and Expanding	Magazine	39 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
20	Dabiq 6: Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan: A Testimony from Within	Magazine	62 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
21	Dabiq 7: From Hypocrisy to Apostasy	Magazine	82 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
22	Dabiq 8: Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa.”	Magazine	67 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org
23	Dabiq 9: They Plot and Allah Plots	Magazine	78 Pages	2014	English	N/A	IS- Dabiq	Media.ClarionProject.org

24	Defiant Response to Bombing of Tyrants	Video	0:07:49	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS-N/A	BareNakedIslam.com
25	Deter Spies 1	Video	0:04:12	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS- Dijlah	Heavy.com
26	Execution 1: Beheading of U.S. hostage Peter Kassig	Video	0:01:25	2014	English	Arabic	IS-AI-Forqan	LeakSource.com
27	Execution 2: Beheading of Syrian pilots and military forces	Video	0:03:31	2014	English	Arabic	IS-AI-Forqan	LeakSource.com
28	Execution of 15 Iraqi Spies	Video	0:07:30	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS- N/A	Heavy.com
29	Execution of One of the Kuffar's Commanders	Video	0:03:09	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS- Al-Jenoub	Archive.org
30	First Time Slaughtering a Goat	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	TheGuardian.com
31	Flames of War	Video	0:55:12	2014	English	Arabic	IS – Al-Hayat	LeakSource.com
32	From inside Haleb	Video	0:12:00	2015	English/French	Arabic	IS – Al-Hayat	Viableopposition.blogpost.ca
33	From inside Mosul	Video	0:08:16	2015	English	Arabic	IS – Al-Hayat	LiveLeak.com
34	Graduation of a New Sharia Class for the New Adherents to Jabhat al-Nuṣrah in Turkmān Mountain	Video	0:05:41	2014	Arabic	N/A	ANF	Jihadology.net
35	Healing the Believers' Chests	Video	0:22:34	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS-AI-Forqan	LeakSource.com
36	I Wish I'd Come Sooner	Video	0:00:40	N/A	English	Arabic	IS-N/A	YouTube.com
37	Iman, hijrah, an Jihad	Video	0:08:24	2014	German	Arabic	IS- Lava al-Mujahidin	LiveLeak.com

38	Inside Ayn al-Islam (Kobane)	Video	0:05:32	2014	English	Arabic	IS- Al-Etesam	YouTube.com
39	Interviews on the Jordanian Pilot	Video	0:04:55	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS- Al-Raqqah	Archive.org
40	Killing the Apostates 1	Video	0:04:17	2015	Urdu/ Arabic	N/A	IS- Korasan	Jihadology.net
41	Killing the Apostates 2	Video	0:04:35	2015	Urdu/ Arabic	N/A	IS- Korasan	Jihadology.net
42	Led Me Your Ears 1	Video	0:03:21	N/A	English	Arabic	IS-N/A	YouTube.com
43	Led Me Your Ears 2	Video	0:05:37	N/A	English	Arabic	IS-N/A	YouTube.com
44	Led Me Your Ears 3	Video	0:06:53	N/A	English	Arabic	IS-N/A	YouTube.com
45	Led Me Your Ears 4	Video	0:07:48	N/A	English	Arabic	IS-N/A	YouTube.com
46	Message of the Mujahid	Video	0:06:13	2014	English	Arabic	IS- Al-Etesam	Breitbart.com
47	Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross	Video	0:05:01	N/A	English	Arabic	IS- N/A	Vimeo.com
48	Millatu Ibrahim for Allah and his Messenger	Video	0:05:49	N/A	German	English	IS – N/A	Jihadology.net
49	MTmujatweets 1	Video	0:01:04	2014	Dutch	N/A	IS-Al-Hayat	Archive.org
50	MTmujatweets 2	Video	0:00:54	2014	Arabic	N/A	IS-Al-Hayat	YouTube.com
51	MTmujatweets 3	Video	0:01:08	2014	Arabic	N/A	IS-Al-Hayat	YouTube.com
52	MTmujatweets 4	Video	0:01:23	2014	German	English	IS-Al-Hayat	LiveLeak.com
53	MTmujatweets 5	Video	0:00:53	2014	No Narration	N/A	IS-Al-Hayat	Archive.org

54	MTmujatweets 6	Video	0:01:17	2014	Indonesian	English	IS-AI-Hayat	YouTube.com
55	MTmujatweets 7	Video	0:01:20	2014	Arabic	N/A	IS-AI-Hayat	YouTube.com
56	MTmujatweets 8	Video	0:01:32	2014	Russian/ Arabic	N/A	IS-AI-Hayat	YouTube.com
57	My Oath to the Islamic State	Video	1:03:52	N/A	German	Engliah	IS – N/A	Jihadology.net
58	Our Hijrah in the Way of God	Video	0:05:37	N/A	German	Engliah	IS – N/A	Jihadology.net
59	Our State Is Victorious	Video	0:05:03	2015	Arabic	English	IS-AI-Hayat	Archive.org
60	Prepare for Glory	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	The Internet
61	Receiving Muslims Displaced from the Areas of the Regime	Video	0:12:09	N/A	Arabic	N/A	IS- N/A	Jihadology.net
62	The Bombing of the Crusaders on Muslims	Video	0:05:38	2015	English	Arabic	IS- The Media Office of Wilayet Aleppo	Heavy.com
63	The Day of Rewards	Video	0:08:14	2015	Arabic	N/A	IS- Nnawa	Jihadology.net
64	There Is No Life without Jihad	Video	0:13:26	2014	English	N/A	IS-AI- Hayat	Jihadology.net
65	This Is Our Call of Duty	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	TheGuardian.com
66	Toddlers IS Supporter	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	Catolic.org
67	We Only Fear Allah	Video	0:19:29	N/A	German	Engliah	IS – N/A	Jihadology.net
68	Why Not Make it Martyrdom	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	TheGuardian.com

69	Words from the Heart to Our Brothers in the Caucasus	Video	0:07:43	2014	Russian	Arabic	IS- N/A	Jihadology.net
70	Words Watered with Blood (part 2)	Video	0:03:36	N/A	Arabic	N/A	IS-N/A	Archive.org
71	Young IS Supporters	Poster	N/A	2014	English	N/A	Pro IS – N/A	Catolic.org